

# es without Shane

Philip Chevron was a punk hero in The Radiators when the 'great' Shane McGowan came to a gig – the rest is history. Here, Philip recalls his wild days with The Pogues (and Shane is more savvy than you think...)

Brothers in charm:  
Pogues members  
Shane MacGowan  
and Philip Chevron  
in 1993

some when people assume Shane wrote 'Thousands Are Sailing' but what can you do? Shane, in fairness, is always the first to clarify.'

Philip was inspired to write that particular song by the memory of watching JFK's motorcade whisk past his street shortly after the president had landed at Dublin Airport 50 years ago this month.

'I had just turned six when President Kennedy passed by at the end of our road in his motorcade. I could have reached out and touched him as I waved my standard issue little paper stars and stripes. We were the first straggly groups of people who would greet him in ever-increasing numbers over the next few days. But the moment changed my life.'

Returning to the subject of The Pogues, I tell Philip that I've just purchased a copy of fellow band-member James Fearnley's memoirs, *Here Comes Everybody: The Story Of The Pogues*. When I jokingly ask him whether I should take the book with a pinch of salt, he replies good-humouredly: 'Oh, it deserves something more than salt. A glass of nice light Alsace-derived vino.'

'It's exceptionally well written,' he continues more seriously. 'It's exactly how I imagine I would have remembered it if I were James Fearnley, which I'm not. In a band that large, it's perfectly possible, likely even, that entirely unique and separate empirical narratives exist to feed memoirs.'

'Darryl, our bassist, caught this perfectly many years ago when — in satire of Shane's book *A Drink With Shane MacGowan* — he announced his own memoirs would be titled *A Cup of Tea with Darryl Hunt*. None of the seven or eight biographies or autobiographies of The Pogues are, or could be, a fair portrayal of the band. It's not that kind of band.'

James Fearnley wrote in his book how he was 'flattered' by the 'obvious crush' that Philip, who is gay, had on him. He describes being 'drunk enough to dismiss the shock of the unfamiliar' as the two shared

a kiss that 'seemed to have gone for ever' one night during the band's formative years. Philip, who knew he was gay from age six, tells me that he never struggled with his sexuality. 'I was subject to all the usual

bull\*\*\*\* a kid of my generation experienced — from negative stereotypes on TV to actual physical and verbal threats from sexually-insecure bullies. 'I never struggled with my sexuality, in the sense that it was always clear to me — only with other people's acceptance of it. But there comes a point where you just stop being polite about tolerance and acceptance and diversity and shout: "Know what? I'm gay. Deal with it!" Nobody who cared about me or whom I cared about had a problem accepting who I was.'

Philip — who reformed The Radiators in 2003 and continues to play and record with them — has no plans to write his own memoirs. 'It sounds like a lot of hard work. I'm not sure the market can support how much it would cost a publisher to persuade me.'

Besides, he adds, he is not interested in rehashing anecdotal drunken tales about The Pogues. 'They've all been used up and recycled in the memoirs and biographies and documentaries so often that I sicken of them.' I'd wager that Philip Chevron's many fans wouldn't feel the same.

■ **CHRISTY Moore** plays a one-off gig in Philip's honour on July 15 at Whelan's in Dublin. Tickets are €36.50 at [wawtickets.ie](http://wawtickets.ie)



## THE Vulture

The Mail critic's pick of the week's must-see events

### ON THE RIVER PARTY ON THE BARROW

EÍGSE Carlow has its big fiesta day tomorrow, with the banks of the Barrow bursting with music, markets, family entertainment and street theatre. The 8pm gig in the town park, starring Sharon Shannon and her Big Band, is a highlight. Later on, Carlow Castle will toast its 800th birthday with a fireworks display at 10.30pm. And the fun goes on into the night at the Salty Dog sessions. ■ **TOMORROW**, 2pm to 1am, across Carlow town, free. See [eigse.com](http://eigse.com)



### ON THE TOWN THE RETURN OF COLMCILLE

DERRY, too, will be spectacle-filled this weekend — as the city's saint is feted with a performance by The Undertones, a People's Procession and a grand-scale street performance created by the London Olympic Games' opening ceremony writer Frank Cottrell Boyce. ■ **TOMORROW** from 2pm, venues across Derry city. See [thereturnofcolmcille.com](http://thereturnofcolmcille.com)



### ON TOUR CARA LUFT

CANADIAN folk and roots dynamo Cara has been compared to the likes of Gillian Welch and Julie Miller — but the singer has a presence that's all her own. With her emotive voice and delicate guitar playing, she's sure to win hearts as she sets out around Ireland on a six-night tour. ■ **TONIGHT**, 8pm, Hawkswell Theatre, Sligo, €15, [hawkswell.com](http://hawkswell.com); then dates in Galway, Dublin, Ballymore Eustace, Limerick and Ballybofey.



### ON STAGE HONS AND RISSOLES

CELEBRATE Wexford and its people at Hons And Rissoles — a showcase of short plays by Dominic Palmer, Colum Kavanagh, Carmel Harrington and Imelda Carroll, performed by New Line Theatre Group. Expect to be challenged by a vibrant selection of new works including tales of time travel, revenge and love lost. The night-time show will be followed by a panel discussion on The Gathering and what Wexford means today. ■ **TOMORROW**, 2pm and 8pm, €10/€12. See [wexfordartscentre.ie](http://wexfordartscentre.ie) or call 053 912 3764



### ON THE CLIFFS VAN MORRISON, DUNLUCE CASTLE

HIT the Causeway Coast for a slice of Van the Man in a stunning setting. Cyprus Avenue — tree-lined and lovely as the Belfast street famed of his 1968 hit may be — has nothing on this spot. If the sun's out you'll be super smug to have caught the first ever gig beside the impressive medieval ruins that inspired Cair Paravel in CS Lewis's Narnia, and that have more recently starred in Game Of Thrones. ■ **TODAY**, 6pm, and Saturday 4pm, Dunluce Castle, Co. Antrim, £70. See [ticketmaster.ie](http://ticketmaster.ie)



**THERESE McKENNA**