



## If it's Celtic, it's on Main Street this weekend

Bethlehem was awash in plaid for the annual Highlands festival



### Celtic Classic on Saturday

Scenes from Celtic Classic Saturday. The annual Celtic Classic Highland Games and Festival continues Sunday in Bethlehem. (DONNA FISHER / THE MORNING CALL /September 28, 2013)  
By JD Malone, Of The Morning Call  
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There was more plaid, tartan and flannel in Bethlehem on Saturday afternoon than at an early 1990s Pearl Jam concert.

Clear blue skies, warm weather and the [Celtic Classic](#) brought throngs of people into the city, many of them clad in the colors of Scottish clans, or shirts bearing witness to their English and Welsh ancestry. There were kilts, and men in wool stockings.

But above it all, there were the Irish.

A great green wave of folks shouting their roots to the world. Just going by shirts, there were Irish dads and granddads, Irish babies and babes, even Irish Marines.

By the bodies jammed into and around tents, it appeared that they all came for the Irish music.

"I just listen to the great music and have a great time!" said Diane Hopkins of [Kutztown](#) as she jigged a bit outside the Tavern in the Glen.

At the aptly named Grand Pavilion, the group Dublin 5 rocked through Irish favorites to a packed house. When the band asked the crowd if any of them had ever been to Ireland, a deafening, "Yes," burst forth.

Taking a break from the action and the warm sun, Kit Brown of [Coopersburg](#) sat beneath a tree and cooled his red- and white-stockinged feet. Dressed as a member of the 42nd Royal Highland Regiment at the time of the Revolutionary War, Brown wore a heavy red and blue wool coat with a nifty kilt and bonnet.

Brown even ran in full Highlander gear — complete with musket — in the Celtic Classic 5k race Saturday morning. His only concession to modernity was donning a pair of running shoes.

"I've been coming here for 20 years," Brown said. "I love the music, and keeping the history alive."

Weaving through the thick crowds, Sean Cassaday of Levittown drew many an eye thanks to a 3-foot wooden hammer resting on his shoulder.

Cassaday bought the oaken implement at one of the many booths and shops set up across the festival grounds. Visitors can buy anything Celtic — from shepherd's pie and football kits, to Claddagh rings and shillelaghs — at the festival, which concludes today.

Cassaday's \$50 hammer wasn't quite an authentic shillelagh, but Cassaday mentioned that he and his friends plan to "smash things," with it. He said he came for the music and to watch the Highland games, where very big men heave stones and throw hammers, but this year he found something else to enjoy.

"My favorite thing? Probably this baby," Cassaday said as he patted his new hammer.

"Is that decorative or functional?" a passer-by asked Cassaday.

"Probably more decorative than anything else," Cassaday said.

That's probably a good thing.

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