

THE IRISH Sun

Monday, November 13, 2023

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INSIDE

WOLFE TONES CALL IT A DAY



Off into the strumset
... Brian, Tommy and
Noel are set to wrap
up their long career

OOH AH UP THE RA-TIREMENT

SHOWBIZ EXCLUSIVE

MUSIC legends The Wolfe Tones are preparing to hang up their banjos.

The rebel music icons will "go out with a high" after gigs next October.

Singer Tommy Byrne told The Irish Sun: "I'm 80 next year and I think that would be a good time to stop."

Bandmates Brian Warfield and Noel

By KEN SWEENEY, Showbiz Editor

Nagle agreed to wrap things up after an epic year that saw them play to 30,000 at Electric Picnic. Tommy laughed: "They'd hardly want to see us playing the Picnic in wheelchairs."

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Found score . . . Blue

€660k of cannabis is seized at airport

By DANIELLE MASTERSON

A MAN was arrested after officers with a detector dog found cannabis with an estimated value of €660,000 in his bag at Dublin airport.

Revenue, using helpful hound Blue, seized about 33kgs of the herbal form of the drug in the search on Saturday.

The passenger was stopped after getting off a flight from New York.

A spokesman said: "A man in his 20s was arrested by An Garda Síochána and is currently detained under Section 2 of the Criminal Justice (Drug Trafficking) Act, 1996 at a Garda station. Investigations are ongoing. "This seizure is part of Revenue's ongoing operations targeting the importation of illegal drugs.

"If businesses, or members of the public, have any information regarding smuggling, they can contact Revenue in confidence on 1800 295 295."



Seizure . . . by Gardai

Drugs & Rolexes found in cop raid

By DANIELLE MASTERSON

A MAN has been arrested after gardai seized €70,000 of suspected cocaine and two Rolex watches in a raid.

The Dublin Crime Response Team searched a location in Tallaght, Dublin, on Saturday where the suspected cocaine was seized.

A Garda spokesperson said: "During the course of the search, approximately one kilogram of suspected cocaine was seized, with an estimated value of €70,000, along with two Rolex watches, and drugs paraphernalia.

"The drugs will undergo analysis by Forensic Science Ireland.

"One man, aged in his 20s, was arrested and is currently detained under Section 2 of the Criminal Justice (Drug Trafficking) Act, 1996 at a Garda station in the Dublin area."

Cops yesterday added: "Investigations are ongoing."

ICONIC BAND TO QUIT IN '24

WOLFE TONES

CALL IT A DAY

GOING OUT ON A HIGH

Brian, Tommy & Noel and, inset below, fans at Electric Picnic gig



EXCLUSIVE by KEN SWEENEY
Showbiz Editor

LEGENDARY rebel band The Wolfe Tones plan to call it a day next year after 60 years performing together.

But the balladeers want to "go out on a high" with arena dates in Belfast and Dublin next October.

Singer Tommy Byrne made the decision to finish with agreement coming from fellow members Brian Warfield and Noel Nagle.

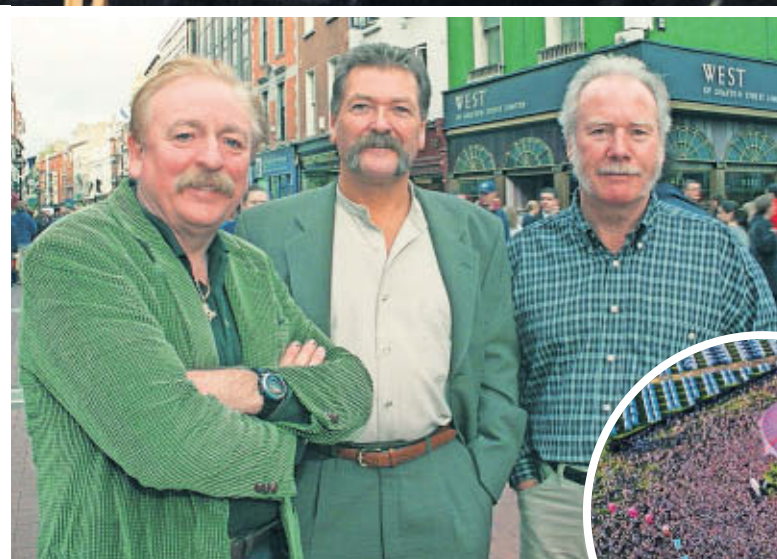
Tommy told The Irish Sun: "I never thought that we would go on so long. It's been absolutely amazing, but I'm 80 next year and I think that would be a good time to stop.

"I brought this motion to Brian and Noel and they agreed. To go out on a high like this would be a great tribute to the band."

The Wolfe Tones' plan to bring the curtain down on their career will come as a blow to the 30,000 fans who swamped their tent at Electric Picnic this year.

Tommy told us: "They'd hardly want to see us playing the Picnic in wheelchairs. I'm fit and healthy but all the travelling we do does wear you down.

"We always agreed that if one of us passed away, we wouldn't continue by getting in new Wolfe Tones to replace them. So we're



doing the SSE Arena in Belfast next October then the two shows at the 3Arena in Dublin and that's it."

The singer, from the Liberties in Dublin, admits bandmate Brian had been keen to keep the band on the road despite battling a neurological disorder that has left him struggling to play some instruments.

Tommy said: "Brian would like to go on with The Wolfe Tones until he drops, but at this point in my life, I like being in my garden. God knows we have been at this long enough."

And bandmate Brian admits he still has projects he would like to complete. He said: "I'd rather die on

stage than in a nursing home, but I respect Tommy's decision.

"It's probably the right thing to do. I've seen other bands, who I won't name, who were huge in America but ended up playing dingy pubs.

"I wouldn't like The Wolfe Tones to go that way. I'll be 78 next year and Noel will be 79, so it's time."

Looking back over their time together, Tommy said his favourite memories include headlining New York's Carnegie Hall and London's Albert Hall. He said: "You have no

idea how terrifying it is going out on stage in Carnegie Hall, but we did it."

However both he and Brian say they have been stunned by the revival of The Wolfe Tones' fortunes in recent years. Topping BBC Radio 4 polls with A Nation Once Again, having their songs sung by Steve Coogan in Alan Partridge sketches, the Irish women's soccer team singing their lyrics after a win and stealing the show at this year's EP were all epic moments.

Tommy said: "Brendan Grace used to take the mickey out of The Wolfe Tones too, years before Alan Partridge."

Named after 1798 Irish rebel Theobald Wolfe Tone, the band claim best known song Come Out Ye Black and Tans, written by Dominic Behan and released in 1972, still has an incredible potency.

Brian said: "Hating the Black and Tans is in the DNA of the Irish diaspora around the world. Every time we played it over the years the place went mental. From New York cops, Icelandic fishermen, and out in the bush in Western Australia."

And Tommy doesn't think the call to hang up their instruments will be the end to the Tones' music. He said: "I think The Wolfe Tones will be even bigger after we're gone."

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