

'YOU'RE A STAR'

Experience

T'IS FUNNY HOW the cycles of life goes. In 1950, a young lass left Ireland to follow her dreams of a happy and prosperous life in New York. A little over 50 years later, her granddaughter to follow her dreams of bringing her music to Ireland.

Mary Hegarty from Gortvagh, Co Leitrim realized her dreams. She was married for 40 wonderful years to the late Michael Gilbride Swanlinbar, County Cavan, had 2 children and 7 grandchildren. She still lives in New York and has many friends and an active social life.

Her granddaughter, Corina, is still in the process of realizing her dreams and is hoping that Ireland will embrace her new single. Corina was born, raised and educated in New York City the oldest of five children. At a young age, Corina showed promise on piano, violin, harp, accordion, and in voice, step dancing, musical theatre, music arrangement and songwriting.

It wasn't until after a sibling's recovery from a tragic accident that Corina and her family formed a band and played music for patients in hospitals, nursing homes, and rehab centres. This led to shows and festivals, concerts, and fundraisers for charities and eventually to shows all over the US, Canada and Europe.

Corina was eventually asked to do a soundtrack by John Barry and the following year the family group signed to Universal Music, after being seen by German producers at one of their shows.

After a whirlwind of media spots, TV

The Brouder family with Jim Corr: Corina, Christina, Jim Corr, Neil, Cornelia & Mary Catherine.



shows, and music videos in Germany and England, Corina and her siblings who were known as the Spirits of Gilbride returned to New York. Corina was already a licensed hair dresser and nurse and had a BA from Fordham University in Music, but her younger members of the family needed to catch up with their schooling. They decided to continue to perform around their academic schedules in the New York area and in that time did shows with the Chieftains, the Harlem boys Choir, Paddy Reilly, and many other artists.

In 2003, with her family's encouragement Corina set out on a solo career. Since she always felt happiest playing music with an Irish flavour she decided to see if Ireland would be receptive to her.

She spoke to Louie Walsh, who told her to compete in the 'You're A Star' competition. He told her straight out that there was no way she would get a look in at the final but for Irish exposure it would be a start.

So over to Ireland with Corina and sure enough the show gave her the media coverage that allowed her to be seen on many TV shows and in numerous news paper and magazine articles. Competition itself was really more of a reality show with some really talented artists. Getting turned away in favour of contestants who seemed a little crazy but who were really camera friendly. There were those it seemed that were chosen purely for TV ratings which was exactly what the producers were looking for.

The hype from the show was to Corina's advantage and it put her in touch with some



Corina Brouder & Phil Coulter at 'You're A Star'.

really wonderful people who were a great help to her when she was releasing her single.

Mind you, she also met a few music business executives who were not so well intentioned but the positive definitely outweighed the negative.

All in all, Corina says the 'You're A Star' experience was a real eye opener to the human spirit. She released her single and it went to No.31 in the Irish Charts and No.11 in the World Charts in May 2004.

Corina has made Ireland her home since last December though she travelled to New York and to Canada for performances during the summer and her siblings travelled to Ireland to play with her in the RDS in Dublin.

She plans to release a new single 'Change with Another Day.'

When Mary Hegarty left Gortvagh, Co. Leitrim, could she ever have imagined that one day her granddaughter would be on Irish radio and live not far from where she was born?

The Spirits of Gilbride will be performing together in Cannes, France in January 2005, Corina's brothers and sisters are Christina (24), a lawyer who serves as Corina's manager (plays button accordion and harp); Cornelia (22), will be a lawyer in May 2005 and is Corina's photographer (sings harmony, plays guitar, violin, piano accordion and tin whistle); Neil (20), is an environmental engineer in his first year of law school and is Corina's graphic designer (plays drums); and Mary Catherine (18) is a junior at Harvard University and is a freelance reporter and she's Corina's publicist (plays bass guitar).

Cornelius Brouder aka Dad is Corina's sound engineer and Loretta Gilbride Brouder aka Mom takes care of everything behind the scenes