

# **PRESS RELEASE**

## **AUGUST 22, 2011**

### **BLACK IRISH BAND RELEASES 21<sup>ST</sup> LANDMARK CD- LONESOME WHISTLE (RAILROAD BALLADS)**

**Performing at Portola Railroad Days  
Saturday August 20<sup>th</sup>, Railroad Days in Portola  
[www.portolarailroaddays.com](http://www.portolarailroaddays.com)**

The Black Irish Band will perform onboard the Feather River Express III charter excursion train on Friday August 19 between Sacramento and Portola and again on Sunday August 21. Also the band is scheduled to play at the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Portola Railroad Days Festival on Saturday August 20 at the Central Stage in downtown Portola 4pm to 7pm.

The occasion marks the release of the bands 21<sup>st</sup> CD album, "Lonesome Whistle". The new album features 14 ballads in honor of America's Railroad History. The release covers over 150 years of songs that focus on the workers that toiled endless hours creating a nation of rail networks. One ballad, "Paddy on the Railway: was the very first song that talks about the Irish working on the early iron roads of England. The CD includes songs about the Chinese and Irish, who dueled it out to create the first transcontinental railroad.

According to band member Patrick Michael Karnahan, much of America's early railroad history was not written down as songs. Railroad ballads did not catch on as interesting subject matter until the beginning of the twentieth century. Popular ballads such as Casey Jones were written around 1910, and what followed were many songs featuring railroad men as heroes, according to Karnahan.

The new Black Irish CD fills in much of the history through original song writing and popular traditional railroad favorite. Selected numbers include the story of the Union & Central Pacific Railroads, Jamestown's Sierra Railroad, and the story of Alaska's, White Pass & Yukon Railroad. The album also features a song, "Train to Utah", in honor of the modern railroad engineer on the long haul.

Black Irish Band members Patrick Karnahan, Steve McArthur, Rick Restivo, and James Nelson performed on various traditional instruments, such as Banjo, Melodeon, Acoustic Bass, and Fiddle. Guest performers included Michael Martin Murphey on Guitar & vocals, Tina Louise Barr on Autoharp, and John Baker on French horn.

The new CD will be available at most railroad museums in America and during The Portola Railroad Days right from the band!

The Black Irish Band has gained much national attention over their 20 year history. In 2005, the band was hired by the Smithsonian Folklife Festival and performed at the National Mall and Kennedy Center. In 2000 the band headlined at the International Music Festival in Singapore. The band also was the featured performers for the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversaries of the Alaskan Gold Rush and White Pass & Yukon Railroad. Because of the historical nature of the Black Irish Band many venues such as, the Alaska History Museum, Promontory- Golden Spike National Historic Site, Gene Autry Museum of the West, Elko Folklife Center, the Los Angeles, San Diego, and San Francisco Maritime Museums have headlined the group in the past.

**For more info go to the bands web site at [www.blackirish.com](http://www.blackirish.com)**