



Bernie and Jane O'Meara Sanders with Marie and James Nolan



Cork Mother Jones Committee and Friends



Remembering John Jefferies and Richard T Cooke

“The Most Dangerous Woman in America”

Mary Harris was born in Cork at the end of July 1837 and was baptised in the North Cathedral on August 1st of that year. The Harris family emigrated to Canada during the Great Famine.

Mary became a teacher and later a seamstress and moved to Memphis after her marriage to George Jones, a union moulder, in 1861. Tragedy struck when a yellow fever epidemic took the lives of her husband and four young children in 1867.

Having lost her dressmaking business in the Great Chicago fire of 1871, Mary Jones became involved in the growing trade union movement. By 1900 she worked to support miners and their families and became a tough and feared union organiser. Mary led many strikes for better pay and working conditions.

Mary organised the “March of the Mill Children” in 1903, which highlighted the exploitation of young children in the mines, mills and factories of America. Then known throughout North America as simply Mother Jones, she was present at the launch of the IWW union in 1905. In subsequent years, Mother Jones organised labour extensively throughout America as well as Canada and Mexico.

During the brutal mining wars in West Virginia and Colorado from 1912-1914, Mother Jones played a prominent role and was arrested and jailed many times. She died in 1930 and is buried at Mt. Olive Union Cemetery in Illinois. Her spirit remains alive and active wherever in the world there is a fight for labour and social justice.

August 1st is now designated **Mother Jones Day** in Cork City, and there are annual festivals in Mt Olive and Chicago. Chicago has plans to erect a statue in her honour in the city shortly. Cork city which has virtually no monuments to working class women should honour our rebel daughter Mary Harris in the community of her birth with a statue and an appropriate place name in her native city.



The Cork Mother Jones Committee wish to thank our speakers, musicians, singers, participants, film makers, sponsors, and volunteers who working together create a unique festival to honour Cork's Rebel Daughter.



Bernie and Jane O'Meara Sanders visit Plaque (A Flynn)

Thanks also to the Shandon Maldron Hotel, the Dance Cork Firkin Crane, the Shandon Area Renewal Association (SARA), Cork Community Media Hub, Kathleen Scarboro, Cork Community TV, Lee Press Ltd, the Cork City and County Archives, Rosemary Feurer (Chicago), James Goltz (Mt Olive), Saul Schniderman (Washington), Andrew Desmond, WhazOn? Cork, Northside Glass NSG and many other groups and individuals.

Festival sponsors and supporters include SIPTU at Liberty Hall, ASTI Cork South Paddy Mulcahy Branch, FORSA, Cork City Council Heritage Department, the Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland, the Teachers Union of Ireland, Cork (TUI), Northern Ireland Public Servants Alliance (NIPSA), Cathedral Credit Union, Pure Cork, Cllr Ted Tynan, Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT), Connect Trade Union, INTO, Mandate Trade Union, UNISON Northern Ireland, Unite the Union, Cork Council of Trade Unions, Communications Workers Union. The Spirit of Mother Jones festival remains free to all thanks to their support.



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@MotherJonesCork

Shandon Cork SPIRIT OF MOTHER JONES FESTIVAL 2025

THUR 24th to SAT 26th JULY



By kind permission of Kathleen Scarboro

A festival and summer school dedicated to the memory of Mary Harris/Mother Jones and to inspirational people everywhere who fight for social justice

Cork Mother Jones Committee

www.motherjonescork.com

The Spirit of Mother Jones Awards

The Spirit of Mother Jones Award each year is presented to activists who have made an extraordinary contribution in the area of labour/trade union, social justice or human rights issues.

A decision to present the award is made by the Cork Mother Jones Committee for the year of the festival. Members of the committee consult very widely before the selection of recipients.

- 2013 Margaret Aspinall and Sue Roberts
Hillsborough Family Support Group
- 2014 Gareth Peirce, Solicitor
- 2015 Fr Peter McVerry
- 2016 Dave Hopper RIP General Secretary, Durham
Miners' Association
- 2017 Ken Fleming
International Transport Workers Federation
- 2018 Mary Manning on behalf of the Dunnes Stores
workers
- 2019 Louise O'Keeffe
- 2020 Antoinette Keegan, Stardust Families
- 2021 Catherine Coffey O'Brien, Ann O'Gorman &
Maureen Considine
Cork Survivors and Supporters Alliance
- 2022 Don O'Leary for the Cork Life Centre
- 2023 Mick Lynch, General Secretary RMT Union
- 2024 The People of Palestine



People of Palestine SMJ Award 2024



Mt Olive October 24 Miners Day Gathering (Mike Matejka)

All events take place at the *Maldron Hotel, Shandon* unless otherwise stated

Festival Programme 2025

Previous festival archives will be shown on Cork Community TV over the festival days. See details on www.corkcommunitytv.ie

Thursday 24th July

- 10:00 a.m. **F** *Mother Jones and Her Children*
Frameworks Films
- 11:00 a.m. **L** **David Carroll**
Anti-Racist Workplaces project coordinator, Irish Congress of Trade Unions
- 12:00 noon **L** **Raghad Abu-Shamala**
"Education in Palestine under Occupation: Human rights violations and aspirations"
- 1:00 p.m. **M** Official festival opening by the **Lord Mayor of Cork**
Songs from **KALYNA Ukrainian Community Choir**
Cobh Animation Group
Cork Mother Jones - **Joan Goggin**
- 2:15 p.m. **L** **Blanca Rice**
"From Fermoy to Latin America: The Human Rights Legacy of Patrick Rice"
- 4:00 p.m. **L** **Jilan Wahba Abdalmajid**
Palestinian Ambassador to Ireland

Followed by:
"Gaza Monologues"
Theatrical Performance produced by **Ashtar Theatre, Ramallah**
Directed by **Naser Al-Swirki** from Gaza
www.gazamonologues.com
Dance Cork Firkin Crane
- 7:00 p.m. **F** *Petra Kelly – Act Now!*
A documentary by **Doris Metz** (104 minutes)
Followed by a discussion
Dance Cork Firkin Crane
- 9:30 p.m. **M** **Cork Singers' Club**

Friday 25th July

- 10:30 a.m. **L** **Nick McWilliam**
Justice for Colombia
Via Zoom
- 11:30 a.m. **F** *Iron Ladies*
Documentary about the role of women in the 1984/85 Miners' strike
Directed by **Daniel Draper**
Produced by **Christie Allanson**
Shut Out the Light Films
www.shutoutthelightfilm.co.uk
- 1:00 p.m. **M** **Jimmy Crowley and Eve Telford**
Concert
- 2:30 p.m. **L** **Mick Lynch**
Former General Secretary RMT Trade Union
Dance Cork Firkin Crane
- 4:00 p.m. **L** **Cecil Roberts, President, United Mineworkers Union of America**
A talk by the longest serving President of the legendary American Trade Union. He will discuss his family connections to Mother Jones.
Via Zoom
Dance Cork Firkin Crane
- 7:00 p.m. **F** *James Connolly*
A documentary by **Alan Gilsean**
Presented by **Ethel Buckley**
Assistant General Secretary of SIPTU
Followed by panel discussion
Dance Cork Firkin Crane
- 9:30 p.m. **M** **John Nyhan** and friends
Introducing singer **George Mann**, who will perform Labour songs
American Federation of Musicians Local 1000 and former union organiser

- F** Film
- M** Music
- L** Lecture/talk/discussion
- W** Walk

Saturday 26th July

All talks at **Maldron Hotel, Shandon**

- 9:30 a.m. **W** **Peter Foynes** of the Cork Butter Museum
Heritage stroll in the Shandon Historic Quarter
Meet at Maldron Hotel
- 11:00 a.m. **L** **Joe Noonan** Solicitor
"Environmental Law & Environmental Justice – are they allies or enemies?"
- 12:00 noon **L** **Jennie C Stephens**
Professor of Climate Justice, ICARUS Climate Research Centre, Maynooth University
"Climate Justice Here and Now"
- 2:00 p.m. **L** **Mike Allen**
Director of Advocacy, Research and Communications, Focus Ireland
"Housing, Homelessness and the Struggle for Social Justice: A bed for the night"
- 3:00 p.m. **L** **Jack Lane**
"Roger Casement – The Real and The Fabricated"
- 4:00 p.m. **L** **Anne Twomey**
"Making Their Mark: Remarkable Cork Women and the Contribution they made to Cork and Irish Society."
- 5:00 p.m. **L** **Luke Dineen**
"Big Jim Larkin: His Life, Times and Ideology"
- 6:15 p.m. **M** Plaque events with Singer and songwriter **Martin Leahy** and singer, musician and educator **Dee Power**
Followed by the traditional toast to Mother Jones at the Mother Jones plaque on John Redmond Street



All speakers and musicians included in this programme are committed to attending the festival. Additional speakers and events may be included at the festival itself. The Cork Mother Jones Committee reserves the right to vary the programme. Check on www.motherjonescork.com and Facebook