



# About The River Drivers

Hundreds of years of songs by and about the disenfranchised all say the same things in the end—that everyone wants freedom and a fair shake. Just so happens that the road to getting there makes for some damn good music. It's no coincidence that a lot of these songs have strong opinions, political and otherwise. All the power people lack in life can come back tenfold in their music. On their self-titled debut album, the River Drivers have chosen to respect that legacy and let the songs speak for themselves.

The River Drivers are a band with roots that run deep in a number of musical genres. Anchored by Kevin McCloskey (vocals, guitar, mandolin, banjo, bass) and Mindy Murray (vocals, guitar, banjo) with accompaniment by Marian Moran (tin whistle, low whistle, concertina) and Meagan Ratini (fiddle, Irish flute, tin whistle), the River Drivers have cultivated a passion-infused style drawing from Celtic, Americana and Mountain influences.

At a very early age, Kevin was playing guitar and banjo and singing harmonies to Irish standards with his father, Irish tenor, Tommy McCloskey. In his early twenties, he cut his teeth playing weekly at a Trenton pub alongside his father and “Irish Billy” Briggs. Kevin developed a passion for songs portraying the plight of working men and women and all the places they toiled. Kevin’s musical tastes are broad, and he toured North America and Europe extensively with his hardcore punk band Wrong Answer. He brings the intensity of that genre to River Drivers.

Mindy was in her early teens when she started singing and playing guitar and dulcimer in coffee houses, pubs, and campus radio stations. Life took her to medical school in West Virginia where she witnessed firsthand the struggles of day-to-day life in Appalachia. The music of the mountains and the miners infused into her repertoire. Years later, she and her daughter Meagan would play music together long into the night and eventually formed the musical duo Port Murray.

Marian’s family roots lie in the town of Ardara in County Donegal--known throughout the world as an epicenter of Irish traditional music. Whenever she can break away from the office world, she steals back to the rugged coastline village to recharge at its nightly sessions and the many music festivals held there--including the famed Cup of Tae and Johnny Doherty festivals. Having played the organ in her youth, Marian jumped at the chance to learn the concertina - a much more portable instrument with reeds and bellows.

Meagan grew up in a house that seemed like it had more musical instruments than practically anything else. She learned how to play the flute and dulcimer when she was quite young and then moved on to other instruments, eventually picking up the fiddle and the tin whistle and falling into Irish music. While helping direct the New Jersey Folk Festival in college, Meagan was introduced to the world of the traditional Irish session by some of the best trad musicians in the region.

In what has been unironically called “An Act of God,” Mindy was asked to resurrect some '70s folk music for an anniversary at a local church along with Kevin, a grade school friend of her daughter Meagan. Marian, Mindy’s best friend from high school and college roommate, was also brought into the fold. All four quickly sensed a deep musical connection. House sessions evolved into the formation of River Drivers--a band that continues to experiment and find ways of making the traditional visceral again. Their music is now heard at many festivals and other venues throughout the region. The River Drivers can also be found anchoring a weekly Irish session at a local pub in Bristol, Pennsylvania.

<http://theriverdrivers.com>