

Fenians Festival 2019 has launched!

It commemorates the escape from Western Australia of renowned Irish Fenian poet John Boyle O'Reilly.

Poet and writer, John Boyle O'Reilly arrived in Fremantle on the Hougoumont in January 1868. On board this ship he wrote poetry and helped edit a hand-written newspaper, the *Wild Goose*, which is now considered a nation literary treasure.

The authorities moved him to the Bunbury district where, with the help of local Irish settlers and a Catholic priest, he escaped in February and hid in the bush till the 3 March 1869 when he boarded an American whaler, the *Gazelle*.

This festival commemorated his departure for Boston, where he became a newspaper editor and champion of human rights.

O'Reilly's other major literary contribution to Australia was his work *Moondyne*, a novel about Western Australian life first published in the Boston in 1880. It is believed to be the very first novel ever published about Western Australia. He also helped organise and fund the purchase of the *Catalpa* which arrived years later to rescue the remaining Fenians from Fremantle Prison.

Updates on Facebook: [@feniansfestival.com.au](https://www.facebook.com/feniansfestival.com.au)

Email info@feniansfestival.com.au

Festival Program

Irish Music Legend Sharon Shannon in Concert with Susan O'Neill

Talented Irish accordionist and outstanding entertainer **Sharon Shannon** together with her band will perform in this one-off Perth concert. Joining the line-up is gifted singer and performer **Susan O'Neill** who will entertain us with guitar, harmonica, trumpet and a loop pedal. She has a rich soulful voice and will deliver a timeless and powerful fusion of soulful Irish folk & her own acclaimed original material.

Date: Friday 22 February 2019

Time: 7.30 – 10 pm

Venue: John Curtin College of the Arts, Ellen Street, Fremantle

Bookings: Eventbrite - Fenian Festival Sharon Shannon Concert

Fenian Festival Family Day WA Maritime Museum

Bring the Family to Fremantle to join the free fun day at the Maritime Museum.

- Follow the Shamrock Trail
- View Free Family Films
- Watch performance of Irish dancers
- Listen to stories of daring escapes

Date: Saturday 23 February

Time: 9 am – 5 pm

Venue: WA Museum - Maritime Museum, Victoria Quay Fremantle

Cost: Free

Bookings: Eventbrite Fenian Festival Family Day Event

Sunset Ceili Dance

Come one, come all ages. Find your dancing shoes; bring the kids and the grandees to this all age fun event. You don't need to know the dances; our expert caller, Hilary McKenna will soon have you knowing what to do in no time.

Date: Saturday 23 February 2019

Time: 5.30-7.30 pm

Venue: TBC

Cost: Free

Bookings: Eventbrite Sunset Ceili

Reading O'Reilly's Moondyne

An all day event reading the entire novel written by John Boyle O'Reilly about Western Australia and published in Boston in 1880. It's the first novel ever written about WA and gives a penetrating view of colonial life, Aboriginal Culture and the plight of a convict. The entire book will be read in public over this one day at various historic locations throughout Fremantle.

Date: Sunday 24 February 2019

Time: 7 am – 8 pm

Venue: Streets of Fremantle – various locations throughout the day

First Reading - In front of Fremantle Prison 7 am

Final Reading: Kidogo Arthouse 7.30 pm

Cost: Free

Bookings: Eventbrite Fenians Festival Reading O'Reilly's Moondyne

Gaelic Gumbo

Relax on the grass in front of Kidogo Arthouse. Bring a picnic or grab a bite nearby and a drink from the bar. Settle in for a great evening's entertainment as Lucky Oceans and the Zydecats blend their foot tapping Louisiana beats with the spirited Irish music from Fiona Rea and Tommy O'Brien – but get your tickets soon – this event was a *'sell out'* at the 2018 Fenian Festival.

Date: Sunday 24 February 2018

Time: 7 pm

Location: Lawn near Kidogo Arthouse

Cost: \$20 (kids under 12 free when accompanying by an adult)

Bookings Eventbrite: Fenians Festival Gaelic Gumbo