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## From Dayton to Dublin

Tori Miller

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# UNIVERSITY OF Dayton

MAGAZINE



FROM  
Dayton  
TO Dublin

PLUS

COMMUNITY  
CHAMPION

TEARS  
AND ASHES

ALL THESE  
LITTLE THINGS



FROM DAYTON TO

# DUBLIN





# PUNK



WRITTEN BY Tori Miller '23 and Rebecca Sutton '25

PHOTOGRAPHS BY Nick Bolin



⇒ The **Pride of Dayton** marched in Dublin's historic St. Patrick's Festival national parade. They brought to Ireland Flyer spirit and the band's signature funk dance — and they took with them a once-in-a-lifetime experience to cherish forever. Band member **Tori Miller** takes readers on their adventure.

BY TORI MILLER '23

**T**AKING THE FIRST STEP: THAT'S always something people ascribe importance to. My first step happened to the beat of the Pride of Dayton Marching Band drum cadence as it hummed through the streets and ricocheted off the stone townhouses lining the parade route. My instrument shone silver in my hand, and my uniform of red and blue was buttoned up tight. I was marching in Ireland's 2022 St. Patrick's Festival parade in Dublin.

As we turned the first corner, a wave of calm overtook my previously built-up anxiety. We had been waiting nearly four hours for our moment to step into the parade. While waiting, we heard a half dozen other marching bands, from Texas to Spain, start the parade before us, and everytime a new band marched on I questioned if my friend Duncan would make it back from his search for a bathroom in time. But when the Pride of Dayton drum major finally gave the command "horns up," we were all in line. Nothing mattered other than pouring my heart and soul — and music from my mellophone — into this once-in-a-lifetime performance, an opportunity for the Pride of Dayton to contribute to Ireland's celebration of this religious holiday more than 1,000 years old.

It was a trip years in the making and delayed by the pandemic. Before we departed, our preparations included lectures and discussions about the history of St. Patrick's Day and an examination of the cultural lens we would bring to our travels. On March 13, Pride of Dayton students and alumni boarded our flights, and we touched down in Dublin the next day. Looking out



at the Irish countryside from the tour bus window, I took note of two things: Ireland had the greenest grass I had ever seen in my life, and our adventure was about to begin.

On the trip, we had the opportunity to explore the Titanic Museum in Belfast, EPIC: The Irish Emigration Museum in Dublin and the Guinness Storehouse. We were also able to see natural wonders like Giant's Causeway and climb the hexagonal-shaped rocks along the shoreline. Seeing these places and making memories with this group reminded me that Pride of Dayton has never done anything like this before — and that traveling internationally with other passionate performers is an extraordinary experience.

I am from Sandusky, Ohio, the first in my family to attend UD and the only one to play an instrument. While I can play both alto saxophone and the French horn, my instrument of choice is the mellophone. It may look like a trumpet, but it has a smooth, rich and classic sound. I have been marching my way through high school and college, so getting to march with my mellophone in Ireland was as if my work as a musician

“Rounding the first corner of the parade, I felt a rush knowing 400,000 people were in attendance — which is **the largest crowd Pride of Dayton has ever performed for.**”





### CROWD PLEASER

⇒ “My favorite part of the whole experience was seeing the joy on the faces of the Irish people during our performances,” said band director Kenneth Will.



had come to fruition. As a junior English major, I was among the 133 students and alumni representing UD in Ireland, which was an honor I will never forget.

Before the parade began, we were stationed on a side street of Dublin by other marching bands and curious passersby. People stopped to take videos and asked for photos. Residents peeked their heads out of bedroom windows as our drumline and that of Spirit of 52, a marching band from Germany, had a drum-off, each line playing a drum cadence followed by a solo. Once the whistles blew to indicate it was our turn to start marching, all the hype immediately ceased because it was time for a dedicated performance.

Rounding the first corner of the parade, I felt a rush knowing 400,000 people were in attendance — which is the largest crowd Pride of Dayton has ever performed for. This was the first St. Patrick’s parade in Dublin since 2019, and the return to annual tradition was welcomed back with streets full of revelry. I will never forget the look on observers’ faces the first time we began our funk dancing routine, with

kicks as high as the Rockettes. People went slack-jawed while whooping and hollering with us as we cried out our chants of “Oh yeah” and “Aiye!” As we approached the grandstand television area, Lord Mayor of Dublin Alison Gilliland smiled and clapped along.

Our musical selections included “Victory,” UD’s fight song; “Learn to Fly” by the Foo Fighters; and a medley that included “Beautiful Day” by U2 and three traditional Irish songs. During the medley, we saw the Irish audience clapping along. The song “Molly Malone” was familiar to every schoolchild. They danced wildly and continuously tried to high-five the musicians; one trumpet player in line ahead of me reached out a free hand to make a kid’s day.

Marching in the parade reminded me of why I do what I do. It’s true that no matter where we all come from, everyone admires passionate performers who radiate infectious enthusiasm about what they love. Spending time in Ireland made me realize that I crave adventure — and that I still have so much more to discover through my music and throughout the world.



### ALL SMILES

⇒ Despite some lost luggage and instruments that arrived only 24 hours before the parade began, students were ready to perform. Here, from left, are trumpet players Abigail Grant '24, Rebecca Kurtz, Rebecca Sutton '25 and Makena Korzan '24.



# THE KILKENNY BOP

BY REBECCA SUTTON '25

**M**Y FEET CRUNCH ON THE glorious green grass as I walk with a cold, shiny trumpet in my hand alongside more than 100 other musicians and color guard members wearing red, white and blue uniforms and eager expressions.

On the seventh day of the Pride of Dayton trip to Ireland, we gather in a clearing in front of Kilkenny Castle on the banks of the River Nore, taking our positions in what we call the “Kilkenny Block.” I love the Kilkenny Block, since I am surrounded by some of my best friends from the trumpet section.

From the beginning of our warm-up, I feel immensely focused, like the only thing in the world is me and my trumpet. We are there to sound good, have fun and give all of these people — such a large crowd! — the best performance we can give.

We fly through our repertoire with ease, including the crowd-pleasing “Go Dayton Flyers.” The Pride of Dayton just doesn’t play music; we dance, too! Nothing tops the raw power of Cameo’s “Talkin’ Out the Side of Your Neck.” The song literally jump-starts, as everyone in the band jumps from the first sousaphone note. I hit high notes with ease, smile at my friends, “stir a pot” with our trumpets, see how much the crowd enjoys it and live in the moment. When the song ends, we dramatically stop with our horns up, and the crowd goes wild.

To close our performance, we sing our alma mater with our arms draped around each other.

Standing in front of that marvelous castle, I have never been so happy to be a part of the Pride of Dayton. 🏰

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*Rebecca Sutton '25 is a sophomore psychology major from Milford, New Jersey, and a student writer for University of Dayton Magazine.*





#### INFORMATION

⇒ The audience was clapping before the band even finished their performance on the castle lawn, giving students the energy for even higher kicks.



**“I feel immensely focused,** like the only thing in the world is me and my trumpet.”