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FURTHER READING

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Jacqueline Borsje

Bodhrán, an Irish word, designates a light framedrum averaging about 60 cm (two feet) in diameter and constructed of a wooden rim over which a cured and scraped goatskin has been stretched. In former times it was commonly used as a winnowing pan, a sieve (the skin being perforated), or a tray for holding loose household items. It also served in music-making as a hand-drum. For this purpose specialized forms were sometimes fitted with metal jingles or bells, and a wooden stick frequently used in playing. In the south and west of Ireland (ÉIRE) the playing of the bodbrán was particularly associated with the house-to-house visitations of the 'wren-boys' on St Stephen's day (an association that recalls the use of dried animal skins for percussion in similar Christmas and hogmanay regeneration rituals practised in the Scottish High-LANDS and Western Isles). The bodhrán was especially popular as an accompaniment to traditional dance music in the north CONNACHT counties of Sligo, Roscommon, and Leitrim (Sligeach, Ros Comáin,



Brenda Sutton playing the bodhrán

Liatroim). Largely due to its utilization by Seán Ó Riada and his influential ensemble Ceoltóirí Chualann (1959–69), the bodhrán was adopted as the pre-eminent percussion instrument of the traditional music revival of the 1960s and 1970s (see DANCES; IRISH MUSIC). In early Irish texts, it is possible that timpán (a loanword from Latin tympanum, cf. Welsh tympan) sometimes refers to a framed drum like the modern bodhrán, but in some contexts a timpán seems to be a stringed instrument.

further reading Connacht; dances; éire; highlands; irish; irish music. William J. Mahon

Bodmin Manumissions

It was the custom in many countries to record legal transactions on the blank pages of sacred texts. During the late 10th and early 11th centuries landowners in