



## **St. Patrick's Day in Kentucky**

By Michael Mannen



There is nothing like celebrating St. Patrick's Day in Kentucky. The festivities, the people, the beer; it is truly one of a kind experience for anybody that enjoys celebrating St. Patrick's day. Kentucky has a very large Irish community, much larger than people would think. In Kentucky, St. Patrick's day is cultural celebration and many cities and towns have daylong celebrations to commemorate St. Patrick's day.

Most people may not know this, but St. Patrick's Day is considered to be both a religious and cultural holiday. The holiday is meant to commemorate the bringing of Christianity to Ireland. And releasing it from its pagan traditions. However, St. Patrick's Day is celebrating by everybody, not just the Irish.

The Irish have a long and substantial history in Kentucky. In fact, the Irish play a substantial role in founding Louisville, and establishing many of its unique customs and cultures. The Irish really began their wave into Louisville in the 19th century and became a central source of labor for many businesses. There remains a large part of Louisville that is of Irish heritage.

In Louisville there are a variety of festivals and events that are available for people to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. These include the St. Patrick's Day parade that takes place in Louisville and the St. Patrick's Day party at Slugger field. These events have been going on for years and are a blast for people of all ages to attend. There also a variety of pubs in Louisville that have all night parties to celebrate St. Patty's. To some's surprise, Louisville even has an Irish Pub district that features many low scale and high end pups for those willing to spend more. There is nothing like celebrating St. Patrick's Day in Louisville. Louisville's most famous Irish Pub, Molly Malone's in the Highlands hosts an annual party each year as well.

Unique to Louisville, is the “Bloody Monday Memorial.” When the Irish first arrived in Kentucky, they were met with great hostility by those there native to the area. The nativist in the area were very resist to the new wave of Irish immigrants. During the 1855 elections, there were violent outbreaks that killed many Irish. This has been deemed, Louisville’s “Bloody Monday.” In 2006, a memorial was erected to remember those that lost their lives over 150 years ago as a result. People often visit this memorial on St. Patrick’s Day and remember the tragedy. This is one unique aspect of St. Patrick’s Day in Kentucky.

Other parts of Kentucky also have plenty of festive activities for St. Patrick’s Day as well. The activities also include dancers and other forms of Irish entertainment. These include Lexington’s St. Patrick’s Day parade and festival. The festival attracts a variety of vendors that allow patrons to buy Irish products or taste Irish food. Many events are also held to help charity during these parades. The festivals also feature a lot of local Irish bands that provide entertainment to guests. Other cities such as Bowling Green, Danville, and other smaller towns have similar activities and festivities to celebrate St. Patrick’s Day.