

News, Shows, Casts, Upcoming Events, all the stories behind the scenes in your drama group.

All Ireland win for BALALLY

At the All Ireland Finals, held at Carrickmore Co Tyrone on the first weekend in December, Balally Players took first place in the Open Competition, winning The All Ireland One-Act Finals with a wonderful production of *Melody* by Deirdre Kinahan.

Directed by Gary Wall the play featured best actress Hilary Madigan as Kathleen and best actor Geoffrey O Keefe, in the role of William. Stage Manager was Pat Hand and the excellent soundscape was designed by Oran O Rua. Costume and Make-Up was by Jean Monahan. Having won four of the five festivals in which they had participated during the knock out stages of the competition, hopes were high that ad-

judicator Tom Doherty would award the coveted first place to Balally. It was nail biting stuff and when the adjudicator awarded both Geoffrey and Hilary Awards for quality performances, we knew we had a chance. What a celebration when the results were announced, cheers and tears. Chairperson Ciara O Byrne was there as were Kevin & Antoinette, Judy McKeever and the Madigans. Karen was on stage praying that we didn't come second yet again. The Nationwide team were present and some of the feeling of euphoria was captured in the coverage on RTE on Wednesday December 13th. Gary looked splendid, tall and handsome and smiling taking his award on stage.



Hilary Madigan in triumphant mood.

For more pics, see our website on www.balallyplayers.com



Cast and Crew at the All-Ireland Finals on 3 December in Co Tyrone
Pat Hand, Geoffrey O'Keefe, Jean Monahan, Hilary Madigan & Oran O'Rua



Cllr. Sean Begley, Chairman of Omagh District Council presenting the All Ireland Open Trophy to Gary Wall, Balally Players, Director of 'Melody'

FIRST DRAMA FESTIVAL AT THE MILL THEATRE



Ciara and Jean at the presentation of awards.

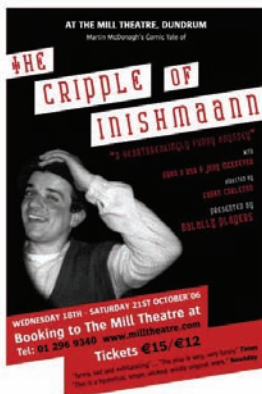
Another first for Balally this season was the successful running of a one-act festival at the Mill Theatre November 1st—3rd. It was a lot of very hard work for Festival Director Jean Monahan and her committee. It was successful because so many of the group came through with help— everything from

helping them through their performance, stage management, time keeping, catering and cleaning. Special mention to some: Dympna Murray who provided accommodation for the Adjudicator, Pat Monahan who drove him to the airport, Karina Stefans who designed the logo and the programme – so many of the group who gave their time

and talents –and especially Jean, who was tireless in her efforts to make it all run smoothly—and at the end to find that her bouquet was taken home by a visiting actress!

The Open competition was won by our friends at Taney with Sinead Donovan taking Best Actress. Congratulations to all.

' CRIPPLE ' DOES THE BUSINESS AT THE MILL



A superb performance from the cast of the Cripple of Inishmaan—Oran O Rua, Peter Flood, Mary Ryan, Anne Lucas, Judy McKeever, Francis Cahill, Tony McGettigan, Robert Duff and Doris Cullen ensured that the first Balally performance at the Mill was of a really high professional standard. Director was Karen Carleton. The setting was exceptional – built by Brian Dempsey and enhanced by Geoffrey O Keefe -thanks to all the group members who painted and distressed it. Karen found the currach in Tyrone and collected it by car. Paul Macken's lighting was his best to date—very evocative. The sound with newcomer Catherine Steel was always pin point and at the right level. Welcome back to Michael Kennedy in stage management and to Carol Hayes as a newbie..more of Carol later. Jean Monahan was stage manager..full houses every night. Congratulations everybody.

Gossip...Gossip.....

So Doris Cullen has retired..or has she? At the party for the All Ireland win at Dundrum House, Doris was serenaded with Happy Birthday but she may yet return to work in a part-time capacity.....Anne Lucas and Paul Sharpe made a very striking couple in Taney's panto...Anne doing the striking of course...Emperor and

Empress of China...Worn out after all his All Ireland exertions, Gary hasn't been feeling good. Get well soon Gary.....We hear Antoinette Fahey has been promoted in work..again! Geoffrey O Keefe best actor extraordinaire on the circuit was able to use his role as William for his final year MA acting piece– way to go,

Geoff...Screams coming from the rehearsal room of Lorcan Dunne's are those of Carol Hayes whom Declan (in character of course) seems intent on strangling...the screams from Oatlands are from first time director *what do you mean you're going to be late* Kevin Fahey...Gerry Doyle is on his way to Thailand for another 3 months

If you are wondering where our **Christmas / New Years party** went to—well, rumour has it that it will be in The Goat , Kilmacud with karaoke, featuring our girls groups..who? Anyway, the date is being set shortly...just waiting for Ruth to have a breather between events –that's what Ruth does, organise events...perhaps we can ask Bernard to reprise his role in The Sailor from Ringsend...if you didn't catch it in Airfield, you missed a beaut.

Great success with Christmas at Airfield.

Twenty six performers at Airfield put on a wonderful show, full of music, laughter, song and nostalgia. Full houses every night for four nights, Congratulations to Mary Ryan and Margaret Twomey with their team for a very successful Christmas entertainment.

Mulled wine and mince pies galore and a crew from the group on front of house meant that the audience were well looked after and left in happy mood. Mrs Overend aka Teresa Dempsey gave all a warm welcome and sang to accompaniment. The music

was provided by a delightful man John Breheny. Other guests included sopranos Linda Nolan and Siobhan Doyle, harpist Ann O Dea, and the OBroin sisters, violinists. Louise Holst was the wonderful 12 year old soloist. Congratulations to all...thanks for the fun.

WORKSHOPS

The voice workshop has been deferred to later in the month.

If you would like a workshop on any particular facet of drama, please let your committee member know.

Out of Order Minister .. By the Bog of Cats...

Out of Order Minister

Rehearsals continue in Oatlands for our next production which is '***Out of Order Minister***'.

This high voltage comedy is directed by Kevin Fahey and features Francis Cahill, Jim Carroll, Sally Anne Doddy, Brian Molloy, Len Nealon, Susie Nix, Ciara O Byrne, Niall O Kennedy, Margaret Twomey and David Walshe.

The Set is being built by Paddy Feehan—welcome back Paddy!

By The Bog of Cats

For her first production for the Mill, Jean Monahan has chosen this dark and dramatic story by Marina Carr.

Among those whispered to have a role are Geoffrey O Keefe, Pat O Malley, Peter Flood, Jacqueline Dooley, Claire O Reilly, Margaret Twomey, Doris Cullen, Muriel Caslin O Hagan Tony McGettigan

Support our show in Bray

Please travel to the Mermaid Arts Centre in Bray on Saturday 27 January and support '*Forward to the Right*' the Balally entry. Directed by Lorcan Dunne and featuring Declan Brennan and Carol Hayes, this is the first play of the evening and starts at 7:30pm. Booking is essential.

MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE LATE ALREADY!

If you have not paid up yet, get your 40 euro to
Balally Treasurer,

37 Dun Emer Drive, Dundrum, Dublin 16

DATES TO REMEMBER

January, Saturday 27th - Bray Festival

March 7th-10th 'Out of Order Minister'

April 5th-7th Studio Performances

April 25th-28th 'By the Bog of Cats'

**We're on the web at
www.balallyplayers.com**

KAREN TO DIRECT FOR STUDIO PERFORMANCES...

Only those who have not had a role since September are asked to come along to talk to Karen about acting in the studio performances scheduled for later in the Spring. These are not auditions or readings in the normal sense but the opportunity to find a role to fulfill each actor. Performances are built into a series of drama evenings over two weeks.

So if you have not had an acting role since September and want to act and work with one of our most experienced directors, come along to Tiernans on Wednesday 17th and Wednesday 25th.

For more information, text Karen on 087 670 12 52 for a chat. Each actor will have challenges presented according to their level of experience—so come on, stretch yourself this spring.