

## BALALLY PLAYERS THEATRE CO

### NEWS FLASH

- NEXT MONDAY & TUESDAY AT THE MILL 29TH & 30TH JUNE..... READINGS FOR BOTH FULL LENGTH PLAYS:
- *MANY YOUNG MEN OF TWENTY*
- *THE PLOUGH & THE STARS*
- 8.00p.m. All Welcome

*Wanted...*

*Production Managers*

*For each show...Ask Muriel or Niamh what its about. and contact the directors.*



### NEW SEASON NEWS: WHATS IN STORE FOR YOU IN 2009/10

First Up in August 2009 (20th–26th) is the trip to Monaco to represent Ireland at the World Mondial Du Theatre. Best Wishes to Gary Wall, Hilary Madigan, Geoffrey O'Keefe and crew.

Anybody who hasn't yet decided on their summer holiday might like to join those travelling—email Gary on [gwgwgw@hotmail.com](mailto:gwgwgw@hotmail.com)

September 7th: rehearsals begin for 'Many Young Men'

September: Play Readings with Tony McGettigan

September: One-Act Readings

October: Airfield Auditions  
Teresa Dempsey

October 29th–31st Dundrum One-Act Festival: Jean Monahan

Nov 9th: Mill Theatre 'Many Young Men of Twenty'



Congratulations to New CHAIRPERSON JOANNE KEANE  
Joanne with Claire Joyce and Hilary Madigan

December:  
Christmas at Airfield-

January 2010  
Bray One-Act Festival

February 1st: The Plough & The Stars' at the Mill Theatre

February/March: Developing New Talent:  
Emerging Directors and Techies Showcase

March 1st: Outdoor Production for Airfield- Readings.

April–June: Studio Scenes  
Outdoor Airfield Gardens

**BALALLY MOBILE:0876944088**

### COMMITTEE 2009 / 2010

Chair: Joanne Keane

Hon. Treasurer: Tony McGettigan

Hon Sec. Karen Carleton

Members: Teresa Dempsey, Jacqueline Dooley, Peter Flood, Jean Monahan, Len Nealon.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN DEVELOPING YOUR TALENT AS A DIRECTOR? OR AS A TECHIE? THEN LET US KNOW ABOUT IT. NEW MENTOR SCHEME. TALK TO JOANNE ON 0877977067

### Judy Climbs Every Mountain...

The Platinum Peak Challenge trek up Africa's majestic peak, Mount Kilimanjaro is one of several events being held this year to help celebrate 70 years of the Irish Red Cross....and who but our own intrepid Judy McKeever is volunteering for this amazing adventure.

Judy has to raise €5,000 and is about quarter of the way there. If you would like to sponsor Judy in this magnificent effort for charity, visit the following website and follow the link.

[http://www.mycharity.ie/event/judy\\_mckeever\\_event/](http://www.mycharity.ie/event/judy_mckeever_event/)

ABBEY THEATRE VISIT  
SATURDAY 4TH JULY  
Reception 12.30p.m.  
Show 2.00p.m  
'The Last Days of a reluctant Tyrant'  
After Show Talk with Conall Morrison & Pauric McIntyre

Tickets from DLI at 15 euro only. Tel Valerie at 01 2969343.

SATURDAY JULY 18TH  
THEATRE VISIT  
Samuel Beckett Centre  
Michael Frayne's witty architectural comedy 'BENEFACTORS'  
Directed by Lynn Parker.

Show 3.00p.m.  
Tickets at special DLI price of Ten euro. Contact Valerie at 01 2969343

## AN AWAY DAY TO CARLINGFORD...



Doing it all again...in Cabinteely Park.. The cast of 'How The Other Half Loves' replayed the dinner scene in the Grainstore in Cabinteely Park on a wet and wild Sunday afternoon in May. Thanks to Brian, Claire, Orla, Kevin, Sean and Claire..and to Joanne, Niamh and Lorraine for the back up at 'Centre Stage'.



### So...are there many roles this season...or will I get the opportunity to work?

Whether you are an actor, director or technical person, there should be an opportunity for you to enhance and enrich your creative life with Balally in the coming year.

Classic Irish plays, both with very large casts, begin readings Monday and Tuesday evenings next and for those who are away next week, there is a further opportunity on July 6th.' Many Young Men of Twenty, The John B.Keane play with music has a cast of fifteen with extras and 'The Plough and The Stars which may tour the festival circuit has a cast of similar size. Techies or those interested in the backstage and craft side of theatre, please go along as both directors are anxiously looking for your valuable assistance. The One-Act Circuit beckons and as Balally has the distinction of being the only group to win it twice in succession in recent times, it is surely a challenge. Director needed. Both this and the Bray Festival will cast late August early September. Showcase in the studio is an opportunity for developing directors and there are opportunities for roles in some ambitious work. The Shakespeare which normally offers around twenty roles in spring returns in 2010. Monday and Tuesday next kick off...then holidays ...September.....Open Night is usually the first Wednesday. ..so go on, ye will, ye will, ye will. All welcome.

# AND FINALLY....FINALLY

ROUND UP OF AWARDS ON THE CIRCUIT FOR THE GREAT HUNGER.....

**Rush Drama Festival 2nd**

Best Director: **Geoffrey O'Keeffe**  
 Best Supporting actor: **Len Nealon**

**Dublin Drama Festival 2nd**

Best Actor; **Evan Jameson**  
 Adjudicator's Award to Cast

**Cavan Drama Festival 2nd**

Scholarship: **Niamh Holland**  
 Best Stage Craft

**Glenamaddy; 3rd**

Best Supporting Actress **Judy McKeever**  
 Best Sound **Gary Wall & Hilary Madigan**

**Newry Drama Festival 1st**

Best Director **Geoffrey O Keeffe**  
 Merit Award **Evan Jameson**

**Carrickmore 1st**

Best Director **Geoffrey OK**  
 Best Actor **Evan Jameson**  
 Best Lighting **Barry Donaldson**  
 Best Costume **Dympna Murray**



Judy McKeever who was nominated as Best Supporting Actress at The All Ireland Finals at Athlone with RTE's Nuala Carey.



**Photos from Reception given by Balally Players to the cast and crew of The Great Hunger.**

Pat Hand, Stage Manager, Muriel Caslin O'Hagan, Production Manager, Geoffrey O Keeffe, Director.

Dympna Murray dedicates her best costume award to her mother who gave her her first sewing machine at thirteen.



**Ulster Finals**

Most Ambitious Play.  
 Best Moment of Theatre - the parade to church  
 Best Set Design—**Gerard Bourke**  
 Best Young Performer - **Niamh Holland**  
 Nomination for Best Supporting Actress - **Jacqueline Dooley**  
 Nomination for Best Actor - **Evan**

**Planning Day**  
 The full day workshop on planning for the future of the group took place on Saturday 6th

**Artistic Director**  
 On the necessity for an Artistic Director: some of the questions which arose were: do we need to put a specific person in charge of the artistic programming? Is the current approach too ad hoc? Should we have a programme offered by genre or period? Thematic work? Why haven't we produced any of the European masters? Do we offer an eclectic mix? Is the work too influenced by producing plays for the Mill Theatre?

After discussion, it was felt

*'Our passion makes us strive for excellence'*

*Excerpt from Geoff's speech*  
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that while the committee and directors need to programme in more structured, cohesive and forward looking manner, it was not necessary to have an Artistic Director. It was generally agreed that forward planning for three year sessions is the most appropriate for the company.

European Theatre in 2011

**Mission Statement**

While not unanimous, it was felt that a Mission Statement was appropriate for the company and one will be brought forward to next meeting by our outgoing chairman.



...an incredible journey for those involved in the Balally Show in The All Ireland Finals

## A Word from Geoff.....Outgoing Chairperson's Address

As we now approach the end of yet another successful year in Balally Players, it has been a great honour to serve as your Chairperson. It has been a year of excitement, growth and artistic triumph. It has been a year of hard work that brought its own particular set of challenges. It has been a year of changes, both to our artistic programming and to the administration of our productions. Change is inevitable and while there is always the temptation to resist change, life never stays still. We empower ourselves when we take charge of change. We learn, we grow and we become richer for this.

My work as Chairperson over the year has been both rewarding and stimulating, due in no small part to the huge and generous contributions of your committee. Each one has played a part in ensuring that Balally Players stays on top of its game, both on and off the stage. To Tony, Karen, Jean, Teresa, Muriel, Joanne, Gary and Judy I thank you for your unwavering support. I also congratulate Pat Hand, Declan Brennan and Len Nealon for their invaluable work

Last year I spoke of the need for more on the ground support for Directors of major productions. I am glad to report that this materialised and we are indebted to Muriel Caslin O' Hagan and Niamh Daly for the invaluable work they did in their roles as production manager for *The Great Hunger* and *How the Other Half Loves*. I also asked us to consider that our artistic schedule at the time, in some ways had us 'locked in' and didn't necessarily allow for new adventures. Despite some natural reservations but with the support of the committee, we entered the RTE Full Length Circuit for the first time. I think the many members who were involved in this journey, will say that despite all the hard work involved, this was a most rewarding and exciting departure for the group. The door is now wide open for other directors who wish to share their vision with a much wider audience.

I also referred last year to the fact that not all members appeared willing to help out and get stuck in with the more unglamorous tasks associated with a drama group. I think for the most part that this situation has improved and we are seeing new faces becoming the 'grafters' within the group. This can only be a good thing and I applaud all those who got stuck in.

There is one area though that still causes me to worry, in fact, I would go so far to say that it annoys me greatly, What I refer to is the fact that each year there are a sizeable number of paid up members who do not attend our productions unless they are directly involved in them. It is imperative that we support each production, we are not separate groups, we are one group. I would implore each individual member to do the right thing.

In many ways we are a victim of our own success. The group is widely recognised as one of the premiere amateur companies in the country and each year we are attracting more and more members. It becomes increasingly difficult to facilitate everyone all of the time. Individuals join Drama groups for different reasons, for some it's a break from the routine of work, for others it's a social outlet, for others its a stepping stone to other things and then for some its a passion. There are many passionate people in this group and this is what I think sets Balally Players apart., Our passion makes us strive for excellence, it makes us take risks, it makes us give 100%. I wonder did Jean and Karen ever envisage the critical success that the group has achieved, when they along with others founded the company over 25 years ago? I wonder did Teresa and Doris think that they would be in for the long haul when they joined the group a year after its inception? It is the vision of these people and the very many more who have contributed to the group with a passion, that has created an environment where we feel enabled and confident to push the boundaries of amateur theatre.

My two years as Chairperson have had many personal highlights and I hope that in some way I have fostered a spirit of adventure, welcoming the challenge of the new and unexplored and the need to constantly push ourselves. I don't measure our success by the money in the bank, the members in the books or the bums on seats, I measure it through the quality of the work that we produce. It is work that I am very proud to be associated with. I feel that in these two years I have given a lot to Balally but got back so much in return. But, as I said earlier life does not stand still and we must embrace change. New challenges for me mean that I will not be in a position to put myself forward again as Chairperson and we now need someone else to step up to the mark and lead the group forward. Someone else who will embrace the challenges that lie ahead.

I wish to thank everyone who has given me their support, guidance and friendship through out the last two years. I wish the incoming Chairperson the best of luck, we have achieved so much in Balally Players, but there will be new goals and new challenges and this is how it should be. Embrace these challenges and lead the changes that will come, in doing so this group will continue to grow and excel.

Thank you.

Geoffrey O'Keeffe

**Drama Adjudicator Geoff**

**Congratulations to Geoffrey on being accepted as an Associate Member of  
The Association of Drama Adjudicators (ADA) .**