



Merry Christmas from SHENANIGANS



December 2002

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Front L-R Christine, Ian, Karen, Dan, Colm & Tadhg.
Back L-R Kevin, Aileen, Mark, Brid, Paddy, June & Anita.

Hello All,

After a very informative and enjoyable Annual Conference in Dublin your executive colleagues have again given me the task of serving the Festival Movement as Chairperson. I am again deeply honoured by their continued support, encouragement and your well wishes.

I am very glad, however, that the wiser owls knew exactly what they were doing when they insisted through the Constitution that ALL Officers serve no more than three years. You read it here first when I say I am looking forward to seeing out this, the last year of my three year term of office .

We are in a vastly different situation to two conferences ago and it is the policy of the National Executive that we



copperfasten the changes and developments we made to the organisation in terms of resourcing and administration. A new Central Office, a new Secretary General and a new company as well as a variety of new and

exciting projects that we are about to embark on - means if anything we are all going to be busier over the coming few months.

Well done to June and all the team for delivering a truly brilliant Conference. My thanks on your behalf again to those who stepped down from National Executive and a warm welcome to the new and vaguely familiar faces of our new members. One thing that came across hugely at Conference was the desire of many people to want to get involved and give a hand more, without actually being burdened with huge numbers of meetings. Over the coming weeks and months we'll be knocking on your door, so do give us a dig out!

Use *Shenanigans* and the Website more to sound off or inform people of your difficulties or frustrations of being a festival organiser in Ireland. The network and the facilities that AOIFE provides and really for your benefit - so make maximum use of them!

Do take time to read the Annual Officer Report to the Conference - maybe even pass it around to your committee members!

And finally to you, your families and festival communities have a wonderful Christmas and a peaceful and prosperous New Year!!

Slán agus Beannacht,

Colm



NATIONAL EXECUTIVE MEMBERS' ASSIGNMENTS

Colm Croffy was the unanimous choice for Chairperson at the National Executive meeting that took place on November 16th in Ballinasloe. This will be Colm's third year in the hot seat and the constitution requires that



Aileen

he step down at the AGM in November 2003.

Brid Moriarty, who returns to the National Executive having taken 'a year out', was the unanimous choice as Vice Chairperson. June Carey was unopposed for Treasurer, as was Ian Malcom who is in his

first year on the National Executive and will act as Assistant Treasurer.

The full list of responsibilities is:

■ **Colm Croffy**, Chairperson.

■ **Brid Moriarty** is Vice Chairperson and will also



Brid

take responsibility for all matters relating to Youth Safety & Welfare.

■ **June Carey** is Treasurer.

■ **Anita Deasy** holds her position as Recording Secretary.

■ **Ian Malcom** will serve as Assistant Treasurer.

■ **Karen Bonner** will head up a working group preparing the AOIFE submission to the Dublin government on proposed changes in tourism infrastructure.

■ **Miley Carroll** will take



Ian

responsibility for a new development to encourage Member Festivals to enhance image relating to print, design and photography.

■ **Christine Cosgrave** will participate in the working group preparing the AOIFE submission to the Dublin government on proposed

changes in tourism infrastructure.

■ **Kevin Cosgrave** will chair a working group preparing the AOIFE Submission on the planned structural changes within the Arts Council in Dublin.

■ **Aileen Hennigan**, who also returns to the National Executive having taken 'a year out', will take up the new position of Associates Membership Officer and will focus on expanding the Associate Membership category, with particular emphasis on local authorities.

■ **Tadhg Moriarty** retains responsibility for Health & Safety Matters and Event Licensing issues.

■ **Paddy Murphy** retains responsibility for recruiting and servicing International Member Festivals.

■ **Dan O'Donoghue** retains the position of Corporate Membership Officer.

■ **Mark Patton** was appointed to edit Yearbook 2003.

WHO DO I TALK TO?

In the interests of networking and to expedite the flow of information a member of the National Executive has been designated as a 'primary contact' for Member Festivals in each county.

Member Festivals will be regularly contacted by telephone - it is likely that the first contact will be to ascertain dates for 2003!

The assignments are:

Antrim Mark Patton
Armagh Mark Patton
Carlow Miley Carroll
Cavan Kevin Cosgrave
Clare June Carey
Cork Anita & Ian
Derry Tadhg Moriarty

Donegal Karen Bonner
Down Mark Patton
Dublin Christine Cosgrave
Fermanagh Mark Patton
Galway Colm Croffy
Kerry Brid Moriarty
Kildare Christine Cosgrave
Kilkenny Miley Carroll
Laois Kevin Cosgrave
Leitrim Paddy Murphy
Limerick Ian Malcolm
Longford Tadhg Moriarty
Louth Tadhg Moriarty
Mayo Aileen Hennigan
Meath Kevin Cosgrave
Monaghan Tadhg Moriarty
Offaly Kevin Cosgrave
Roscommon June Carey
Sligo Aileen Hennigan
Tipperary Ian Malcolm
Tyrone Mark Patton
Waterford Miley Carroll

Wexford Miley Carroll
Westmeath Kevin Cosgrave
Wicklow Paddy Murphy

Dan O'Donoghue has been assigned responsibility for all **Corporate Members** and **International Members** will be the responsibility of Paddy Murphy.

All members are also encouraged to keep in touch with Secretary General Nicole Mulholland in the Ballinasloe headquarters.

Nicole can be reached by phone at 090 964 3779 email aoifeonline@eircom.net

THE PHONE NUMBER HAS CHANGED - ALREADY!

The new office in Ballinasloe is hardly open a wet week and already the phone number is changing! Actually the change in telephone numbers within areas of the 09 region had been flagged for some time.

The NEW OFFICE NUMBER IS

090 964 3779

THE LIGHTER SIDE OF CONFERENCE 2002

Once again Conference is indebted to **Kelly Displays** and **TurboSounds**. Willie Kelly and his people erected not one but three bars (one was used as a Registration Desk, where a certain AOIFE person was heard to say she felt 'right at home'), provided a range of furniture for the private bar on Friday night and the innovative **Kelly Displays** mobile bar & refrigeration unit on display outside the hotel was favourably commented on by everyone. The guys from **TurboSounds** installed an incredible sound & lighting rig and provided full PA facilities throughout conference. Both Corporate Members provided the entire range of facilities and services free of charge. Uncle Arthur chipped in generously to support the Gala Banquet and **Philip Mangan of Clockwork Management** was on hand to ensure plenty of the black stuff was in demand. Thanks folks!

Full marks to **Chris Reina** of Magic Moonshine for the impromptu performance he gave at the gala dinner. Lifting Nicole was easy, but **Tadhg Moriarty** is one big boy. One wonders if Philip Mangan and Tadhg Moriarty knew what was in store when they responded to the call for 'anyone from **Guinness**' to volunteer to participate in the magic show!

Marking the end of the transition from Arklow to Ballinasloe, AOIFE made a presentation to **Elizabeth McLoughlin** the Administrator as a gesture of appreciation for her support and assistance. Elizabeth and her husband **Tommy** have given sterling service to AOIFE and your

scribe joins in wishing them well.

Linden Nicholls is one classy dancer. A magnificent supporter of Conference, the owner of Orakel UK trips the light fantastic with grace and energy. But this year she certainly had competition at the Banquet from **Tess Yocarini** of Holland and **Vickie Dunne** of **Kilmuckridge Mardi Gras Festival**. Tess and husband **Titus** showed us all how it's done in The Netherlands while Vickie, who was partnered for quite a portion of the night by **Ian Malcolm** of **Mitchelstown Music Festival** (no party pooper he), showed why she is such a successful dance teacher.

Money matters: **TurboSounds** launched a **special discount scheme** for AOIFE Member Festivals. Contact John Fitzgerald on 087 285 5300 for details and tell him *Shenanigans* sent you!

New idea: Linden Nicholls of **Orakel** was telling us about a **new sales item** that has proven very popular at British festivals - a branded lanyard. You know the type of thing, it's a heavy cord placed around the neck with an ID badge attached. Apparently kids are crazy to buy just the lanyard with the name of festival, event or group printed on the lanyard. For more info contact Linden on (0044) 01824 702214 and make sure to tell her you read about the idea in *Shenanigans*!

Congratulations to **Helena MacMahon** of **The Irish Coffee Festival Foynes** for the 'House Full' sign at her brilliant workshop on parades, costumes & props. Following the reaction to

her workshop at Conference 2001 **June Carey** allocated a double session this year. June's faith was rewarded with glowing comments on the impact, information and tips on offer. How are you fixed for next year Helena?

Hats off to **St. Patrick's Festival** of Dublin who had the largest number of delegates at the Friday programme. **Maria Moynihan** and her colleagues were highly amused at the notion that museums in Amsterdam stay open until 2:00 a.m. during a festival there. Apparently it took three years of negotiations before Dublin museums would even *open by day* during the festivities!

Secretary General **Nicole Mulholland** seemed to find time to enjoy herself even if this was her first 'working' conference and seemed to find time to network with absolutely *everyone*. Rumour has it that she will *not* be wearing a new pair of shoes when she next goes dancing.

Largest contingent of weekend delegates was once again the Gang with The Goat. The **Puck Fair** girls & boys worked hard and boy do they party hard! Special welcome also to delegates from 2 new Member Festivals: **Féile by The Feale** (Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick) and **Newcastle West Arts Festival** (Co. Limerick also).

Eddie Fossett of **Fossett's Circus** had an imaginative way of celebrating taking out Corporate Membership of AOIFE. Everyone at the banquet was invited as a guest to a special performance of the Circus on Sunday afternoon in

Dublin. Eddie says he just loves the sound of "there's one for everyone in the audience".

What happened the **Dublin Festivals**? One note of criticism voiced over the weekend was the poor representation by festivals from the Dublin region. "If the bloody conference was in the Caribbean and for free, you couldn't get some people to go' was one disgruntled comment heard in the bar (where else?) at approximately 4:27 a.m. on Sunday. Some festivals were represented but the expected influx of committees for the Saturday programme just didn't materialise.

Tip of the hat to **Ballina Street Festival & Arts Week** and the gals 'n' guys from **Ballina Heritage Costume Company** for the costumes and colour they added to the banquet. Eye popping décolletage and superb wigs made the chaps look frightfully inviting. The group included a Cardinal resplendent in his red robes and a lowly friar. The latter was taking an inordinate interest in the young ladies but was last seen seeking the venue for Matins. Oh, and the girls looked tres tres chic too!

The selection of dubious photographic images of conference featured in this issue of *Shenanigans* are the work of **Paddy Murphy**, **Karen Bonner**, **Aileen Hennigan** and T.J. Kaye. As usual there was great competition to snap **Colm Croffy** in an unguarded moment but none succeeded. (Actually one did but the fat brown envelope ensured that photograph will never see the light of day). As we go to print the digital

THE LIGHTER SIDE OF CONFERENCE 2002

images captured by **Belinda Jackson** and **Philip Page** of **GlobalSalsa.com** have yet to appear on www.aoifeonline.com but there are those who dread what might be shown.

AOIFE's own Impresario **Dan O'Donoghue** was pleased by the reaction to Paddy Cole and to the Showcase on Friday night. The bill topping **Bogus Brothers** were 'only brill' but entertainment agent & manager **Laura Williams** was quietly thrilled at the reaction to 'Frankly Sinatra'. A lot of business cards were handed about and phone numbers exchanged - let's hope business gets done!

Among the guests at the banquet was **John Barton** of the **National Outdoor Event Association (NOEA)**. A preponderance of women at the banquet meant that gentlemen willing and able to dance (and who were not propping up the bar) were much in demand and John is to be congratulated for his energetic and

wholehearted assistance in remedying the problem!

Missing from conference this year were **Mel & Kathleen Croffy** of the **Great October Fair of Ballinasloe** but daughter **Ciara** on her first visit to conference 'had a ball'. Former AOIFE National Treasurer **Mary Phelan** of Ballinasloe was in party mood too. **Mike O'Reilly** of Ballinasloe solicitors **Fair & Murtagh** having spent Friday afternoon presenting a workshop on the ins & outs of contracts, slipped away to Lansdowne Road on Saturday afternoon and celebrated Ireland's win with great exuberance on the dance floor.

Douze Points to **Birmingham Irish Festival** for a vivid display at Expo and their generous offer to network with any festivals on this side of the pond seeking information on available acts, opportunities to promote their festivals at Birmingham Irish Festival or it seemed anything at all

they could do. No, there were *no* offers of money!

Looking resplendent as always on the Saturday night was **Eileen O'Loughlin** of Gorey. The Founding Chairperson of AOIFE never misses conference. One unavoidable absentee on Saturday night was former AOIFE National Secretary and now independent event safety adviser **Victor Ryan** who had spent all day on Saturday co-presenting the very successful Safety Officer Programme with **Tadhg Moriarty** and **Peter Thomas**. You missed a good one Victor!

"Is there no end to this madness?" might have been a question posed by **Joe Hodnett** of **Clonakilty August Festival**. Joe decided to step down from the National Executive for 2003 pleading time demands but he was on duty as DeeJay into the wee small hours after **Paddy Cole & His All Stars** called it a night. (*Editor's note*: surely that should be

'morning'?).

Sunday morning's brunch was a testament to the survival of the fittest. The enthusiasm with which some tucked into the rasher & egg was awesome. Given that a more than a few had just about enough time to leg it upstairs for a shower and quick change of kit before the breakfast bell rang, your scribe can only marvel at the condition of some delegates from **Donegal, Cork, Mayo** and **Wicklow** in particular. Perhaps that explains the enthusiasm with which a certain Irish Government Minister (who shall be nameless but hails from Kerry South) was shredded for his raiding of the Bord Fáilte Cultural & Festival Events Funding Initiative at the Swapshop following brunch. The comments about the criteria used to allocate funds to certain festivals were 'invigorating' and references to the coincidence of such funding decisions and the holding of a General Election were only priceless. S

YEARBOOK 2003: IMPORTANT INFORMATION

It is generally accepted that the Yearbook should be published earlier in the year. This is a view strongly put forward by Corporate Members and Advertisers.

"One of the biggest delays in putting together the information is waiting to get dates from Member Festivals" Mark Patton, Yearbook Editor, told *Shenanigans*.

"Some smaller festivals do not meet until later in the year to begin putting their programme together - or indeed to decide if a festival will take place at all. Perfectly

understandable, but it gives rise to major delays". The problem was discussed at length at the last National Executive Meeting with the following outcome:

- All member festivals will be listed by county in alphabetical sequence - whether dates are known or not. This avoids highlighting those festivals without any date information.

- Where the dates are known they will be inserted. If the actual dates are not known but the month(s) are advised these will be shown.

- The absolute cut off for

information is 31st January 2003.

It is essential that you notify AOIFE of the dates of your event. If the actual dates are not decided on but you know the month(s) in which your festival will take place then get that information to AOIFE as soon as possible.

"The sooner we know, the sooner we can go to print. The Yearbook is an immense reference resource and I can promise everyone that Yearbook 2003 will be packed full of information - and will be distributed earlier" a confident Mark Patton

assured us.

Last word on this subject to Nicole Mulholland: "Don't forget that the information appears on the AOIFE website and is passed to both Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Bord Fáilte as well as other databases. We want as much information as soon as possible but if you cannot meet the January 31st deadline you should send us the information whenever it becomes available!"

You can email information to aoifeonline@eircom.net or post it to AOIFE. S

NEED TO KNOW ...

The planned changes in the organisation and funding of the Arts Council in Dublin may have an enormous impact on the functioning of the Council and its autonomy in matters of grant aid.

The National Executive is of the view that it is essential that AOIFE prepares a submission to government. A Working Group consisting of Maurice Galway, Artistic Director of Samhlaíocht Chiarraí-Kerry Arts, Mary Mulvey, Director of Cashel Cultural Festival and Gráinne McLoughlin, Chairperson of Greystones Arts Festival and headed up by Kevin Cosgrave, Chairperson of Dundrum Arts & Cultural Festival has been set up. "Submissions from Member Festivals are both welcome and invited" Kevin Cosgrave told *Shenanigans*, "the proposed changes are a matter for concern and it is important that the voice of Irish Festivals is clearly heard in these deliberations!"

Time is of the essence - get your thoughts to Kevin as soon as possible! Any submissions should be posted to Kevin Cosgrave at the AOIFE Headquarters, The Enterprise & Technology Centre, Creagh, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway or by email to aoifeonline@eircom.net



"Another successful conference is over and it looks like everyone involved enjoyed and benefited from it. Feedback from both the conference evaluation forms and comments at conference has indicated that the conference

content hit the mark, while many very valuable suggestions were made for future conferences" stated AOIFE Secretary General Nicole Mulholland.

"The 2002 conference had many more opportunities than previous AOIFE conferences for delegates to learn from the international experience of those involved in our sister festival and events networks. Friday's sessions with Paul Gudgin from the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Jeremy Tyndall from the Cheltenham Arts Festival and Titus Yocarini from North Holland Festivals showed how the creativity of festival organisers outside of Ireland is adding to the audience experience, and generating a real interest in both the festival and the arts" Nicole continued.

The Saturday programme of workshops was more familiar to the 'old hands', but with over two-thirds of delegates at the conference for their first time, all workshops were extremely well received. Some were classified as 'extremely enjoyable', such as Helena McMahon's workshop on Street Parades and Dan O'Donoghue's workshop on fundraising ideas. However, as one delegate put it in his evaluation form - "I wouldn't call the workshop on 'our increasing claims culture' enjoyable, but it was vital to our festival".

Corporate members were given the opportunity to have their say in the first session exclusively for suppliers to the festival sector. What came home very clearly was the desire

for those involved in supplying the industry to sign up to standards of practice to ensure a quality service to all festivals - good news for corporate members and member festivals alike.

When asked if they would recommend the conference to other festival organisers, 100% of respondents said yes. One new delegate commented 'I have nothing to compare this conference to as it's my first year attending, but I'll certainly be back next year. Not only is the information which our committee is bringing back invaluable, but we also really enjoyed ourselves'.

"The next conference is due to take place on 7 - 9 November 2003, so put the date in your diary now!" the Secretary General emphasised to all *Shenanigans* readers.



Maurice Galway, Artistic Director of Samhlaíocht Chiarraí - Kerry Arts was proud as punch to win the inaugural competition for Best Website at Conference 2002 but he was thrilled at the prize: free banner advertising on the Eircom website!

Eircom Sales Executive Annette O'Sullivan had earlier presented a workshop on the use of email and decided to put up 2 attractive prizes, free banner advertising for the winner of the Best Website Competition and a free Internet Starter Kit valued at €700 to be raffled among the festivals attending conference. The latter prize went to The Bloomsday Festival, Dublin.



Traditionally 3 awards have made at Conference to encourage greater use of professional design in promotional literature. Conference 2002 saw **Éigse Carlow Arts Festival** win the award for Best Brochure/Flyer. The Best Poster award went to **The Irish Coffee Festival Foynes**, and **Kilkenny Arts Festival** took the prize for Best Programme. A new category this year was Best Photograph and the inaugural award was won by **Puck Fair**.

The 4 prizes of Cara Crystal were sponsored by the **Irish Table Top Group** and were presented by Gráinne McLoughlin, Commercial Director. Speaking to *Shenanigans* Gráinne stressed her company's delight in being associated with the awards. "We are committed to encouraging professional design and image within our business and we are delighted to sponsor these awards. It is gratifying and encouraging to note that entries are increasing each year and the standard of design and presentation by festivals improves year on year".



The current review of tourism structures, marketing & promotions strategies and the continued funding of the Cultural Events & Funding Initiative are of key importance to AOIFE Members. It is anticipated that any changes will also impact on the cross-border body Tourism Ireland.

A Working Group, chaired by Karen Bonner of Greystones Arts Festival, has been set up to prepare a submission from AOIFE

... NICE TO KNOW

to highlight the needs and views of the festival & event sector. Karen is joined by Mark Patton of the Eagle Wing Festival and Christine Cosgrave of Dundrum Arts & Cultural Festival. "We cannot possibly represent the views of all of our members without affording them the opportunity to make an input to the submission" Karen stresses, "we would welcome the views of Members and we invite anyone with some time to spare to join the Working Group. Time is limited and we are not talking about endless meetings around the country. We are looking for interested people to attend a couple of meetings, review the inputs from members and prepare the draft submission. Short, sharp and to the point!"

Submissions should be posted to Karen Bonner at AOIFE Headquarters, The Enterprise & Technology Centre, Creagh, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway or by email: aoifeonline@eircom.net"

If you are interested in joining the Working Group you can telephone Karen at 01 287 7870 (H) or at 087 279 3096 - but do it **now!**



As AOIFE enters its 10th year of operation, many of those who know and love the organisation are calling for a face-lift. **The traditional logo of the fiddle player no longer reflects what AOIFE has become** - a professional association for a group of dedicated specialists in the festival events sector. Following calls for this to be echoed in AOIFE's image, a design agency was briefed with

the task of coming up with a logo which showed AOIFE as an all-island organisation, working in parallel with festival organisers, government agencies, local government, community groups and business interests to promote a vibrant festival sector on the island. The results will be unveiled soon...



Shenanigans is aware of rumours that the entire Civil Defence organisation will be totally involved in assisting the Special Olympics World Games in June and that **festivals that have traditionally enjoyed the involvement of Civil Defence may be left 'all on their lonesome' come next May and June!**

Those festivals that are aided by Civil Defence are unanimous in their praise for the incredible support that Civil Defence provides to all community activities. Indeed we can all have only the highest regard for the volunteers who respond to emergencies, give of their time and their talents and participate in so many situations.

As *Shenanigans* goes to print the Department of Defence Press Office had not responded to our call seeking clarification. If your festival depends on Civil Defence and your event takes place in May or June we recommend you contact your local Civil Defence Officer **now** to confirm availability for your festival.



Delegates to Conference who attended the Friday Programme will have enjoyed the **informative presentation made by Kerrie Gregg of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board.**

Kerry gave a detailed presentation on the importance of properly packaging festivals, and the impact they can have on the tourism benefits to a region. The presentation, which was equally applicable to those in the Republic of Ireland as those in the North, also focused on funding policy, the criteria used in assessing grant aid proposals and the fact that funding may be available to festivals in the border counties of the Republic in addition to festivals in Northern Ireland.

The text of Kerrie Gregg's presentation will shortly be available to access on the AOIFE website www.aoifeonline.com



Did you attend a Festival Safety Officer training programme earlier this year? Still waiting to receive your Certificate?

Red faces abound in AOIFE circles at the loss of the attendance lists which resulted in zero certificates being issued. However there is light at the end of the tunnel: some of the attendance lists have been found and Tadhg Moriarty is hoping to issue the certificates within the next few weeks.

"Yes it is embarrassing that the lists were misplaced" Tadhg cheerfully admits. "Honesty being the best policy we have come clean!

It would help greatly if people who attended one of the programmes would get in touch so that we can be sure that all attendees receive a certificate".

If you attended one of the programmes or you know of someone from your festival that did why not pass the details to Tadhg Moriarty by email to aoifeonline@eircom.net or post the details to AOIFE at The Enterprise & Technology Centre, Creagh, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway



The Donal O'Driscoll Memorial Award is presented to the media organisation that, in the opinion of the National Executive, has made the biggest contribution to publicising festivals.

Previous winners include Mugshot TV, *The Irish Times* and *The Irish Examiner*. This year Members were invited to submit nominations. Those nominated were RTÉ's 'Nationwide' series, TG4 for 'Féilte', Ian Dempsey of Today FM, Martin King of Today FM and TV3, RTÉ News for the coverage of festivals during the summer months and Mugshot TV the producers of the 'Féilte' series.

Congratulations to TG4 and Mugshot TV who were jointly presented with the Award for the series 'Féilte'. The Award of Cara Crystal was sponsored by Irish Table Top Group.

The NEW OFFICE
NUMBER IS
090 964 3779