



MEDIA RELEASE

HUNDREDS OF EUROPEAN LITERARY ENTHUSIASTS BOOK IN FOR ENNIS BOOK CLUB FESTIVAL 2007 - Organising Committee launches official Festival programme in Glór

Ennis, County Clare, Tuesday 13th February 2007 – Hundreds of literary enthusiasts from all over Europe have purchased tickets for the Ennis Book Club Festival in County Clare from March 2nd-4th 2007. The inaugural Festival has already drawn interest from Book Club members and interested individuals in the UK, France, Denmark and many of the 150 Library Book Clubs and 300 Private Book Clubs that exist nationwide.

Ticket sales have been described as “*hugely encouraging*” by the Festival Organising Committee, which today launched the official Festival programme at Glór Irish Music Centre in Ennis. The 12-page glossy programme features information on the wide array of events taking place during the three-day festival.

Commenting at the launch of the programme, Mayor of Ennis Cllr. Joe Reidy stated, “*The Ennis Book Club Festival, which is being supported by Clare County Library, comes as a major economic boost to the county capital at a time of year not normally associated with such events. It will present a unique opportunity for book club members to meet and exchange ideas about all aspects of literature. I also hope visitors to the town will engage in everything Ennis has to offer as well as taking note of our wonderful De Valera Library and many bookshops. I congratulate Clare County Library and the Festival Organising Committee for their efforts in bringing tourists to the town.*”

Committee member, Mary Kenneally said, “*Ticket sales have primarily been driven by a quality programme of events that contains some of the UK and Ireland’s most popular authors. Others have been attracted by the wide variety of events*

scheduled to take place during the Festival. I look forward to welcoming book club members and individuals from all over Ireland, the UK and Europe to Ennis next month."

The Ennis Book Club Festival programme of events includes readings by authors, lectures, films, workshops, music, and even cookery demos and chocolate tasting - reflecting the reading passions of many people. There is also poetry, food, litríocht as Gaeilge, travel and political writing, as well as fiction.

A number of internationally renowned authors are scheduled to participate in the inaugural Festival. One of Ireland's most controversial and critically acclaimed authors of the twentieth century, **Edna O'Brien** will take centre stage when she performs a reading of her latest book and takes part in a public interview at Glór Irish Music Centre on Saturday, March 3rd. The public reading and interview will be chaired by Clare County Librarian **Noel Crowley**. The programme also boasts contributors such as **Patrick McCabe**, author of many works including '*The Butcher Boy*', '*Breakfast on Pluto*' and his most recent book '*Winterwood*'. Other authors include **Ré Ó Laighléis**, the biggest selling contemporary writer in the Irish language; **Dermot Healy**, novelist, playwright and poet; international best selling author **Niall Williams**; short-story writer **Evelyn Conlon**; and Clare-based writer **Eddie Stack**. Book lovers will also get a sneak preview from award-winning author **Anne Enright**, who will read from a work in progress.

On Sunday 4th March, authors **Charlie Bird**, RTE Chief News Correspondent and author of '*This is Charlie Bird*'; Booker Award nominee **Carlo Gébler**; **Rosita Boland**, Irish Times journalist, poet and author of '*A Secret Map of Ireland*'; and **PJ Curtis**, broadcaster, record producer, author and music historian, will take us through the thrills and terror of selling their books. Experienced broadcaster, journalist and communications consultant, **Caimin Jones**, will chair this session.

Poetry will also feature prominently at the festival. Aosdána member Mary O'Donnell; Hennessy Award winner **Mary O'Malley**; critically acclaimed poet and broadcaster **Thomas McCarthy**; **Michael Coady**, winner of the Patrick Kavanagh Award for Poetry; and poet and dramatist **Rita Ann Higgins**, whose many awards include the

Peadar O'Donnell Award, will all delight and challenge their audiences during the Festival.

Kate Bateman of the School of English and Drama and the School of Education and Lifelong Learning in UCD will host an exhibition entitled '*How to Read a Novel*'. '*How to Read Poetry*', meanwhile, is the title of poet Mary O'Malley's workshop where she will share valuable insights into exploring poetry.

Film is also included in the Festival itinerary with special screenings of Neil Jordan's film adaptations of Patrick McCabe's novels, '*The Butcher Boy*' and '*Breakfast on Pluto*'. Other events include a presentation on the '*Kate O'Brien Papers*' by Archivist **Róisín Berry**, a walking tour of the historic town of Ennis with local historian **Seán Spellissy**, a talk as Gaeilge by **Seán Ó Ceallaigh** on Éamonn Mac Giolla Iasachta (Edward MacLysaght), one of the foremost genealogists of the 20th Century. There will also be a presentation on the '*John McGahern Papers*' by Archivist **Fergus Fahey** of NUI Galway, and a talk on Book Clubs by Mayo County Librarian **Austin Vaughan**. Chef, food writer and proprietor of Cork's Café Paradiso, **Denis Cotter** will cater for culinary tastes by revealing his secrets in a cookery demonstration and talk. Chocolate tastings will take place in Barrack Street's '*Chocolat*' shop.

According to Mary Kenneally, "*The Festival presents a unique opportunity for book club members to meet and exchange ideas about all aspects of literature. Book Clubs from Ireland the UK are invited to get together in Ennis to share their joy of reading, to meet authors, to discuss books, and to have a weekend break with friends. Non Book Club readers are also invited to come along and to find out how to go about setting up a club in their own area.*"

Full details on ticket prices and the festival are available at www.ennisbookclubfestival.com, Telephone 087-9723647/085-7758523 or Email info@ennisbookclubfestival.com.

A limited number of tickets for Edna O'Brien's appearance at Glór are available. Tickets are priced at EUR15 (concession price of EUR12). Bookings can be made by phoning Glór box office at 065 6843103.