

Clare Prepares To Celebrate Seachtain Na Gaeilge 2009

Wednesday, 11 February 2009

An exciting and diverse programme of events has been unveiled for Clare Seachtain na Gaeilge 2009, which gets underway at the end of the month.

The weeklong celebration of the Irish language and culture will be officially opened by bilingual reggae band '*Bréag*' when they perform at Glór on Friday 27 February 2009.

Over the last decade the established Belfast group have developed a Celtic fusion, combining Eastern European and Latin America traditional styles with reggae and ska. *Bréag* have performed throughout Ireland, Europe and Asia, and have twice shared a stage with the infamous Jamaican reggae outfit *The Wailers*, as well as *Shane McGowan*, *Bad Manners*, *Black 47*, *Alabama 3*, *John Spillane* and *Kíla*.

Hundreds of people are expected to participate in a wide range of other events during Seachtain na Gaeilge 2009 at locations including Ennis, Tulla, Lisdoonvarna, Kilmihil, Miltown Malbay, Killaloe, Kildysart, Kilrush, Kilkee, Shannon and Kilmaley.

For the third consecutive year, Fóram Gaeilge an Chláir, which comprises members of various Irish language organisations throughout the county, has taken on the role of co-ordinating a countywide programme for the annual festival. The Fóram is being supported by The Arts Council.

According to Ms. Emer Ní Fhlaitheartaigh, Fóram member and Oifigeach Forbartha Gaeilge, Clare County Council, '*We anticipate that this year's programme of events will again involve hundreds of people of all ranges of fluency. The vast range of events due to take place around the County demonstrates that the Irish language is vibrant, alive and exciting in the hearts of the people of Clare.*'

She continued, '*Seachtain na Gaeilge puts a serious emphasis on the Irish language, incorporating both written and the spoken tongue, with abundant efforts from voluntary groups and officially organised activities. This year we are especially delighted to welcome so many high profile contributors from around Ireland and beyond to County Clare. I have no doubt that the many and varied organised events will both entertain and educate those who attend them.*'

Primary schools are spoilt for choice this year given that workshops in singing and dancing have been organised to take place in schools throughout the County. *Sorcha Ní Chéide* best known for playing *Ríona de Búrca* in *Ros na Rún* will give dancing workshops in primary schools whilst well-known singing teacher, *Deirdre Callinan-Griffin* who holds a Masters in Community Music will teach singing workshops.

Branar Theatre Company, based in Galway will provide drama workshops for fourth and fifth class students in Glór, whilst *Tomás MacConmara* will provide tours of Clare Museum, incorporating the rich and varied placenames of Clare. *Séamus Ryan*, will act as *scéaláí* for '*Am Scéil*' a storytime session aimed at second class students upwards, in Tulla, Lisdoonvarna, Kilmihil, Miltown Malbay and Killaloe Libraries.

Clare Library have organised visits from writers *Esther Göbl Uí Nualláin* and *Méadhbh Ní Eadhra*. Esther, who is a teacher will read from her book '*Eachtraí Uchtaigh*', her soon to be published collection of short stories. She will speak about the background of her stories and explain some of her writing techniques. The children will have an opportunity to ask questions and express their opinions. Sessions will be bi-lingual.

For secondary school students, young writer *Méadhbh Ní Eadhra*, who has written for *Foinse* and *Lá Nua* newspapers will read from her book *Fáinne Fí Fíí* in Kildysart, Kilrush, Kilkee and Shannon libraries to an audience of first to fourth year students.

And for daoine fásta, *Club Caifé* will take place every morning between 10.30 and 11.30 in various locations throughout Ennis. Members of the public are encouraged to join the trail and use their Gaeilge for the hour.

Poet and current President of Conradh na Gaeilge, *Pádraig MacFheargusa* from Kerry will visit Ennis and Scoil Mhairéad Ní Ghráda, Cill Mháille on Wednesday, march 4th for Slí na bhFilí. Scoil Sheanáin Naofa in Kilrush have also organised events including drámaí Gaeilge, Tráth na gCeist, and Ceol am Lóin concerts.

Events in Shannon are also exciting this year. Club na Sionna of Conradh na Gaeilge have their *ciorcail comhrá* happening on Wednesday March 4th and 11th in Áras Wolfe Tones na Sionna from 8.00 onwards with music, song and dance on March 4th organised in association with *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*. *Dúchas na Sionna* have organised a cultural and heritage display in the Skycourt Shopping Centre for the duration of the Seachtain.

The Festival will be closed on St. Patrick's Day with *Céilí Mór na Seachtaine* with *Ceilí Mór na Sráide*, during which *Ceoltóirí na Mainistreach* will provide music. However, this is not the end of the events in the County as on *March 21st to 29th Féile na hInse* will take place in Ennis boasting a multitude of competitions and events for all ages.

Seachtain na Gaeilge is a non-profit organisation which helps to promote the Irish language and culture both at home and abroad within a two week festival held in March every year.

Since its foundation by Conradh na Gaeilge in 1903, the festival has progressed and developed not alone on a national level but in countries such as Germany, Brazil, Canada, America and England.

For further information on any of these events please see

www.clarecoco.ie / www.snag.ie

or contact **Emer Ní Fhlaitheartaigh**,

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