

SHE NANIGANS



Vol. 3 Issue 2

May 2002

BORD FÁILTE SUPPORTING AOIFE IN 2002

Hello there,

By now you will have received your Yearbook. Thanks again to all the Advertisers and corporate members that supported it - please remind them when you are booking your acts or products where you read about them or saw their ad first - It is important!

The welcome news from Bord Fáilte, allocating some financial support from their new fund towards our ongoing development and resourcing is truly historic and will go some way towards improving the variety and quality of services to our membership.

The negotiating and adoption with our Welsh counterparts in the Festival of Wales of a Formal Co-operation Agreement and decision to apply and manage a joint Inter Reg Festivals Project is again

another significant milestone in our development and will serve to strengthen the cultural links between the Welsh and Irish.

Glad to note from the evaluation of the Health and Safety Seminars that you would like them run annually - obviously a huge yearning from festival organisers out there to keep our to date on these important matters. Well done to the team who rolled



that pilot project out for year one.

Please use the Website more as a resource for communication - the Members' Forum/Chat Room facility is excellent and could prove very worthwhile in solving some of your problems.

Slán agus Beannacht,
Colm

Montague Heritage Services

Montague Heritage Services are organisers of historical events - bringing History back to Life - Celts, Monks, Normans, Vikings & Gaels. Their shows include weaponry display, ancient crafts, Pageantry and drama. They can be contacted at info@montague.ie or visit their website www.montague.ie or

"The decision by Bord Fáilte to provide support to AOIFE is one of the most significant developments in the history of our Association" was Colm Croffy's reaction to the official confirmation that Bord Fáilte will provide funding through the Festivals & Cultural Events Initiative to AOIFE for 2002 to develop and enhance services to member festivals in the Republic.

AOIFE submitted a Business Plan and a formal application for funding in January.

"The thrust of our application was to provide the level of service festivals need to achieve the best possible presentation to optimise the number of visitors they attract" the AOIFE Chairperson continued. "We will not be involved in the marketing of festivals as this is the responsibility of Bord Fáilte but we will provide enhanced training and support to facilitate the growth and development of the festivals to achieve long term sustainability and improve the overall 'health' of our industry. At the core of the business plan is the appointment of a full-time Secretary General".

"With immediate effect we will begin the recruitment process" Colm Croffy explained, "this appointment is a critical step in the expansion and growth of AOIFE. Advertisements will appear

in national newspapers in the coming weeks and we anticipate there will be a significant level of interest".

As *Shenanigans* went to print the National Executive were finalising details of Job Specification, contract and where the Secretary General will be based. Though the funding commitment from Bord Fáilte is for this year only and no commitment to further funding can be made, it is understood that the initial appointment will be for a 3-year term. The remuneration package is designed to attract the highest calibre candidates.

"We invite applications from anyone in the festivals sector. Core attributes will include excellent communications and interpersonal skills, demonstrated business acumen and a commercial focus, a very high degree of personal flexibility and superb people management skills both in regard to staff and volunteers. Substantial organisational ability and a degree of flair would be essential selection criteria" Colm concluded.

Detailed advertisements will appear in national newspapers shortly. Applications, clearly marked "Secretary General" should be addressed to AOIFE, The Enterprise Centre, Creagh, Ballinasloe, County Galway or emailed to aofirecruitment@iol.ie



SAFETY SEMINARS A MAJOR SUCCESS

Over 100 people from AOIFE member festivals attended a series of four seminars which were held nation-wide during the month of April 2002 and the overwhelming positive reaction from delegates has proven that the pilot project was an unqualified success. The background to the seminars was the major changes to the AOIFE Insurance Scheme - it is now a requirement of insurance that festivals appoint a Safety Officer and that a written safety statement be prepared.

The four one-day seminars were held in Ballinasloe, Cork, Kilkenny and Cavan. The course content was aimed specifically at the "new" role of Safety Officer among AOIFE member festivals, providing an overview of relevant legislation and codes of practice, to clarify issues such as risk assessment and to assist in the preparation of individual festival Safety Statements. All presenters provided one-on-one advice to delegates during the

practical session to assist in the proper completion of the templates. Delegates also received comprehensive handouts.

The primary speakers were Victor Ryan, Event Safety Advisor to AOIFE and Tadhg Moriarty, the National Executive member with responsibility for safety issues. Peter Thomas and Claire Dumbrell from PJT Insurance Services shared the sessions on Festival Insurance.

The evaluation sheets detail the very positive reaction from delegates at all seminars with the majority of respondents indicating all presentations were very relevant and that the seminars had helped to better understand safety issues. Post seminar comments included "*Very informative course. Got rid of the taboo of health and safety. It scares you at first mention but course got rid of it*" and "*The seminar / workshop gave a clear understanding of*

the paramount importance of safety at events involving crowds of people. I'm sure committees will take a lot of the advice on board".

Tadhg Moriarty is enthused that "this particular project has been very successful" but is careful to point out that "as issues concerned with safety continue to come to the fore, festival organisers will be governed by more legislation and codes of practice. We are clear that AOIFE bears a responsibility to create a greater awareness of these issues and I have no doubt that this very successful series of seminars will be repeated".

Final word to Colm Croffy "These seminars represented a significant investment of time by Tadhg Moriarty and our Event Safety Adviser Victor Ryan. I want to thank them and the other members of the National Executive and acknowledge the extraordinary input from Peter Thomas and Claire Dumbrell of PJT Insurances. Well done all!" S

YEARBOOK 2002

"Yes it was later than usual but with good reason" was Colm Croffy's response to the question of why the Yearbook distribution was later than usual this year. "In a word: 'dates'. It is incredible that in the month of May we are still awaiting 2002 dates from 69 festivals! We waited and waited. That is the primary reason why the Yearbook was late".

"The impact of 'foot & mouth' is still with us" Colm stresses, "service providers and festivals are still suffering from the downturn in demand last year and are apprehensive about this year's prospects. Potential advertisers took longer this year to commit to advertising. Perfectly understandable but this also meant delays".

Distribution of the Yearbook is diverse. In addition to all Members (festivals, corporate and associate members) copies are sent to all members of the Oireachtas, the Legislative Assembly, MEPs, Northern Ireland's MPs, senior police officers, Arts Officers, all Tourist Information Offices on the island, Regional Tourism Organisations, all embassies and consulates in Ireland, the Chief Librarian in every county and district council, Irish embassies & consulates and Bord Fáilte offices abroad. Over 150 are distributed to the media alone.

Colm emphasised that there are 3 key things that YOU can do to assist in compiling Yearbook 2003:

- "Decide on your dates for 2003 (and 2004) as soon as possible and advise us"
- "Whenever you purchase a product or service from an advertiser in the Yearbook ensure that you tell them you saw their advertisement"
- "Whenever you purchase a product or service from someone who is not an advertiser, demand to know why they do not advertise in your Yearbook!" S

EVENT LICENSING - NATIONAL USERS' FORUM

AOIFE is pressing ahead with the formation of a National Users Forum on Event Licensing despite the decision to postpone a major 2-day conference on Event Licensing.

"Another conference on aspects of event licensing was recently held and it was the view of many potential participants in the proposed AOIFE Conference that budgetary considerations precluded them from attending 2 conferences on allied topics within 2 weeks of each other" Tadhg Moriarty told *Shenanigans*.

The conference was to have taken place on May 1st and 2nd at the Shannon Oaks Hotel in Portumna. In excess of 700 brochures had been distributed to Planning Officers, Chief Ambulance Officers, Chief Fire Officers, Arts Officers, Corporate Members, An Garda Síochána, the Police Service of Northern Ireland and other sectoral interests.

"Postponement is a disappointment" Tadhg admitted, "one of the primary aims of the conference was to achieve consistency in the application of the event licensing process. For this reason we are committed to setting up a National Users Forum consisting of representatives of all interested parties".

June Carey, AOIFE Annual Conference Organiser, confirms that elements of the event licensing conference will be included in the programme for full-time festival directors and administrators on Friday November 8th at the Sheldon Park Hotel. S



NEED TO KNOW NICE TO KNOW

Another Millennium Celebration

Remember the millennium celebrations of 15 months ago? Thought we had another 998 years to go before the next millennium bash? Wrong!



John Grimes of Féile Brian Boru has been in touch to remind everyone that 2002 marks the 1000th anniversary of the crowning of Brian Boru as High King of Ireland. We have it on good authority the festival team is planning a mega-festival from July 11th through 14th to mark this major anniversary.

John and his colleagues are looking forward to welcoming visitors from far & wide to Killaloe County Clare. No doubt persons of Scandinavian origin will be welcome also - but please use a Shannon pleasure cruiser and not a Long Boat!

Speaking of Boats

AOIFE's ambassador-at-large Paddy Murphy has returned from yet another foray 'across the pond' and tells us that he expects Irish Festivals in Leeds, Nottingham and Birmingham to join Manchester Irish Festival as International Festival Members of AOIFE. "I have received immense assistance from the staff of the Irish Embassy in London" Paddy reports, "there are a huge number of Irish festival events taking place across Britain and I plan to follow up on all of them!"

Féile Chultúir Chiarraí

One wonders where the folks at Muckross House & Traditional Farm in Killarney

get the time to mount a festival. Toddy Doyle, Farm Manager, contacted *Shenanigans* to confirm the Féile Chultúir Chiarraí will take place from May 13th to 17th this year. "Up to 600

primary schoolchildren will participate in a series of 45-minute workshops incorporating skills and traditions of a bygone era" Toddy explained, "baking on an open fire, churning butter and harnessing a horse are some of the activities being staged". That's in addition to workshops on songs and song writing. Highlights of 2001 at Muckross House included the visit of Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji, the Government held a Cabinet Meeting in May and in November the Research Library at Muckross House scooped the Museum of The Year Award for Collections Care. Busy, busy people!

LeChéile: Oldcastle Arts and Music Festival

Patrick Twomey would like all his colleagues in the festivals sector to know that since its inception in 1998 LeChéile has been run by a group of young volunteers (under the name CULTURE GAP Ltd., a not-for-profit company). The festival was founded with the aim of bringing live music and other cultural events to an historic and scenic part of Ireland and since its inception has featured many of Ireland's best known live music acts. 2002 is no different with confirmed acts including *The Undertones*, *Relish* and *Turn*. Negotiations are underway with other acts with up to ten live music

acts envisaged. As ever the festival will also include a range of day and night-time entertainment for all age groups, including street and stage theatre performances; arts/crafts exhibitions and workshops; fireworks, etc.

Testifying to the attraction of past festivals, each year the festival has drawn an estimated 10-15,000 to the town. Festival-goers can also avail of the opportunity to visit some of the region's historic and scenic sites, notably Loughcrew megalithic cairns overlooking the town. This year's festival takes place from July 26 to 28.

New Corporate Member?

Former National Executive Member Victor Ryan has launched a new Event Safety consultancy for festivals and events. Already he has been engaged to consult on a number of major events including Witness and events at Slane Castle and Lansdowne Road. *Shenanigans* wishes Victor well and who knows, perhaps the former National Secretary will feature among the list of corporate members?



Victor can be contacted at: 8 Highfield Avenue, Templaraine, Arklow, Co. Wicklow. Telephone 0402 33356, fax 0402 39155, mobile 086 821 0048 and by email at victorryan@eircom.net

Working With Children

Mary Hanafin T.D., Minister for Children, has launched "Our Duty to Care" aimed

at providing guidance to the voluntary and community sector in providing safe environments for children they are dealing with.

The guidelines are based on Children First - National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children and include Guidance on the promotion of child welfare and the development of safe practices in work with children. A Booklet, Fact Sheets and training video for the community and voluntary sector, information on how to recognise signs of child abuse and the correct steps to take within organisations if it is suspected, witnessed or disclosed are all included in "Our Duty to Care".

"Our Duty to Care" sets out very clearly the principles of best practice and how to promote the rights of children. It provides advice on developing safe recruitment practices and strategies on developing safe management practice and policies within organisations.

The Stork has landed

Shenanigans wishes to convey heartiest congratulations to Deirdre and Joe Hodnett on the birth of their baby James, a brother for Rachel. The Hodnetts have moved to a new address, they now reside at Maultrahane, Rathbarry, Clonakilty, Co. Cork. Deirdre has refused to respond to our question if the move was intended to confuse future stork deliveries!



TWO NEW MEMBERS OF NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

"I've done most everything" laughed **Christine Cosgrave** when asked by *Shenanigans* to describe the role she has played in the Dundrum Festival.

One of two new members of the AOIFE National Executive, Christine was a founder member of the Dundrum Festival 19 years ago and she remains as committed and enthusiastic as she was back in 1983. "My title is Co-ordinator" Christine continued, "festival organisers will now what that means: you do whatever has to be done!"



other international folk dance routines. It's great fun and we all enjoy meeting new friends and visiting new places" Christine explained.

"I was very flattered to be invited to join the National Executive. To be honest I had considered allowing my name to be put forward for election in Ennistymon but drew back. I'm delighted now to be a part of AOIFE and to have the opportunity to network and learn from other festivals - two of AOIFE's great strengths" Christine responded to

our question why she had joined the National Executive.

Christine and her husband Kevin have a daughter Edel and a son, Lorcan. Christine is also a member of Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown Tourism.

"I do everything from run pub quizzes to act as general factotum" is how **Kevin Cosgrave** describes the

position of Chairperson of Dundrum Festival which is organised by a committee of six with a further twelve drafted in as the event takes shape. "I don't know where I will find the time to fit everything in but I am delighted and honoured to be a member of the AOIFE National Executive!"

"Dundrum Festival includes heritage walks, treasure hunts, bands, cycle racing - no surprise that as Dundrum is Stephen Roche's hometown - and we present a very successful Family Day in the village as the core event of our festival" Kevin continued.

Indeed *Shenanigans* has learned that the concept of a Family Day has been adopted by Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown County Council who are encouraging other population clusters to hold a similar event.

"We stage events for everyone from babies to

grannies. We are very proud of our showcasing of aspiring bands, to encourage and facilitate young talent" Kevin explained. From this we may surmise that Dan O'Donoghue is going to hear about a lot of young bands for the Showcase events at Conference 2002.

"AOIFE is the great! We all have the opportunity to share experiences and learn from one another. I regard the Annual Conference as an event not to be missed and one of my priorities will be to encourage as many people as possible from the Dublin region to attend Conference 2002 in the Sheldon Park Hotel here in Dublin" Kevin declared.

One of two new members of the AOIFE National Executive, Kevin is justifiably proud of his record of 37 years service with the ESB as a maintenance fitter. Kevin and his wife Christine have a daughter Edel and a son Lorcan.



Allianz Business2Arts Sponsor of the Year Awards

Four Businesses have been short-listed for the Allianz Business2Arts Sponsor of the Year Awards 2002, all were nominated by AOIFE Member Festivals in three different categories:

Supervalu Greystones was nominated by Greystones Arts Festival as Best Sponsor by a small business.

Galway Arts Festival nominated **National Irish Bank** for Best Sponsorship of a single Arts Project.

2 companies have been nominated for Best Sponsorship in kind. **Irish Ferries** has been nominated by Waterford Spraoi; six arts organisations in Galway including Babaró International Arts Festival for Children nominated **Compaq European Software Centre**.

There are six categories in total and each category is short listed to three companies. AOIFE extends its congratulations to these Businesses and wishes them well in the final selection on 30th May in Dublin!



CHECK OUT



MEMBERS FORUM
www.aofeonline.com

Send items for inclusion in **SHENANIGANS** to:
The Editor/*Shenanigans*
AOIFE Administration Office
1 Upper Main Street
Arklow, Co. Wicklow
Fax (066) 718 0107
email shenanigans@iol.ie