

THE LAST WORD AN FOCAL DEIREANACH

Prin Duignan—Leitrim Guardian Person of the Year 2010

AG FÉACHAINT SIAR ar Mheán Fómhair 2009, ní bréag a rá gur baineadh an-gheit asam nuair a hainmníodh mé mar Phearsa Liatroma na bliana 2010. Agus ní bréag a rá ach oiread go raibh ríméad orm gur roghnaíodh mé. Mar sin, ba mhaith liom buíochas a ghlacadh le Cumann Scríbhneoirí Chluainín Uí Ruairc as mé a ainmniú don ghradam seo. I mo chás féin thug an gradam seo spreagadh dom leanúint ar aghaidh ag saothrú i ngort na n-ealaíon. Agus ar ndóigh is iad na healaíona tré mheán na Gaeilge is gaire dom' chroí.

As I said at the launch of the Guardian a year ago, I was delighted to accept the award of Leitrim Person of the Year on behalf of those working in the arts in the county. And what a rich tradition we have in this corner of the north west! And what a debt we owe to those who laboured to enrich that tradition in those difficult times as the fledgling state struggled to have its cultural voice heard through its poets and playwrights, its musicians and artists, its ballad singers and ballad makers. Above all, we are indebted to those dedicated men and women whose voluntary work kept local arts alive at a time when the word 'arts' was not even part of their vocabulary.

During the year it was my privilege to address the Leitrim People's Association in London at a function in the

Crown Moran Hotel where my wife Betty and myself received a great welcome from Frank Keegan and his committee. A few weeks later we were guests of Kay Horan and her fellow organisers at the very enjoyable annual dinner dance of the Leitrim Peoples Association in Sligo. I was delighted also to be asked to formally open the drama festival and Seán MacDiarmada Summer School, both in Kiltyclogher, whose community endeavours are surely the most innovative in the county.

As regards our own work in Manorhamilton, our film company *Filín na Gaeilge* produced a documentary on the Leaving Certificate Irish Course for 2011 which was formally launched by President Mary McAleese in Arus an Uachtaráin in May. It is available on line at www.filinagaeilge.tv free of charge. I would like to acknowledge the work of film-makers Johnny Gogan and Patrick O'Rourke and of co-ordinator Mary Morris in the production of this educational aid.

In October, Splódar, our resident company in the Glens Centre staged the premiere of the Irish language play *Salómé*, with film sequences by Colm Farrell and original music by Ailie Blunnie. We were delighted that this mixed media production was well received by our regular theatre goers and also by people who travelled long distances to be present.



■ Prin presenting Leaving Certificate documentary www.filinagaeilge.tv to President Mary McAleese in Arus an Uachtaráin, May 2010.

Níl aon dabht ná go bhfuil rath ar chúrsaí na Gaeilge sa chontae seo. Tá na gaelscoileanna i gCora Droma Rúisce agus i gCluainín faoi lán tseoil, ta ciorcail cainte ag fás agus ag forbairt, tá Glór Chluainín le cloisteáil go forleathan agus thar aon ní eile tá meas ar ár dteanga dúchais. Is dóigh liom gur féidir a rá go bhfuil laincísí an Choilíneachais scaoilte go brách.

Finally, congratulations to Brendan Harvey and a word of thanks to *Manorhamilton Writers' Group*, *The Leitrim Guardian Committee*, *Deirdre O'Meara* and all those who sent good wishes especially the native of Derrinurn my own townland.

Beir Bua!