

WRITTEN WORD WEEKEND

Eileen O'Toole

2009 USHERED in the first literary festival in Drumshanbo over the August Bank Holiday weekend. The three days included an informal open mic on the Friday, a cabaret on the Saturday night and published writers from the nation read on the final Sunday evening.



The organizers thought that it was best to ask the local townspeople who they would like to see at such an event and it was with great delight that the writers suggested were only too glad to attend. Over the past three years authors such as Dermot Healy, Eoin McNamee, Tony Curtis, Belinda McKeon, John F Deane and to the joy of everyone, Drumshanbo's very own Ita Daly traveled from Dublin to read from her collection of work on the inaugural weekend .

The first and second year of the festival was joyfully held in the function room of Berry's Tavern on the High Street. 2011 saw a change as the first two nights were held at a new business in Drumshanbo. The intimate Yellow Ducati Bazaar brought much pleasure with the surprise guest appearance of

an Italian six piece classical ensemble that played Bach, Mozart and Bartok in between poetry and prose.

The final night was held at another new enterprise. The former Chariot Inn a once proud and fine establishment, now the most beautiful Leitrim Stain Glass Studio where Belfast poet Martin Mooney wowed the capacity crowd, Gerry Boland brought smiles to all eyes and Alice Lyons's insightful and provoking poems secured her place as the First Lady of Leitrim poetry.

Of course a mention must go to the Saturday night cabaret performers who have graced the stage over the years. They include Boris Belonni from Dublin and from Derry City, the ever

At the WRITTEN WORD WEEKEND Ananda Caffery, Belinda McKeon, Eoin McNamee, Tony Curtis and compere/organizer Eileen O'Toole

popular Poetry Chicks. Also local historians Eamon Daly and Noel McPartland began their informative and well attended walking tours of Drumshanbo during the weekend.

Throughout the past three years WRITTEN WORD WEEKEND was made possible from the generous support of organizations such as the South Leitrim Arts, Poetry Ireland, The Joe Mooney Summer School and of course Leitrim County Council.