

# **Athlone Literary Festival**

## **Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September to Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September**

Prince of Wales Hotel

### **Friends Wanted**

This is your opportunity to support the Athlone Literary Festival

Join with us and enjoy your best festival ever.

Benefits include free admission to most of the literary events of the weekend.

The friend's rate of subscription is €50.

Apply to Athlone Literary Festival, Custume Place, Athlone, Co Westmeath

### **Committee**

Christy Bigley

Siobhan Bigley

Tadgh Carey

Deirdre Collins

Jarlath Duffy

George Eaton

Simon Healy

Fionnuala O'Connell

Mel O'Flynn

### **Sponsors**

Westmeath County Council

Athlone Town Council

Foras Eireann

Prince of Wales Hotel

Double LM

Athlone Promoting Workplace Equality

### **Booking**

Season ticket: €55 and concessions: €35

Check out our website [www.athlone.ie/literaryfestival](http://www.athlone.ie/literaryfestival)

To book email [literaryathlone@gmail.com](mailto:literaryathlone@gmail.com) or ring 090 6434420 or apply to Athlone Literary Festival, Custume Place Athlone, Co Westmeath.

## Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September

2.30 - 4.00 Niall Crowley former CEO of the Equality Authority on his book "an Ambition for Equality" Admission: €5

Crowley's address will explore the different means by which we promote equality, combat discrimination, examine the casework under the legislation and cast a critical eye on equality in Ireland. The forum is open to all and after Mr. Crowley's address there will be a question and answer session followed by refreshments.

7.30 – 8.00 Official opening of Athlone Literary Festival by Caroline Walsh, Literary Editor, Irish Times and one time friend of John Broderick, followed by cheese and wine reception

8.00 – 10.00 "The Big Questions" Admission €10

Donncha O'Connell will chair a session of moral, ethical, controversial and contrasting perspectives as each of our speakers address their own Big Question. Following the speakers the forum is open for audience participation.

### Speakers

Dr. Steven King, Journalist, Irish Examiner Columnist, and former advisor to David Trimble

Colm O'Gorman, Executive Director of Amnesty International, and author of Beyond Belief

Brendan Keenan, Group Business Editor, Independent Group

Donncha O'Connell, NUI Galway, former Dean of the Faculty of Law 2005-08

## Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> September

9.15a.m. Registration and coffee

9.30 – 1.00 The Memoir Writing Workshop conducted by Irene Graham Fee €40 (to include writing workbook and materials). 16 places only, book in advance to secure place.

Write your life story in The Memoir Writing Workbook It is a stimulating journey from memory to memoir using a range of challenging techniques.

- write your memoir for family and friends
- structure a story for publication
- learn how to construct a story creatively
- get in touch with your creativity through the medium of writing
- use writing as a therapeutic process
- understand cognitive thinking skills
- have fun as you learn to write

10.00 – 11.30 'The Shore.' A collaboration of piano and poetry with Martin Dyar and Conor Walsh. Admission: €5

Focusing on themes of rural experience, angling, horse-breeding, and wildlife, the original poems and music, produce a reflective and occasionally humorous experience.

11.30 – 1.00 Dr Eamon Maher "Broderick and the French Connection"  
Admission: €5

France and the French were of enormous importance to John Broderick who died in Bath 20 years ago this year. One need only recall his residence of about 18 months in Paris, his admission that Nobel Laureate Francois Mauriac was the only person who influenced him as a writer, and his friendship with Julien Green as expressions of his broad and enduring francophilia. Dr. Maher has written and spoken many times about John Broderick and his book Cross Currents & Confluences contains a chapter entitled John Broderick: Irish Novelist in the European Tradition.

11.30 – 1.00 Published and emerging poets reading from their own works. Featuring published poets Mary Melvin Geoghegan and Kieran Furey. They will be joined by emerging poets from Scribblers in Mullingar and Ballymahon Writers Group. Open forum, all welcome.

Admission/Donation: €5

1.00-2.00 pm      Lunch

2.00 - 3.00 Colm O'Gorman reading from his memoir *Beyond Belief*  
'Beyond Belief' is the story of how O'Gorman took on the Church after he suffered sexual abuse as a boy. According to publishers Hodder and Stoughton, 'Beyond Belief' is a powerful story of a young man's shame turning to outrage, and demonstrates that – whatever our past hurts – there is hope for the future.

2.15 – 4.30 National Print Museum: Bookmaking workshop for children – venue is Rothwell Gallery, Reeves Arts Studio, Church St. Admission: €5

In this workshop children will learn how to make a hardback book in the traditional manner. We use special handmade paper and card to create books that can later be used as diaries, notebooks or sketchbooks. Limited to a maximum of 12 children. All the materials are provided.

**3.00 – 4.30 An audience with Dermot Bolger on writing and publishing**

7.30 pm Literary Festival Dinner and surprise entertainment upstairs in the Olive Grove Restaurant. €40 four course dinner.

To make a booking ring 090 6498838 or email [literaryathlone@gmail.com](mailto:literaryathlone@gmail.com) or ring the restaurant and mention Athlone Literary Festival on 090 647 694664

### **Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September**

A Literary & Cultural Athlone Walk with Gearoid O'Brien. [Duration 75 to 90 minutes approximately] Assemble at The Square, Athlone at 11am.

Admission/Donation: €5

Athlone has had guided historical walks for more than thirty years but a new Literary & Cultural Walk of Athlone has been specially devised for this year's Festival by local historian and author Gearoid O'Brien. This will take in authors as diverse as T.P. O'Connor, John Broderick, Desmond Egan and Hannah Greally – it will include information on other writers, on musicians, artists and composers. If you ever thought that Athlone was an oasis of culture come along and be convinced otherwise!