

# CLONMEL THEATRE GUILD

Forty Years Performing

Founded 1969





1975	Da – Hugh Leonard The Lark – Jean Anouilh The Tinkers Wedding – J.M. Synge and The Little Red Apostles	1995	Dancing at Lughnasa – Brian Friel Big Maggie – John B. Keane Da – Hugh Leonard All the Way Back – Bernard Farrell
1976	The Patrick Pearce Motel – Hugh Leonard Brush with a Body – Maurice McLoughlin Three for the Road – A Trilogy of one act Plays	1996	The Prisoner of Second Avenue – Neil Simon On the Outside / On the Inside – Tom Murphy The Odd Couple (Female Version)–Neil Simon
1977	The Effects of Gamma Rays on the Man-In- The-Moon Marigolds – Paul Zindel	1997	Voyage around my Father – John Mortimer The Chastitute – John B Keane Run for your Wife – Ray Cooney
1978	Anyone Can Rob a Bank – Tom Coffey	1998	A Dolls House – Henrik Isben Double Trouble – Brendan Long Brothers of the Brush – Jimmy Murphy
1979	The Loves of Cass McGuire – Brian Friel	1999	The Gingerbread Lady – Neil Simon
1981	A Man for All Seasons – Robert Bolt Arsenic and Old Lace – Joseph Kesselring	2000	Happy Birthday, Dear Alice – Bernard Farrell The Cripple of Inishmaan – Martin McDonagh
1982	Vivat, Vivat, Regina – Robert Bold	2001	Noises Off – Michael Frayne The Beauty Queen of Leenane – Martin McDonagh
1983	See How They Run – Philip King Lovers – Brian Friel The Patrick Pearce Motel – Hugh Leonard	2002	How the Other Half Loves – Alan Ayckbourn A Scull in Connemara – Martin McDonagh Forty Four Sycamore Street – Bernard Farrell Absurd Person Singular – Alan Ayckbourn
1984	I Do Not Like Thee, Doctor Fell – Bernard Farrell	2003	Lovers (Winners and Losers) – Brien Friel It Runs in the Family – Ray Cooney
1985	Whodunnit – Three One Act Plays • Dock Brief – John Mortimer • The Trial – Anthony Booth and • The Real Inspector Hound – Tom Stoppard  I'll Get My Man – Philip King	2004	Philadelphia Here I Come – Brien Friel
1986	The Communication Cord – Brian Friel The Dresser – Ronald Harwood	2005	The Happy Marriage – John Clements
1987	Da – Hugh Leonard Double up Laughing – Two One Acts: • Mill Hill – John Mortimer • The Last of the Last of the Mohicans – Hugh Leonard	2006	Why Not Stay For Breakfast – Ray Cooney The Odd Couple (Female Version)–Neil Simon
1988	The Year of the Hiker – John B. Keane Love on the Rocks – Two One Acts • Piazza Suite – Neil Simon and • Lovers – Brian Friel	2007	Last Tango / Panto in Little Grimley – David Tristram It Couldn't Happen to A More Deserving Couple – David Barrett Mulcahy Park – John McCarthy
1989	The Plough and the Stars – Sean O'Casey The Patrick Pearce Motel – Hugh Leonard	2008	Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf –Edward Albee
		2009	Live a Little Love a Little – Three One Acts Losers – Brien Friel; Piazza Suite; Neil Simon and The Last of the Last of the Mohicans – Hugh Leonard

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chairpersons Address . . . . .	3
Forty Years of Live Local Drama . . . . .	4
Memories of the Guild . . . . .	6
The Crucible - Directors Address . . . . .	7
Cast and Crew . . . . .	8
To Our Audience . . . . .	10
More Memories and Photos. . . . .	11



## Chairperson's Address

I am both honoured and delighted to be the current chairperson of Clonmel Theatre Guild in this it's 40<sup>th</sup> Year. I first joined the Guild over 20 years ago, and in that time I have seen and taken part in some splendid productions. Forty years ago a group of people formed a drama group, and it is a testament to their enthusiasm, drive and vision that this organisation is still here today.



As any organisation will tell you we have had our ups and downs but determination and a love of our craft has enabled us to get through the difficult times and thoroughly enjoy the good ones. The most important part of any drama group is its members, and we are blessed with a group of people that are willing to work hard and give up their free time to bring their experience and talent both behind and to the front of the stage. We are also blessed to still have founder and older members waiting in the wings always ready to give advice and support where needed. Their vast wealth of experience is priceless and always welcomed. We as a guild are always delighted to welcome new members and recognise that for survival a blend of old and new is vital.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and give my sincere thanks to all those who have contributed in any way in keeping Clonmel Theatre Guild a vibrant part of our community. I have every confidence that we will go from strength and continue to grow. I know that Clonmel Theatre Guild will continue to provide you with laughter, drama and entertainment. I thank you the public very sincerely and we look forward to your continued support in the years ahead. It has been my pleasure and privilege to be part of this wonderful group, who are led by a wonderful committee.

Patricia Harte,  
Chairperson,  
Clonmel Theatre Guild.

President:	Michael Hennessy
Chairperson:	Patricia Harte
Artistic Director:	Edmond Ryan
Manager :	Juanita Guidera
Assistant Manager:	Ann Loh
Social Events Co-ordinator:	Ricky Dunne
Executive Committee:	Paul Kelly, Rachel Culligan, Barbara Binchy, Jim Malone, Esther Byrne



## Forty years of Live Local Drama



The twenty third of February 1969 Clonmel Theatre Guild was formed during a fateful meeting in Hearn's Hotel. For forty years the Guild has been providing of live, local, amateur drama in Clonmel.

During those years we have been fortunate to have many dedicated members who were willing to be involved on and off stage. Fifteen years ago during our Silver Jubilee we had nine founding members who were still very active in the Guild affairs.

Today that has been reduced to five as we recall those who have gone to their eternal reward. Davy Fenlon, Seamus Maher, Brendan Long and Leo Wallace. We also lost our former PRO Anne Taylor. They have joined other former members Rev. Patrick Roche, O.F.M., Mary Redmond, Patricia Redmond, Jack Griffin, Seamus Lonergan, Jack Murnane, Sean O'Neill, Andy Phelan and Alan Simpson all these dedicated people filled important posts for the Guild and we gratefully remember the many happy times we shared in their company. To the remaining five founder members, Mary Burke, Ina Long, Stella O'Sullivan, Margo Prendergast and Denis O' Sullivan a sincere word of thanks because without you the Guild may not be here today celebrating this achievement.

Why do we do it? Do we need our heads examined? That moment before you go on stage that first daunting entrance. As the late Brendan Long once said " *We embark on an exercise in self expression in a medium to which we are fatally attracted, 'how in hell did I get into this?'. We promise ourselves never again and we mean it. In the end, however, when the final curtain falls there is such an exhilarating sense of achievement, something worthwhile having been accomplished, the companionship, the fulfilment of having done it, far outweighs the tribulations and sacrifices along the way. Thus the cycle starts all over again, and again, and again.*"

I have been with the Guild for twenty-four of the forty years. In that time I have been lucky enough to have been in many wonderful productions with many talented and dedicated actors and producers providing top class live, local, amateur productions such as Dancing at Lughnasa, The Year of the Hiker, The Plough and the Stars, Translations, Noises Off, Run For Your Wife, A Dolls House and Da, to name a few. Our season 2008'09 was the twenty first year of dinner theatre which was introduced under the directorship of Stella O' Sullivan back in 1987 in the Clonmel Arms Hotel. Creating a whole new form of theatre, which has proved popular with audiences over the years. From our first production of the Playboy of the Western World in Our Lady's Hall in 1969 to the White Memorial Theatre in 1981, the Clonmel Arms Hotel in 1987, Hotel Minella 2006, The Main Guard in 2007 and our most recent location Raheen House Hotel in 2009 the Guilds future looks secure with our production of the Crucible in December '09 having a cast of twenty one.



The Guild has been fortunate that throughout our forty-year history we have had tremendous support from the people of Clonmel and surrounding districts. The task of putting on a production can be hard and demanding but the reward of your applause, encouragement and support has been vital to our efforts for this we thank you.

**Edmond Ryan,**  
*Artistic Director*



*Above Left: The Set from Doll's House 1998*

*Above: The Set from Double Trouble 1998*



*Left: The Set from 'The Year of the Hiker' 1988*

Pictured in the play Run for Your Wife are Michael Hennessy, John Brady, Edmond Ryan, Paul O'Donnell, Rachel Culligan, Mary Adamson, Seamus Moore





## Memories of Clonmel Theatre Guild from our Members

I was involved in drama in Clonmel in the mid sixties, but due to working reasons I transferred from Clonmel, and missed out on being one of the founder members of Clonmel Theatre Guild in 1969. I longed to join in the future, and living in Ardfinnan in 1994, I joined the group when Stella O'Sullivan produced Juno and The Paycock at the White Memorial Theatre, with a large cast. Juno was played by Margot Prendergast, The Paycock by Michael Ahearn, Joxer Daly by the late Brendan Long who was also Artistic Director in what was an outstanding production.

I have great memories of all of the plays especially Big Maggie, On the Outside/ On the Inside, The Chastitute, Double Trouble, - where I had a huge roll, Brothers of The Brush, Philadelphia Here I Come, It Couldn't Happen To a more Deserving Couple. I have special memories of Run for Your Wife with Edmond Ryan and Mary Adamson, Lovers with Esther Byrne, The Odd Couple with Ricky Dunne, Happy Birthday Dear Alice, with Margo Prendergast. These were hilarious comedies, and had people laughing in the streets for a time later, when recognising me as a member of the cast.

Theatre has been wonderful to me especially Clonmel Theatre Guild where I have many friends. Many also have passed away agus go ndéanfaidh Dia Trocaire ar a anamacha. Long may the Guild continue.

Michael Hennessy,  
President.



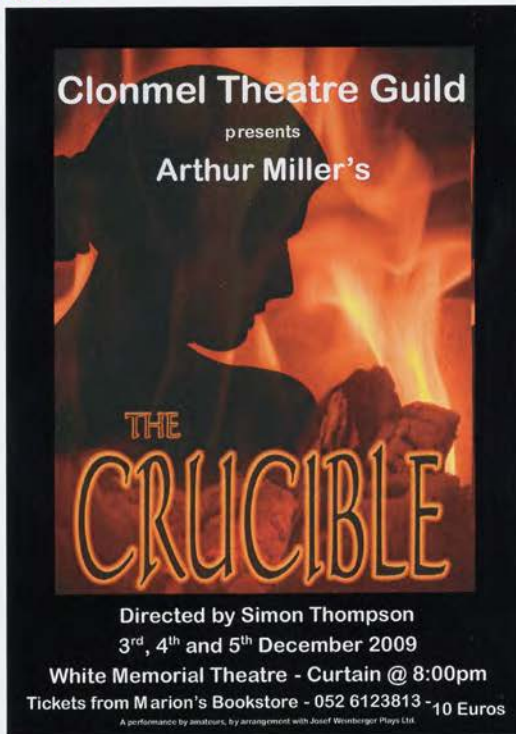
Picture above in Brother of the Brush are: Trevor Somers, Michael Hennessy, Paul O'Donnell, Brendan O'Mahoney.



Left in Happy Birthday Dear Alice are: Kevin Fahey, Michael Hennessy, Rachel Culligan, Trevor Somers, Margo Prendergast and Kay Cleary.



## The Crucible



### Directors Note:

"The Crucible" by Arthur Miller forms part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Theatrical Cannon. This classic parable draws on two parallels – the Salem Witch Trials of 1692 and a period of American history from the 1950's when McCarthyism and the fear of Communism run riot.

This is a story about the small province of Salem in Massachusetts, which was whipped into a frenzy of madness by superstition, paranoia, forbidden lust and vengeance. Culminating in a mindless display of persecution and death. "Hell had no fury as that of a woman scorned".

As a visiting director to the Guild, I have only had four weeks to work with the ensemble in preparation for these performances. These performances are a testament to the dedication and commitment everybody has shown throughout the rehearsal process which has culminated in a passionate and truthful portrayal of a superb text.

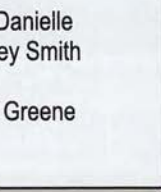
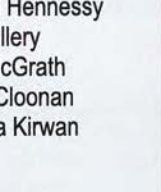
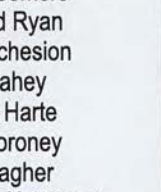
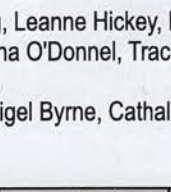
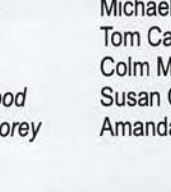
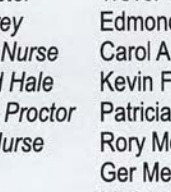
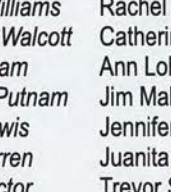
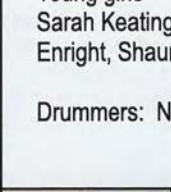
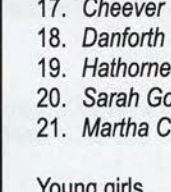
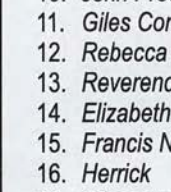
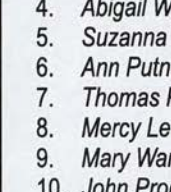
Well done everyone.

Please enjoy the show.  
Simon



**The Cast**  
(in order of appearance)

1. <i>Reverend Parris</i>	Ricky Dunne	
2. <i>Betty Parris</i>	Marie Morrissey	
3. <i>Tituba</i>	Lily Almeida	
4. <i>Abigail Williams</i>	Rachel Culligan	
5. <i>Suzanna Walcott</i>	Catherine McVicker	
6. <i>Ann Putnam</i>	Ann Loh	
7. <i>Thomas Putnam</i>	Jim Malone	
8. <i>Mercy Lewis</i>	Jennifer Williams	
9. <i>Mary Warren</i>	Juanita Guidera	
10. <i>John Proctor</i>	Trevor Somers	
11. <i>Giles Corey</i>	Edmond Ryan	
12. <i>Rebecca Nurse</i>	Carol Achesion	
13. <i>Reverend Hale</i>	Kevin Fahey	
14. <i>Elizabeth Proctor</i>	Patricia Harte	
15. <i>Francis Nurse</i>	Rory Moroney	
16. <i>Herrick</i>	Ger Meagher	
17. <i>Cheever</i>	Michael Hennessy	
18. <i>Danforth</i>	Tom Callery	
19. <i>Hathorne</i>	Colm McGrath	
20. <i>Sarah Good</i>	Susan Cloonan	
21. <i>Martha Corey</i>	Amanda Kirwan	



Young girls  
Sarah Keating, Leanne Hickey, Danielle Enright, Shauna O'Donnel, Tracey Smith

Drummers: Nigel Byrne, Cathal Greene





Some of the cast with the director during rehearsals



Director: Simon Thompson

Stage Manager: Pat Brophy

Lighting: Denis Cahalane

Sound: Paul Kelly

Costumes: Simon Thompson and Ann Loh

Sets: Edmond Ryan, Ricky Dunne, Neal Shirran, Simon Thompson

Continuity: Neal Shirran, Amanda Kirwan

House Manager / Box Office: Molly Daly, Mary Burke, Stella O'Sullivan

### Acknowledgements:

Clonmel Theatre Guild would like to acknowledge with thanks John McCarthy for inspiring this project and his work on it. We also wish to thank Paul Kelly for filming the opening sequences of the girls dancing in the woods.

Josephine Casey, Props

PJ O'Neill, Sureprint

Marion O'Neill, Marion's Bookstore.

Dennis O'Sullivan, Tipp FM

Hilary O'Sullivan, White Memorial Theatre

Larry O'Keeffe's

By arrangement with Josef Weinberger Plays Ltd.





## To you our audience,

Welcome to Clonmel Theatre Guild's production of *The Crucible*. It is our hope that you will enjoy our interpretation of this play.

Tonight you will see a cast of 21 actors and our backstage crew work together to impart Arthur Miller's beautifully written dialogue. Over the past months we have rehearsed our lines so that we might deliver them with the pace and heart that this production demands – we hope that we might do it justice.

It's a challenging piece of theatre which raises many questions for us as individuals. The subject matter asks that you might consider your own humanity – what choices would you make? Would you stand up and be counted? Where is the line between good and evil? All powerful questions that each of us must answer on a personal level - in doing so we find our own truth.

We wish to thank you for your continued support as an audience. We hope that you will enjoy the production tonight and we look forward to seeing you in March for our next dinner theatre production which will see us return to light hearted comedy in *I'll Get My Man*.

Juanita Guidera,  
Manager.





## More memories of the Guild

'I was lucky to be there in 1969 when the Clonmel Theatre Guild, on its foundation, presented two full length plays "The Playboy of the Western World" and "The Importance of Being Earnest". Both plays were performed during the same week with two completely different casts. It might be said that whatever else we may have lacked at the time, it certainly wasn't ambition.

As a young aspiring amateur actress with a staunch commitment to the activities of The Guild, I took great umbrage at the time, when a close friend remarked, "I never knew you were into the playacting". Playacting? This was nothing as frivolous or whimsical as playacting! For over 40 years we have had the privilege and opportunity of presenting the cream of Irish and international theatre to what we felt was an acceptable standard to ourselves and to our audiences and I would modestly suggest that we didn't disappoint. In the midst of all this hard work, we had our ups and downs and learned a lot about life but most of all we had tremendous fun, formed lasting friendships and would like to believe that, in the process, we provided some very worthwhile entertainment for our community. This playacting is a serious business after all! I wish the Theatre Guild continued ambition, fun, and success. And many more years of wonderful 'playacting' of course.

*Ina Long*



*Pictured above are Ina Long and Margo Prendergast in the Cripple of Innishmaan 2000*

When I was asked to write a few words about my time with Clonmel Theatre Guild, I couldn't help remembering back to when the Guild was founded. Nowadays when an organisation is being formed, there are a few matters which have to be considered beforehand, viz, venue, funds and members. We had the members but no venue and no funds! However, we had what we considered important – talent, commitment and a passion for drama. We quickly formed a committee and very soon we had two plays in rehearsal. The rest is history.

Forty years on Clonmel Theatre Guild is still going strong and this I think is a tribute to those founder members and also due in no small part to the present-day members. Of course we must never forget our patrons who have been so loyal to us over the past forty years and without whose support we could not have survived, especially during the early years of the Guild.

Clonmel Theatre Guild has survived recessions over the past forty years and I have no doubt that it will survive the present one and go from strength to strength. People will



always want to be entertained and what better way to be entertained than by a local drama group in your local area.

Good luck to Clonmel Theatre Guild and may it continue to foster the traditions and aspirations which were founded on an idea forty years ago!

*Margo Prendergast*

My memories of the years spent with Clonmel Theatre Guild are a bit like the Dana song "All Kinds of Everything:" laughter, tears, discipline, and drama (more often backstage than onstage!) - and of friendships which have endured over forty years.

For many years the Guild was an integral part of my life: readings, rehearsals, set-building and, finally, to the first night - standing in the wings in terrified anticipation; the adrenalin rush as you felt the audience respond - to the final curtain and the collective sigh of relief!

I look back on those times with great fondness and can truly say – for me - "those were great days!"

*Mary Burke*



*Pictured in Dancing at Lughnasa are Margo Prendergast, Molly Daly, Patricia Harte, Mary Burke and Stella O'Sullivan.*



*Pictured at a mayoral reception for the guild are Ruairi Walsh, Molly O'Neill (RIP), Molly Daly and Hugh Daly*

It is with great fondness that I look back on my time with Clonmel Theatre Guild. While initially the Guild was a social outlet for a young inexperienced teenager in 1974, on reflection, it proved to be one of the great positives in my life, forging friendships that have endured to this day. Commitment, discipline, nerves, sometimes even tears but most importantly camaraderie and trust underpinned each performance, attributes that are still evident to date, making Clonmel Theatre Guild a strong and vibrant organisation forty years after its inception.

*Molly Daly*



Clonmel Theatre Guild embodies the spirit of local talent coming together to bring to life the works of both modern and acclaimed playwrights. The Guild has delighted art lovers everywhere throughout Clonmel and its environs with well-established works.

One particular play springs to mind, the brilliantly powerful and evocative work by the critically acclaimed playwright Martin McDonagh, "The Beauty Queen of Leenane", which has the advantage of having all the things that theatre audiences enjoy - its plot and story and yarn and characters that they'll recognise - and so there's the possibility of getting that popular response to it. The late great Brendan Long was successful in securing the rights to stage this play and he directed the Irish premiere here in Clonmel. Indeed he remarked to me after one performance that the production was as close to perfection as he had ever envisioned.

During my time with this great company of players, I have had the opportunity to perform, direct and produce, which has been a source of great enjoyment to me. I have also had the honour of being elected as a Committee Member and indeed, Chairperson.

With all the new and emerging talent in our town it is inevitable that our Guild will go from strength to strength - steered by stalwarts ever ready to give up their expertise. I aspire to continue to play my role with this wonderful group of thespians.

*Esther Byrne*

As a new member of Clonmel Theatre Guild I am privileged to make a small contribution to this very special commemorative booklet. My first play with the Guild was 'Lovers' by Brian Friel which we did as part of 'Live a Little, Love a Little'. Dinner Theatre in Raheen House under the production of the wonderful Stella O'Sullivan playing the part of 'Andy Tracey' is my proudest achievement on stage. I had acted in some plays in Ardfinnan Hall many years ago, in the early 80s to be precise and taken part in eleven pantomime productions but never had I been entrusted with a role like Stella gave to me!

To work with Stella was an honour and the fact we got on so well together, meant it was easier for her to 'put the skids' under me and get whatever she could out of me. As well as Stella, to be on stage and have Amanda Kirwan play 'Hannah Wilson' was brilliant as she was a tremendous help and encouraged me when I found the going touch. Of course Mary Burke as 'old Mother Wilson' was also there to give me much needed confidence, so 'prissy Cissy' played by Susan Cloonan and I were made feel so welcome.

I hope, please God, to have many more years in the Guild and am honoured to be part of such a great bunch of people, and never forgetting my first and again thank you Stella for having such confidence in me.

*Ger Meagher*



I joined the Clonmel Theatre Guild in September 1996. I had just moved from Ennis, Co. Clare for work reasons and I was looking for a way to make friends and meet people in Clonmel. I had heard that readings for a play were taking place in Mulcahy house and so I went down and when I arrived, there were about thirty or forty other people there whom all seemed to know each other and so I sat in a corner feeling ever so slightly embarrassed and prepared myself to feel invisible for the night. How wrong I was. Straight away people introduced themselves and asked me where I was from and so began many, many wonderful friendships with people from all around Clonmel and others whom like I were just visitors to this town.

We have done so many different plays. A few that stand out in my mind are, "The Cripple of Inishmaan" by Martin McDonagh, "Happy Birthday dear Alice" by Bernard Farrell and in particular "Noises Off" by Michael Frayne. This had a cast of nine people and was one of the most fun plays that we ever did. It was also the last time that Brendan Long, one of the founding members of the Theatre Guild and a leading light in so many ways, was on stage before his passing in September 2004.

Brendan was a wonderful, actor, playwright, director, producer, mentor and a friend. Some of my best memories of my time with the Theatre Guild include Brendan and the direction and advice that he gave me on stage are second to none and when I was asked to recount some of my memories of the Guild, he was the first person who came to my mind.

At the moment the Guild try to produce at least two plays a year but when the curtains are drawn and the last bows are taken, it is the fun that we had and the friendships that we have made during that time that stay with me.

*Rachael Culligan*

My first memory of Clonmel Theatre Guild is also my best memory, as on a cold October evening in 2000, we gathered in Mulcahy House for the first reading of Michael Frayne's Noises Off. It was my first play with the Guild, and the initial nerves of joining a new organisation were quickly quelled by the friendliness and warmth of its members. Noises Off is regarded an extremely difficult play to do, even for professional theatre companies. But everyone threw themselves into the job with dedication and enthusiasm.

By March the following year, we were ready for our four-night run in the White Memorial Theatre in Clonmel. Although a physically demanding and exhausting play, it was easily the most fun I've ever had on stage. As Noises Off is a play about putting on a play, art would often imitate life in the most unexpected and sometimes hilarious fashion. I was sorry when the last night arrived and the curtain came down for the final time, but will always have very fond memories of those five months spent with Clonmel Theatre Guild and Noises Off.

*James Whelan*



One of my pleasant memories of The Guild is the production of Martin McDonagh's acclaimed "The Beauty Queen of Leenane". McDonagh was hugely en vogue at the time after the runaway success of the above mentioned play which was a hit on Broadway and starred the late, highly talented Anna Manahan from Waterford.

When Brendan Long announced we were to undertake it there was great excitement. Rehearsals were soon under way, with Brendan skilfully whipping four of us into shape!

I am always grateful to Brendan Long, as a friend and mentor for giving me the chance to play Pato Dooley. In relation to Brendan, the last time I acted opposite him on stage was in Ray Cooney's "It Runs in the Family" a very British farce set in a hospital. This was a very fast paced and frenetic show and Brendan's timing was impeccable... I do remember feeling nervous that if I dropped a line opposite him I might be in trouble! I'm pleased to say everything was, to use a cliché, alright on the night.

There are many memories but not enough time or space to include them here, I congratulate the Guild on forty years and here's looking forward to many more to come!

*Trevor Somers*

*Pictured in the 2001 production of Noises Off are (back row l-r) Brendan Long, Rachel Culligan, James Whelan, Trevor Somers, Brenda Kiely, Edmond Ryan, (front row l-r) Kevin Fahey, Deirdre Barrett, Esther Byrne.*



If you are interested in joining Clonmel Theatre Guild please see our website: [www.clonmeltheatreguild.com](http://www.clonmeltheatreguild.com) or contact any member of the guild

