

London plaque to honour Limerick writer Jerry O'Neill

A COMMEMORATIVE plaque is to be unveiled on the site of the Sugawn Theatre in London, founded by Limerick writer Jerry O'Neill, during ceremonies to mark his contribution to Irish literature.

The announcement was made by Doris Daly of the Sugawn Theatre Memorial Committee, during the launch of a new DVD 'A Tribute to Jerry O'Neill', by the Mayor of Limerick, Cllr Joe Leddin, at City Hall.

"Jerry brought our traditional music and drama to all of the cosmopolitan mix in the unlikely location of a disused whelk stall in a backwater on the cusp of Hackney and Islington, said Ms. Daly. "This ushered in an era of communication, mutual respect and understanding in a time of suspicion and distrust when the Irish were getting a bad press".

The launch was also attended by Mary O'Neill from Kilkee, the widow of the author.

Ms Daly invited Cllr Leddin to visit London and unveil the plaque on the site of the Sugawn Theatre on Saturday October 14, when a series of events are planned in Islington to honour the Limerick man.

Launching the DVD, Mayor Leddin said that he was pleased

that the late Jerry O'Neill was at last being recognised for his literary achievements.

The launch was chaired by Barney Sheehan of the White Houses poets and it was attended by those who gave their services and talents free to produce the DVD, including Limerick music group Burning Embers, who provided the soundtrack, and the composers Dominic Taylor and Sean Kelly, whose song "Dare You Ripple My Pond", is featured on the DVD. A poem by well known Limerick poet John Liddy is also included, and the photographs were taken by Denis John, who produced the DVD.

In addition to the recollections of writer and journalist Doris Daly, A Tribute to Jerry O'Neill also features actress Treasa Ni Fhatharta from the Aran Islands, and painter Bernard Canavan, whose pictures on the theme of emigration illustrate the DVD

Born in Limerick, Jerry O'Neill was the son of the city's postmaster. He was educated at Augustinian College, Dungarvan, before he moved to England in the '50s, where he later founded the Sugawn Theatre and Sugawn Kitchen, a well-known

venue for plays and folk music.

"The young Chieftains and the Furey Brothers were among the famous that played there, and the Sugawn was the first pub theatre in London, and an Irish one at that, where Hugh Leonard's Da was premiered to critical acclaim. The rest is history and well documented in this DVD," Ms Daly added.

He has written a number of acclaimed plays and novels and received two Irish Post/Aib Awards. His plays include, Now You See Him, Now You Don't, Diehards, and God is Dead on the Ball's Pond Road. His novels, including Duffy Is Dead and Open Cut, were hailed as truly original works, earning him the accolade of being 'the laureate of the London Irish'.

He moved to live in Kilkee, where he completed his two last novels, Bennett and Company and Rellighan, Undertaker.

He died in 1999 in his seventies, shortly after being awarded the Kerry Ingredients Book of the Year Award for Bennett and Company.

The J.M. O'Neill Papers were donated to the Glucksman Library at the University of Limerick in November 2001 by Joe and Joan Hartnett.



Siobhan O'Connell president of Network Limerick, Tricia Murphy networking consultant and speaker to Network Limerick with Eamon Ryan, Limerick City Enterprise Board.

Teenagers charged with youth's murder

TWO teenagers appeared before Limerick District Court last Friday charged with the murder of Darren Coughlan in November 2005.

The 18-year-old from Pineview Gardens, Moyross, died a few days after he was assaulted on the Old Cratloe Road almost a year ago.

Shane Kelly of Oliver Plunkett Street, St

Solicitor for Mr Treacy, Pat Barriscale, asked Judge Tom O'Donnell if his client could be remanded to Limerick Prison for safety reasons.

Mr Treacy is a younger brother of Owen Treacy, the State's key witness in the murder trial of Kieran Keane.

Solicitor John Devane, who is acting for Mr Kelly, also

remanded in custody to appear before Limerick District Court again on November 5.

Mr Coughlan, an apprentice electrician, was on a life-support machine after the

assault on the Old Cratloe Road. However, he never regained consciousness and died from his injuries four days after the attack in the Regional Hospital.

Competition winners

THE Opera competition held a number of weeks ago has yielded the following winners.

1st prize Dave Harold, SCR Limerick.

A380 lands at Shannon

THE world's largest passenger airliner, the Airbus 380, landed at Shannon airport last Wednesday, and spent an hour and a half taking off and landing, conducting "cross wind training" and testing on-board systems, to the delight of local plane watchers.

The double-decker airbus A380 can carry up to 555 passengers in a three-class configuration or 853 in full economy class. However, the aircraft is still at testing stage and has not carried passengers as of yet.