



20  
YEARS

of  
**Ennis Book  
Club Festival**

6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> March 2026

We are grateful for the invaluable and continuous support of local media.

The Clare  Champion

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**glór**

who provide support as a venue and ticket platform

**Venues:**

**De Valera Library, Temple Gate Hotel, Old Ground Hotel,  
St. Columba's Church, Sweet'n'Green Café**

**Matt Purcell, Festival Sound Technician**

**Ian Malone Design**

**Realprint**

**Eamon Ward Photography**

**Our many volunteers**

**Our stage furniture at glór was kindly lent to the festival by  
Ennis Home Furniture, stage plants provided by Ennis Garden  
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*Photographs are taken at events at the festival and are available  
on our website and used for promotional purposes. If you would  
prefer not to be included in any photographs, please let either the  
photographer or one of our volunteers know.*

# Welcome to the 20<sup>th</sup> Ennis Book Club Festival

On behalf of myself and the organising committee, I am thrilled to welcome you to Ennis as we mark a remarkable milestone — the 20th Ennis Book Club Festival. For twenty years, this Festival has brought readers and writers together, creating a space where stories spark friendships and ideas take flight.

We are deeply grateful to the Arts Council of Ireland for their steadfast support, and to Clare County Council, Clare Libraries, Clare Arts Office and Creative Ireland Clare for helping us reach this special chapter.

Our thanks also go to our local partners in hospitality and retail, whose generosity and commitment reflect the true spirit of community that makes this Festival possible.

As you explore the programme, I hope you find events that delight, challenge and inspire. Here's to celebrating twenty years of shared stories — and to the many chapters still to come.



**Niamh  
O'Donovan**  
*Chairperson*

It is a huge pleasure to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the festival in 2026. When a passionate group of book lovers first started dreaming of a way to bring book clubs together with writers, they lit a hopeful spark.

Since then, the festival has grown to become an essential part of the literary landscape in Ireland, and we've welcomed writers and readers from all over the world to Ennis.

We are proud of all that the first volunteers achieved and each year seek to build on it and offer engaging, insightful and hopefully, surprising ways of bringing the written word to our flourishing audiences.

We come to Ennis for this weekend to share and reflect on the complex business of being human and to let our imaginations soar.

As James Baldwin once wrote: "You think your pain and your heartbreak are unprecedented... but then you read. It was books that taught me that the things that tormented me most were the very things that connected me with all the people who were alive".

Welcome to EBCF 2026!



**Martina  
Durac**  
*Artistic Director*

## EBCF 2026 Committee:

Niamh O'Donovan, Angela Connaughton, Mary Coffey,  
Louise Eccles, Denise Maher, Bríd Hayes

The committee can be contacted at:

[info@ennisbookclubfestival.com](mailto:info@ennisbookclubfestival.com)

## Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March

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*All events are ticketed. Pre-booking advised.*

Booking on  
[www.ennisbookclubfestival.com](http://www.ennisbookclubfestival.com)  
 and with  
 glór box office on (065) 68 43103



### The Hare's Corner - Jane Carkill, Catherine Cleary and Pranjali Bhawe in conversation with Áine Bird



Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March | 12pm | Temple Gate Hotel | Free but ticketed

*The Hare's Corner – Making Space for Nature* celebrates the quiet, hopeful revolution in Ireland, where people are restoring habitats and reconnecting with the land. This beautifully illustrated book by Catherine Cleary and poet Jane Clarke shares inspiring stories from farmers, families, schools, and community groups, showing how small actions can spark big change. With enchanting illustrations by Jane Carkill and striking photography, it invites readers to rediscover nature. At this event, Jane Carkill, Catherine Cleary and Pranjali Bhawe, Impact Research at Burrenbeo, in conversation with Dr Áine Bird, Burrenbeo CEO, discuss the book, their creative process, and ways to take action for nature.

### John Gibbons in conversation with Féidhlim Harty

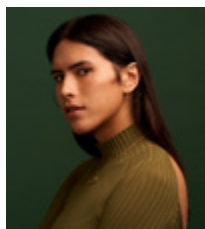


Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March | 2pm | Temple Gate Hotel | Free but ticketed

*The Lie of the Land* by John Gibbons is a fascinating critique of the decisions that have left Ireland ecologically vulnerable, exposing the relationship between farm leaders and the State and the wishful thinking sustaining agribusiness. In conversation with environmental consultant Féidhlim Harty, Gibbons discusses the crisis in Irish farming and agriculture, while offering solutions for a sustainable future. He advocates a farming revolution, renewable energy expansion, and accelerated decarbonisation of transport and housing. The book also highlights successes, including halving home emissions since 2005 and growing onshore wind and solar power, presenting an inspiring vision for Ireland's climate-ready future.



## Love & Change - New LGBTQ+ Writing Seán Hewitt, Chloe Michelle Howarth & Nicola Dinan in conversation with Jackie Lynam



Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March | 4pm | Temple Gate Hotel | €14/12

The festival is delighted to welcome Chloe Michelle Howarth, *Heap Earth Upon It*, Nicola Dinan, *Disappoint Me*, and Seán Hewitt, *Open, Heaven* for this panel event celebrating distinctive narratives and the power of representation. Their lyrical and sometimes surprising work offers a multitude of perspectives on identity, intimacy, and community. This session will be moderated by Jackie Lynam, author of *Traces: Poems and Essays*. It promises to engage with fresh stories that expand and challenge the literary landscape. Their work is nuanced and tender, exploring new and familiar themes: obligation, obsession, belonging and life on the periphery.

## Poetry 2026 Karen J McDonnell, Erin Fornoff & Molly Twomey



Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March | 4pm | De Valera Library | Free but ticketed

EBCF is delighted to give voice to our poets who consistently shine a piercing light on the business of living. The new poetry collection by Karen J McDonnell is *Tidal*, published by Doire Press. It explores memory, history, and personal responses to the world.

Erin Fornoff's *We Are An Archipelago* was published in 2025. It is based on her one-woman spoken word show, telling the story of an elderly man's return to his island home. *Chic to be Sad* by Molly Twomey explores a young woman's report from the front lines of experience. There's a sense of the aftermath of illness and the poems are infused with physical and emotional vulnerability.

## New Perspectives in Writing - Wendy Erskine, Oona Frawley & Oisín Fagan in conversation with Aoife Barry



Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March | 6pm | Temple Gate Hotel | €14/12

This event will bring together three of the most exciting writers in Ireland today, who play with form and content in surprising and inventive ways. In conversation with Aoife Barry, journalist and author (*Social Capital*), they will explore the dazzling ways they have constructed their latest work.

*The Benefactors* by Wendy Erskine is set in Belfast and unfolds as a polyphonic narrative, featuring more than fifty distinct voices. From the prize-winning author of *Dance Move* and *Sweet Home*, this rigorously intelligent novel explores intimate histories, class, and money in modern-day Northern Ireland — and what it truly means to be a parent.

How do we live when our loved ones are dying? How do we make sense of the world in their wake? In *This Interim Time*, Oona Frawley explores the death of her father in New York, the loss of her parents' home in Ireland before she was born, and the births of her children. It is a stunning meditation on memory, family and the brief windows of life we share with those we love.

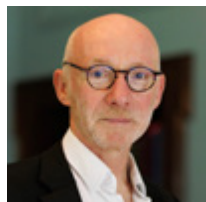
A wildly inventive and epic tale of greed, revenge and love set in eighteenth-century Latin America, *Eden's Shore* by Oisín Fagan is a shimmering work. Angel Kelly, an Irishman, sets sail from Liverpool with the intention of creating a Utopian commune in Brazil. But when a mutiny takes place on the ship, he finds himself stranded upon the coast of an unnamed Spanish colony.

*The winner of the 2026 Ennis Book Club Festival Short Story competition will read at this event.*



## Clare-based Writers

Karen Fitzgibbon, Joe Queally & Michael McTigue  
in conversation with Diarmuid de Faoite



Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March | 6pm | St. Columba's Church | €14/12

The festival looks forward to sharing the work of our locally-based writers in this event moderated by actor and writer Diarmuid de Faoite.

*Never Look Back* by Karen Fitzgibbon begins when a young mother, Clara, vanishes in Limerick, leaving behind a new-born baby. A tangled web of secrets and deception follows.

Joe Queally has earned distinction for his writing on locally-based historical narratives. *Tragedies of Clare* includes stories relating to the Land War and the years around the Easter Rising.

*Dust, Dirt & Politics* is the memoir of Kilnamona sculptor Michael McTigue. His work is to be seen all around: from the Michael Cusack statue at Cusack Park to the Muhammad Ali plaque at the Turnpike in Ennis.

Diarmuid de Faoite will also read from his new book of translations, *Pádraic Ó Conaire - Scothscéalta/Best Stories*.

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## Festival Weekend Opening

# Ennis Book Club Festival

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March | 7pm | Súil Gallery | Free

Join us at the beautiful Súil Gallery to celebrate the opening of our 20th festival. This is the perfect chance to connect with friends, both old and new, and explore the exciting events planned for the weekend. Enjoy a warm welcome, lively conversation, and a taste of the creativity and inspiration the festival has to offer. We look forward to celebrating with you.

## A Celebration of Irish Fiction Michael Harding, Edel Coffey & Anna Carey in conversation with Declan Hughes



Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March | 8pm | glór | €17/15

Irish writers consistently produce work that is thrilling and unmissable. Our guests on this panel will explore the mystery and magic that is behind their latest work, in conversation with writer and critic Declan Hughes.

Michael Harding's new book, *Midwinter*, is a poignant exploration of a season of loss, and the glimpses of hope that can follow even the longest nights. The Irish Times said of it: "Michael Harding has bestowed on us a beguiling meditation on life and death, in these quiet and profound reflections on how he endures the midwinter months".

Twenty years ago, Eddie's career as a journalist was destroyed by the Juliet Fox case. Juliet was born into the privileged world of the Manhattan elite. In *Glass Houses*, the new book by Edel Coffey, Eddie sees how far the rich and powerful are prepared to go when their way of life is threatened. Edel is an Irish novelist, journalist and broadcaster. She has worked as an editor for The Irish Independent, a presenter and reporter for RTE and is a regular contributor to the Irish Times.

Anna Carey is an Irish Book Award-winning novelist, journalist, editor and scriptwriter. Her first adult novel, *Our Song*, published in June 2025, was shortlisted for Popular Fiction Book of the Year at the An Post Irish Book Awards. A nostalgic and heartfelt love story, it features richly drawn, memorable characters. Her second romance novel, *Love Scene*, will be published in summer 2026.

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### Books and Buns Quiz



Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March | 9.30am | Temple Gate Hotel | €15

Start your Saturday morning with our much-loved Books and Buns Quiz - a delightful book club gathering that will put your literary knowledge to the test.

Enjoy refreshments as you gear up for a busy day of festival activities. Participate in teams of four - bring your own team or join with fellow attendees to form a team of four on the day.

Spaces fill quickly, so early booking is highly recommended. Don't miss this fun and interactive start to your festival experience!

### Walking Tour of Ennis



Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March | 9.30am | Meet at glór | €10

Join Jane O'Brien for her award-winning walking tour of Ennis, exploring many of the town's major sights and hidden gems.

Highly praised as the best way to experience the charm and history of Ennis, this tour offers an unforgettable journey through its streets. Don't miss the opportunity to see the town through Jane's expert and captivating storytelling.

## Hugo Hamilton in conversation with Éilís Ní Dhuibhne



Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March | 10am | St. Columba's Church | €14/12

Hugo Hamilton is one of Ireland's most critically acclaimed writers. In his latest book, *Conversation with the Sea*, a man returns to the west coast of Ireland, last seen on his honeymoon 20 years earlier. His marriage in Berlin is collapsing. His wife is under investigation for her possible role in a student protest; their daughter has stopped eating properly. He brings only a notebook, filling it with images and fragments. The Irish Times said of it: 'the novel is rendered with a timeless, dreamlike purity'.

In this discussion with the Laureate for Irish Fiction, Éilís Ní Dhuibhne, Hugo will talk about what lies behind the subtle exploration of truth, illusion and memory at the heart of this captivating story of love and displacement.

Hugo is also the best-selling author of *The Speckled People*, a memoir of his German-Irish childhood in Dublin, growing up with his German mother and prohibited by his revolutionary Irish father from speaking English. It was translated into twenty languages and adapted for stage at the Gate Theatre. His novels include *Dublin Palms* and *The Pages*. His stories have appeared in the New Yorker. Hugo won the Bundesverdienstkreuz Order of Merit, awarded by the German state for his exploration of cultural diversity.

## Ten Books You Should Read

Bryan Dobson & Cecelia Ahern with Ciana Campbell



Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March | 11.30am | glór | €17/15

This year's festival continues its tradition of showcasing diverse and thought-provoking voices from the Irish writing community. One of the most popular events of the festival promises to be a cracker in 2026. In this session, two guests share the books that have inspired them. Each chooses five titles to discuss, and the conversation often leads to unexpected choices and thoughtful recommendations.

Bryan Dobson was one of RTE's most popular news journalists until his recent retirement. In his 37-year career he presented all the station's main radio and television news programmes, including the Six-One TV News, Morning Ireland and the News at One on RTE Radio One. He has since gone on to present documentaries.

Cecelia Ahern is one of Ireland's most popular writers. Since her debut novel, *PS I Love You*, she has written fifteen novels. These have sold more than 25 million copies and been published in over thirty-seven languages. Her best-known books include *A Place Called Here*, *The Year I Met You* and *If You Could See Me Now*. Cecelia's books have been adapted for screen. She says of her work, "I like to catch my characters as they fall, and bring them from low to high".

This event will be moderated by award-winning broadcaster and journalist, Ciana Campbell.

### Debut Novelists - Elaine Garvey, Shane Tivenan & Claire Gleeson in conversation with Eoin Devereux



Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March | 2pm | glór | €14/12

*Show Me Where It Hurts* by Claire Gleeson, winner of the Irish Book Awards Newcomer of the Year, explores a family shattered by loss with perceptive delicacy. Shane Tivenan, award-winning author of *To Avenge a Dead Glacier*, presents stories of outsiders and the isolated, blending sensitivity, wit, and pathos. Elaine Garvey's debut novel *The Wardrobe Department*, shortlisted for the An Post Irish Book Awards, follows a protagonist navigating belonging and the past across London and Ireland's theatre world. These beautifully written works will be discussed at the festival in conversation with Professor Eoin Devereux, cultural sociologist, writer, and musician.

### Beyond Borders Book Club Cecilia Brizuela, Aneta Stepień & Mercedes Verona in conversation with Sarah Clancy



Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March | 2pm | Temple Gate Hotel | Free but ticketed

The Beyond Borders Book Club showcases great writing from countries beyond Ireland, recommended by guests with personal connections to those places. This year's panel includes Cecilia Brizuela, Aneta Stepień, and Mercedes Verona, in conversation with poet Sarah Clancy. Books discussed include Gabriela Cabezón Cámara's *The Adventures of China Iron*, Olga Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead*, and Leonardo Padura's *The Man Who Loved Dogs*. The event explores diverse narratives and perspectives, offering insights into different cultures while highlighting the universal connections that link us across societies and experiences worldwide.

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An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt,  
Gnóthaí Baile agus Imirce  
Department of Justice,  
Home Affairs and Migration



## Festival Book Club with The Tired Mammy Book Club



Tired Mammy Book Club



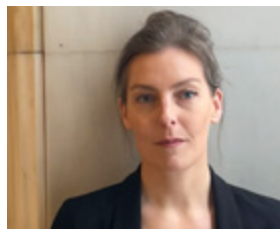
Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March | 3.30pm | De Valera Library | Free *but ticketed*

Celebrate the joy of reading together in this welcoming discussion led by our visiting book club The Tired Mammy Book Club. Founded by Sinéad Cuddihy, this online book club hosts monthly meetings and in-person meet-ups three to four times a year. Sinéad created the club after returning to work following her first child's birth, to reconnect with reading and build community. Over seven years, she has grown a following of 13,500+, launched #TiredMammy30minutes, interviewed bestselling authors, spoken at festivals, appeared on podcasts, and will lead a discussion on *Moving On* by Roisin Meaney.

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## Climate Fiction - Abi Daré & Caoilinn Hughes in conversation with Will Govan



Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March | 4pm | Temple Gate Hotel | €14/12

Scientists have been warning about global warming's dire consequences for decades. Governments and industry haven't listened. Now novelists are taking up the challenge. As Amitav Ghosh has written, "The climate crisis asks us to imagine other forms of human existence - a task to which fiction is the best suited of all cultural forms."

In this panel, we are delighted to welcome Abi Daré, winner of the inaugural Climate Fiction Prize 2025 for *And So I Roar* and Caoilinn Hughes, a New York Times Editor's Choice for her novel *The Alternatives*. They will be in conversation with Will Govan, editor of Irish literary journal, *The Moth*, about their astonishing and timely new works.

## Remembering Nell McCafferty Rosita Sweetman, Muire McCallion & Ailbhe Smyth



Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March | 4pm | glór | €14/12

Nell McCafferty was one of the most remarkable journalists and campaigners of recent Irish history. Her immense reputation and outspoken views on women's rights, gay rights and Irish nationalism helped Ireland move on from an era of stifling social conservatism. The festival is moved to honour her in this special event with Rosita Sweetman, Ailbhe Smyth and Muire McCallion (Nell's niece).

A Derry woman and civil rights activist, Nell was present on Bloody Sunday in 1972, when paratroopers shot dead 14 civil rights protesters in Derry. "It is not a myth that all of us there were changed for evermore by the experience; it is a fact," she wrote later. "It is in the Derry air. It is limned in our blood."

Fellow founder of the Irish Women's Liberation Movement, writer Rosita Sweetman met Nell at a time when "down south we were politely attempting to extricate ourselves from the deathly embrace of Catholicism and respectability". Muire McCallion feels that Nell belonged to the Bogside in Derry and remembers her firebrand aunt with great affection. Ailbhe Smyth recalls Nell McCafferty as a feminist and an activist who cared deeply for those who were marginalised. We are looking forward to a very special event here.

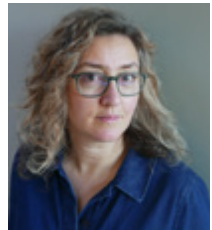
**Clare Youth Theatre presents**  
**‘The Freedom to Read is the Liberation of the Spirit.’**



Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March | 4.30pm | De Valera Library | Free but ticketed

Clare Youth Theatre celebrates 21 years of creativity as part of the County Clare Arts Office. Its first production, *Ex Libris (Out of Books)*, was a site-specific performance in the De Valera Library, exploring free access to books and the role of libraries. This year, the company invites audiences to enjoy performances of works chosen and performed by young people, celebrating the new library and the Ennis Book Club Festival. Directed by Eleanor Feely, the event reflects T.S. Eliot's words: "And the end of all our exploring will be to arrive back at the place we started and know the place for the first time."

**Historical Fiction – Andrew Miller, Sarah Waters &**  
**Nuala O'Connor in conversation with Juliana Adelman**



Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March | 6pm | Temple Gate Hotel | €14/12

Historical fiction lets us explore the human side of history, bringing the past alive through vivid detail, rich characters, and emotional depth. This panel, moderated by historian and writer Juliana Adelman, features three acclaimed authors. Sarah Waters, author of *Tipping the Velvet*, *Fingersmith*, and *The Little Stranger*, has won the Betty Trask and Somerset Maugham Awards. Andrew Miller, whose latest novel *The Land in Winter* won the 2025 Walter Scott Prize and was Booker-shortlisted, brings his masterful storytelling. Nuala O'Connor's recent works, *Seaborne* and *Nora*, reimagine historical figures with insight and nuance, earning critical acclaim.

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## Anne Enright in conversation with Niamh Campbell



Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March | 8pm | glór | €17/15

The festival is honoured to welcome Anne Enright to explore her writing life and latest work in a wide-ranging conversation with Niamh Campbell. *Attention* is a collection of essays in which Anne turns her acute gaze on identity, power, memory and the spaces where personal and public meet. The Guardian review said, “each precious line needs going over twice. First for the sound and shape of the words, the second for their meaning”.

Her other books include *The Wren*, *The Wren*, *The Green Road* and *Actress*. She was the inaugural Laureate for Irish Fiction and won the Booker Prize in 2007 for her novel, *The Gathering*. Her work has been described by the writer Angela Carter as “elegant, scrupulously poised, always intelligent and, not least, original”.

Anne has said of the act of writing “If you keep close to your sentences, to the sweetness of getting them right, then you will be interested, you will be safe in your imagining, and the words will flow”. Anne won The Andrew Carnegie medal for Excellence in Fiction, The Writers’ Prize for Fiction, the Seamus Heaney Award for Arts and Letters and The Windham Campbell Prize.

Niamh Campbell is the author of *This Happy* and *We Were Young*. Her latest book is *Make Strange*. She has won the Rooney Prize for Irish Literature and the Sunday Times Audible Short Story Award.

### Hush Hour



Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March | 9.30am | Sweet N Green Café | Free but ticketed

Step into Hush Hour, a reading party that redefines social gatherings for book lovers. You are invited to bring your favourite book, indulge in some solo reading, and connect with like-minded individuals for an hour. A facilitator will then open the floor to discussion about the books for the final 15 minutes of the session.

### Sunday Miscellany



Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March | 11.30am | glór | €17/15

The late Manchán Magan described Sunday Miscellany as “dispatches from a country brimming with soul”. With a simple format of short essays, memoir pieces and the occasional poem interspersed with complementary music, this jewel in the RTÉ Radio 1 schedule attracts over 300,000 listeners every Sunday morning. It has been part of the lives of listeners for over half a century on Irish radio.

It features a spectrum of writing talent, from household names to outstanding new voices.

Since the programme's first broadcast in 1968, it has built its own space for listeners to escape to on Sunday morning, with the very best of new writing insights delivered conversationally to the audience.

The show explores themes of Irish life, culture, and personal reflection, and offers a quiet and reflective space for listeners. The show's success is evidenced by the large audience it commands and its 2023 Irish Book Award for a selection of its published pieces. The festival is thrilled to welcome Sunday Miscellany to Ennis for this special recording.

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## Literary Lunch Dr Marie Cassidy in conversation with Catherine Kirwan



Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March | 1.30pm | Old Ground Hotel | €30

Marie Cassidy became a forensic pathologist in 1985 following her training as a histopathologist. She worked in the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology in Glasgow investigating unnatural deaths and homicides, from gangland shootings and stabbings to drugs deaths, road traffic accidents and suicides.

In 1998 she moved to Ireland and later was appointed State Pathologist. Her name became synonymous with murder and tragedy. In over thirty years of practice, she has performed thousands of postmortems and dealt with hundreds of murders. She has witnessed the burgeoning role of forensic science and the impact that has had on investigations and the expectations of the general public, while embracing new technology and welcoming the input of experts in the other sciences.

Her debut crime novel, *Body of Truth*, came out in 2023 and was one of the top ten highest selling novels in Ireland in 2023. Her latest novel *Deadly Evidence* was published in 2025. Dr. Terry O'Brien has just been appointed assistant state pathologist and the brutal killing of Detective Garda Martin Higgins in a gangland-style execution ensures that she is obliged to dive in at the deep end.

This promises to be a fascinating encounter as Marie will be in conversation with fellow crime novelist Catherine Kirwan, author of *Cruel Deeds*, *The Darkest Truth* and *The Seventh Body*.

*A light lunch is served. Please inform the Hotel directly of any dietary requirements.*

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# Children & Young Adult Events

## Clare Libraries Events

We are delighted to be partnering once again with Clare Libraries to offer readings and workshops with young adult authors, facilitators and visual artists. These events will take place in De Valera Library, Ennis and Seán Lemass Library, Shannon. They will be offered directly to Secondary Schools to book for class groups.

Booking enquiries can be made by contacting:

**De Valera Library, Ennis - (065) 68 91317**

**Seán Lemass Library, Shannon - (061) 364266**

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## Ennis Book Club Festival Events

Ennis Book Club Festival events as part of the Children and Young Adults programme will take place in glór and require pre-booking.

**A Talk on the Work of Seamus Heaney with Gillian Chute**

**Alex Dunne in conversation with Sarah Moore Fitzgerald**

**Interactive Writing Workshop for Children - Alex Dunne & Laura Keohane**

Please call glór box office on (065) 684 3103 to secure your tickets.



### ■ Word Power with Deirdre Devally



This workshop supports students preparing for exams by exploring how self-talk and the power of words can either support or hinder success. It offers practical tools to calm racing thoughts, including journaling methods, simple breathwork techniques, and confidence-boosting 'Power Poses'. Students receive a journal and leave with strategies to use before, during, and after exams to stay grounded, clear, and focused. The session is experiential and includes laughter—an essential part of wellbeing. Deirdre Devally is a writer and experienced facilitator with an MA in Creative Writing.

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March | Free | 10.30am–11.30am | Ennis Library  
Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March | Free | 10.30am–11.30am | Shannon Library

### ■ Fighting Words



Fighting Words is delighted to bring a two-hour short story writing workshop to Clare Libraries for Teen Week 2026. The session begins with a collaborative story-writing exercise using improvisation to develop characters, setting, and plot, with participants editing as they go. In the second half, participants either complete the collective story individually or work on their own pieces. The workshop concludes with optional sharing, with guidance and encouragement from the Fighting Words team throughout.

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March | Free  
10am–12pm | Ennis Library  
1pm–3pm | Shannon Library

### ■ Kel Menton



Kel Menton, a writer from Cork, enjoys collecting fox paraphernalia, reading tarot, and dyeing their hair unusual colours. Their debut novel, *A Fix of Light* (Little Island, 2025), is the focus of this online interactive writing class. Participants will engage in exercises to generate story ideas and write independently. Kel will also discuss their novel, artistic journey, experience as an author, and the path to getting published.

*The session will be hosted online, with a link sent to attendees.*

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March | Free  
10am–11am | Online  
12:30pm–1.30pm | Online

### ■ Eco Soap Making with Aoife Munn



Discover how the type of soap you use can impact the environment and make your own eco bar of soap. This lovely creative session gives you lots of choice to make a soap that's perfect for you with a wide range of fragrances, colours, shapes and extras.

Aoife Munn is a horticulturist and environmentalist who works with communities to improve biodiversity and reduce waste through education.

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March | Free  
10am–11.30am | Ennis Library  
12.30pm–2pm | Shannon Library

### Gráinne O'Brien



When Gráinne began writing *So/lo*, she didn't particularly like poetry, which made writing a poetic verse novel challenging. She explored poetry beyond what she had studied in school, finding inspiration in unexpected places. In this interactive workshop, students will join Gráinne to discover how poetry can deepen our understanding of the world and ourselves, and how to find inspiration in poems we might never have encountered. Winner of the An Post Teen & Young Adult Book of the Year 2025, Gráinne brings over a decade of experience in bookselling, literary services, and creative writing education.

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March | Free  
10.30am–11.30am | Shannon Library  
12.30pm–1.30pm | Ennis Library

### A Talk on the Work of Seamus Heaney with Gillian Chute



Seamus Heaney is regarded as one of the finest poets to come from Ireland. He was the author of over 20 volumes of poetry and criticism, and edited several anthologies. He won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1995 "for works of lyrical beauty and ethical depth, which exalt everyday miracles and the living past."

His work is notable for its evocation of Irish rural life and events in Irish history as well as for its exploration of myth. His books include *Death of a Naturalist*, *Field Work*, and *Spirit Level*.

In this event, Gillian Chute, of Gillian Chute Leaving Cert English, will explore these themes and much more in an insightful talk. It will touch upon the work by Seamus Heaney that is part of the school curriculum and will delve into his use of language, image and metaphor.

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March  
Free but pre-booking required  
10am–11am | glór



## Children's Bookclub Event - Alex Dunne in conversation with Sarah Moore Fitzgerald



Alex Dunne's first children's novel, *The Book of Secrets*, was published by The O'Brien Press in 2022 and went on to win the Eilís Dillon Award at the 2023 KPMG Children's Book Ireland Awards. A follow-up novel, *The Harp of Power*, was published in 2023. Her new book is *Small Magics* and in this event she'll discuss the power of magic and adventure in her books.



Prizes for the winning entries in the Ennis Book Club Festival schools' writing competition will be presented. This competition was hosted in conjunction with the annual schools' Book Club series hosted by Sarah Moore Fitzgerald and Supported by Creative Ireland.

Schools wishing to book tickets should phone glór box office on (065) 68 43103

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March | 12pm–1pm | glór | Free but pre-booking required

## Interactive Writing Workshop for Children with Alex Dunne & Laura Keohane



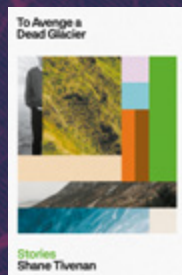
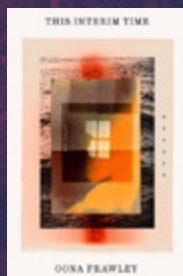
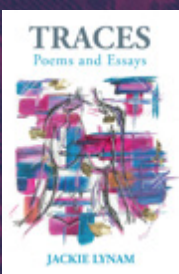
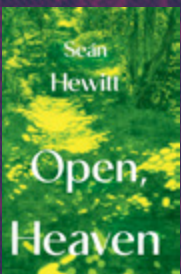
*Myths, Magic & Making Stories* is a one-hour interactive creative writing workshop designed for children aged 9–12. Through discussion, readings, and hands-on writing activities, participants will explore how mythology and folklore can inspire original storytelling. This session will be co-facilitated by local children's authors Alex Dunne and Laura Keohane.



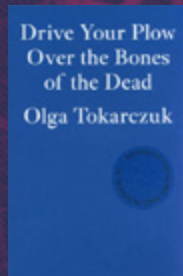
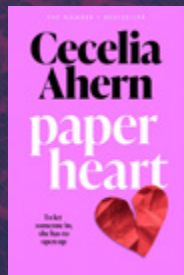
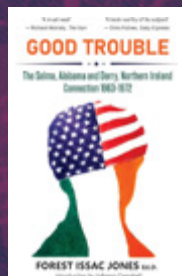
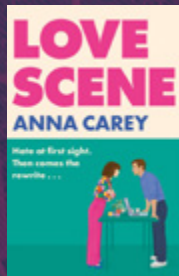
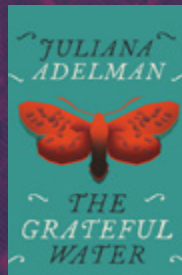
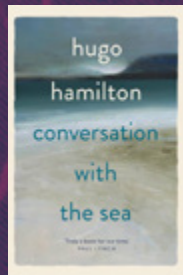
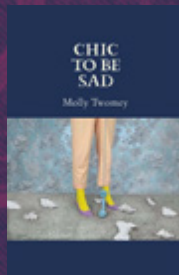
Drawing heavily on Irish folklore and mythology in their work, they will share insights into how ancient tales can spark new adventures in fiction. The workshop will engage young writers with examples, imaginative prompts, and a fun, supportive environment to begin creating their own myth-inspired characters and stories.

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March | 11am–12pm | glór Studio | €5

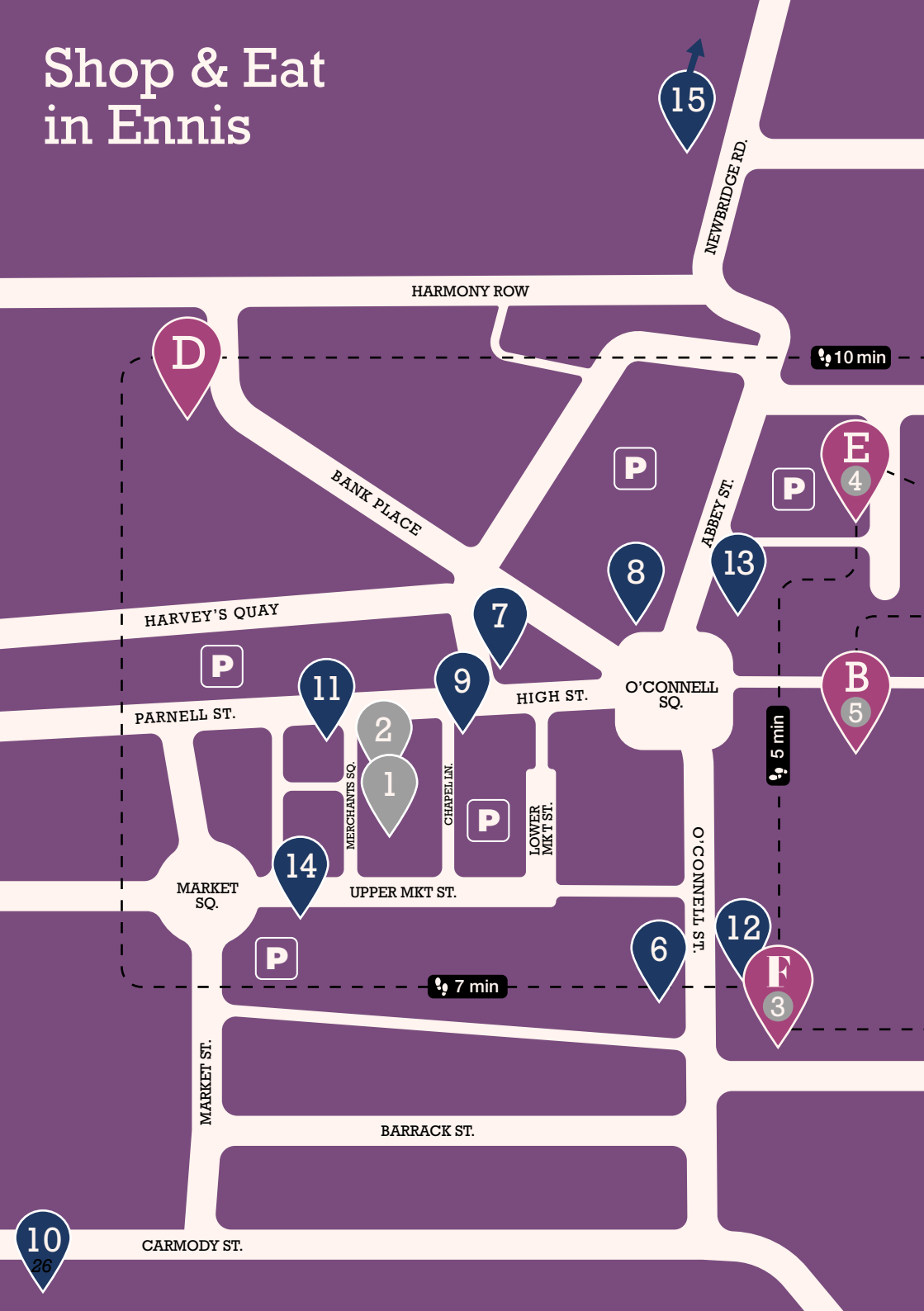
# The Books of EBCF '26

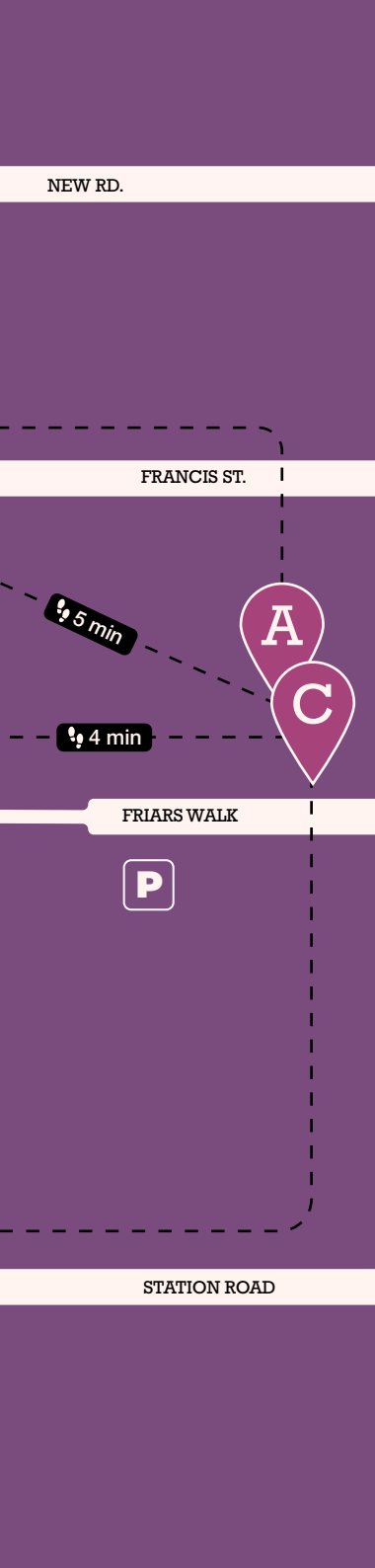






# Shop & Eat in Ennis





## Restaurants & Cafes

### 1. Eva's Café

*Merchant's Square, (065) 68 23901*

### 2. Mondo Coffee Shop

*Merchant's Square, (087) 955 8339*

### 3. Old Ground Hotel

*31 O'Connell Street, (065) 68 44325*

### 4. Sweet'n'Green Café

*Friary Car Park, (065) 68 21724*

### 5. Temple Gate Hotel

*The Square, (065) 68 23300*

## Shops

### 6. County Boutique

*57 O'Connell Street, [www.countyboutique.ie](http://www.countyboutique.ie)*

### 7. Ela Maria

*4 Salt House Lane, [www.elamaria.ie](http://www.elamaria.ie)*

### 8. Eye Care Centre

*O'Connell Square, [facebook.com/Eye-Care-Centre](https://facebook.com/Eye-Care-Centre)*

### 9. Freya Boutique

*16 Parnell Street, [facebook.com/FreyaBoutique](https://facebook.com/FreyaBoutique)*

### 10. Mulqueen's Florist

*9 Carmody Street, [www.flowersbymulqueens.com](http://www.flowersbymulqueens.com)*

### 12. O'Mahony's Booksellers

*Merchants Square, [www.omahonys.ie](http://www.omahonys.ie)*

### 13. Pamela Scott Ennis

*50 O'Connell Street, [www.pamelascott.com](http://www.pamelascott.com)*

### 14. The Ennis Book Shop

*13 Abbey Street, [www.ennisbookshop.ie](http://www.ennisbookshop.ie)*

### 15. Vaughan's Garden Centre

*Gort Road Business Park, [www.vaughansgardencentre.com](http://www.vaughansgardencentre.com)*

## Venues

### A. glór

### B. Temple Gate Hotel

### C. De Valera Library/Súil Gallery

### D. St. Columba's Church

### E. Sweet'n'Green Café

### F. Old Ground Hotel



# FRINGE

AT EBCF '26

EBCF is delighted to bring the Fringe back to the festival in 2026. This year will feature a number of music and spoken word events hosted at smaller venues. Please check our website and social media for the full Fringe programme as the Festival weekend draws near.

American author, **Forest Issac Jones**, will join us in **Súil Gallery** at 4pm, **Friday 6th March** to talk about his new book, *Good Trouble: The Selma, Alabama and Derry, Northern Ireland Connection 1963-1972*. The book explores the links between the Black Civil Rights Movement in the U.S. and the Civil Rights Movement in Northern Ireland.

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March | Súil Gallery | 4pm | Free *but ticketed*

At 12pm, Saturday March 7<sup>th</sup>, **John Tunney** will launch *Where Songs Do Thunder*, a new edition of his father Paddy Tunney's classic song book that mixes memoir, folklore and poetry to evoke the era of the 1950s' folk revival and the 1960s' ballad boom. The event will feature readings and music.

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March | Súil Gallery | 12pm | Free *but ticketed*

**Inis Creative Writers Group (ICWG)** will celebrate their fifteenth anniversary and their second anthology, *In The Air*. It features a rich mix of poetry and prose, with each piece reflecting the unique voice and style of its writer.

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March | Súil Gallery | 4pm | Free *but ticketed*

*We also hope to have another surprise or two for you, so keep an eye on the website...*

All event and booking information can be found at  
[www.ennisbookclubfestival.com](http://www.ennisbookclubfestival.com)



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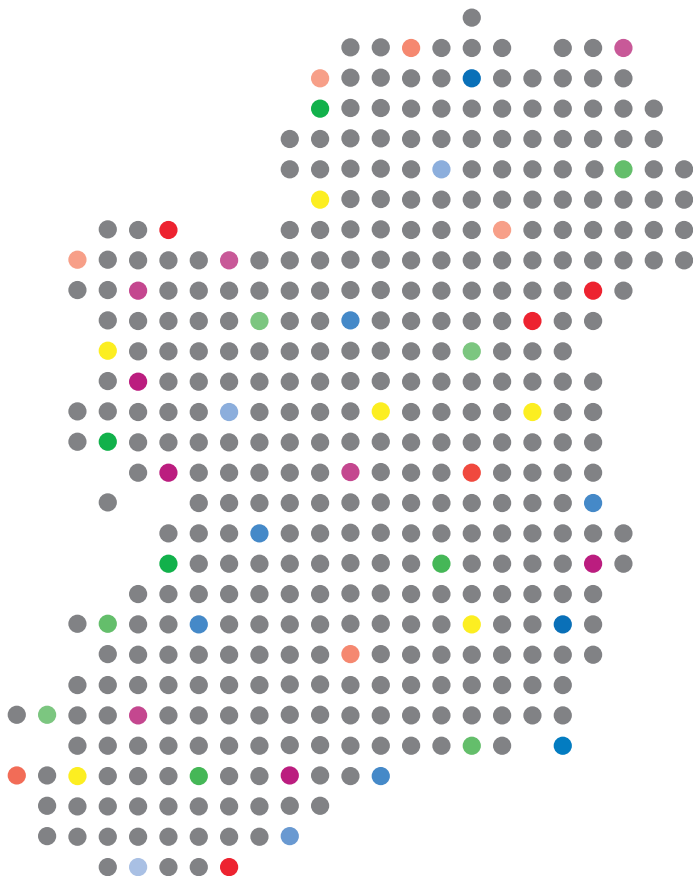
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