



Sixmilebridge Youth Club

# Once Upon A MEMORY



21st, 22nd and 23rd April at 7pm  
Sixmilebridge GAA Hall.



2022



**I**n 1982 Sixmilebridge Youth Club was formed by Flan Spaight which means we are celebrating 40 years in existence. In 1984 Flan was joined by Frances Downes. Frances has written, produced and directed every production staged by Sixmilebridge Youth Club up to 2020.

In late 2020 we received a phone call from Frances who told us that she had decided to call time on her role with Sixmilebridge Youth Club. I think all of us who received that phone call that day were absolutely gutted. Because we were in the middle of a pandemic we could do nothing to celebrate her achievements.

As restrictions began to be lifted a group of us met up to see where we would go from here and the idea for tonight's show was born. We decided to hold a tribute show for Frances. We have done our very best to keep this from her and I'm not sure if we have succeeded.

**Everything you see on stage over the next few nights has been the brainchild of Frances.**

When we reached out to previous cast members down through the years, we were inundated with people who wanted to be involved and the general reply was "I'll do anything for Frances" and we are overwhelmed and so grateful to all our returning cast members for their commitment to this show.

We always knew how hard Frances worked for each show but it was only when we took on this task that we realised exactly how much she did.....

We can't mention Frances without acknowledging Tony Downes. Tony looked after our lights, our backdrops and everything else that was needed. To replace Tony this year we had to call in the professionals to assist us and that in itself showed how much he did for Sixmilebridge Youth Club.

To many people Frances is Sixmilebridge Youth Club, she is a huge loss to us but we will do everything we can to continue to have the passion that she instilled in us all and continue giving young people in the village the chance to express themselves through music, dance and comedy.

## OUR PRODUCTION TEAM



CIARA DOWNES



SHARON KENNEDY



KATE FLYNN



LIAM TOGHER



GRACE COLLINS

PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS: KAYLUM MAXWELL, BEN NAUGHTON SHIRES

CHOREOGRAPHY: KACI TOOMEY, EMMANUEL OKUBANJO, LAUREN KELLY

SOUND & LIGHTING: LUMATECH

FRONT OF HOUSE TEAM: BREDA MOLONEY, EILEEN DEVANNY, MARY CARROLL, OLLIE CAHILL, CARMEL HOGAN, SHARON MAXWELL.

BACKSTAGE TEAM: SHARON KENNEDY, CIARA DOWNES, KRISTIN HORAN, EMMANUEL OKUBANJO, AOIFE CADOGAN, KATE FLYNN, KACI TOOMEY, NOELEEN MURPHY, SAOIRSE DOWNES, RICHARD GERMAINE, KAYLUM MAXWELL, KEVIN TOOMEY, MARTA PIETRZYK.

PROGRAMME: DAVID R SHIRES,  
(THEIMAGEDESIGNS.COM)

## OUR PRODUCTION TEAM



NOREEN MURPHY  
COSTUMES



KACI TOOMEY  
CHOREOGRAPHY



EMMANUEL OKUBANDO  
CHOREOGRAPHY



LAUREN KELLY  
CHOREOGRAPHY

### APPRECIATIONS:

We wish to sincerely thank those who have contributed their valuable time and efforts.

What you see here tonight is the result of many months of hard work, not just by the people on stage but also by the many people who work behind the scenes. Our committee and production team have been hard at work since May 2021 and a show such as ours simply couldn't come together without the commitment of everyone involved.

We had additional challenges in running rehearsals due to Covid - the masks only came off in February! Our cast have been fantastic and adapted to every restriction we had to implement.

Our backstage crew keep the show on the road for each performance and both our front of house team and Sixmilebridge GAA Club also deserve special thanks.

After a year off, all our equipment was dusty - especially our stage backdrop! We would like to give special thanks to Ted and Richard Germaine and Jack Walsh for helping us to get this up and running again.

Thanks to Kaylum, Stacey, Miriam and Marta for working in our shop at the interval.

We would like to thank our ticket outlets - Centra, Tim Crowe's Gala and Reddan's Post Office, who kindly facilitate us each year.

While reminiscing for this show we were reminded of former members and leaders who are no longer with us. We remember them fondly.

We also have to give special mention to O'Flynn's Centra, and Ollie in particular, who have been fantastic throughout the year, providing hand sanitiser, chocolate and supplies for Food Sunday which was much appreciated by our cast and production team!

We would like to thank our programme sponsors, whose support contributed greatly to the production costs of this pantomime.

Finally, you, the audience - without your continued support we would not be able to do this year after year.

Committee 2022

#### Co-Chairpersons

Clara Downes & Sharon Kennedy

#### Secretary

Kate Flynn

#### Treasurer

Marta Pietrzky

#### Assistant Treasurer

Kevin Toomey

#### Child Protection Officer

Kristin Horan

#### Registrar

Aoife Cadogan

#### PRO & Digital Media Officer

Sharon Maxwell

#### Covid Officer

Kevin Toomey

RUNNING ORDER

ACT ONE

BRAND NEW DAY

PANTO 1: RAPUNZEL

A STAR IS BORN / SOMEBODY TO LOVE

FOOTLOOSE

CAN'T STOP THE BEAT

PANTO 2: PETER PAN

UPTOWN FUNK

LAND OF MAKE BELIEVE

PANTO 3: PINOCCHIO

DEAD RINGER FOR LOVE

BORN THIS WAY

EDGE OF GLORY

PANTO 4: WIZARD OF OZ

STEPS MEDLEY

TOGETHER IN ELECTRIC DREAMS

RUNNING ORDER

ACT TWO

PANTO 5: JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

RIVER DEEP MOUNTAIN HIGH

VIDEO KILLED THE RADIO STAR

MAGIC OF THE MUSICALS

BELLE

BE OUR GUEST

AT THE END OF THE DAY

BRING HIM HOME

MASTER OF THE HOUSE

ON MY OWN

ONE DAY MORE & DO YOU HEAR THE PEOPLE SING

THE 1990S.

EYE OF THE TIGER

ROCKY

YOU'RE THE VOICE

SOMETHING INSIDE SO STRONG

FAME

BIG HOLE

MATCHSTICK MEN

ITALIA 90

ONE MOMENT IN TIME

FINALE

## OUR CAST

### ACT ONE

BRAND NEW DAY

SHARON KENNEDY, KAYLUM MAXWELL, GRACE COLLINS, LORRAINE OWENS

RAPUNZEL

CHILDREN:

NARRATOR:

GARDA BONNY MOLONEY

MALARIA:

RAPUNZEL

TRUMPELSTILTSKIN

KING OF HEARTS

COLDY LOCKS

QUEEN OF CLUBS

KING OF DIAMONDS

JACGER

TEDDY

MIILENIUM

HOLLY COYLE, SARAH O'GRADY, LENA MCMAHON, ANTHONY JOHN BENDER, AIDAN CUNNIFEE, HANNAH FITZPATRICK, AMBER NAUGHTON-SHIRE, JULIANNE MCAULEY, KATE FLYNN, LORRAINE OWENS, CIARA MINIHAN, SHALINA KERIN, FEIDHLIM COTTER, LIAM TOGHER, AEBY NI LOINGSIGH, PADRAIG SHANNON, STEPHEN O'DEA, BEN NAUGHTON-SHIRE, ANNA HAUGH

MOTHER KNOWS BEST

LORRAINE OWENS, CIARA MINIHAN

A STAR IS BORN / SOMEBODY TO LOVE

LORRAINE OWENS, ABBY NI LOINGSIGH, KAYLUM MAXWELL, SHARON KENNEDY, A GROUP

FOOTLOOSE

KAYLUM MAXWELL, SHARON KENNEDY

CAN'T STOP THE BEAT

LAUREN KEARNEY-KEARSE, CLIONA CASEY, FREYA LOUGHNANE, ASH KAVANAGH, LEAH KEANE

PETER PAN

NARRATOR:

WENDY

PETER PAN

CAPTAIN HOOK

TINKERBELL

NANNY HUBBARD

JAKE

MICHELLE

SMEE

TIGER LILY

PIRATES

NATIVE AMERICANS

PHILIP COYLE, MADDY HORAN, BEN MURPHY, STEPHEN O'DEA, EMMA LALLY, LIAM TOGHER, AARON KEANE, FIONA DIGGINS LYNCH, CRISTEL SHANNON, NEASA CONLON, ANNA HAUGH, DYLAN KEARNEY-KEARSE, MOHAMMED AL-KASEEM, JULIANNE MCAULEY, ROISIN SCANLON, HEATHER HAYES, LUCIE PURCELL, FEIDHLIM COTTER, CADHLA COTTER, CIARA MINIHAN, EMMA COSGRAVE BOGHAN O'DONNELL

UPTOWN FUNK:

KAYLUM MAXWELL, ASH KAVANAGH

LIVE WHILE WE'RE YOUNG:

KAYLUM MAXWELL, ASH KAVANAGH

# OUR CAST

LAND OF MAKE BELIEVE

GRACE COLLINS, LORRAINE OWENS, CIARA GOLDEN, ABBY NI LOINGSIGH, HILARY ORPEN, EMMA COSGRAVE, FREYA LOUGHNANE, LAUREN KEARNEY KEARSE, CLIONA CASEY, NEASA CONLON, LEAH KEANE

## PINOCCHIO

NARRATOR:  
PINOCCHIO:  
GEPPETTO:  
ANGELINA:  
MAMA MACARONE:  
BLUE STAR FAIRY:  
BELLADONNA:  
NICO:  
RICO:  
LUIGI:  
BUDDY HOLLY:  
DONKEYS:

ANNA HAUGH  
AOIFE CADOGAN  
STEPHEN O'DEA  
TRIONA O'HALLORAN  
LIAM TOCHER  
LUCIE PURCELL  
CADHLA COTTER  
ROISIN SCANLON  
HEATHER HAYES  
BEN NAUGHTON-SHRIES  
DYLAN KEARNEY-KEARSE  
MOHAMMED AL KASEEM, NEASA CONLON,  
PHILIP COYLE, JULIANNE MCAULEY, EMMA COSGRAVE, FIONA DIGGINS LYNCH

## DEAD RINGER FOR DOVE

STEPHEN O'DEA, LIAM TOCHER

## BORN THIS WAY

CIARA GOLDEN

## EDGE OF GLORY

CIARA GOLDEN

## WIZARD OF OZ

NARRATOR:  
DOROTHY:  
MAYOR:  
WIZARD:  
SCARECROW:  
LION:  
TINMAN:  
WITCH OF THE WEST:  
AUNTIE EM:  
SCREWY LOUIS:  
RIFF RAFF:  
MUNCHKINS

MADDY HORAN  
NEASA CONLON  
CATHAL GREENE  
BEN MURPHY  
PADRAIC SHANNON  
CIARA MINIHAN  
CADHLA COTTER  
TRIONA O'HALLORAN  
OLIE KEARNEY  
MIKEY CORBETT  
BARRY CORBETT  
ANNA HAUGH, AARON KEANE, LUCIE PURCELL,  
JULIANNE MCAULEY, EMMA COSGRAVE

## STEPS MEDLEY

SHARON KENNEDY, LORRAINE OWENS,  
EMMA LALLY, GRACE COLLINS, HILLARY ORPEN

## TOGETHER IN ELECTRIC DREAMS

BRENDAN MURPHY, BEN MURPHY



## OUR CAST

### ACT TWO

#### JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

**NARRATOR:**

**JACK:**

**JILL:**

**DAME DOLLY:**

**SIMPLE SIMON:**

**KING DANDY:**

**GOLDLocks:**

**FAIRY GODMOTHER:**

**GIANT'S WIFE:**

**GIANT:**

**HENCHMEN:**

**DAISY THE COW:**

**MAGIC HEN:**

**FIONA DIGGINS LYNCH**

**ALAN MURPHY**

**TRIONA O'HALLORAN**

**OLLIE KEARNEY**

**MIKEY CORBETT**

**DAVID CARROLL**

**ABBY NI LOINGSIGH**

**EMMA LALLY**

**AOIFE CADOGAN**

**STEPHEN O'DEA**

**MOHAMMED AL-KASEEM, AARON KEANE**

**BEN NAUGHTON-SHRIES**

**DYLAN KEARNEY-KEARSE**

#### RIVER DEEP MOUNTAIN HIGH:

#### VINCENT:

#### VIDEO KILLED THE RADIO STAR:

**SHARON KENNEDY, LORRAINE OWENS**

**CIARA GOLDEN**

**KAYLUM MAXWELL, CLIONA CASEY,  
FREYA LOUGHNANE, LAUREN KEARNEY  
KEARSE, ASH KAVANAGH, LEAH KEANE**

#### MAGIC OF THE MUSICALS

#### BILLE:

**EMMA LALLY, MICHELLE BARRY, DEREK  
MCMAHON, AOIFE CADOGAN, BEN NAUGHTON  
SHRIES, BEN MURPHY, KATE FLYNN, LIAM  
TOCHER, STEPHEN O'DEA, ABBY NI LOINGSIGH,  
LUCIE PURCELL, SARAH O'GRADY, ANNA HAUGH,  
LENA MCMAHON, DYLAN KEARNEY KEARSE,  
FREYA LOUGHNANE, ASH KAVANAGH**

#### BE OUR GUEST:

**MICHELLE BARRY, DEREK MCMAHON,  
EMMA LALLY**

#### AT THE END OF THE DAY:

**ASH KAVANAGH, ABBY NI LOINGSIGH, BEN  
MURPHY, STEPHEN O'DEA, GRACE COLLINS,  
KAYLUM MAXWELL, HILARY ORPEN, AND GROUP**

#### BRING HIM HOME:

**DEREK MCMAHON**

#### MASTER OF THE HOUSE:

**BRIAN MURPHY, MICHELLE BARRY, AND GROUP**

#### ON MY OWN:

**LORRAINE OWENS**

#### ONE DAY MORE & DO YOU HEAR THE PEOPLE SING:

**DEREK MCMAHON, SHARON KENNEDY, ALAN  
MCUALEY, HILARY ORPEN, LORRAINE OWENS,  
GRACE COLLINS, ASH KAVANAGH, ABBY NI  
LOINGSIGH, ANNA HAUGH, LUCIE PURCELL,  
LENA MCMAHON, SARAH O'GRADY, BEN  
MURPHY, STEPHEN O'DEA, KAYLUM MAXWELL  
AND GROUP**

# OUR CAST

## THE 1990S

### EYE OF THE TIGER:

GRACE COLLINS, HILARY ORPEN

### ROCKY

#### INTERVIEWER:

ROCKY

CAROLINE FROST

TREVOR WHITE

### YOU'RE THE VOICE

SHARON KENNEDY, ALAN MCAULEY, DEREK  
MCMAHON, AND GROUP

### SOMETHING INSIDE SO STRONG:

ALAN MCAULEY, BRENDAN MURPHY, GRACE  
COLLINS

### FAME

HILARY ORPEN

### BIG HOLE

STEPHEN O'DEA, BARRY DOWNES, MIKEY  
CORBETT, DAVID CARROLL, ALAN MCAULEY,  
OLLIE KEARNEY

### MATCHSTICK MEN

DEREK MCMAHON, AND GROUP

## ITALIA 90:

### ITALIA 90 RAP:

BARRY DOWNES, MIKEY CORBETT, ALAN  
MCAULEY, DAVID CARROLL, OLLIE KEARNEY,  
BRENDAN MURPHY

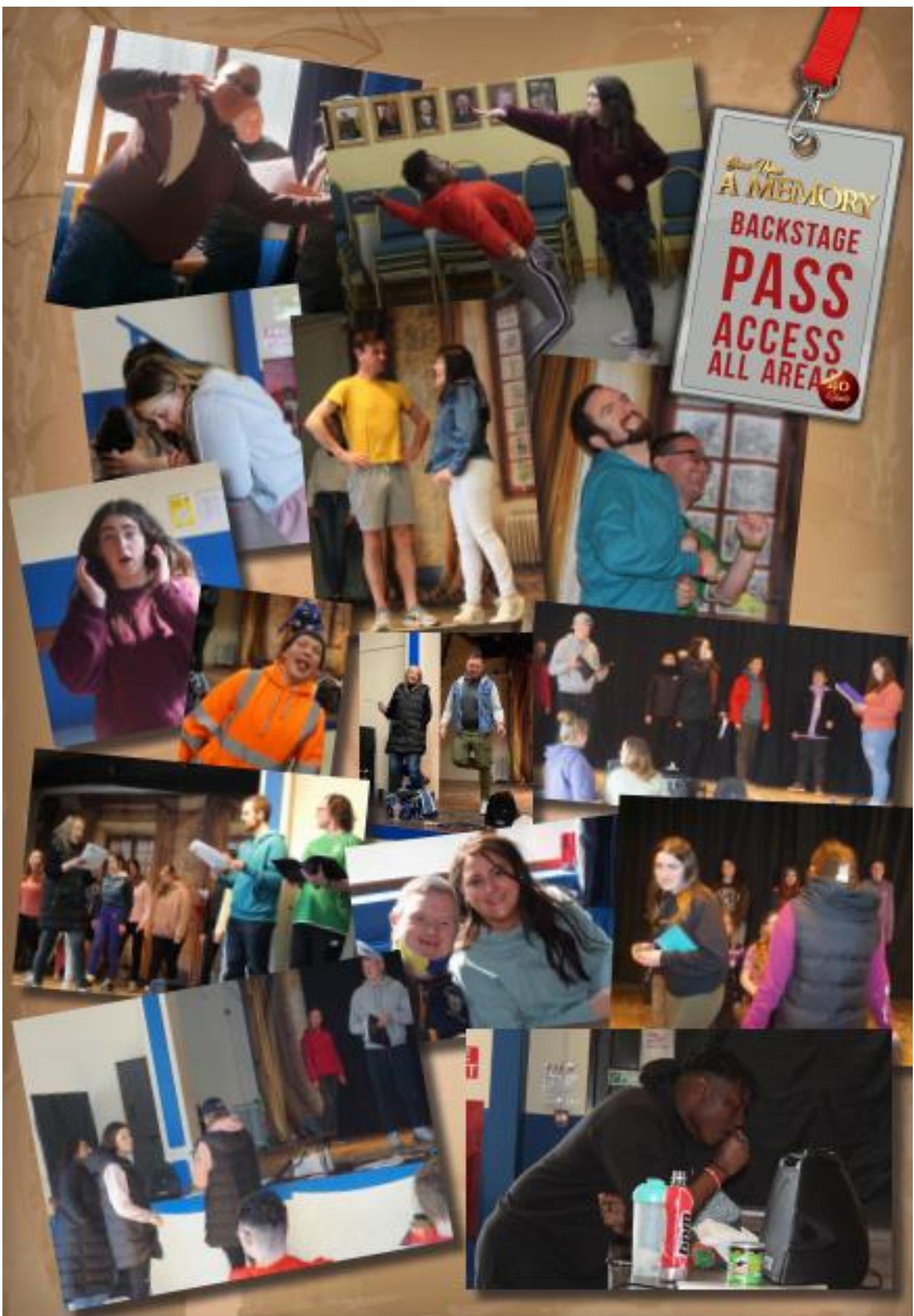
### ONE MOMENT IN TIME

GRACE COLLINS, BARRY DOWNES, MIKEY  
CORBETT, ALAN MCAULEY, DAVID CARROLL,  
OLLIE KEARNEY, BRENDAN MURPHY, AIDAN  
CUNNIFEE, PHILIP COYLE, FEIDHLIM COTTER,  
ANTHONY JOHN BENDER, MOHAMMED AL  
KASSEEM, AARON KEANE

## FINALE

DEREK MCMAHON, LORRAINE OWENS, GRACE  
COLLINS, CLARA GOLDEN, SHARON KENNEDY,  
ALAN MCAULEY, HILARY ORPEN, ABBY NI  
LOINGSIGH, STEPHEN O'DEA, & THE FULL CAST





# OUR CAST



AARON KEANE



ABBY NI LEANNACH



ADIAN CONNOLLY



ALAN McAULEY



AMHER MACAULEY



ANNA MARCH



ANTHONY JOHN BUTLER



AOIFE CADOGAN



ASH KAVANAGH



BAARRY CORBETT



BEN NAUGHTON



BEN MURPHY



BRIAN MURPHY



CAOIMHE COTTER



CAROLINE FROST



CATHAL GREENE



CLARA MHATHAIN



CAOILTE SHANNON



DAVID CARROLL



DYLAN KEARNY KAIN



EMMA CONGRAVE



EMMA LALLY



ALAN MURPHY



EOGHAN O'DONNELL



FIONNUALA ESTER



FIONA O'KEEFE



FIONNUALA FITZPATRICK



HEATHER HAYES



HOLLY COYLE



ORLAÍONNE McCULLIS



KATE FLYNN



KATHRYN O'DONNELL



KAYLA MAXWELL



LAUREN KEARNEY-KLARE



LEAH KENNE



LINA MCMAHON



LIAM TOHER



LORAINE OWENS



LUCY PURCELL



CIARA GARRY



MADDY HORAN



MICHELLE BARRY



MILLY CORBETT



NIAMH NIALL KAVANAGH



PRESS GUCKIAN



NESSA COOSEY



BARRY DOWNER



OLIE KEARNEY



PADRAIG SHANNON



CLARA LUCEY



PHILIP COOLE



RONAN McALLON



RONAN KEANE



RUARI O'DEA



SIOBHAN McALLISTER



SARAH O'GRADY



MALINA KERIN



MATTHEW McEVILLY



NIALL McNAMEE



GRACE COLLINS



TEVRON WHETL



SIENNA O'DONNELL-RATH



SARAH KENGEN



SIOBHAN O'BRIEN



## OUR DANCERS



BACK ROW (L - R) - STELLA RUANE, MARLEY SEAGO-O'SULLIVAN, EIMEAR PEACOCK, MOYRA O'GRADY, LEISHA MINIHAN

FRONT ROW (L - R) - ALANA O'DONNELL, ISABELLE TERRAGE, ANNABELLE HARVEY, ABBY MADDEN

BACK ROW (L - R) - REBECCA JOYCE, MEGAN KEARNEY-KEARSE, NIAMH CASEY, GEMMA COLLINS, ORLA CAHILL

FRONT ROW (L - R) - EIMEAR CAHILL, NICOLE LALLY, CASSIE-MARIE KIRKLAND, TEIGAN JUDGE



### RETURNING DANCERS

BACK ROW (L - R) - VALERIE CHAPLIN AND KAREN DOLAN

MIDDLE ROW (L - R) - MICHELLE BARRY, STACEY MOLONEY AND DONNA O SULLIVAN

FRONT ROW (L - R) - AOIFE MURRAY, EDEL MORAN AND LAUREN KELLY...MISSING IS GRAINNE McMAHON



# FRANCES JOINING OUR YOUTH CLUB.

FLAN SPAIGHT

**W**hen Sixmilebridge Youth Club started we had many difficulties in finding a venue. We had to meet in Kilmurry Community Centre for the first few years and to bring the members to the club by car, which caused logistical problems as we had nearly 30 members from the beginning. Once we got permission to use the Parochial Hall in Sixmilebridge we were able to increase our membership and although we had plenty of adult leaders we were always open to new adults coming along.

At the time, we had mainly a games and activities programme and we decided to begin introducing some stage work and entered for the Clare Youth Service "Tops of the County" competition for 30-minute variety shows. This was a huge leap forward for us, and a big adventure for young people and leaders alike.

None of our leaders really knew Frances at the time, but every time we had youth club her son Corey, who was about 15 at the time, would keep saying, "my mother can help with that" and this occurred over and over every night. We eventually decided to meet Frances to see what this 'Wonder Woman' could do to help us. And "Wow, did she help"!!!

From the very beginning, Frances was just fantastic with the members and along with her many skills, she offered the young people a space where they could feel they could interact with adults in a friendly and secure environment. She has always been a terrific youth leader and remains so to this day. She has the patience of a saint and has helped so many young people develop their skills and self-confidence through the youth club.

Despite many changes in leadership down through the years, Frances remained the one constant in the club and contributed greatly to the quality of youth work and overall success of the club down through the years. She was never one for seeking the limelight but was always working tirelessly in keeping the club going and engaging in a positive manner with all the leaders and members. She has made an enormous impact on all of us and is deserving of our gratitude for all she has done for this community down through the years.



# 40 YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF SIXMILEBRIDGE YOUTH CLUB

**S**ince its foundation in 1982, and in its many activities through the years, from sport and games to musical theatre, Sixmilebridge Youth Club has always endeavoured to provide the young people of Sixmilebridge and the surrounding areas with a platform to shine. We have been incredibly fortunate over those 40 years to have some truly special people give selflessly of their time to provide that platform, and in 2020, the club was honoured to receive a Volunteer Service Award from Clare Youth Service in recognition of all those wonderful volunteers, both past and present.

Through the 80's and 90's, the club took part in every sporting and theatrical competition available to us. The club enjoyed enormous success in the Tops of the Clubs and Youth Work Ireland Variety Competitions through the years, and by the time the 'Tops of the Clubs' competition ended in 1996, our club had won every possible award at county and national level, including the Club of The Year title on several occasions. Our

dancers won an unprecedented four back-to-back 'Youth Work Ireland Variety, Munster Show Dance Championship' titles from 2008 to 2011 and went on to win the All-Ireland title three times in that four-year period. We are inordinately proud of the talent and dedication of all our singers, musicians, actors, comedians, and dancers who competed at all levels. We are equally proud of our mentors, coaches and choreographers who gave our performers the tools and the confidence to shine in front of such huge crowds.

In 2002, we ventured into the unknown, and set about producing our first pantomime. Such was its success, that it was decided to make the pantomime an annual event, and each year the stature of the Sixmilebridge Youth Club

**Sixmilebridge Youth Club**

proudly presents

**Jack and the Beanstalk**



pantomime grows. Showcasing the incredible talent of the youth of Sixmilebridge and surrounding areas, our pantomimes, staged at Sixmilebridge GAA Hall, are full to the brim of comedy, song, and dance. The self-confidence and sense of achievement that performing on stage can instill in our young people is truly a joy to behold. These productions take a tremendous amount of preparation and dedication from performers, committee members and volunteers. Scriptwriting, auditions, costume design and preparation, choreography, set design etc are literally months in the making. All the preparation in the world would however be worthless without the generous and enthusiastic support of the wonderful community of Sixmilebridge and the surrounding areas down through the years. We cannot thank you enough.

It's a measure of the affection that our members through the years hold for Sixmilebridge Youth Club that our current leaders and committee are predominately made up of former club members. And indeed, a vast majority of our current members are the children, (and possibly even grandchildren!) of former club members. Long may this tradition continue!

We were blessed to have the supremely talented Frances Downes as our writer, producer, and director for so many years. It is impossible to quantify Frances' contribution to the very fabric of Sixmilebridge, other than to say

her dedication and commitment to the young people of Sixmilebridge changed countless lives for the better. In 2007, at an event celebrating 25 years of Sixmilebridge Youth Club, the club surprised Frances with a special award to acknowledge this, and in 2020, Frances received a most well-deserved Lifetime Volunteering Award from Clare Youth Service.



# THROWBACK



# THROWBACK



# PREVIOUS PRODUCTIONS

Somelbridge Youth Club  
presently presents



Somelbridge Youth Club  
in association with Somelbridge Drama Group

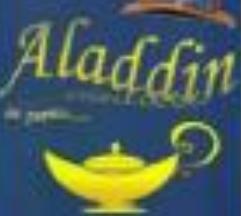


Somelbridge Youth Club  
& Youth Theatre

*Robinson Crusoe*

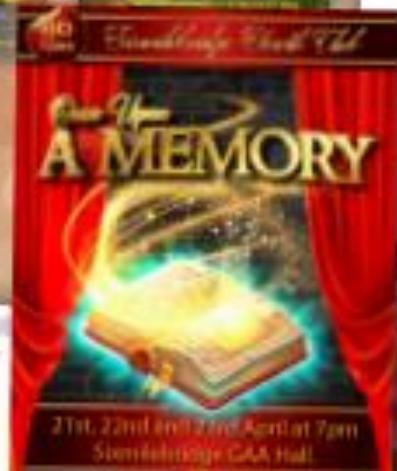
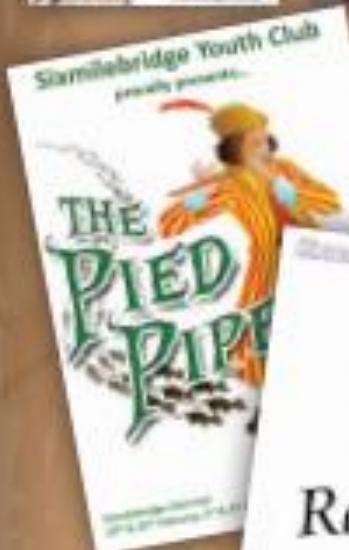
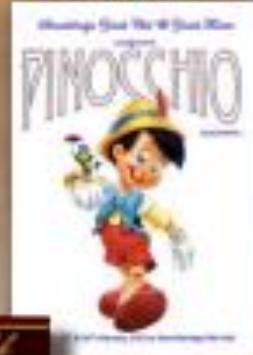
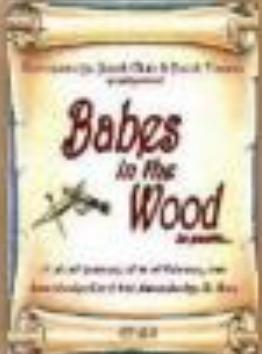


Somelbridge Youth Club & Youth Theatre



Somelbridge Youth Club & Youth Theatre

*Sleeping Beauty*



## A WORD OF THANKS FROM CYS

Clare Youth Service are in awe of what has been achieved by volunteers in Sixmilebridge under the gentle guidance of Francis Downes. From the early years of the development of Youth Clubs in Clare when they excelled locally and nationally in a host of sporting and artistic events the club has been a leading light in the Youth scene for over four decades. The Downes home was the headquarters, and the cups of tea the fuel, to encourage volunteers to create wonder and magic for generations of young people.

Over the years Frances has been instrumental in supporting the development of Clare Youth Service, serving for over seven years on the Board of Trustees. Successive Youth Workers have been only too happy to work alongside her, seek her counsel and have learned a great deal from her.

There can be no doubt that her approach not only contributes to individuals but impacts the community as a whole. She supports young people to stay connected to their community ensuring that as young adults and adults they continue to contribute by encouraging ongoing and lifelong volunteering. Research shows that the consistent factor identified by people who demonstrate resilience, happiness and a thriving life in later years is the presence of significant adults in their lives as teenagers. This one factor is the key item that they believe helped them, not only survive and thrive during adolescence but also helped them build good relationships and face the daily challenges of life more easily as adults. There are so many young and not so young people whose lives have been impacted by the care shown by Frances, her husband Tony, her family and her team of volunteers.

During our 50th anniversary celebrations some years ago, where her service was honored, we were overwhelmed by the huge number of people living all over the World who reached out with stories about Frances and what they gained from the Youth Club.

It is clear that the foundation she has laid in Sixmilebridge is a template for all communities, for all volunteers and for young people. Her passion and commitment to young people is without equal and it is why she is so loved and respected by all who know her. Frances has instilled in all the team a belief that 'the show must go on' so much so that even with the additional challenge of COVID they found new and inventive ways to bring young people together to have fun and practice within the restrictions. There is no doubt that this show will be a fitting tribute to Frances.

Clare Youth Service wishes her continued good health and the Youth Club continued success as they take up the mantle to live by her example.



Clare Youth Service

## "THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC, FRANCES".

Frances has had an enormous impact on the formative years of countless young people in Sixmilebridge. Frances created an environment of positivity, inclusiveness and safety which allowed us to find our confidence and our voices. I will be forever grateful for the opportunities Frances gave me to find my voice and confidence which has opened up a world of opportunities for me and still does. Frances, I'm sorry I can't be there to celebrate you this week but I want to thank you for all you gave to me personally and to the whole community of Sixmilebridge.



Olivia Owen



I was 14 when I did my first show with Sixmilebridge Youth Club. I had just moved to the village and I loved to sing. Frances Downes was kind enough to give me some great opportunities to sing and taught me so much about stagecraft and the art of being a performer that I developed a life long love for it. I had a 20 year professional career and did a degree and a masters in voice as I knew I wanted to be able to pass my love and skills on to the next generation. That would never have happened had it not been for Frances. Thank you Frances for every opportunity you gave me both on and off the stage and everything you taught me. I am so grateful to have shared that magic with you.

Suzanne Carmody

Growing up in Sixmilebridge and being one of the earliest members of the Youth Club was such a wonderful experience. It gave me and so many others a place to belong, a place where we could fit in and allowed for building community and for us to lean into what it meant to contribute to something great. I was so fortunate to have had leaders in the community and the club like Frances who was like a mother to us all, she genuinely cared and wanted to tap into everyone's potential. She had a kind and yet intuitive way of bringing out the best in everyone and everything she touched. The years that I was part of all the shows that Frances produced were so memorable, life affirming and helped to build my confidence as a young person and gave me reasons to be proud.



by way of the work I and others put into the shows under the careful and watchful eye of Frances. She gave us all a purpose and ensured we had a common goal by way of how she wrote, produced and brought everyone together to participate and perform in the clubs shows.

Frances is just a pure gem, she is the most wonderful lady and I owe her so much for what she thought me, how she took care of me and others and for all the dedication and heart that she poured into me and all the others in our community over the decades she lead the youth club and shows. I consider Frances to be one of the best leaders I've had in my life up to present day and I can't thank her enough for being the amazing human she is. We all owe her so much and I hope life continues to bless her with love, great health and all of the very best. Thank you from the bottom of my heart Frances and Cheers to you xoxo

Noel McNulty

**H**aving been involved with Sixmilebridge Youth Club for well over 35 years, taking a brief break in between, it's fair to say that there has been one constant – Frances!



She encouraged all the young people through the generations that came through Sixmilebridge Youth Club (myself included!) to showcase their talents; "Are you able to sing?", "Can you act?", "How are your dance moves?" or, "Can you help backstage?". Now read that first question again. Frances would not ask, "Are you a good singer?", she would simply ask, "Can you sing?". That's essentially what Frances embodies - everyone involved in a show produced by Frances was made to feel important, because they are! If you wanted it, it was there for you, and she made it happen.

I have very fond memories of the very early days, as 'Tops of the Clubs' variety shows gained notoriety, travelling throughout the county and indeed, nationally with wonderful cast members to represent our community. What struck me at that time, and even to this day, was how Frances was able to interject momentous local, national and world news into shows, whether it was the fall of the Berlin Wall, or a humorous ditty of Boris Yeltsin sitting on a plane in Shannon, while Albert Reynolds waited on the tarmac. Who can forget that song, "Who the \*\* is Albert?". She certainly had her finger on the pulse of local, national and world affairs, and her themes certainly were appreciated by audiences through the years.

**It was really in the early noughties that I started to work more closely with Frances as a co-producer on Pantomime shows. Having come through the ranks, from participating in shows and then switching to production, I quickly became in awe of her skills. Her gift for writing, her knowledge of music, casting roles and much more became apparent. Frances is a force of nature. I have learned so much from her and instilled many of the values she possesses and believes in, into my own life, routine, and family. I'm so proud to call her my dear friend and will look forward to sharing many more stories over tea and biscuits into the future.**

**I cannot close this piece without mentioning and acknowledging my pal Tony. Always in the background and actively avoiding the spotlight that he literally shone on everybody else, Tony's dedication, support, and commitment to the club in countless ways through the years has been second to none. Tony 'kept her lit' in more ways than one and the club was incredibly fortunate to have him.**

**Looking forward to the show and the tribute that it will pay to my dear friend!**

**Ray Maxwell**



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