

# Newpoint Players

*Registered with The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland NIC100155*  
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Sunday, 25 June 23

The last AGM was on 13<sup>th</sup> November and, in an effort to bring the occasion back to June, this AGM takes place with a mere six months having passed. Our financial and trustees' reports go to the Charity Commission as soon as possible after the tax year ends each April. We allow 8-10 weeks for the reports to be compiled and seek an early AGM to approve these reports before submission, hence to a new June meeting.

Since last April the Newpoint Players have been their usual busy selves. The primary focus of our existence, and first event on the new yearly calendar, is the Summer Show. Caolan Byrne & Donal, our Chair, spent seven weeks in Newry Town Hall, five days a week for four hours a day with workshops and rehearsals for Under Milk Wood by Dylan Thomas culminating in three performances to good houses. The production was in an innovative traverse setting with 20 kids in Newry Town Hall. Mary McManus & Elizabeth Freeburn were Musical Directors. The Newry, Mourne & Down Council generously hired the stage and supported the show. The Brian Conlon Foundation generously sponsored the whole project to the tune of £3,500 and The Elliott-Trainor Partnership provided vital funds also. It was both creatively & financially successful. Many visitors called to lend their support and expertise: Pauline took workshops, Leo did the choreography, Mary-Ellen brought her wisdom as a Casting Director. Neil Heaney operated Eoin Hannaway's lighting plot. As always, the whole committee rallied round with Mark riding shotgun in various guises throughout the summer. All the above were volunteers with Caolan receiving a commission from us to coordinate the entire project. An undoubted success and, as always, absolutely free to all the kids involved.

Throughout the year we continued our cooperation with Anthony Russell and the D'Arcy McGee Summer School to perform our interactive historical trials in Armagh, Dundalk & Dungannon.

We always keep an eye on the old boys and girls from our summer school. Prominent amongst them this year were David Pearse, beloved to us as DP, in The Banshees Of Ennisherin. One of the most successful films internationally this year.

In some highly innovative writing and staging, Sean Kearns was the undoubted star of Propaganda in the Lyric.

New Year's Eve saw the wedding of our esteemed vice-Chairman to a occasional actor in Newpoint. I think this qualifies as an official Newpoint Wedding. Congratulations and best wishes to Paddy & Catherine. The first recorded one was in 1957 between Art & Marie Magennis. Somewhere in the middle were Kate & myself.

Our members continued to work with The Light Theatre Company based in Rostrevor on Ulysses' publication and the ensuing Court case. This brings in some substantial cash in fees to Newpoint as the actors divert all payments to the society.

Susan Lynch appeared on telly in Happy Days and The Change while her brother John was an exquisite 'baddy' in Blue Lights.

Those of us who went to Hangmen in the Gaeity in Dublin saw a stunning set and Lighting design from old Newpoint boy Ciaran Bagnall, now a big name internationally in both these fields.

There was a joyous occasion in February when Sean Kearns, Caolan Byrne, Pat Mooney and Pauline Lynch were interviewed by the journalist Dearbhal McDonald - all products of Newpoint. Proceeds to Newpoint funds.

Happy Days went into rehearsal just before Christmas and was toured around the Spring festivals with performances in Sticky Fingers, Lislea, Newtownstewart, Castleblaney, Ballymoney, Portadown, Newtownabbey, Strabane and Newry. Treasa took the Best Actress award at nearly ALL these festivals. The play won four festivals and qualified for the Ulster and All-Ireland finals.

As Happy Days is a two-hander, there were many Newpoint actors, including our youth members, ready & willing to get another show on the road leading to the commencement of The Cripple Of Innismaan which will play gigs in the autumn.

These are the events up to 5<sup>th</sup> April. They summarise, in my opinion, another excellent year and I commend them to this assembly as a success.

Donal O'Hanlon  
Chair  
Newpoint Players