

BALLEA WRITERS NEWS

Ballea Writers Youth Division Poets of the Year Awards

Sponsored by **Martin Walsh Pharmacy and Maryville Equestrian Centre**

Twenty local schools produced over seven hundred poetry entries. Many of the winning poems, which will be published in an illustrated book, have been given a preview in this page and today we will show a few more.

The winning authors are all invited to submit more poems for consideration and the illustrator would particularly like to get a piece with a carnival, circus, acrobat or clown involvement. As the anthology of winning poetry is intended to go to print this summer the biography of poetry authors needs to be collated as soon as possible. Everyone who received an award should submit a page or so about their lives. The submission can be made through school or through e-mail to the contact below. The biography could include things like: where they are from, their family structure, what schools they have attended, what their interests, hobbies and sports are, what they may like to do when they grow up, how their interest in poetry developed, what they get out of writing poetry, what inspired their poem/ poems, which poets they most admire, what other forms of writing they enjoy, whether they envisage continuing with writing as a hobby or even a career and whether there are other writers, poets or journalists in their family. These are just starter suggestions but feel free to include anything unique or especially interesting. Much of the purpose of poetry is to stir one's emotions so it's hardly surprising that bereavement poems, like that below, scored well in this competition.

A Brave Star

My Grand Aunt Mary was a star to me,
The bravest woman that you'd ever see,
She was gentle and loving, wise and kind,
The best of person that you'd ever find.

She got breast cancer and was very bad,
And all of us were heartbroken and sad,
Hoping and wishing that she'd be alright,
We stayed by her bedside and prayed all night.

But at the finish she could take no more,
She was thin and tired and so very sore,
Although she's gone I'll love her forever,
And keep the memory of Best Aunt Ever.

Ellen Ryan
Aged 11

There were in excess of thirty poems about animals, a few happy ones and many others about the loss of beloved pets. We felt for all the children whose pets had died but possibly the most tragic image was from a child whose dog was killed at Christmas in her own driveway while she was in the car.

Daisy

On Christmas Eve with lights all aglow,
My Dog got knocked down and why I don't know,
She'd silken streaks of tan, black and white,
I weep to think of what happened that night

Dad and I went to collect the beer,
The turkey and ham in festive cheer,
We came up the drive all bright and giggly,
But somewhere along the car went wiggly.

A thump, a yelp and I'm caught in a dream,



Competition organizer Elaine Rhys-Davies with Diarmuid Clayton and his parents. Diarmuid's poem 'Why' won 1st prize in the Senior category

'Stop this nightmare', I hear myself scream,
Dad snuggled me close and let out a sigh,
Which told me at once my Daisy had died.

Jennifer Kiely
Aged 11

Tuffy

I have a rabbit her name is Tuffy
She's four grey paws and a tail so fluffy.
With big floppy ears and a twitchy nose
She hops round the lawn on her tiny toes.

I love little Tuffy because she's mine
Can't wait for tomorrow when she turns nine.
I'll give her a party all laughter and cheers
And hope I still have her for lots more years.

Eimear Maverley
Aged 9

Beauty and the Beast

Robin Red Breast longs to stay,
When other birds have flown away,
In this cold and bitter time,
Little robin sings his chime.

Like a bonfire in the grey,
Robin's red breast shines all day,
Like a beacon in the snow,
Robin gives a radiant glow.

But as he perched upon a fence,
He failed to think about defence,
A hawk intently flying past,
Swooped and grabbed him o so fast.

Ben Murphy
Aged 12

Eight out of the twenty available marks were for originality; whereby the well-worn themes such as Christmas were generally disadvantaged. However, Katie Shanahan managed to keep her Christmas poem 'Glad Tidings' original and got a prize for her efforts.

Glad Tidings

Auntie's having a baby
A little bundle of joy,
Just like our Holy Mary
Had a very special boy.

A baby's a precious pearl
To treasure with all my heart,
Whether it's a boy or girl
I'll adore it from the start.



Martha O'Brien recites her prize-winning poems: Impossible to Tell and An Ruaille Buaille



Competition organizer Elaine Rhys-Davies with her son Alex Rhys-Davies whose poem 'School' won a prize.

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That he'll be here for Christmas
Is the best gift I could have,
He'll be a special bonus
That's certain to make me laugh.

Katie Shanahan
Aged 11

Butterflies

Soft and gentle
Timid and shy
Rainbow like wings
Bloom open and fly.

Off with the wind
Dancing up high
Gently gliding
Touching the sky.

Drifting so softly
It floats down to feed
On swaying white rose
By bottle green reed.

Rosie O'Keeffe
Aged 11

River King

Rushing with excitement
And glistening in the sun
It dances over rocks
Personifying fun.

Its inner stealth and strength
Propel it with its might
Yet it holds a mystery
Why does it seem so light?

Impetuous, passionate
Embodiment of zing,
Racing, dodging hurdles
All mighty River King.

Stephanie Marwood
Aged 10

Ninny from Neptune

Ninny from Neptune
Loves bopping to tunes
While eating spaghetti
And blowing balloons.

Her luminous pants
With purple hoop flairs
Have sewn in streamers
To match her wild hair.

At ten metres tall
Pushed up on her toes
This Basketball Star
Gets all the best throws.

Her fingers are green
Her eyelashes blue
She's two million sisters
And brothers just two.

Caoimhe Hoey
Aged 10

Excitement

Within you a burning
Your stomach is churning
Your fingers start twitching
Your back may be itching
You try counting sheep
But still cannot sleep.

Ghosts

My grandmother lives in a
haunted house,
Where nothing scared her- not
even a mouse,
Then one autumn's day while
doing her chores,
She heard all around her loud
bangs and roars.

She stood her ground saying



Louise Mills and Isabelle Nyhan of Scoile Bhríde, Crosshaven with Elaine Rhys-Davies and Ber Walsh

'This is my home,
Be off with you all and leave me
alone'.
All through the winter she heard
eerie sounds,
And pictures would float and fall
to the ground.

Then one chilly day while fixing
the fire,
The shouts and screams got
higher and higher,
The ghosts were frantic they
wanted her out,
And screeched and bellowed
'Get out Get out'.

The pots and pans leapt down
from the shelf,
And smashed up all of her
glasses and delft,
She slammed the door shouting
'you haven't won,
Cause nothing will keep me out
of my home'.

Diarmuid Cronin
Aged 10

Chase

Waiting in the classroom
For the break to start
I long to get outside
And play in the schoolyard.

Lined up against the wall
They choose the teams quite fast
Everybody won't get picked
'Please don't select me last'.

The 'off' team sprint to den
Preparing for the run
The 'on' team hunt their prey:
A battle veiled as fun.

Anna Harrington
Aged 10

That several children submitted
poems about boredom at school
encouraged us to plan more
workshops and competitions to

try to expand their interest in
creative writing. Some countries
have the equivalent of a Creative
Writing Junior Cert and Leaving
Cert and the words of the
following poem present a fair
case for such a development in
this country.

School

From class to class and year to
year,
I think to myself about why I'm
here,
Just ticking over at slow moving
pace,
I open a book and stare into
space.

Waiting for break-time to talk to
my friends,
I consider all of the latest trends,
I'll get a tongue pierce that's
what I'll do,
And maybe next year I'll have a
tattoo.

The school won't notice and nor
will my Mum,
And their not knowing will add to
the fun,
Why don't the schools try to keep
us inspired?
And teach us more than being
bored and tired?

Alex Rhys-Davies
Aged 15

From September our Youth
Division will be running Creative
Writing Workshops, for age
twelve upwards, in Carrigaline
Community School on
Wednesday afternoons.
Interested parties should e-mail
us at the contact below: as
should local businesses that may
like to sponsor the publishing of
the children's poetry book.
Please note that some of the

poems have been edited for
newspaper release and may be
further edited before the book is
published.

CONTACT

Ballea Writers, who meet in the
Ballea Suite of the Carrigaline Court
Hotel from 7.30-9.30 most Mondays,
can be contacted at

balleawriters@gmail.com Ballea
Writers have adult sessions for
fiction, poetry and journalism each
month and children's sessions,
throughout the year, in schools.
The annual membership fee of Euro 38
covers all the disciplines. There is a
sub of Euro 5 per workshop for
adults and workshops for schools
are free of charge.



Catrina Kelly of Scoile Bhríde, Crosshaven recites her winning poem, pictured with event organizer Elaine Rhys-Davies.