



Press release 21st July 2009

All routes lead to Rose of Tralee International Festival celebrating 50 Years in August

TRALEE will have the focus of the entire nation next month when the Rose of Tralee International Festival celebrates 50 years over nine days from the 21st to 29th August.

Many Roses of Tralee will return for the week of the Festival where they will again take centre stage along with this year's 50 Roses. Some of the ladies were looking forward to the Festival so much they reunited recently to hitch a lift to Tralee!

The Managing Director of the Rose of Tralee International Festival, Anthony O'Gara said: "There will be a highlight for everyone at this year's Festival which will be bigger than ever before with 50 Roses, 50 Escorts, 50 Rose Buds, the Return of the Roses and a huge programme of entertainment for all ages in the Dome and on the streets of Tralee."

"It would not be possible to put on such a show without the help of our sponsors and in particular Newbridge Silverware and RTÉ," he said.

The Communications Manager for the Rose of Tralee, John Drummey, said: "There has been massive interest in all aspects of the Festival with an unprecedented demand for tickets."

The Dome will be larger than ever to accommodate the huge numbers who will be attending the many events that will be running over the nine days, including:

The International Rose Ball, Sharon Shannon, The Sawdoctors, Shane McGowan, Dessie O'Halloran, Damien Dempsey, The Irish Examiner Autumn Winter Fashion Show 2009, Tommy Fleming in Concert, Radio Kerry Grand Final of Kerry's Got Talent, Spin Southwest Teenage Party Night, Fire it Up with DJ Eddie Halliwell, Party with the Roses, Roses and Escorts Reunion Nights and of course the International Rose Selections.

Tickets for all Dome events are available from the Rose of Tralee office on 066-7121322 or www.roseoftralee.ie.

A star-studded line-up of celebrities will be in attendance at the Rose Ball in the Dome on Friday 21st August, among them will be **Ray D'Arcy, Dáithí Ó Sé, Ryan Tubridy** and long-term Festival stalwart **Gay Byrne**. On a night full of elegance and extravagance they will be joined by the 50 Roses and their Escorts who will all enjoy a sumptuous banquet before dancing the night away.

There will be music for all tastes in the Topaz Dome during the week of the Festival with Tommy Fleming on Saturday 22nd August and Sharon Shannon, The Sawdoctors, Shane McGowan, Dessie O'Halloran and Damien Dempsey on stage together for the first time on Monday 24th August.



The Irish Examiner Autumn Winter Fashion Show will take place in the Dome on Sunday 23rd August with the creations of some of the top Irish and international designers on display. Celia Holman Lee will produce the fashion show once again this year and one lucky person will take away a prize of €1000 for the Best Dressed Lady Competition.

The International Rose Selections to find the 2009 Rose of Tralee will be televised live from the Topaz Dome on RTÉ One with the Shannon Development Escort of the Year being announced on Tuesday 25th and the new Rose of Tralee being crowned on Wednesday 26th.

The Grand Final of Kerry's Got Talent which has been run by Radio Kerry for the past number of weeks will take place in the Topaz Dome on the afternoon of Saturday 22nd August. Also in the Dome will be the Spin Southwest Teenage Party Night on Friday 28th and Fire It up with top DJ Eddie Halliwell on Saturday 29th. Tickets for both gigs are available from Ticketmaster outlets.

42 of the 50 Roses of Tralee will return to take part in the Parade of the Roses, a special Return of the Roses Banquet and a number of other high-profile engagements. They will be joined in Tralee by past presenters of the selections, Gay Byrne, Kathleen Watkins, Ryan Tubridy and Michael Twomey.

The Parade of the Roses on Saturday 22nd will be the biggest street event with new floats, fireworks, vintage cars, plenty of colour, marching bands and a tremendous fireworks display. There will be lots of free exciting children's fun on the streets everyday with a **family day event at Kingdom Greyhound Stadium** on the afternoon of Sunday 23rd August. **Fossetts Circus** and **Birds Amusements** will return once again to the Fels Point area adjacent to the Dome.

The whole family will find something to enjoy from the 70 hours of free live music on five stages from Friday 21st August featuring **The Coronas, Jack L, Mike Denver, Brush Shiels, Blue Moose, PJ Murríhy, Spailpin** and much more.

Managing Director of the Rose of Tralee International Festival, Anthony O'Gara said: "The celebrations to mark the 50 years of the Rose of Tralee International Festival give us and the people of Tralee an opportunity to say "thank you" and "welcome home" to our returning friends who have enjoyed the Festival over the years and who wish to relive the many great memories."

"We salute everyone who has played a part in organising the Festival since its foundation in 1959. These people, mostly volunteers have been the cord connecting Tralee and Ireland with Irish communities all over world."

Ends

For further information please contact: John Drummey, Communications Manager, Rose of Tralee International Festival on 087-7909487 or Communications@roseoftralee.ie

Notes to editors:

Information on all this year's Roses, Escorts and Roses of Tralee are available on request from Communications@Roseoftralee.ie or www.roseoftralee.ie