

***Bard Summer School 2009***  
***Report by Elena K. Keany, July 2009***

We are delighted to report that the Bard Summer School 2009 was once again a huge success. Not only did our participants enjoy a week of *Time and Timelessness* in the context of *Midir and Etáin*, but they also enjoyed the best weather in Ireland during the first week of July. While flash floods and lightening took over the mainland, Clare Island was a haven of heat and sunshine. Most participants enjoyed a daily swim in the Atlantic Ocean.

The Summer School itself was conducted in the National School which enjoys stunning views of Inis Turk behind which lurks Inis Boffin. Our guest speaker this year was Prof. Dáithí O hÓgain, Department of Folklore, University College Dublin. Bard was also honoured to have Dáithí as its guest poet and he delivered a powerful poetry reading on the final evening of the school.

During the week's festival participants enjoyed the very special Islander's Night. Each year we are honoured with the talents of the Islanders – from sean nós dancing, poetry and song from the region to amateur dramatics from all ages across the Island.

While the adult participants enjoyed the summer school immersing themselves in myth and storytelling, the children enjoyed many exciting events organised by Bard. A day of weaving classes at the Ballytoohy Loom produced crafts carefully taught by Beth Moran; Beth has been producing crafts locally for the past twenty years. New to the curriculum was a morning of storytelling where the children learned and re-enacted *The Children of Lir*. The younger generation completed their programme by enjoying an afternoon of sports with Maura Moran on the local GAA field.

The week finished with the annual féasta. Everyone involved in the Bard Festival enjoyed dining together in the Bay View Hotel. The children had decorated the dining room with their images inspired by the story of the Children of Lir and performed a memorable song which they had prepared specially for the event.