

Clare's Diary

27th April 2011

Wednesday

I whizz over to Newbridge Silverware to pick up a couple of rings today as I have heaps of black tie events coming up and their Hollywood Collection sparklers are perfect for the job. I spend most of the afternoon organizing dresses as I will be away for the next 5 days. I have a sleep over with my gorgeous god-daughter Rebecca who at 7 adores the idea of the Rose of Tralee and I even earn myself a few brownie points by signing some autographs for her friends!

Thursday

The morning brings a photo launch with the Road Safety Authority, an organization which of course I am very proud to be associated with. The bank holiday weekend is coming up and they are keen to encourage drivers to switch off their mobile phones whilst travelling. After this I meet Steve Cronly, Commercial Manager for the Rose of Tralee, who drives me to Tyrone for their selection night. We have a lovely dinner with the Judges, Roses and Escorts before I am given a yummy surprise. Back in April, I met Mary Gervin the proprietor of Weddings, Parties and More and warned her that should she be bringing her glorious chocolate fountain to the Tyrone selection, I would not be held liable for my actions (I am a chocolate fiend!). Anticipating the fact that I might try to climb into the fountain and or devour it all she has prepared my own special chocolate fondue set which I set upon with gusto!!! After my chocolate feast its back to the room to get changed for the main event. It is only fitting that Colin Hampsey pays tribute to Michaela Harte McAreavey so we begin the evening with a minute's silence in her memory. At the end of the night the fabulous Donna Ross is selected to represent Tyrone in the regional finals in June.

Friday

It's back to Dublin this morning where I pick up my car and my friend Michael, who is my chauffeur/escort this weekend. I convince Michael to stop for a quick walk on the beach to undo the effects of last night's chocolate escapade but I quickly decide that an ice cream cone is a worthy reward for my energetic endeavour, oooops! Then it's onwards to the Waterford Selection. At the end of another fantastic night we have a very worthy Rose in Jacqui Watson.

Saturday

An early start sees us on the road to Tralee, I had always thought Waterford was close to Kerry but three hours later and we are just arriving. I am so grateful that Michael is here to get us home tonight! After a quick lunch with the ROTIF wonder woman that is Valerie Kerins I attempt to put on my sari. First, I put it on backwards, then I pleat too much of the material, then I pleat too little. Forty-five minutes later I am still doing no better, half Indian indeed! This afternoon I am delighted to be helping Minister Jimmy Deenihan to launch the Bollywood Film Festival which is hosting a night of film here in Tralee on June 13th. I think it is fabulous that

Bollywood is coming to Kerry and am just sorry that I won't be able to make it. 5 hours later I am back, stumbling into my own bed at home.

Sunday

A little bit of study (I have a PhD interview in London this week). A little bit of packing. Then an emotional evening at the Carlow Selection where a huge number of the 2010 Roses and Escorts have come to support Jessie Adamson and Anthony Dempsey as they hand over their titles as the Carlow Rose and Escort. Leinster's back-row forward, Sean O'Brien is my escort once again, fresh from his teams' victory yesterday and complete with battle scars! I will admit, a late night is had celebrating with the new 2011 Carlow Rose, Jane Sheppard.

Monday

It's home again for a few hours before meeting Rose TV frontman Brendan Galvin in Dublin where we record a brief video for the Antrim selection in a couple of weeks. After that, Michael and I hop, skip and jump up the motorway to Armagh where we stay for the first half of the selection.

Tuesday

What is it about small dogs thinking they can take on the world? This morning our little Scottie, Bobby seems to think that the helicopter which has come to collect me is just another dog that he can play with and he gives Mum and I a fright barking underneath it as it tries to land! I am privileged to be flown to Youngworld Preschool a mile away where I am visiting the children this morning. I am treated to a fabulous red carpet welcome before I am presented with some beautiful gifts including flowers, cupcakes with Rose of Tralee iced on top and some Rosso Solini designer soles which I am very excited about. Eoin Roche flies us home over the fields and the rooftops of Athy, the world feels like a much simpler place from way up here. I make a quick pit stop at home before driving to the Carlton Dublin Airport Hotel. I say goodbye to my car before boarding my flight to London.