



Message from the Ambassador

Greetings from the Embassy!

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the Ireland House Newsletter - which I hope will evolve into a key communication conduit between Ireland House and the Irish Community in Singapore. The aim of the newsletter is to keep the Irish Community updated on upcoming events, recent activities, changes in consular or travel advice and developments in the Ireland-Singapore relationship. As this project is only in its infancy, your feedback and views on the newsletter would be very welcome.



The first thing I would like to do is to thank and congratulate our regional participants at the Global Irish Economic Forum which took place in Dublin last month - Fred Combe, Gerry Creaner, Colin MacDonald, John Seward, Robert Trota and Anna Whitehouse. Through their energy and enthusiasm, they brought Asia - and its huge potential in the context of Irish economic development - to the forefront of attention at the Forum. The positive and impressive contribution that they made to this historic event is a testament to the rich and diverse quality of talent that exists with the Irish diaspora of Asia.

As you will all know, the Referendum was decisively passed by 67.1% in an outcome was welcomed by the Taoiseach: "The Irish people have supported reforms so that the EU can become more efficient and more effective in dealing with the global problems we all face."

The final quarter of 2009 is set to be a very busy one from the perspective of Ireland House with a myriad of projects taking place across the cultural, economic, social and philanthropic spectrum - a Green Technology Forum, the participation of Irish author John Boyne at the Singapore Writers Festival, a special feature on Ireland in the forthcoming edition of Campus magazine and the visit to Singapore of a very talented group of Irish musicians to name but a few.

One event which I would like to give special mention to, however, is the inaugural Gala Dinner of the Singapore Ireland Fund which takes place on Saturday 21 November. Launched only just over a month ago, the Singapore chapter of the Ireland Funds is the latest addition to an international philanthropic network that utilises the vast network of Irish and friends of Ireland throughout the world to help fund charitable projects in the field of community development, education, arts, culture and sport. The Gala Dinner is an opportunity to become involved in the Fund and contribute in a meaningful and tangible way to the development of the relationship between Ireland and Singapore.

I hope you enjoy browsing the newsletter and find it both informative and useful. My colleagues at the Embassy and Enterprise Ireland are available to provide further information on any of the topics or activities mentioned.

Richard A. O'Brien
Ambassador

Upcoming Events

October

14th: The Secret of Kells
animated film

17/18th: Asian Gaelic Games
(Bangkok)

24th: John Boyne at the
Singapore Writers Festival

November

17th: Green Technology Forum

21st: Singapore-Ireland Fund
Gala Dinner

27th: Black Mountain Celtic
Ensemble Performance

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Best of luck to
Singapore's Gaelic
Lions at the Asian
Gaelic Games in
Bangkok!



Farmleigh

Global Irish Economic Forum

Dublin, 18-20 September 2009

The Global Irish Economic Forum took place in Farmleigh over the weekend of the 18 September. It brought together, for the first time, the most influential members of the global Irish community with a record of high achievement in business and culture, as well as a number of individuals with a strong business connection to Ireland. A total of 180 invitees were present, including six participants from Singapore, the Philippines and Indonesia.

The idea behind the Forum was fairly simple - to bring some of the most successful members of the global Irish community back to Ireland to discuss ideas and options for the future with business and political leaders in Ireland.

The Farmleigh weekend was the beginning, not the end, of a new phase in the engagement by Ireland with its overseas communities.

The reaction of the participants, the media and the general public was overwhelmingly positive. It was a historic occasion. Never before had the Irish State brought together in one place such a global network of business talents.

The Department in Dublin is compiling a comprehensive report of the discussions, and is liaising with delegates to develop and expand on the ideas they raised. The report will include details of the very wide range of proposals which emerged from the Forum. It will also highlight a smaller number of concrete areas, which delegates suggested could be amongst the Forum's key outcomes. These include proposals to establish a new global Irish network, comprising participants at the Forum and other leading members of our overseas communities; a Gateway Ireland portal, which would serve as a key online focus for promoting Ireland abroad and engaging with our global community; and expanded educational exchange and scholarship programmes to ensure younger members of our global community - the leaders of tomorrow - retain a deep affinity for the country.

More information on the Global Irish Economic Forum available at www.globalirishforum.ie

Our Farmleigh Participants



Fred Combe: Fred runs a boutique consultancy firm in Singapore and is also an active angel investor in Asian start-ups. He co-authored the 2009 bestseller, "Business Journey to the East" and is an Entrepreneur in Residence at INSEAD, Singapore.



Gerry Creaner: Gerry was appointed Deputy Chairman of DPS in 2007 and prior to that was Managing Director since 1996, when he and four partners established the company. Gerry is also a Director of the Irish Management Institute (IMI) and the Singapore-Ireland Fund.



Colin MacDonald: As well as being President of the Irish Business Association in Singapore, Colin is founder and CEO of Fine Grain Property. Colin established the McCraic pub group, which includes Molly Malone's Irish Pub, in Singapore in 1997.

Our Farmleigh Participants



John Seward: John is President Director at Coca Cola Bottlers, Indonesia. He has spent twelve years in the Coca-Cola system, joining CCA in 2004 having previously run the Nigerian Bottler for Coca-Cola Hellenic.



Robert Trota: In addition to being Vice Consul for the Honorary Consulate General of Ireland in the Philippines, Robert is also the President of Max's Restaurant, a leading restaurant chain. He is also President of the Philippine Franchise Association.



Anna Whitehouse: Anna has just recently taken on a new Singapore-based position as Vice President for Specialties Strategy at Total Oil -South East Asia. She was previously President and Managing Director of Total Oil - Philippines.

ST Telemedia and Eircom

As many of you will have read, on 14 September 2009 the board of Eircom Holdings Limited (ERC) recommended an offer led by Singapore Technologies Telemedia (ST Telemedia) to acquire eircom, the incumbent in Ireland's telecommunications industry.

ST Telemedia is a leading player in the telecoms and information services industry, which invests and manages a group of companies, including Starhub - Singapore's largest cable television operator, second largest mobile operator and major broadband provider. ST Telemedia also owns US based Global Crossing, which has a significant presence in Europe.

The Irish Government recognises ST Telemedia's excellent reputation in the telecoms sector. Following the announcement Minister Eamon Ryan said:

"I welcome in particular the positive comments of STT's President and Chief Executive Officer, Mr Lee Theng Kiat, about working collaboratively with the Irish Government in the future development of the telecommunications industry in Ireland. I look forward to such collaboration and I wish STT and eircom well."

Collaboration refers predominantly to the development of the necessary Next Generation Broadband infrastructure to ensure that Ireland can progress its economy, provide creative technological solutions for society, facilitate the sharing of knowledge and business opportunities, and ensure greater connection between people throughout Ireland and around the world.

The importance of such infrastructure is underlined by Dr Robert Pepper in Cisco Systems, who states that by next year 20 homes will generate more IP traffic than the entire internet did in 1995.

Innovation Islands - A Green Future

The Embassy, along with a number of partners, will hold a Greentech forum on 17th November 2009 during Singapore's International Energy Week. Participants will examine global green trends and their impact on smaller nations; and illuminate the work of policy makers, entrepreneurs and businesses who are exploring areas of green growth in Europe, Asia and beyond. It will incorporate a number of presentations followed by a panel and audience dialogue. The forum will feed into a joint paper on opportunities for small nations such as Ireland and Singapore in a "Green Future".



For further information please contact [Micheál Smith](mailto:micheal.smith1@dfa.ie) (micheal.smith1@dfa.ie)

Minister Pledges €1.2 million to South East Asia

In recent days the Minister of State for Overseas Development, Peter Power, has pledged €1.2 million to assist those affected by the series of natural disasters which have devastated parts of Southeast Asia and the Pacific. The allocation is being used to support the international effort to assist the worst-affected families by providing emergency supplies such as clean water, food, blankets to those who need it most.

In the case of Indonesia €350,000 of the assistance is being disbursed through the Irish aid agency, Trócaire, to provide urgently needed humanitarian supplies - including tents - to the earthquake affected regions while an additional €150,000 has been transferred to the International Federation of the Red Cross to help provide for 5,000 families who lost all in the Indonesian earthquake.

This pledge of €1.2 million is in addition to Irish Government funding which was drawn down in the immediate aftermath of the disasters by the International Federation of the Red Cross. Ireland is among the international donors who provide pre-positioned funding to allow our partners on the ground to respond in the hours after a disaster strikes. €2 million of Ireland's contribution to this disaster relief fund is now being used in the Philippines, Vietnam, Samoa and Indonesia.

ENTERPRISE IRELAND in Singapore

Enterprise Ireland is the primary Government agency charged with developing and promoting Irish owned enterprises.

Our mission is "to accelerate the development of Irish companies into strong positions on world markets, resulting in increased national and regional prosperity".

Three principal values - innovation, export growth and leadership - are at the heart of Enterprise Ireland's strategy and remain crucial to the long term sustainability and growth of Irish enterprise. Here in Singapore we work in close partnership with our Colleagues at the Embassy and provide the following supports to companies either expanding within the region, or companies looking to enter the Asian marketplace for the first time;

- Opportunity Identification
- Scheduling Company Sales Meetings and Company Itineraries.
- Trade events & Receptions e.g. Interphex (Pharmaceuticals) and CommunicAsia (Telecoms)
- Business network facilitation and development.

For the some 50 Enterprise Ireland Client companies with a presence here, Singapore serves as an excellent springboard for developing into other Asean markets and the broader Asia Pac region.

Having recently returned from our International Markets week in Ireland and having met with 42 Irish companies we are glad to say that interest in Asia has never been stronger - there is a vibrant pipeline of new market entrants to work with across a range of sectors. Our mid year review of Irish companies doing business in Asia indicates that we are on track for an increase of 9% growth in Enterprise Ireland Client company exports to the region which demonstrates the strength of offering and the resilience of Irish companies in the midst of the extremely challenging domestic and global environment.

In addition to thanking the Ambassador and the Ireland House team for their unstinting support in what is a particularly crucial time for Irish exports, it is also opportune to thank the Irish Business Association and the Irish Graduates Association and their respective membership bases for their ongoing support to us and to the Client companies we represent. We are always interested to hear from members of the business community in Singapore who are willing to champion the efforts of Irish Entrepreneurs and Businesses here in Singapore and the broader region we serve.

And of course a big thanks to our Irish companies here for their collective effort and collaboration which enables Ireland Inc to punch above it's weight in penetrating new export market opportunities - congratulations on your ongoing success in winning new Sales contracts in what has never been a more important time for growing Irish Exports to Asia.

Pat O' Riordan - Enterprise Ireland - Director Singapore, Indonesia & the Philippines.

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The Black Mountain Celtic Ensemble

Black Mountain Celtic Ensemble features three of the best Irish traditional music exponents in Australia and they will be performing in Singapore on 27 November.

- ◆ Proinnsias O'Muruchu from Dublin on banjo, mandolin, fiddle, guitar and vocals.
- ◆ Ken Maher from Waterford Town on fiddle, guitar and vocals.
- ◆ Martin Dougherty from Belfast on uilleann pipes, flute and tin whistles.

Black Mountain Celtic Ensemble have audiences spell-bound with their eclectic mix of driving reels, jigs, and hornpipes. Audiences will be clapping their hands and stamping their feet to the pulsating rhythms. Slow airs on the pipes and low whistles transport listeners with their haunting evocations of Irish history. There are plenty of songs too sung with emotional intensity, inspiring laughter and tears.

Concert Details

Friday 27 November

7.30pm

Singapore Arts House

Admission: \$15

For further info please contact

Catherine.bannon@dfa.ie



Consular Corner

Travel Advice: If you are planning to travel anywhere in the region or further a field, you may wish to consult the Department of Foreign Affairs [travel advice](http://www.dfa.ie) (www.dfa.ie) for the country you intend to

The Department of Foreign Affairs Consular Services Charter "[Travel Safely: Slán Abhaile](#)" provides general travel advice and also outlines the assistance you are entitled to if you run into problems abroad. It is available at www.dfa.ie

For further information on passports, citizenship, or other consular matters please contact [Suze Samuri](mailto:Suze.Samuri@dfa.ie) (suze.samuri@dfa.ie) or [Vijayal Arumugam](mailto:Vijayal.Arumugam@dfa.ie) (vijayal.arumugam@dfa.ie)



Please remember that it can take up to 6 weeks to process a passport application so don't leave it to last minute!

The Singapore-Ireland Funds

The Singapore Ireland Fund was founded in June 2009 with the objective of further developing the long historical relationship between Singapore and Ireland through the growing international network of Ireland Funds - an international charitable network made up of friends of Ireland, operating in 12 countries.

The Singapore Ireland Fund was launched on August 31st at the Ambassador's Residence. The Chairman - Dr Stanley Quek - outlined the long history of the Irish in Singapore - and the worldwide network of Ireland Funds, which has raised over 300 million Euros for charity.

One of the first projects which the fund will donate to is vocational education programme at Eden School, a specialist school in Singapore for children with autism.

On Saturday November 21, the inaugural Gala Dinner for the Singapore Ireland Fund will be held at the St. Regis Hotel. Not only will it be an evening of entertainment, good food and excellent company, it will also be an opportunity to be a part of the foundation of this exciting and important new chapter in the Ireland Singapore relationship.

For more information on the Singapore Ireland Fund and the upcoming Gala Dinner, please go to www.irlfunds.org/singapore

Don't miss...

14 Oct - The Secret of Kells

This year, the Irish animated film [The Secret of Kells](#) will open the Animation Nation Film Festival. This award-winning fantasy adventure is filled with Irish culture, history, mythology...plus "terrifying Viking hordes". More info: www.sfs.org.sg/animation/an2009



24 Oct - John Boyne at the Singapore Writers Festival

Irish author [John Boyne](#), best known for "The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas", will be taking part in a Meet The Author session at the Arts House on the 24th October at 12pm where he will focus on his latest novel, "The House of Special Purpose". Admission is free. More info: www.singaporewritersfestival.com

If you have any comments or queries about the newsletter or any of its content, please feel free to contact [Catherine Bannon](mailto:Catherine.Bannon@dfa.ie) (Catherine.Bannon@dfa.ie). Feedback is always welcome and if you have any ideas about possible future content, we would be delighted to hear them!

If you do not wish to receive any further correspondence from the Embassy, please email singaporeembassy@dfa.ie.

