



Message from the Ambassador

Greetings from the Embassy!

Welcome to the Chinese Year of the Tiger - a time when, according to Chinese legend, events move quickly - the unexpected will happen - and all obstacles can be overcome! With such a prediction, 2010 cannot fail but to be an exciting - entertaining - and successful year.

Indeed, I can confirm that it is already exciting and exceptionally busy. The mid-January visit of the President of the Dublin Institute of Technology - Professor Brian Norton - and his accompanying senior delegation - got the year off to a productive and propitious beginning with a round of high level meetings and discussions at the Ministry of Education - the newly established Singapore Institute of Technology - Nanyang Technological University - and Singapore Polytechnic where DIT is heavily engaged with their Singapore-based Industry Partner from Ireland - DPS Engineering. The Asian Development Bank Workshop in late January was an outstanding success - thanks in no small part to the dedication of Juliana Stening - Executive Director of the Irish Chamber of Commerce - and was a superb introduction to this year's Enterprise Ireland Trade Mission to the Bank's Headquarters in Manila - in which I will participate following the State Visit to Ireland of the Timorese President (and Nobel Peace Laureate) Dr. Jose Ramos-Horta. The ADB Workshop was followed swiftly by a Pharmaceutical and Process Industries Networking Event which I hosted at the Residence and which was followed a highly successful evening in introducing our Equine Industry to a range of key Singapore contacts and which included the development of an exciting educational link with the University of Limerick. The visit of a high-level delegation from the IDA - they selected Singapore as the venue for their 2010 Asia-Pacific regional meeting - took place just before we all celebrated Chinese New Year.

Just after Chinese New Year I was delighted to host the AGM of the Irish Graduates Association of Singapore. The wide ranging mix of well established and new members that joined the dynamic Committee under the leadership of Professor Brian Mooney at the Residence again showcased the wonderful diversity and impressive reach of the Irish Community and Friends of Ireland in Singapore. Bernadette joins me in wishing IGAS, and all the Irish Societies in Singapore, the very best of good wishes throughout the Year of the Tiger and beyond!

As we enter March and the festival of St. Patrick across this Green Island Nation - always the most special time to celebrate all that is Irish in Singapore - I look forward to greeting you at the St. Patrick's Parade - the only one of its kind in South East Asia - and at the St. Patrick's Society Annual Ball - (details of both events are available in the newsletter). There will also be the auspicious launching of the new Irish Chamber of Commerce in Singapore. In conclusion therefore let me wish you every good fortune and best wishes throughout this year's festival of Saint Patrick - the Patron of the Irish - which is celebrated with such energy and enthusiasm across this great City-State of Singapore.

Beannachtaí na Féile Pádraig ar ár lá náisiúnta ceiliúrtha féin.

Richard A. O'Brien



Upcoming Events

March

8th - 12th March: Trade Mission to Asian Development Bank, Manila

14th: St. Patrick's Day Parade

17th: St Patrick's Day

18th: Irish Chamber of Commerce AGM

19th: St. Patrick's Society Ball

April

26th: Irish Film and Animation Showcase

May

17th: Secret of Kells at the EU Film Festival

30th: South East Asian Gaelic Games

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Community Profiles

In celebration of the Woman on Workplace group that was recently launched by the Irish Chamber of Commerce (formerly the IBA) - and to mark International Woman's Day (8 March) - this edition of the newsletter is showcasing three very different and diverse Irish women in Singapore.



Siona Wu-Murphy

With a Chinese father and an Irish-Spanish mother, 15 year-old Siona has a multitude of cultural influences in her life. If you think you recognise her, it may be because she played the part of Sam on the Mediacorp drama series, Fighting Spiders. She's been living in Singapore since August 2008.

What has been the best thing so far about living in Singapore? The best thing so far about living in Singapore is that it is small and safe to travel, even if you are alone.

And the worst? That it is remote and for some things, very expensive! I would not like to live here for ever.

What was it like acting in a Singapore drama series? Oh it has been great fun!! I met very nice people through Fighting Spiders and "This is my Home". It has been a wonderful experience, superb, a definite highlight in coming to live here.

What does Ireland mean to you? Ireland means so much to me... I was four years old when I first went there and remember picking blackberries and heavy, iron fences that had to be opened and closed every time you drove through! I love the weather and the sense of community in the people. Some of the towns around Cork are breath-taking... My Irish family are full of stories - and so are their neighbours - but they are all quite old! I'd love to meet Irish people my age!... Music is great too, I like The Corrs

Do you think that being of multi-national heritage is a blessing or a curse? It's a BLESSING! ...I get to experience many different things other people can't. It makes me understand the world in a different way. It's just like being able to speak different languages, you have to switch over.

What do you think is the biggest difference between Europe and Asia? Well the weather and culture are very different and so is the way of living... Europe seems much older than Asia, the buildings are more historical for example. Asia is developing and growing and people are very competitive.

Is it difficult to feel a sense of Irishness when you grow up abroad? Oh yes! If I had not gone to Ireland I would not be able to imagine it! Whenever I go back it is to see my Irish family so I can't separate the two. Being Irish is part of who I am and I miss that sense of Irishness like you miss part of your family because they are far away.

What are your plans for the future? I'll finish school in 3 years ... I'll carry on filming during that time if I can... then University. You know, I'm thinking of applying to Trinity College Dublin...

Juliana Stening

A lot of you will already know Juliana as she is the Executive Director of the organisation formerly known as the Irish Business Association (and now known at the Irish Chamber of Commerce).

How long have you been in Singapore? 18 months

What brought you here? My husband Angus Stening works for Pioneer Investments - an asset management firm. He was asked to take on a new regional role in Asia. Singapore seemed like the perfect hub for him to travel from and we had also heard that it was very family-friendly.

What was the greatest challenge in moving your family to Singapore? Leaving the Grandparents! We have two little girls -Molly is 8 and Ellie is 4. They are the only Grandchildren so far in our family. My parents really miss them. Everything else went like clockwork.

If you weren't living in Singapore, where would you most like to live? Greystones, Co. Wicklow or Manly, Sydney.



What is Women on Workplace (WOW) and why did you start it? WOW was just an idea I had when I first started working for the Irish Chamber. It struck me that there were very few females at the events and very few female members. I decided that I would make it my business to change the membership make-up and try my best to motivate more women to get back to work. I spent my first year in Singapore labelled as 'trailing spouse' when I really saw myself as 'trailing talent'. I now know that there are many women here in Singapore that feel the same way! I am determined to continue opening new doors for all our members as we face the next decade as a fully fledged Chamber of Commerce.

How would you describe the Irish Community here? Friendly, outgoing, adventurous and fiercely loyal.

What's your favourite restaurant in Singapore? The Oasis at the Hyatt- Friday and Saturday night BBQ by the pool. Great food, great margaritas and excellent value in a fabulous setting.

What do you think the biggest difference between Ireland and Singapore is? Singapore plays by the rules. Singapore is rigorous. You can always expect a bit of lee-way in Ireland. I am still not sure which I prefer...

For more information on Women on Workplace, you can contact Juliana at ed@irishbusinessassociation.com



Sheila Lim

Sheila met her Singaporean husband, Jimmy, in Dublin in 1972 and has been living in Singapore since 1977. She has been active in the Irish Community for many years and is involved with the Singapore Ireland Fund

Is there anything that you still miss about Ireland? Oh yes my family, the scenery, a walk down Dun Laoghaire pier with Teddy's ice cream, and bacon and cabbage, fish and chips, Tayto and Kimberley biscuits, a visit to Cork.

Do you still feel connected to Ireland? Definitely with regard to family and friends but not so much politically or socially.

What are the challenges of living in Singapore long-term? The expense and pace of a big city life, but that could be anywhere I guess.

How has Singapore changed since you first came here? The first thing I noticed when I walked out of the airport, at Kallang was a sweet pungent mixture of smells, thought I'd never get used to that, you don't get that any more. In the 70's not all cars or taxis were air-conditioned. In fact not all houses had AC either and even then only in bedrooms. Imagine Orchard Road without Wheelock Place, Ion, Wisma Atria, Ngee Ann City, Paragon, Heeren, Centrepoint, 313 Orchard, Orchard Central - Fitzpatrick's supermarket was where Paragon is now!! That was Orchard Road. Foreigners are welcomed now not then. There were no overhead flyovers! The junction of McRitchie /Thomson Road was a roundabout as was Tanglin/Grange Road where the great Marco Polo Hotel was! There is so much construction now so a huge increase in high rise buildings everywhere.

Why did you decide to get involved with the Singapore Ireland Fund? I think it's a wonderful organisation and believe in what it aspires to do from both an Irish and Singapore perspective.

Do you think you would ever be able to live in Ireland again? Not sure about this at this point in my life. Two of our 3 children are here so don't think it's ever going to be an option now!

An Irish Oscar?



Last year, *The Secret of Kells* was opened the Singapore Animation Nation Film Festival. This beautifully created fantasy adventure was just recently nominated for an Academy Award so miss out on it a second time!

The Secret of Kells will be this year's Irish submission at the annual European Union Film Festival and will be screened on Saturday 15th May.

More details to follow...

Innovation Islands

A Green Future (November 2009)

The "Innovation Islands - A Green Future" Forum examined green trends in technology and innovation from the perspective of small island nations on the cusp of establishing a knowledge economy with an increasing focus on sustainability. The message was that Ireland, as is the case with Singapore and other Asian nations, is seeking to make a significant impact in green energy and technology by focusing on policies that encourage R&D, nurture innovation and entrepreneurship, and incentivise business, building on our comparative advantage as a creative hi tech hub.

The event, which was held at *The Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy* at the *National University of Singapore* and took place during *Singapore International Energy Week*, afforded an opportunity for participants to look at global green trends and their impact on smaller nations; and illuminate the work of entrepreneurs and

businesses who are exploring areas of green growth in Europe, Asia and beyond. It incorporated presentations by a number of expert speakers: Dr. Shreekant Gupta (Associate Professor at LKY and a member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change); David Tyndall (Ireland's Kingspan Group who as opened an office in Singapore in January 2010); Anna Whitehouse (Vice President of Total Oil); and Joe Harford - the Chairman of the Government's High Level Action Group on Green Enterprise, who travelled to Singapore especially for the event.

The panel discussion chaired by Dr. Gupta included a lively question and answer session from the floor.

Many thanks to the support of Enterprise Ireland and the Irish Chamber of Commerce Singapore. The seeds have been sown for a 'Green Network' to enable ease of contact between Irish and Singaporean companies, policy makers and researchers in this ever burgeoning area.



Green R&D in Ireland

An Overview

With the race on to progress Ireland's green-energy portfolio in order to meet our 2020 energy targets and to create a cleaner, smarter economy, an increasing array of researchers in universities and institutes of technology (ITs) around the island are focusing on the renewable energy space to harness Ireland's wave, wind, solar and bioenergy resources.

Professor Fionn Murtagh, director of information, communications and emergent technologies at Science Foundation Ireland (SFI), says there is a lot of awareness of the potential of green-energy research and its commercial and industrial relevance in Ireland right now.

SFI is currently supporting around 60 research projects in the green-tech area in Irish universities and ITs.

"There are about 40 such projects in areas that range from waste treatment, environmental, atmosphere analysis through to combustion," Murtagh says.

He refers to CLARITY, an SFI Centre for Science Engineering and Technology (CSET) that is carrying out research in the area of sensor networks. A collaboration between Tyndall National Institute, University College Dublin (UCD) and Dublin City University, CLARITY is also involved with SmartBay, a marine-research infrastructure of sensors and computational technology located in Galway Bay.

Picking up the pace

According to Eoin O'Driscoll, chairman of Forfás and managing director of Aderra, while green-energy research is probably still at an early stage, a number of initiatives over the past few years have helped it gain momentum. He cites the Charles Parsons Energy Research Awards, which were started in 2006, as one initiative that has stimulated and developed areas of green-energy research by providing funding for research groups in Ireland.

O'Driscoll is optimistic about green-energy research happening in Ireland right now, but he says more venture capital needs to become available in the green space. He also asserts that a lot of the challenges in green energy are more engineering than science related.

"We understand the underlying science principles involved in solar, tidal, biofuels, wind. What we don't know is how to harness the sun, wind, waves and the crops to produce energy in a cost-efficient manner. That's the difference between this area and some other areas of research. It's more of the engineering challenges and the deployment challenges and the cost-conversion challenges than it is around the basic science."

For more information on Green Technology issues, please contact Micheál Smith (micheal.smith1@dfa.ie)

Recent Activity...

Enterprise Ireland Pharmaceutical & Process Industries Networking Reception at Ambassador's Residence Jan 28th 2010

Given the importance of this key Industry to Ireland and to Irish Exporters across Asia, Enterprise Ireland Singapore with support from our Colleagues here at Ireland House organised a very successful, worthwhile and engaging evening to discuss opportunities and trends across the Region in 2010 and beyond.

Several of our most important Clients attended the evening which was also well represented by senior figures from the Multinational Sector along with local Singapore companies and the Enterprise Ireland team in Asia. Asia's healthcare spend is now approaching US \$200 billion and there are opportunities to be capitalised on both in Singapore and across the region. It is an exciting time for Irish companies in this sector and we are continuing to see very strong performances on the export front in this area. The underlying demographics in Asia and the emergence of a huge middle class in the region are key development drivers and we will be putting a lot of focus on supporting companies in this area in the months and years ahead. A special thanks to Alan Dixon our Asia Pac Director for attending and to my Colleague Judy Chan here at our Singapore office.



Enterprise Ireland Equine Reception at Ambassador's Residence February 3rd 2010

Ireland's prowess in the Equine sector has been established over generations with top class breeders and trainers that are admired the world over. There is also an interesting group of Irish companies supplying the sector and there is evidence of their interest and capability to internationalise their offerings. Ambassador O' Brien kindly hosted 55 key members of the Singapore Equine Industry and a number of Irish Companies including Connolly Redmills, University of Limerick – Equine Science Department and the Irish Thoroughbred Marketing Association who are all active here in Singapore. Special thanks to Moira Lynam (Citi Bank) and Mark McCormack (Kerry Asia) from the Irish Chamber of Commerce Singapore for their support with contacts and advice to the Irish interests and also to our Colleague Catherine Bannon here at Ireland House for her support.

Pat O' Riordan

Enterprise Ireland - Director Singapore



Irish Graduates Association of Singapore

IGAS

Irish Graduates Association of Singapore (IGAS) is a not-for-profit organisation founded in 1980 with the aim of establishing a network for graduates of Irish Universities in Singapore. IGAS holds a number of social events throughout the year and also runs an Essay Competition for Singaporean Students.

On 19 February, the AGM was hosted by Ambassador O'Brien at his Residence. After the serious business was over, guests spent a relaxing evening listening to traditional music (organised by IGAS President Brian Mooney), reconnecting with old friends as well as meeting newer members of the Community.

For more information on how to join IGAS and get involved, please contact Catherine Bannon (catherine.bannon@dfa.ie).



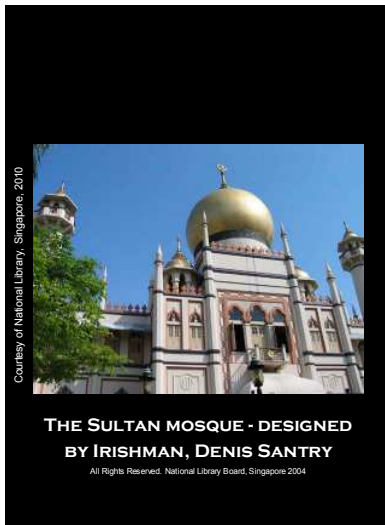
facebook

IGAS is now on Facebook!

Join the group and be kept up to date with news and events.

...just search for the Irish Graduates Association of Singapore from your Facebook account.

denis santry



The Embassy - with the invaluable assistance of local historian Rosemary Lim - and the National Library of Singapore Donors Collection are planning an exhibition later this year centred around photographs in the Denis Santry Collection. The photographs were donated to the library by a member of the Santry family in the Netherlands.

Denis Santry was born in Cork in 1879 and - through the winning of scholarships and prizes - received his training in London before migrating to South Africa where he became a draughtsman in a firm of architects. His career in South Africa took a more artistic turn as he became a satirical cartoonist, with his work published worldwide. He was an early pioneer of animated cartoons. But for ill health, which prevented him from entering the USA, he may have become a name in the animated film industry. As it was, in 1919, he came to Singapore and enjoyed great success as a partner in the architectural firm of Swan & McLaren.

Santry spent fifteen years in Singapore during a prolific period in construction. Many of the commercial buildings of the time have been demolished but places of worship have survived, among them the Sultan Mosque, Prinsep Street Presbyterian Church, Kampong Kapoor Methodist Church and Alkaff Mosque, all featured in the collection.

Santry belonged to many societies and clubs during his time in Singapore, including a choir, an amateur wireless club that broadcast its own programmes once a week, and of course the Society of Architects, whose journal often featured Santry's satirical cartoons. In fact he was a founding member of the Singapore Society of Architects and later the Institute of Architects in Malaya. In 1925 he and a group of other Irishmen called for a meeting to set up the St Patrick's Society of Singapore.

Santry left Singapore in 1934 and eventually returned to South Africa in 1940 where he resumed practice as an architect. He died in Durban in 1960.



St. Patrick's Day

St. Patrick's Society of Singapore
Annual Ball - Friday 19th March

Shangri La Hotel - Island Ballroom.
7pm - Champagne reception.

Tickets on Sale NOW.
Selling fast.

Members \$235 / Non members \$250.
Contact Paul O'Neill
theboyoneill@yahoo.co.uk for more details.

Fabulous prizes to be won in the raffle. 5 course dinner, live band Nana and the Vibes, VJ the DJ and lots more!

Consular Corner...

FOR QUERIES ON

- ◆ GETTING MARRIED ABROAD
- ◆ CITIZENSHIP
- ◆ PASSPORTS
- ◆ AUTHENTICATION OF DOCUMENTS
- ◆ AND ANY OTHER CONSULAR MATTERS

PLEASE DROP SUZE AN EMAIL
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Please remember
that passports must
be valid for at
least 6 months
prior to travel in
most parts of
Asia...

Eircom Takeover officially Completed and New Board Announced

On 4th January ST Telemedia made official its foray into the European telecommunications market with its acquisition of eircom Holdings, Ireland's leading provider of telecommunications services.

On 21st January 2010 - eircom Limited announced the membership of its board under its new owners:

Mr Ned Sullivan (Independent Chairman)

Mr Ned Sullivan was appointed as an independent director and Chairman of the Board of eircom on 30 October 2008. He is currently Chairman of Greencore Group plc and McInerney Holdings plc.

Mr Jerome Barrett (Deputy Chairman)

Mr Jerome Barrett has been a director of eircom Limited (and Deputy Chairman of the Board) since 1 June 2009. He was also appointed a director of the ERC Ireland entities on the same date.

Mr Tan Guong Ching

Mr Tan Guong Ching serves as Non-Executive Chairman of ST Telemedia, Asia Mobile Holdings Pte Ltd, StarHub Ltd, Singapore Technologies Aerospace Ltd, Temasek Life Sciences Laboratory Limited and IP Academy.

Mr Lee Theng Kiat

Mr Lee Theng Kiat is President and Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director of ST Telemedia. He spearheaded the formation of ST Telemedia and has led the company's efforts in establishing itself as a leading wireless and global IP services company.

Mr Steven Terrell Clontz

Mr Steven Terrell Clontz was recently appointed Managing Director - North America and Europe for ST Telemedia. Until December 31st, 2009, Mr. Clontz was CEO of StarHub Ltd., where he had served since 1999. He continues to serve StarHub as a non-executive Director.

Mr Greg Sparks

Mr Gregory Sparks was appointed to the Board of eircom Limited on 27 May 2009. He was also appointed as a director of the ERC entities on 1 June 2009. He is a founding partner of FGS, Chartered Accountants. He holds a number of other Board appointments including The Irish Times and Digicel, the mobile operator in the Caribbean.

Mr Paul Donovan, CEO

Mr Paul Donovan has been CEO of eircom Group since July 2009. Paul has significant telecom management and senior leadership experience from several markets in the world, including Asia Pacific and Africa. Prior to his appointment as CEO of eircom Group, he was Chief Executive, EMAPA Region for the Vodafone Group.

For more information on Telecommunications issues, please contact Micheál Smith (micheal.smith1@dfa.ie)

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.