

IRELAND NEWS

Consulate of Ireland Newsletter for U.S. Southwest

FÁILTE



Fáilte – Welcome!

Dear friends - Welcome to this first edition of Ireland News for 2018. New Years is a time for making resolutions and planning for the year ahead. The Consulate would be delighted to assist you in planning and developing events or initiatives during 2018 and provide you with information on possible funding options including the Emigrant Support Programme (ESP). Further information on ESP funding is available on the following page.

Thanks to you, we increased the number of ‘greenings’ across the region for St. Patrick’s Day in both 2016 and 2017. The Consulate needs your help to keep greening even more buildings and landmarks across the region for St. Patrick’s week this year. Please let us know as soon as possible if there is a greening opportunity or event taking place in your area.

I wish you and your family a peaceful and successful 2018.

Adrian Farrell
Consul General of Ireland, Austin

P.S. - We would be delighted to feature news about events in your area in our next edition, simply email us the information!

Renewing your passport? Renew online!

The online renewal process is not only faster than renewing by mail, it’s cheaper too!
Click on the photo to the right for more information



Emigrant Support Programme now accepting funding applications!

The Emigrant Support Programme initiative offers funding each year to support the international Irish community. Last year, our consular area was one of the largest recipients of ESP funding – the Kansas City Irish Center received funding for continuing renovations and the Louisiana Hibernian Charity in New Orleans received a grant to construct a Hibernian Memorial Park in the city.

If you have a project of any size that helps promote and support the Irish diaspora, you are welcome to [apply!](#)

An overview of the programme, FAQs, helpful tips, and more can be found [here](#)

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact Robert Teas at Robert.Teas@dfa.ie



Culture Ireland meets in New York



In early January, over 50 representatives from Irish cultural institutions in 16 U.S. states and Canada convened with [Culture Ireland](#) in New York City to share experiences and discuss future plans and collaborations.

RECENT EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS

Ireland meets Mexico at Christmas Reception

This year the Irish Consulate joined the Mexican Consulate for a joint Christmas reception on December 12 at the new Mexican Consulate opened earlier in 2017. We were delighted that members of the Irish communities from Austin, Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, and Corpus Christi attended and enjoyed music, dance, and food from both cultures while celebrating the holiday season. It was great to celebrate the partnership that our communities continue to share throughout Texas!



Holiday Events

Holiday fun and carols at the San Antonio Harp & Shamrock Society's annual Christmas Party.

More at: www.harbandshamrock.org



The Consulate hosted an evening of holiday food and fun for the [Austin Ancient Order of Hibernians](#)' annual Christmas party on December 10. Congratulations to Kevin Buechler who was named 2017 Hibernian of the Year!

Another Christmas season means another successful Celtic Christmas Concert in downtown Austin! Thanks to Donnelle McKaskle for the great work she does to organise this event each year.



Around the Region



Above: Consul General Farrell met with Mayor Ron Nirenberg ahead of San Antonio's tercentenary celebrations during 2018

Below: Elaine O'Connor and Paul Deane hosted the annual [Houston Gaels](#) GAA Dinner



Flynn Center President Lori Gallagher and her incredible team hosted another successful Gala for the [Irish Studies programme](#) at St. Thomas University in Houston



Above: Congratulations to the 2017 [Ireland Funds](#) Honourees Archie and Julie Bennett!



Left: It would not be an Ireland Funds event without the wonderful Mike Corboy.

Around the Region



Speaking to students at the George H.W. Bush Presidential Library at Texas A&M University

Exciting to meet famed director (and Austin native!) Richard Linklater at a screening of John Huston's adaptation of James Joyce's *The Dead*.



Members of Austin's Finnegans Wake reading group enjoyed an evening at the Consulate celebrating the holidays and crossing the Wake's Ricorso from the final "the" on page 628 back to "riverrun" at the opening.



The 21st Austin Celtic Festival took place during the first weekend in November, where thousands of attendees enjoyed Celtic games, dance, music, and storytelling.



Around the Region



Consul General Farrell was delighted to meet with Father Patrick Higgins of Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church in Corpus Christi. They discussed the inspiring response of the Irish community to the devastation of Hurricane Harvey, as well as the pilgrimage Father Higgins will be leading from Texas to Ireland for Pope Francis' visit this summer. If you are interested in learning more, contact Fr. Higgins at (361) 776-2446 or paraichiggins@gmail.com



The Kansas City Irish Festival took place over Labor Day weekend in 2017 and again demonstrated why it is one of the largest and best Irish festivals in the region with thousands of guests enjoying the best of Irish live music, dancing, comedy, culture and even a pop-up Irish Consulate!



New Orleans

Consul General Farrell was welcomed to New Orleans in October for the Ancient Order of Hibernians Testimonial dinner, presided over by Ireland's Honorary Consul for the city, Judge James McKay in his capacity as National President of the AOH. While in town, CG Farrell met with Dr. Laura Kelley of Tulane University, who shared her fascinating book about the Irish in New Orleans. The Consul General also enjoyed once again meeting Mayor Mitch Landrieu ahead of the city's upcoming Tricentennial Celebration ([more info here!](#))



New Mexico

Consul General Farrell enjoyed a trip to New Mexico in November, where he was warmly welcomed by the active Irish community and Santa Fe Mayor Javier Gonzales. He even came across O'Farrell Hats – a fixture of the Santa Fe community and a great example of the lasting Irish presence in the state (over 7% of residents claim Irish heritage)!



CG Farrell with Mayor Gonzales



This name seems familiar...



CG Farrell with members of the [Irish-American Society of New Mexico](#) in Albuquerque

News from Ireland

EU leaders agreed to move on to the second phase of talks on the UK's departure from the European Union. As the Taoiseach has indicated, Ireland achieved all that was set out to achieve in phase one, with the Good Friday Agreement protected and the Common Travel Area continuing.

See President Michael Higgins' 2017 Christmas and New Year Message on YouTube [here](#).

Minister Ciáran Cannon laid out the Government's plans for harnessing the power of the Irish Diaspora in 2018 in two important and wide-ranging articles in [Irish Central](#) and [The Irish Times](#).

The Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade, through its network of Embassies and Consulates, [provided support](#) to a record number of more than 2,500 Irish citizens in distress abroad in 2017. Minister Coveney announced that over 779,000 passports were issued in 2017, an increase of 6% over 2016 and the highest number ever issued in one year.

Ireland was named [first for skills and innovation](#) in the EU Commission's 2017 Small Business Fact Sheet.

Ireland won Travel Weekly Magazine's "[Best Destination](#)" travel award for the fourth year in a row.

Enjoy Culture Ireland's [celebratory 2017 retrospective](#) on a global programme that, with its funding assistance, reached a 3.5 million live audience and 7 million online.

May the Force be With You



If you happen to go see Star Wars: The Last Jedi, keep an eye out for the Skellig Islands off Ireland's west coast, which are featured prominently throughout the movie!



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