

Welcome Fáilte

As Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, I am delighted to see Donegal County Council spearheading an initiative such as the "Donegal - Community In Touch" e-zine in association with the Diaspora project.

I feel this concept has the potential to become an effective and worthwhile tool in encouraging Donegal folk domiciled elsewhere, and many others besides, to return to live, work and invest in our county.

The physical infrastructure in Donegal has changed utterly in the last twenty years and this newsletter will help keep our diaspora well informed of the potential and the opportunities available at home at the click of a mouse. Our county has so much to offer, we are served by a network of roads which has improved beyond recognition and will continue to do so. Passenger figures at Donegal airport in Carrickfinn also continue to increase, while some of the largest cruise liners in Europe are now a regular feature at the new €50 million pier in Killybegs.

The Metropolitan Area Network and Project Kelvin will ensure that we are well served in terms of telecommunications infrastructure, while the Institutes of Technology

in Sligo and Letterkenny play a major part in ensuring our young people have the opportunities to avail of third level education and provide a skilled and competent workforce for prospective employers.

I compliment the Community, Culture and Enterprise Directorate of Donegal County Council for coming up with the idea, subsequently compiling a very substantial list of recipients of this e-mail and, most importantly, for the editorial content. While we do face challenges, we have the ability, the knowledge and the spirit of enterprise and enthusiasm here in Donegal to clear whatever hurdles present.

The importance of networking in all aspects of life cannot be overstated, spread the word and play your part in developing a sustainable and competitive economy for the North West for this and future generations.

Ádh mór

Chuir an Tánaiste, Máire Ní Chochláin, Aire an Roinn Fiontar, Trádála agus Fostaíochta, fáilte roimh an tionscnamh e-zine "Pobal i dTeagmháil - Dún na nGall".

Dúirt sí go mbeidh an tionscnamh seo ina uirlís chun taispeáint d'ár nDiaspóra ar fud an domhain go bhfuil deiseanna agus poitéinseáil oideachais, cumarsáide agus infreastruchtúra go leor sa bhaile anois de bharr mórthorbairt na Contae le scór bliain anuas.

Mhol sí tacú leis an e-zine "Pobal i dTeagmháil - Dún na nGall" chun a bheith páirteach i bhfhorbairt an Iar Thuaisceart anois agus san todhchaí.

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Welcome by the Mayor, County Donegal.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this first edition of the Donegal Community In Touch e-zine. It is intended through this e-zine to establish and to maintain contact with and between the broad community of Donegal people and people with a connection or interest in Donegal, wherever they may be located in the world.

I am aware of the extent of our Donegal diaspora, our extended community in so many places, not least through the key role played by Donegal Associations in countries such as USA, Australia, England, Scotland as well as other parts of Ireland. As mayor of Donegal, I am delighted to see this project initiated and I trust that it will be of interest and of use to our extended community on an ongoing basis.

Guím gach rath ar an obair. Councillor Gerry Crawford.



Welcome by the Chair of the County Development Board

Donegal County Development Board was established in 2000 in order to promote and co-ordinate economic, social and cultural development in County Donegal. Towards this end we have prepared, and are now implementing, a strategy for the development of the county. This strategy defines the community of Donegal as being not only people who live in the county, but also people with a connection to or interest in the county, no matter where they live. Donegal County Development Board has initiated the Donegal Diaspora project in this context. We realise that the broad Donegal community is a key resource for County Donegal and that Donegal is a resource for our diaspora. I look forward to seeing this e-zine establish itself and continue to develop as an ongoing means of communication for the Donegal Community.

Guim gach deá ghruí ar an iris seo agus ar an obair a bheidh a chuir i gcrích san réimse seo.

Councillor Francis Conaghan.



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Donegal Diaspora Events Take Place in Boston, London and Dublin



Pictured at the Ireland North West reception in Boston: Matt Peachy, Derry City Council, Mr Bro McFerran, CBE - CEO Northbrook Technologies NI (Speaker), Ald Drew Thompson, Mayor of Derry, Timothy P Murray, Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts, Cllr John Boyle, Mayor of Donegal, Mr Henry McGarvey, CEO Pramerica (Speaker), Ms Linda Watson, Lady Mayoress of Derry, Aidín McCarter, Donegal County Council.

The Mayor of Donegal, Councillor John Boyle and the Mayor of Derry, Alderman Drew Thompson were in Boston on 23rd April 2008 to call on the Irish community in the US to help create a stronger economy in the North West of Ireland. They addressed the US launch of the Derry/Donegal Diaspora project in Boston, where the Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts, Mr. Timothy P Murray was guest of honour.

Lieutenant Governor Murray said that he "believes that Massachusetts and Ireland are well positioned to work together to jointly grow our economies because, when you look at the important industries for all of us, they are strikingly similar. In the areas of software and technology, financial services, telecommunications, pharmaceuticals, healthcare, biotechnology and medical devices, the synergies between our economies are extensive and potent."

The Mayor of Donegal, Councillor John Boyle and the Mayor of Derry, Alderman Drew Thompson both highlighted the importance of diaspora for now and for the future. The Boston event was also addressed by Bro McFerran, Managing Director of Northbrook Technology, Northern Ireland's largest IT company, and Mr. Henry McGarvey, Managing Director of Pramerica Systems in Letterkenny.

The London launch of the Northwest Diaspora project took place on 29th November 2007 and was attended by over 100 key players in the public and private sector, education, Government and other agencies and was also addressed by Donegal-born Sir Roy McNulty, Chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority, and of the Derry urban regeneration company, ILEX.

Sir Roy outlined the ambitious plans and the vision ILEX has for Derry, and said they were also looking across the border at the wider region, working with partners such as Donegal County Council. He said the diaspora event was "about making sure that we can all play a part in transforming the North West region, and in creating the conditions in which the private sector can flourish and grow, to provide the jobs and prosperity that we all want to see." The Deputy Mayor of Derry, Mrs Patricia Logue, said that our 'Diaspora' in London "are very much part of the wider North West Community and your role in shaping the economic development of the North West region is vitally important."

The Dublin Diaspora project event at the Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin on 11th October 2007 aimed, in the first instance, at establishing a network of individuals, businesses and agencies with connections to the North West.



Pictured at the London launch of the Northwest Diaspora project: Cllr Gerard Diver (Derry City), Janice Treacey (London Chamber of Commerce), John McGowan (Derry) and Simon Johnson (EPI Centre - LYIT).





*Pictured at the Diaspora event held in Dublin:
Hugh Logue (EU Commission), Anne Logue, James
McGettigan, Martin McGettigan and Oliver McGettigan.*

Chief economist with the Bank of Ireland, Dan McLaughlin, is from Malin in County Donegal. He acknowledged that the border has always been a major factor in the economic fortunes of the region. "In many ways, economic activity in Donegal appears to be more closely connected to economic activity in Northern Ireland than the rest of the Republic. So a return to more normal economic activity in NI will benefit Donegal to a greater extent. Similarly, the Derry region has benefited from the economic growth across the border, and may now be in a position to use this advantage more fully."

The Dublin launch aimed to attract people from Derry and Donegal who were working in Dublin, who run their own businesses, or who are key players in their own spheres.

For further information on the project or to be added to the database contact: Jaclyn Harron, Research and Policy Officer, Donegal County Council on + 353 (0) 74 9172498 or jharron@donegalcoco.ie.

Donegal County Council Appoints Mayor



Councillor Gerry Crawford was appointed Mayor of Donegal in June this year. Councillor Crawford is from Porthall, Lifford, a townland with Tyrone and Derry.

He is married to Adrienne and has three sons and two daughters. Councillor Crawford works in the ambulance service of the Health Service Executive North West and has taken a sabbatical to allow him to focus on his commitments as Mayor. His work with the ambulance service has involved

him in the heart of the community. His community portfolio included a Director of the Lifford Credit Union, a member of the Lifford Civil Defence, Board of Management member of the Boyagh National School and a Shop Steward with the Services, Industrial, Professional and Technical Union (S.I.P.T.U.). It was this and other community activities that introduced him to political life.

He was first elected for the Fianna Fáil party to Donegal County Council in 1999. Councillor Crawford currently sits on the Letterkenny Electoral Area Committee, the Corporate Policy Group, Lifford Development Limited, the County Development Board, the Community, Corporate & Cultural Strategic Policy Committee (Chair), Donegal County Enterprise Board, the Border Regional Authority, the Strabane/Lifford Development Commission and L.A.T.C.H.

He is both delighted and honoured to have been appointed Mayor of Donegal and has stated that he intends to focus on local community issues, assisting the Tánaiste and others to work towards achieving a good quality of life for all the residents of the County.

Appointment of Tánaiste (Deputy Prime Minister)

Donegal native, Mary Coughlan was appointed Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment in May 2008 by the newly appointed Taoiseach Brian Cowen. Mary is the third person from Ulster to serve as Tánaiste since that office was created in 1937.

Mary was not the only member of her family to become politically active. Her uncle, Clement Coughlan, was a TD (Member of Parliament) from 1981 until his death in 1983, while her father, Cathal Coughlan, was a TD from 1983 to 1986. The death of her father resulted in Mary being co-opted onto Donegal County Council and launching her own political career.

Educated in Ursuline Convent, Sligo and University College Dublin she worked as a social worker for a brief period before becoming involved in politics.

Having served as Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries & Food and Minister of Social & Family Affairs, she was first elected to the Dáil Éireann as a Fianna Fáil TD in 1987. At the age of 21 years and 9 months she was the youngest member of the 25th Dáil.

Mary is married to David Charlton they have two children – a son and a daughter and they live in Frosses, County Donegal.



Further Job Creation for the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park

On Tuesday, 7th October 2008, **R.A. Pacáistí Teo. (RAP)** announced that it is to expand its operation at the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park with the support of Údarás na Gaeltachta. This expansion will involve an overall investment of €3.3 million and the creation of up to 70 new jobs at the company's base in Gaoth Dobhair. The Company currently employs 54 people and the announcement of this expansion will bring the total number employed at the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park to 124. The additional 70 jobs will be created over the next three years and 27 of those posts will be in place by the end of 2009.



Official Opening of Randox Laboratories Ltd.

SpinVox, the founder and global leader in Voice-to-Content messaging, announced on the 29th September 2008 that it is to expand its presence on the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park by creating an additional 41 jobs, bringing the total number employed by the company at the site to 71. **SpinVox**, the world's largest private speech technology company, first set up its operations in Gaoth Dobhair in 2006.

SIOEN Ireland has embarked on a recruitment campaign to employ a further 12 employees. **SIOEN** is a wholly owned subsidiary of **SIOEN Industries**, a Belgian-based Coating and Apparel Group, and has been operating in Gaoth Dobhair since 1980. **SIOEN Ireland** supplies specialised protective clothing to industry, agriculture, marine, transport, fire, law enforcement and ambulance.

Tithe an Earagail Teo announced that it employed three additional employees last week increasing their workforce to 32. **Tithe an Earagail** manufacture and distribute timber-framed buildings.

Randox Laboratories Ltd., an international clinical diagnostics company, is to invest €7.5 million in the establishment of a diagnostic manufacturing and research and development (R&D) facility in Dungloe, County Donegal. The investment, which is supported by Údarás na Gaeltachta, will create 135 high value jobs over the next three years.

Dr. Peter FitzGerald, Managing Director of **Randox Laboratories Ltd.**, said "We chose Dungloe for this expansion because of the high quality facility that was available, the highly educated workforce and the suitable infrastructure. We are excited about this expansion and hope it will increase the local economy's success by providing a range of professional employment opportunities. We hope this will also aid in our mission to improve diagnostic solutions on a continual basis."

Further Information: Donnchadh Ó Baoill, +353 (0)74 9560100 (dob@udaras.ie), Údarás na Gaeltachta, Gaoth Dobhair Business Park.

September 2008 An Tánaiste opens €1.1m Business Centre for South West Donegal Gaeltacht

Monday 8th September 2008 saw the Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Mary Coughlan TD, open a new state of the art €1.1m Incubation & Enterprise Centre, Fiontarlann, in Baile Mún, Cill Charthaigh in the South West Donegal Gaeltacht.

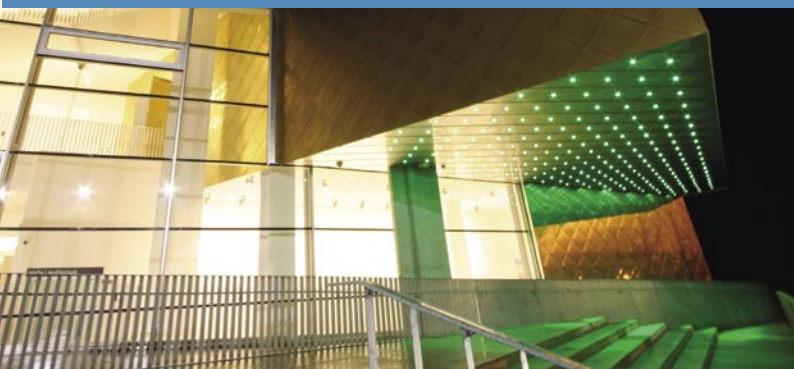
The Business Centre provides flexible workspace with free renewable energy heating and broadband for early stage and developing enterprises. The Centre will suit those who are seeking enterprise space and facilities of a high standard with on-site supports. The units range in size from 37m² up to 93m² and each incorporates a high level of technology fit-out and facilities.

This €1.1m Centre is the result of an innovative partnership between WESTBIC and Áislann Cill Charthaigh Teo. and is funded by Údarás na Gaeltachta and the International Fund for Ireland. Údarás na Gaeltachta are confident that the Fiontarlann will boost enterprise in the area and will have a positive impact on the local business infrastructure.



Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Mary Coughlan TD, opens a new state of the art €1.1m Incubation & Enterprise Centre, Fiontarlann





Regional Culture Centre Letterkenny Official Opening

Tánaiste Mary Coughlan TD Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Employment performed the official opening of the spectacular Donegal County Council Regional Cultural Centre building in Letterkenny on Saturday July 12th 2008.

The official opening of the building coincided with the opening of a number of major international exhibitions. It proved to be a great occasion, attended by over 300 people.

The line up of speakers included Michael McLoone, County Manager Donegal County Council, who acted as Master of Ceremonies, Councillor Marian McDonald representing the INTERREG IIIA Partnership and Councillor Victor Fisher, Mayor Letterkenny Town Council.

Dr. John Hume (Nobel laureate) opened the exhibition on the life and work of Donegal / Derry architect Liam McCormick and Pierre Vasarely from France opened a major retrospective exhibition of the work of his grandfather the renowned artist Victor Vasarely.

Councillor Gerry Crawford, Mayor Donegal County Council spoke about the quality of the facility itself and about the extensive arts and cultural infrastructure supported by Donegal County Council. He extended his thanks to the main funders - Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism, INTERREG IIIA and International Fund for Ireland.

The Tánaiste Mary Coughlan TD emphasised the countywide and cross border remit of the project. She declared that the Centre was one of the finest of its kind in Ireland and a credit to County Donegal.

For more information please log onto www.donegalculture.com.



Cllr. Dessie Larkin & Tánaiste at the official opening of the Regional Cultural Centre.

The 28th Annual MacGill Summer School & Arts Week

Glenties, Co. Donegal

A feast of Friel

The 28th Annual MacGill Summer School in July of this year departed from its usual pattern of dealing with an economic, social or political theme of national importance to honour world renowned playwright, Brian Friel. Friel who will be eighty in January, although born in Tyrone and brought up in Derry, has for most of his life been closely associated with Glenties where his mother's family, the McLoones, lived and where as a boy he spent his summer holidays. The village of Ballybeg in which the action of most of his plays takes place undoubtedly bears close resemblance to Glenties which, on the author's own admission inspired him greatly.



The Cast of Brian Friel's play "Hidden History" performed by the Ourborus Theatre Company, pictured at the MacGill Summer School with Nobel laureate Mr. Séamus Heaney, Mr. Joe Mulholland, Director MacGill Summer School and Mr. Michael Mc Loone, County Manager, Donegal County Council.

This year's MacGill Summer School, entitled A FEAST OF FRIEL, was therefore unique in many respects with the author himself together with his wife, Anne, in attendance at most of the symposia, readings and performances. Performances of some of his great classics, TRANSLATIONS, MAKING HISTORY, FAITH HEALER and PHILADELPHIA HERE I COME as well as readings by a company of professional actors of GENTLE ISLAND, ARISTOCRATS, THE ENEMY WITHIN, FREEDOM OF THE CITY, LIVING QUARTERS and MOLLY SWEENEY attracted unprecedented numbers of admirers of Friel's work from the county of Donegal and throughout Ireland. It was difficult to find accommodation in Glenties and the surrounding area during the week.



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In Glenties to analyse and discuss the hugely impressive range of work in the Friel canon were theatre directors, actors, academics and fellow artists including the Nobel laureate, Seamus Heaney who also gave a reading of his work, the playwright, Tom Kilroy and the poets, Micheal O Siadhail and Theo Dorgan. The Eighth Annual John Hume Lecture, inaugurated at the School in 2001, was delivered by Minister of State, Dr Martin Mansergh TD. The School was officially opened by An Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment, Ms Mary Coughlan TD.

For further information log onto

www.macgillsummerschool.com



Kathleen Watkins and Gay Byrne pictured with Anne and Brian Friel.



John and Pat Hume pictured with Brian and Anne Friel.

Movie Shot in Inishowen Co. Donegal



Aidan Quinn

International Stars Aidan Quinn and Connie Nielsen were in Inishowen in April and May of 2008 to film the movie "A Shine of Rainbows". The film was directed by the Emmy award winning Indian director Vic Sarin and was shot in Malin Head, the Isle of Doagh, Leenan, Buncrana and some other picturesque areas of Inishowen.

A Shine of Rainbows is based on the novel of the same name by English writer Lillian Beckwith. The film focuses on a shy and frail eight-year-old boy named Thomas. He has been living in a desolate orphanage since his grandmother's death and is being teased by the other children. He is taken away from the orphanage by the vibrant Mairi Mc Donald who brings him to her "remote windswept home on the island of Connie" and the film charts his new life from there.

The movie was secured for County Donegal by the County Council's Donegal Film Office following a yearlong negotiation process. The Donegal Film Office is an initiative of Donegal County Development Board and Donegal County Council.

For further information on the work of the Donegal Film Office

please contact Ms. Aileen Doherty at

aideendoherty@donegalcoco.ie.

Recent Publications

Aerfort Dhún na nGall - Donegal Airport announce "Take Off" 2008.

For further information visit www.donegalairport.ie

Donegal Community Audit - A Strategic Needs Assessment

Donegal Community Audit - A Mapping Exercise. For further information visit www.donegalcoco.ie

Forbairt - Newsletter of Donegal County Development Board - April

2008. For further information visit www.donegalcodb.ie

Letterkenny Donegal's Gateway - your complete Guide.

For further information visit www.letterkenny.ie

Donegal www.donegaldirect.ie - Donegal Tourism Ltd. Neil T Blaney

Rd. Letterkenny County Donegal tel: +353 (0) 74 91 21160;

email: donegaltourism@eircom.net



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Focus on Pramerica

Pramerica Systems Ireland was established in Letterkenny in 2000 to provide a software development service for its U.S. - based parent, Prudential Financial*. At the time, it employed 88 people. Now, the company has grown to the point where it employs more than 600 people, serves 13 different business groups for its parent, and operates a contact centre and a back-office processing function that handles calls and processes key business transactions for many of Prudential's clients and employees in America.

Pramerica Systems Ireland is now one of the largest employers in the North West. But in addition to its size is the quality of the employment available to the people of the area. In February 2005 and 2007, the Great Place to Work Institute Ireland named Pramerica Systems Ireland Limited as one of the best companies to work for in the country. This comes on the back of Pramerica's achievement of Excellence Through People certification in 2004 and the award of Excellence Through People at a Platinum Level in 2008.

Prudential Financial is a financial services leader. The fact that Ireland is seen as something of an IT centre with a good availability of technical skills led the company to establish its first off-shore technology development subsidiary in County Donegal.

The establishment of Pramerica Systems Ireland was primarily for technology support reasons. The Letterkenny site supports a wide range of technologies, from mainframe, client server and internet-based systems, to integrating legacy systems with systems that use more modern technologies. There are currently 430 people employed in this segment of the Pramerica business, primarily from Ireland, but also drawn from such geographical locations as the UK and Europe, Africa, India and the rest of Asia. All of these positions in the systems end of Pramerica's business are made up of skilled or knowledge-based jobs.



In addition to the systems segment of Pramerica Systems Ireland, there is also the operations business, which is essentially the contact centre. However, Pramerica Systems Ireland's involvement with the community in Donegal does not begin and end with the provision of employment. It has strong alliances with local groups, and has put in place a technical training programme with FÁS that teaches

technical skills such as the COBOL programming language. It also has links with Letterkenny Institute of Technology in the running of a Diploma programme, which teaches the basics of insurance and IT. Thus far almost 100 of the participants of the FÁS and Letterkenny Institute of Technology programmes have secured employment with Pramerica.

But Pramerica Systems Ireland also takes its social responsibilities seriously. It is heavily involved in the community and takes part in the Prudential Global Volunteer Day on the first Saturday in October each year. Charities supported by Pramerica include the Bubblegum Club, which provides some relief to young people with terminal illnesses, Junior Achievement, where Pramerica employees spend time with local primary and secondary-level schoolchildren and St. Vincent de Paul. Pramerica employees have also been involved in a number of sporting events and fund raising, which support the local Special Olympics group.

Pramerica considers its multi-cultural workforce, which is comprised of at least 17 different nationalities, to be one of its greatest strengths. Pramerica hosts a number of events for employees to learn about and celebrate the cultures represented in the staff.

** Prudential Financial is not affiliated in any manner with Prudential plc, a company incorporated in the United Kingdom.*

For further information visit: www.pramerica.ie



Focus on Trinity Innovations

Trinity Innovations is a software development company that specialises in the print publishing industry. It developed a software solution that allows traditional publishing companies to convert to digital editions instantly.

Paul McNulty started working in his company, Trinity Innovations on a full time basis in April 2006 and since then his business has been going from strength to strength. Paul is originally from Letterkenny and has been working in multi media development for 11 years. For three of those years he worked in NYC. "I couldn't get the local papers in NYC and could only access static websites. I missed the interactive experience. "I travelled every week to the Bronx to get the local Donegal newspapers" he says. Upon returning to Ireland, Paul worked in the publishing industry for a couple of years as an account manager and it was during this time that Paul spotted a gap in the sector. Paul began by developing a software solution that allows publishing companies to convert their print publication into digital editions instantly.

"There is a fantastic support system in Donegal for starting a business. The rates are more competitive than any other part of the country, and after living in cities for the 10 years, there is something to be said for getting home 5 minutes after you leave work.

Paul approached Enterprise Ireland and he was advised to apply for the Letterkenny Institute of Technology's Céim Program. Céim is essentially a one year incubation programme for early stage entrepreneurs where business training, mentoring, networking and various other business supports are available. Incubation facilities were made available to Paul in the Business Development Centre on the Letterkenny IT campus.



Paul McNulty, Trinity Innovations

Paul highlights the benefits of the program: "Through the Céim Enterprise Development Program, I was able to meet and speak with specialists that assisted me in researching, marketing and commercializing my software. The Enterprise Ireland CORD funding is a major boost to starting up as it took care of the basics whilst I concentrated on developing the business."

It goes to show that with the right infrastructure, a good idea, expertise and the right support, the world is your oyster. And that's definitely here in Donegal," says Paul.

Focus on Tourism - Fáilte Ireland North West



Fáilte Ireland North West develops and oversees tourism strategies and plans for the region in line with national guidelines. The themes identified for the North West over the next three years will focus on:

- » Developing new reasons to visit while maintaining environmental sustainability.
- » Developing new access services.
- » Using and developing the cultural and heritage resources of the region.

In 2007, under the Soft Infrastructure Programme in County Donegal, Fáilte Ireland North West has invested €662k in a wide range of product improvement works throughout the county. These include Inishowen Coastal Walk, Inishowen Head Loop Walk, Lough Eske, Owenea and Gweebarra angling works, Loop walks on Tory, Arranmore and Gola Islands, Environmental works at Inch Levels and an interpretation project which was delivered across the whole county. In 2008, under the Soft Infrastructure Programme, in excess of €500k is being provided for product development in the North West region.

Fáilte Ireland North West will also help you to identify your business and people development needs and help in the design, development and provision of programmes and services to meet those needs. Whether you need support for initiatives you are planning or for activities already underway, please contact us.

Contact: Joan Crawford, Business Development Manager, Fáilte Ireland North West, tel: +353 (0)71 9161201 or email: joan.crawford@failteireland.ie.



Innovation Voucher Initiative for Small Businesses

A new call for applications is set to open on November 1st 2008 for Enterprise Ireland's Innovation Voucher Initiative. If you own or manage a small limited company with a company registration number and you have a business opportunity or a problem that you want to explore, why not apply for an innovation voucher worth €5,000!

The Innovation Voucher allows you to concentrate on running your business while knowledge providers in Ireland and Northern Ireland come up with a solution that could take your business to the next level.

To download an application form, get details of closing dates and find out what the vouchers can be used for visit

www.innovationvouchers.ie

email innovationvouchers@enterprise-ireland.com or

telephone + 353 (0) 1 8082766.

Jobs

- » www.lookwest.ie
- » www.publicjobs.ie
- » www.jobsdonegal.ie
- » www.localgovernmentjobs.ie
- » www.pramerica.ie
- » www.udaras.ie
- » www.nijobs.com

Business Support Agencies

Ireland North West - Making Business Happen is a collaborative project between Donegal County Council, Derry City Council, Donegal County Enterprise Board and North West Marketing. The project is aimed at increasing the competitiveness and sustainability of the North West enterprise function through the promotion of a partnership approach to regional economic enterprise development on a cross border basis.

For contact details for business support agencies in both Derry and Donegal please log onto www.irelandnorthwest.eu.

- » **Údarás Na Gaeltachta**, Cathal Mac Suibhne, www.udaras.ie
- » **Enterprise Ireland**, Meabh Conaghan, www.enterprise-ireland.com
- » **IDA Ireland**, Joe McHugh, www.idaireland.com
- » **Donegal County Enterprise Board**, Michael Tunney, www.donegalenterprise.ie
- » **Donegal County Council**, Garry Martin, www.donegalcoco.ie

Government Focuses on Special Employment Initiative for Donegal

Ms. Mary Harney, T.D., Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, in response to significant job losses in Donegal, established the Donegal Employment Initiative Task Force in September 1998.

The Task Force was chaired by the County Manager, Donegal County Council Mr. Michael McLoone and was given the following three terms of reference:

- » To assess and recommend the most appropriate responses to offset and compensate for the immediate risks to jobs in particular areas of Donegal.
- » To draw up a set of priority actions for establishing Donegal as a prime, competitive and attractive location for job creation.
- » To assist the Development Agencies in selling Donegal locations to prospective investors.



Mr. Michael McLoone, County Manager and Chair of the Donegal Employment Task Force.

A dedicated Economic Development Fund was established to underpin the recommendations made by the Task Force. The Economic Development Fund is a rolling fund which has, to date, invested in excess of €7.78m million in initiatives throughout the county.

In September 2005, the Minister for Enterprise Trade and Employment, Micheál Martin, TD, established the Interdepartmental Group on County Donegal as a follow up to the work of the Task Force. The Interdepartmental working group (IDG) produced a detailed report in 2006, setting out key economic priorities for the County. Donegal County Development Board have established an Economic Forum to implement the recommendations of the report produced by the IDG.

The fund has supported, for example, the purchase of land banks, investment in facilities, and investment in the installation of optic networks.

This report can be viewed at www.donegalcdb.ie.



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Focus on Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT)

In January 2008, Paul Hannigan was appointed President of LYIT for a further ten-year period. His first term of office began in 1998 and has coincided with dramatic growth in the physical size and modern appearance of LYIT. During this time the Institute has increased the range and number of higher level academic programmes on offer. This has been achieved through engaging all staff and students. The four academic schools – Business, Science, Engineering and Tourism – have all undergone momentous change with a broad range of entry level degree programmes available matched by growing opportunities in post graduate Masters and PhD programmes. The recent incorporation of the Tourism College Killybegs, now redesignated as the School of Tourism of LYIT, opens up further opportunity in the food and hospitality sectors.

“There has been significant progress in making the LYIT the institute of choice and it’s beginning to show,” he continues, “The breakdown of our student population reveals that we have a diverse student body with a large cohort of mature students studying a range of courses. Currently 25% of our student population is mature – this is already 5% ahead of the national target set for 2013. We are particularly proud of our students’ achievements, many score above average nationally and we have quite a few who have won national academic competitions in design, marketing, engineering, culinary arts and computing. Because we are a relatively small campus, that makes these achievements even more profound.” In addition LYIT welcomes over 150 exchange students from European partner colleges on an annual basis.

The LYIT continues to expand its links with industry through Research, Innovation and Enterprise designed to maintain a two-way channel to ensure courses are meeting industry demands and offer students hands-on experience. According to the President, collaboration with industry is flourishing, “There are number of research centres on campus namely CAMBio, WiSAR, EpiCentre and Tuath. Each of these contribute to an increasing research capacity and interaction with local business.

Our Business Development Centre is currently being extended and this will result in an expansion of our already successful business incubation service. This service has seen a number of very successful spin-outs to the local region recently including SITA, a very successful software development company.

In 2004, LYIT, University of Ulster and NUI Galway in collaboration with University of Missouri, Professor Tom Johnston and Dr Matt Fannin developed a Social Accounting Matrix of the Border, Midlands and West Region of Ireland. This was the first time US Regional Economic Modelling methodology was used in Ireland.

This followed earlier work conducted by the same consortium which developed a SAM Model for the Gaeltacht Region of County Donegal and for County Fermanagh.

In 2007, LYIT in conjunction with Louisiana State University’s Professor Matt Fannin developed an Economic Impact Assessment of LYIT in County Donegal which estimated that the Institute is worth almost €100m annually to the County Donegal economy.

In addition, LYIT has had a collaborative relationship with Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania which has seen student exchange for semesters of study in both directions.

The one constant in this ever-changing environment is that education is a safe bet. The LYIT remains confident that it can play its part in ensuring that its graduates can be best prepared for the future that awaits them.



Courses

County Donegal has a multi-skilled workforce and many opportunities exist for people to upskill through a range of educational institutions.

Within the North West region, numerous opportunities exist to undertake courses of study at undergraduate, post graduate, PhD and through a variety of means for example, full-time, part-time, evening courses, access courses and distance learning.

For further information on some of the educational institutions please logon to the following websites:

- » www.lyit.ie
- » www.oideas-gael.com
- » www.ulster.ac.uk
- » www.nuigalway.ie





WAINFEST 12th Anniversary

This year Wainfest, Donegal County Council's Cultural Services festival for children & young people, celebrated its 12th birthday with over 160 events taking place in libraries, Taobh Tíre Centres, the Regional Cultural Centre and other venues throughout Donegal between the 13th and the 25th October 2008.

Incorporating the national Children's Book Festival, Wainfest 2008 was jam-packed with storytelling sessions, science and history shows, author visits and creative writing sessions. It really was a festival of fun, art and culture with a huge variety of events for families and children of all ages that included workshops, theatre, film, magic, puppetry, art and music.

For further information log onto www.donegalculture.com or call Sally Murphy on +353 (0) 74 91 29186.

400th Anniversary of the Flight of the Earls

2007 saw the commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the Flight of the Earls. The flight, which took place from Rathmullan in County Donegal in 1607, was a landmark event in the history of Ireland and is generally accepted as being the end of the Gaelic order in Ireland. It was also the start of an Irish Diaspora which, over the centuries, spread throughout Europe and further afield.

Donegal County Council and Donegal County Development Board led and coordinated a range of commemorative events during 2007, working in close cooperation with communities throughout Donegal and with partners in all parts of Ireland, north and south as well as overseas locations.

The commemoration was launched by Taoiseach Bertie Ahern at Government Buildings in Dublin in February 2007. A launch also took place in the European Parliament Buildings in Brussels in April of that year. A wide range of events and projects were implemented during the year including seminars, publications, drama, festivals and public art. Full details are available on the Flight of the Earls website <http://www.flightoftheearls.ie> (launched late 2008).



Flight of the Earls Memorial - Rathmullan



The Past in the Present - A Donegal Archives Exhibition

This exhibition celebrates over 200 years of Donegal's unique history and the importance of local history in every day life. It showcases photographs and documents from the County Archives' many collections. The images on display are examples from the thousands of local archives, of both public and private origin, which make up the holdings of Donegal County Archives. Also included are some privately owned photographs which were kindly loaned to us for the exhibition.

The exhibition was launched in Lifford on 10th September 2008. It moved to the Letterkenny Public Service Centre on 15th September and will travel next to Carndonagh Public Service Centre on 10th November. It will travel throughout 2009, to the public service centres and other locations in the county, celebrating ten years of Donegal County Archives Service

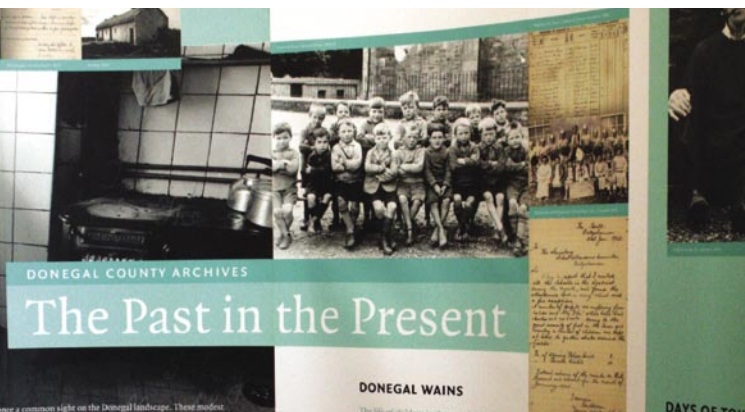
The panels illustrate the significance and relevance of local history for the living, hence the title *The Past in the Present*. For example, the workhouses of Donegal are no more but the memories survive. The railways may be gone but their impact is still felt today.

The exhibition also demonstrates enduring connections between the past and the present. Life for the generations who grew up in the towns, villages and countryside of Donegal a hundred years ago was very different to what it has since become; but the past still resonates with people living today. The old cinemas no longer exist but we still love going to the movies. The curriculum has changed over the years but the school rollbooks and many of the school buildings remain the same. There is a continuity with our history, which is reflected in the exhibition.

Themes are *Donegal Wains, Homesteads, Days of Toil, Fun & Games, Journeys in Time, Faith and Worship, Local Democracy, Landlords and Tenants, and Conflict*.

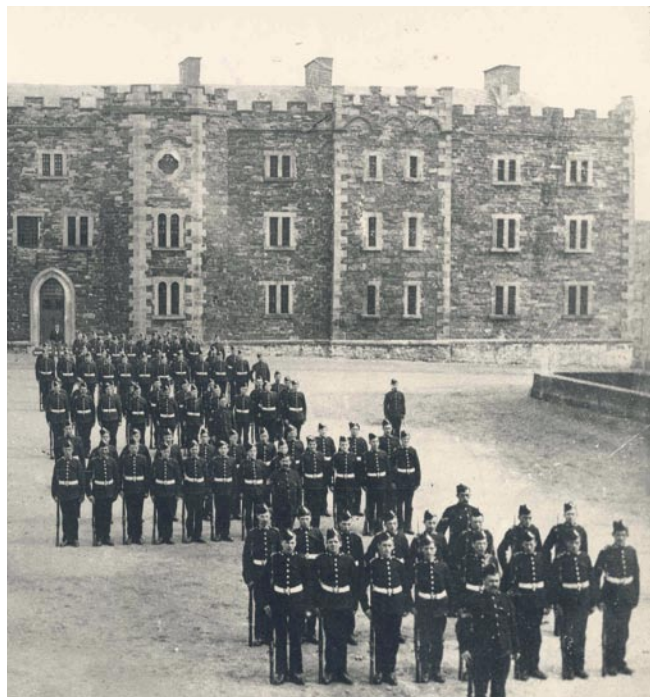
For further information contact

Niamh Brennan, Archivist at nbrennan@donegalcoco.ie



Donegal / Strabane HEART Project

The HEART (Heritage, Environment, Art & Rural Tourism) project is a cross-border initiative managed jointly by Strabane District Council and Donegal County Council, which has assisted a total of twelve towns and villages in undergoing significant heritage and environmental regeneration.



The project includes environmental improvement works, a shop front scheme and a new public art trail, covering the Strabane District and County Donegal.

As part of the project, the Donegal County Archives Service has researched the historical background of each of the seven County Donegal towns participating in the project, for use in interpretative panels. One panel will be erected in each town.

In Donegal, the towns included in the HEART project are the Heritage towns of Ballyshannon, Ardara, Moville, Ramelton and Raphoe and also Lifford and Ballybofey/Stranorlar.

The information compiled traces the development of the towns from their early origins to the present day and highlights places/buildings of interest and heritage aspects of the town.

Images to accompany the panels were provided by the County Archives Service, the County Museum and the National Library of Ireland and include a number of images from the Lawrence collection.



100th Anniversary Celebration of the Donegal Association of Boston

The Donegal Association of greater Boston has been in existence acting as a resource and a support for Donegal people for the past one hundred years. Founded in 1908, the association celebrates its centenary anniversary with a major event to be held in the Quincy Marriot Hotel, Boston on November 1st 2008.

The banquet will be attended by over 700 people. Guests on the night will include Councillor Gerry Crawford, Mayor of County Donegal, Tanáiste Mary Coughlan, T.D., and Bishop Seamus Hegarty and other guests include Margo. Highland Radio will broadcast live from the Quincy Marriot on the morning of the event.



Boston By Night

The Letterkenny Reunion

When Johnny Joe Mc Collum and Jamie Sweeney met for a chat outside the old Downtown Bar, little did they know that something unique was about to happen which is now known as the "Letterkenny Reunion".

During their conversation, many topics were discussed but they finished up with the idea of attracting old townies back to their roots and how this could be achieved. Many of the names that sprung to mind were of people who emigrated many years ago for one reason or another and if a plan was put in place this would be an opportunity for them to return home and witness the changes that occurred since they left. The first reunion happened in August 1991 to encourage emigrants from Letterkenny to come home to meet and reunite with former friends and family.



Members of Letterkenny Reunion Committee

This unique festival provided an extended family atmosphere with nostalgic memories, excitement and joy as old friends were recognised and acquaintances renewed. The atmosphere was electric as family members met at home from many parts of the world. Their memories were renewed and friendships were carried with them abroad as they looked forward from one reunion to the next. The reunion friends not only talked about the past to the youth and young at heart they also familiarised themselves with the new developments and progress in the town of Letterkenny. On their return homeward they were valued ambassadors promoting this area to other emigrants and friends abroad.

The aim of the Letterkenny Reunion is to promote tourism in the region, while at the same time strengthening ties between Letterkenny and surrounding areas with its former residents, relations and friends on a national and international level from a cultural, economic and social aspect. The Letterkenny Reunion will be celebrating their coming of age in August 2009 having had seven successful reunions.

The Letterkenny Reunion group "Wonders of the Golden West USA Tour" took place from the 7th to the 18th October 2008 where the group visited one of the most beautiful places in the world and enjoyed the fun and craic that is synonymous with all Letterkenny Reunion trips.

For further information please log onto
www.letterkennyreunion.com

For further information on this e-zine or on the Donegal Diaspora Project, please contact:

Jaclyn Harron

Email: diaspora@donegalcoco.ie or

jharron@donegalcoco.ie

Tel: + 353 (0) 74 9172498

If you have contact details or know of any other Donegal Associations, or interest groups worldwide, please forward the information to diaspora@donegalcoco.ie.

Donegal Community Links

There are many active Donegal Associations across the world. Contact details of some of them are listed below. Further contacts will be listed in future issues.

Donegal Association of Boston	Michael Mc Carron, President Phone +1 617 696 1702
Donegal Association of Dublin	Carmel Sheerin, The Secretary, C/o The Teacher's Club, Parnell Square, Dublin 1
The Philadelphia Donegal Society	Pittsburg Irish Club Theresa Flannagan +1 610 467 390
Donegal Association of Chicago	Frank Bradley E-mail arranmore@ameritech.net
Donegal Association of Coventry	Margaret Mc Colgan, 37 Stoke Green Crescent, Coventry CV3 1FY
Richmond Irish Society, Surrey	Phone +44 (0) 208 568 0302 Phone +44 (0) 208 940 1389 Phone +44 (0) 7973 127327
Donegal Association of Glasgow	C/o Celtic Supporters Association HQ, 1524 London Road, Glasgow
The Donegal County Association of Canada	Leo O' Donnell, 20 Glenda Road, Scarborough, Ontario. Phone +1 416 266 0047
Donegal Association of New South Wales, Australia	Martin Bond, President, 50 Selkirk Street, Winston Hills, New South Wales, Australia 2153. E-mail bondweld@ozemail.com.au
Donegal Association of Brisbane	E-mail Michael Cunningham at metalworker@optusnet.com.au
New York	Jack Sweeney, President +1 718 253 7402
Bayonne	Kathleen O'Keefe +1 201 339 3614
Tasmania	Mairtin MacMathuna, President John Mc Ardle, Secretary 2249 Huon Highway, Grove, Tasmania, Australia 7109

Other associations include New Jersey, The Washington Irish Club, Seattle, the Donegal Association of SW London and the Donegal Association of Manchester.

