

## A Message from the Ambassador

The last year has been a tremendous one for Ireland here in Canada. Across a wide number of areas, there have been significant developments.

The relationship between Ireland and Canada has always been based on people and 2012 saw a continued influx of Irish people into Canada. The destination of the new Irish shifted westwards as more and more opted to move to the Western Provinces, especially Alberta. The new arrangements for the International Experience Canada (IEC) programme were agreed between the two Governments and signed in Dublin in October by the Tánaiste and Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Eamon Gilmore and the Canadian Minister for Immigration, Jason Kenney. In addition, several of the Canadian Provinces have targeted Ireland for their own Provincial Preference Programmes, including Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and Alberta. The community has reacted very well and there are now groups throughout the country providing a network of support to our new migrants. We also have the new Irish Immigration Centre in Toronto which was opened in March this year. I want to mention in particular the work of Eamonn O’Loughlin, who was the first Chair of the Centre, and the Executive Director Cathy Murphy. All those who contributed to the work leading up to its opening have to be commended.

Irish trade statistics show a very creditable increase of 24% in overall merchant exports to Canada in the first 11 months of 2012 and exports from Irish indigenous companies showing a very similar trend. The latter figure in particular reflects the very good job which Enterprise Ireland, under the leadership of Ross O’Colmain, is doing in this area.

I have often said at events throughout the country that I do not personally believe that Irish links to Canada receive the appropriate level of recognition in Ireland. This year things changed and we had a number of high level visits by senior Government figures including the Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore, the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation Richard Bruton, the Minister for Transport and Tourism Leo Varadkar and the Minister for Mines Fergus O’Dowd. There were also a large number of visits by Canadian Ministers to Ireland, including Finance Minister Jim Flaherty (twice) and Immigration Minister Jason Kenney. Apart from the Ministers, a large number of Parliamentarians went in both directions on visits. I am not sure whenever this level and frequency of visits was experience before.

On the visits front we also had the extraordinarily successful visit by the Ladies All Stars to Toronto where they served up an extremely competitive and exciting game at Centennial Park. The Toronto Board and the GAA in general did a tremendous job, especially Sean Harte and Brian Farmer. In 2013 the Irish Rugby team is scheduled to tour Canada and play test matches in Toronto and Vancouver. I hope the whole community will turn out to give them a welcome. I am certainly looking forward to the games.

Throughout Canada, Irish organisations have been very active and many have gone from strength to strength. I am often amazed at the work that so many volunteers do throughout the length and breadth of this wonderful country, from the US border to the Arctic and from the Atlantic Provinces to B.C. Whether it’s promoting our culture and heritage, sport or music, providing valuable business networks, or the publication of excellent Irish-Canadian magazines and newspapers, your contribution is immense. Our links and our influence are based entirely on the shoulders of these people. Both countries owe a huge debt of gratitude to these unsung heroes.



**Dr. Ray Bassett,  
Ambassador of  
Ireland**

**To be added to our  
Newsletter mailing  
list, send your email  
address to:  
[ottawaembassy@dfa.ie](mailto:ottawaembassy@dfa.ie)**

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## AMBASSADOR'S MESSAGE CONT.

As those who follow the international economic journals will be aware, 2012 was a much better year for Ireland than previous ones. Almost all economic indicators are pointing in the right direction and the recovery now underway will hopefully will gather pace in 2013. It is too early to say that Ireland is entirely out of the woods but the bulk of the necessary adjustments have been completed and Ireland is scheduled to exit the EU bailout in 2013. We will be very glad to do so.

It has been a very difficult three years but, unlike some of the other countries in similar situations, we can see tangible and measurable progress. In International organisations, Ireland's standing is very high and is constantly being reinforced by very successful elections to leadership positions. Ireland is about to step down from the Chairmanship of the 57 member OSCE and is taking up an elected position on the UN Human Rights Commission.

The results above can only be achieved through hard work and ability. In this regard I would like to beg your indulgence to take the opportunity of commending the staff in the Embassy, without them, very little from my point of view would have been possible. In particular Hilary O'Reilly, the Deputy Head of Mission who works incredible hours and to so much effect; Sarah Thorenton Cultural and Consular Officer who is so committed to everything Irish related in Canada.

Also to Siobhan Doran who carries a huge workload in our passport and consular section, Debbie Earwaker who assists in the passport area and manages the Foreign Birth Register, a very important function in Canada. I would also like to express my thanks to Gurpreet Bajwa who operates our Visa section and manages to keep our accounts. Also to Caoimhe Bennis who is in charge of the Ambassador's office and regularly keeps the show on the road. And of course thanks to Alain Tasse who provides office support and to Mat Desjardins and Patti Arud who ensure that events at the residence run so smoothly.

Finally I would like to express appreciation to Linda Fitzgibbon who is our special projects officer and who has established the Irish Women's Network in Ontario.

Finally remember that 2013 is the year of the Gathering so all those who can travel to Ireland should do so. The Tourism Ireland Office in Toronto under Jayne Shackleford will be only too willing to help you promote it in your local area.

Happy Christmas and a peaceful and prosperous New Year.







## ECONOMICS CORNER

### ICCCOTT Hosts Breakfast with Canadian Trade Minister Ed Fast at the Ambassador's Residence



*(From left) Embassy's Consular and Cultural Officer Sarah Thorenton, Deputy Head of Mission Hilary Reilly, ICCCOTT Board Members Siobhan O'Brien, Pat Kelly, Austin Comerton, Trade Minister Ed Fast, Ambassador Bassett, ICCCOTT Board Members Ian Ashe, Richard Philippe, Mr. Maurizio Cellini (First Counsellor and Head of Economic, Commercial and Trade Section at the EU Delegation to Canada), ICCCOTT Board Members Laura Hay and Dara O'Huiginn*

The Canadian Minister for International Trade and the Asia Pacific Gateway, Mr Ed Fast, was the principal guest speaker at a business breakfast hosted by the Ireland Canada Chamber of Commerce in Ottawa (ICCCOTT) and the Embassy at the Irish residence on 1 November.

Minister Fast spoke of the strong and longstanding bilateral relationship between Ireland and Canada, noting that Ireland, a model for inward investment, was the fourth most important destination for Canadian investment abroad. Canadian investment in Ireland was \$10 billion more than in China. The EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Free Trade Agreement or CETA, (negotiations which are nearing completion) would, the Minister noted, greatly benefit the bilateral relationship. Minister Fast also highlighted the important role Ireland will play as it assumes the presidency of the European Union in 2013. The Minister noted that the CETA is expected to bring a 20 percent boost in trade between the EU and Canada and a \$12 billion boost to the Canadian economy. The CETA negotiations represent Canada's most significant trade initiative since the NAFTA.



## ECONOMICS CORNER

### Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation Ireland Leads Trade Mission to Canada



The Irish Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Mr Richard Bruton TD, visited Toronto from 7 to 9 November last on an Enterprise Ireland trade mission.

The objectives of the trade mission were to boost trade between Ireland and Canada and to help Irish companies grow their export sales and to help create jobs in Ireland.

The Trade Mission was organised by Ross O'Colmáin and his team at Enterprise Ireland – Marguerite Bourke, Avril Murphy and Eoghan O'Braonáin, who did a fantastic job.



A total of 30 Irish companies travelled with the Minister, from a range of sectors, including telecoms, mobile and financial software, consumer products, food and beverages and infrastructure. The Minister had a very busy programme, participating in over 20 meetings and engagements over the course of two and a half days. He met with the Canadian Minister for Finance, Jim Flaherty, and also did a number of media interviews for TV and radio about the mission and about Ireland's efforts toward economic recovery. The Minister also addressed the Ireland-Canada Chamber of Commerce in Toronto and met with leading Canadian Financial Services and telecoms executives at a series of advisory panels for Irish companies.

A total of €8million in new business contracts were announced by Irish companies during the trade mission, as well as five new Irish-Canadian partnerships. One such partnership was the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland and the University Health Network of Toronto towards closer co-operation between the two entities.







## ECONOMICS CORNER

### Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport Visits Toronto and Promotes The Gathering



*(from left) Tourism Ireland CEO Niall Gibbons, Minister Leo Varadkar, Ambassador Bassett*

The Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, Mr Leo Varadkar T.D., visited Toronto on 1 October to launch the “Gathering”, the year-long tourism initiative taking place in Ireland in 2013. The Minister addressed a meeting of travel, trade, media, Irish business and cultural contacts in Toronto, organised by Jayne Shackleford and her team in Tourism Ireland. He also undertook a number of media interviews including on Canada AM.

The Minister was on a whistle-stop tour of four North American cities to promote Irish tourism and the Gathering, where he met with the media, airline representatives, members of the travel trade, business networks and community and cultural representatives.

For more information on the exciting events taking place across Ireland in 2013, which kicks off with a big celebration in Dublin on New Years Eve, check out the Gathering website on [www.thegatheringireland.com](http://www.thegatheringireland.com)





## FEATURED

## Tánaiste and Canadian Immigration Minister Announce Enhancements for Working Abroad Visas



*Dublin- Minister for Citizenship and Immigration Jason Kenney (left) and Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore sign the amendments to the Memorandum of Understanding between Canada and Ireland regarding the Working Holiday Programme. (photo credit: Fennell Photography)*

In October, the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Eamon Gilmore, T.D., and the Hon. Jason Kenney, M.P., Canada's Minister for Citizenship and Immigration announced substantial enhancements to the Ireland Canada Working Holiday Programme. The announcement will see the number of visas available for Canadian and Irish participants double to over 10,000 by 2014 and see the length of stay extended from one year to two years.

The Tánaiste welcomed the new programme "I visited Toronto over the St Patrick's Day weekend this year to meet those participating on the programme as well as the companies seeking to hire Irish workers. At that time both Minister Kenney and I felt that the programme could be enhanced to better meet the needs of participants and perspective employers. I am delighted that as a result of that meeting in March, we were able to bring forward these changes which will benefit both our countries in the coming years." The Tánaiste also said that the Government is "striving to create the economic climate that will allow emigrants to return. However, this programme is not just about short term emigration. Canada is one of the biggest investors in Ireland and Irish companies now employ 60,000 people in Canada. This new generation working holiday programme will continue to facilitate economic ties between Ireland and Canada."

### Working Holiday Programme

The Working Holiday Programme started in 2003 with the aim of allowing young Irish and Canadian people to live and work in the other country for a period of up to 12 months. The programme is open to young people between the ages of 18 and 35. From a 2003 quota of 100, the number of places has grown steadily each year with the quota for 2012 recently being set at 5,350 places (up from 5,000 in 2011). Among the new amendments is the extension from one to two years and an increase in the quota to 6,350 in 2013 and 10,000 in 2014.



## FEATURED

### Pat Kelly Receives Inaugural Presidential Distinguished Service Award



*Ambassador Bassett and 2012 Ottawa Rose of Tralee Avaleigh Eastman were on hand at St. Brigid's Centre for the Arts, home of the National Irish Canadian Cultural Centre (<http://saintbrigidscentre.com/>) to celebrate with Pat (right) and his family at an event organised by the Ottawa community*

This November, Pat Kelly was one of ten individuals in the Irish diaspora who received the Presidential Distinguished Service Award in Dublin from President Michael D. Higgins; based on a nomination put forward by the Irish organisations in Ottawa. This award recognizes Pat's outstanding contributions to the Irish community abroad. He was recognized specifically as a recipient for Arts, Culture and Sport. Our sincerest congratulations go out to Pat who is an integral part of the Irish community in Ottawa. For a full article on Pat and the Presidential Distinguished Service Award, please see the latest edition of Irish Connections Canada. An online version will be available at: <http://www.irishcanadamag.com/>





## FEATURED

### Celebrating the Works of Irish Playwright Marie Jones at the Gladstone and Great Canadian Theatre Companies



The Embassy's Cultural Officer Sarah Thorenton (left) presents a Certificate of Irish Heritage to Sheilagh D'Arcy McGee



Theatre goes recently had the privilege of welcoming the works of acclaimed Irish playwright and actress Marie Jones to the Ottawa stage. Presented by Seven Thirty Productions (<http://www.seventhirty.ca/>) and wonderfully directed by John P. Kelly, *Stones in His Pockets* – a story about a rural town in County Kerry overrun by a Hollywood film crew, opened at the Gladstone Theatre in September.

Mr. Kelly also directed *Fly Me to the Moon* - a tale of two women struggling in today's tough economic climate who have to decide how far they will go to make ends meet. The production opened at the Great Canadian Theatre Company (GCTC) at the end of October. Each production delighted the packed audience.

The Embassy's Cultural Officer, Sarah Thorenton attended to opening night of *Fly Me to the Moon* and presented a Certificate of Irish Heritage to GCTC's own Sheilagh D'Arcy McGee.

Amidst being the very talented and accomplished media relations coordinator and promo producer at the theatre, Sheilagh's great, great grandfather John Joseph McGee was the brother of the legendary historical Irish-Canadian figure, Thomas D'Arcy McGee.

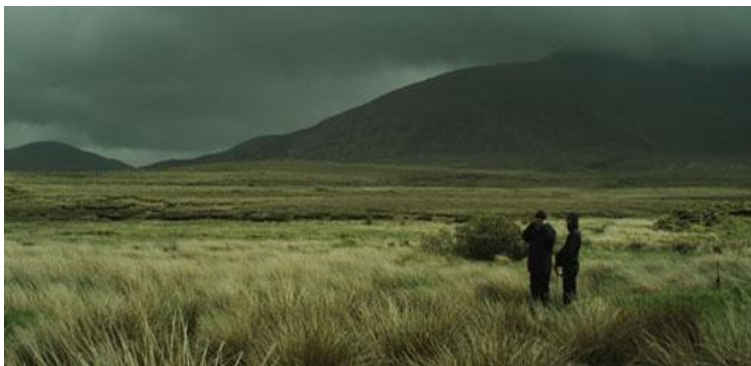
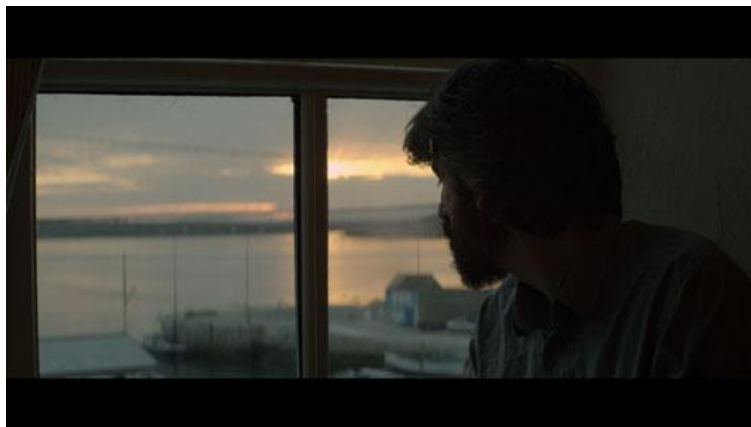
For more information on the Certificate of Irish Heritage please use the following link:  
<http://www.heritagecertificate.com>





## FEATURED

## Pat Collin's *Silence* opens European Union Film Festival



For further information on *Silence*, visit:  
<http://harvestfilms.ie/silence>



In partnership with Cyprus who currently hold the Presidency of the Council of the European Union (Ireland takes on this role in January), the EU Delegation to Canada and the Canadian Film Institute, the Irish Embassy Ottawa organised the annual opening night gala of the European Union Film Festival in Ottawa. Irish Director Pat Collins's film *Silence* screened firstly for a packed audience at the gala - which was made up mainly of the diplomatic community - and then for the general public opening night.

**Synopsis:** Eoghan is a Berlin-based sound recordist who is returning to Ireland for the first time in 15 years. His reason for returning is a job offer: to find and record places free from man-made sound. His quest takes him away from towns and villages into remote Irish terrain. On his journey, he encounters a number of people who in their different ways prompt him to ponder the facts and silences of his own life.

The Ambassador introduced the film in Ottawa citing that it was "beautifully reflective". He further enlightened the audience by recounting a passage by Irish poet William Butler Yeats as he felt Yeats' words echoed the search for silence and peace within the film:  
*And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,  
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;  
There midnight's all a-glimmer, and noon a purple glow,  
And evening full of the linnet's wings.  
I will arise and go now, for always night and day  
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;  
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,  
I hear it in the deep heart's core.*

*Silence* also screened at Toronto and Vancouver's EU Film Festivals. The Embassy is most appreciative to Cathy Murphy, Executive Director of the Irish Canadian Immigration Centre, who also has an extensive background in the arts, as she introduced *Silence* to the packed audience at Toronto's screening. Cathy described the film as "impactful": "I found it very moving. I have been to most of those spots (including Tory Island) and understood his quest. The film's deceptive simplicity was a mask, I think, for the cacophony of sound going on inside, that can only be mined and eventually calmed by the very stillness Eoghan seeks."



## FEATURED

# Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada and Dental Council of Ireland Sign Reciprocal Agreement



The Reciprocity Agreement between the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC) and the Dental Council of Ireland was signed on 5 December 2012. Under this the CDAC and the Dental Council agree that each party recognises the accreditation standards and policies of the other party as being substantially equivalent to its own. The agreement is for an initial period of five years and is subject to ongoing review over this period. There are twelve dental programmes covered under this agreement, ten in Canada and two in Ireland and people who graduate from these programmes after 5 December 2012 can benefit from its provisions.

Under the agreement the CDAC agrees to encourage the Canadian Dental Regulatory Authorities Federation (CDRAF) to accept graduates of the two Irish dental programmes as graduates of an accredited educational program without the need to meet other educational requirements for licensure and registration. To practice in Canada dentists have to pass the National Dental Examining Board (NDEB) examinations. In Canada the registration process can vary from Province to Province and graduates who wish to avail of this agreement should carefully investigate the requirements of the regulatory/licensing jurisdiction, including the requirements of the NDEB, where they wish to practice before making any firm plans to travel.

Graduates from an accredited Canadian programmes should apply to the Dental Council for registration. The Dental Council has recognised the ten programmes accredited by the CDAC under the provisions of Section 27(2)(d) of the Dentists Act, 1985. The registration process is relatively straight forward and applicants will be asked to complete an application form, provide a certified copy of their qualification (and certified translation if the qualification is not already in English), a certified copy of their passport and pay the appropriate fee. If already registered, applicants will be obliged to provide a Letter of Good Standing from the Registration Board where they last practiced. New graduates who have not registered with a Registration Board will be obliged to have the Dean of their programme sign the Character Reference on the application form. Information regarding the registration process in Ireland will be posted on [www.dentalcouncil.ie](http://www.dentalcouncil.ie) shortly.





## FEATURED

### ISNCR Adds a Hint of Ireland to the Canadian Museum of History's Annual Tree Decorating Competition

To celebrate the holiday season with an Irish flare, the Irish Society of the National Capital Region (<http://www.irishsocietyncr.com/>) entered the Canadian Museum of History's (formerly the Canadian Museum of Civilisation), annual tree decorating competition. Over the holidays, passers-by will be treated to the creative collaborations of an assortment of groups and organizations in the Ottawa area as the trees are featured prominently in David M. Stewart Salon (3<sup>rd</sup> floor).

Micheline Patrice, ISNCR's Community Liaison Chair chose to reflect Ireland's tricolor flag through sparkling ornaments which were complimented by beautifully woven sheer green ribbon.



Canadian Museum of Civilization, photo Steven Darby, IMG00000-00000-0000-029Dm



ISNCR decorating team (from left), Communications Chair Bryan Daly, Secretary Evelyn Maloney, Members Services Chair Helena McSheffrey Beattie. (Missing in Action- the Embassy's Cultural Officer Sarah Thorenton who ducked behind the tree to catch and save a falling ornament)

Canadian Museum of Civilization, photo Steven Darby, IMG00000-00000-0000-010Dm





## FEATURED

# Visit Ireland: The Phoenix Park



Dublin's Phoenix Park is an exquisite jewel in the Irish Capital's array of attractions. It has existed in some form since 1662; the Restoration period of Charles II. Originally, a secluded deer park, for many generations it has been a playground for Dubliners who have enjoyed its wide open spaces and wildlife. With the growth of Dublin, its character has changed, particularly as the urban environment has gradually surrounded it.

It remains the largest enclosed urban park in Europe, a curious mixture of urban park and nature reserve. Steeped in history and local folklore, it continues today to provide the people of Ireland with a unique resource which is very well worth preserving. The proposal of the Park becoming a UNESCO World Heritage Site seems very appropriate for this grand old Irish institution.

The Phoenix Park is completely enclosed by stone walls and has been for hundreds of years. These walls wind their way around its periphery for 11 km. The 1,760 acres offers a variety of landscapes and places which resonate with historical connections.

*Winston  
Churchill  
1881-boyhood  
days in Ireland*



## Historical Figures

Former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill spent his early years in "The Little Lodge" on the eastern side of the Park; Wolfe Tone first thought of becoming a military figure while watching the Redcoats parade on what is now the "15 acres" sports grounds. The largest monument in Ireland, the Wellington Memorial, was erected by public subscription for only Dublin born Prime Minister of Britain, Author Wellesley, better known as the Iron Duke, Lord Wellington. Outside the Ashtown Gate, lies the Martin Savage memorial, dedicated to the young volunteer of that name who died during the war of independence, attempting to ambush Lord French, of World War 1 Fame.





## FEATURED-Phoenix Park cont.

### Famous Murders

In 1882, the Park was the location for two murders. The Chief Secretary for Ireland (the British Cabinet minister with responsibility for Irish affairs), Lord Frederick Cavendish, and the Under-Secretary for Ireland (chief civil servant), Thomas Henry Burke, were stabbed to death with surgical knives while walking from Dublin Castle. A small insurgent group called “The Invincibles” were responsible.

One hundred years later in 1982, a young nurse, Bridie Gargan was attacked while sunbathing in the Phoenix Park in Dublin during her time off work. The attacker Malcolm Edward MacArthur, intending to steal her car, bludgeoned her with a hammer then drove off leaving the dying Gargan on the back seat. MacArthur went on to murder a farmer in Edenderry that week and the week after was arrested at the office of the Attorney General with whom he had been staying. The acronym GUBU was coined by Conor O'Brien after the Taoiseach Charlie Haughey described the murders as grotesque, unbelievable, bizarre and unprecedented.

### People's Gardens

The Gardens represent one of the finest examples of Victorian urban parkland. During the months of summer the gardens are a riot of colour from the flower beds. The gardens provided many Dublin families in the Post war period with an opportunity to enjoy outdoor life. They were originally provided to the citizens of Dublin by the Duke of Ormond, a good example of early Irish philanthropy.

### Flora and Fauna

The Park is important as it has been in grassland for hundreds of years without the land being disturbed by the plough. This has allowed wild native species to survive.

There are 351 plant species in the Park; three of these are rare and protected. The park has retained almost all of its old grasslands and woodlands and also has rare examples of wetland. The Park abounds with wildlife, including badgers, foxes, rabbits, Irish stoats and squirrels. Fallow deer were introduced into the Park in the 1660s; the current 400–450 Fallow deer descend from the original herd. 30% of the park is covered by trees, mainly deciduous broadleaf.

A Birdwatch Ireland survey in 2007–08 found 72 species of bird including buzzard, sparrowhawk, kestrel and the European jay. There have been recent reports that woodpeckers have returned to the area after a long absence. Wrens and Collared Doves are also present.





## FEATURED-Phoenix Park cont.

### Buildings in the Park



#### The Wellington Memorial

This huge monument is 62 meter high in the form of an obelisk. It commemorates the victories of the Duke of Wellington with names of his most famous battles engraved on its sides. It also has four bronzed cannons taken at the battle of Waterloo. The Monument is a magnet for young families during the warm summer season.

#### Deerfield Residence

This is the Residence of the US Ambassador to Ireland. It was formerly the home of Chief Secretary of Ireland (the second most senior Colonial official). This is where President John F Kennedy stayed during his trip to Ireland in 1963.

The Deerfield Residence, originally built in 1774 was the former residence of the Chief Secretary for Ireland and before that was the Park Bailiff's lodge. It has been the official residence of the United States Ambassador to Ireland since 1927.

#### Ashtown Castle

An old Norman Keep, it is the oldest building in the Park dating from the 15th century. The complex also houses the Phoenix Park Visitor Centre. It was formerly the home of the Papal Nuncio to Ireland. When the building was returned to the Irish state, restoration began in 1989 and the restoration work won several international conservation awards. The Visitor Centre houses interpretive displays on the 5,500 years of park and area history.

#### Aras an Uachtarain

Literally the home of the President. The Aras is the former Vice Regal Lodge where the Lord Lieutenant lived in Colonial days. Today it is the home of the Irish President. It was built in 1754 and taken over by the newly independent Irish State in 1922.

#### Dublin Zoo

If Carlsberg did Zoos, then Dublin Zoo would be their ideal. Possibly the most beautiful zoo in the world, it houses more than 400 animals and tropical birds from around the planet. Originally opened on 1 September 1831 (the original entrance gate is still intact) it is the 3rd oldest zoo in the world.

#### The Magasine Fort

This austere old Fort was constructed in 1734. The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Lionel Sackville, 1st Duke of Dorset directed that a powder magazine be provided for Dublin. This led local scribe Jonathan Swift to write  
*"Now's here's a proof of Irish sense,  
Here Irish wit is seen,  
When nothing's left that's worth defence,  
We build a Magazine"*



*The Wellington Monument*



*Above:  
The Magasine Fort*





## PROVINCIAL PROFILE

### Nova Scotia



Ambassador Bassett was recently invited to Halifax, Nova Scotia, by local Irish community groups, primarily to unveil the new designation of the city's waterfront as "Irishtown".

During the visit, the Ambassador met with Premier Darrell Dexter as well as Belfast born Mayor Michael Savage. In addition, he visited the restoration project at Holy Cross cemetery (supported by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs' Emigrant Support Programme).

Halifax is one of the chief cities of Atlantic Canada and has a long association with Ireland.

Last year, Ambassador Bassett was present for the 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the local Charitable Irish Society: (<http://www.charitableirishsocietyofhalifax.ca/>). It is still active today and has approximately 600 members. The Irish are the largest ethnic group in the city.

*Photo (courtesy of Mayor Savage's office) Mayor Michael Savage and Ambassador Bassett unveil the designation of the city's waterfront as "Irishtown"*

### Irishtown

One of the local Irish societies, "An Cumann" <http://www.ancumann.org/> campaigned for the old Irish district to be officially designated as Irishtown. This includes much of the city centre and part of the Halifax waterfront. The city council agreed and Ambassador Bassett performed the opening unveiling along with the Halifax Mayor, Michael Savage. There was a large crowd in attendance at the unveiling at Bishop's Landing, right on the waterfront.

The dimensions of Irishtown were delineated by one of the board members of An Cumann, Tony O'Carroll. All the street signs within the area now carry the Irishtown designation. The district was originally settled by Irish migrants in the early part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century; many originally came over in British military units and subsequently sent for other family members.





## PROVINCIAL PROFILE (cont.)

### Holy Cross Cemetery

Halifax was one of the first cities in North America to experience mass Irish migration. Up to 25,000 Irish people are buried in the 19<sup>th</sup> century graveyard, Holy Cross. A retired eye surgeon, Dr Brian O'Brien, is leading a group who are restoring the cemetery which had fallen into disrepair:

(<http://www.holycrosscemeteryhalifax.ca/>). The Irish Department of Foreign Affairs, through the Emigrant Support Programme, has helped to fund a new website which provides details of those buried there, including the first Catholic Prime Minister of Canada Thompson and Edward Kenny, a member of the original Canadian Cabinet which secured Federation. Ambassador Bassett visited the cemetery and met with Dr O'Brien who is hoping to also establish an interpretative centre.



(From left) Mayor Savage, Ambassador Bassett, President of the Charitable Irish Society Halifax, Brian Doherty. (Photo: courtesy of Mayor Savage's office)

### A Selection of Local Irish Societies

On his visit to Halifax, Ambassador Bassett met with a number of Irish groups who operate in the area, including the new GAA club in the city (see the official GAA website of Canada for further information on the GAA in Nova Scotia :

<http://www.canada.gaa.ie/club-news-1/gaelicgamesinnovascotia>)

Mother Parker's Tea and Coffee House also hosted a lunch to greet the Ambassador. The company is owned by the Higgins Brothers who are very proud of their Irish background. The company was originally "Higgins and Burke" until 1912.

There is also a thriving Irish language group in Halifax, made up mainly of Canadian born. Nova Scotia is very strong in traditional Irish and Scottish music and the family of internationally celebrated Irish folk musician, artist, poet and storyteller Tommy Makem are still active in Comhaltas circles.

All of the societies enthusiastically assist any new arrivals.

### Irish Studies at St. Mary's University

The D'Arcy McGee Chair of Irish Studies was established at Saint Mary's University by Dr. Cyril J. Byrne in the spring of 1986 by means of an endowment from the Charitable Irish Society of Halifax and the University. This was matched by the Department of the Secretary of State of Canada, Multiculturalism Directorate, under the terms of the Endowment Assistance Program. With these initial funds, the Chair was set up to form a focal point for the study of all aspects of Irish and Irish-Canadian culture, particularly language, literature, history, political science and folklore. While Irish Studies interdisciplinary courses are mainly for undergraduate students, donations to the trust fund have made possible the development of research projects and the expansion of library holdings at the Patrick Power Library, thus serving to attract graduate students and scholars in the field. Another important concern of the Chair is interaction with the general community. This has been achieved through the provision of opportunities for local residents and others to pursue their interests in Irish and Irish-Canadian studies through lectures and other similar activities. In 1990 the D'Arcy McGee Chair of Irish Studies was presented with a facsimile copy of the Book of Kells (made by a special laser printing process, which is an extremely close reproduction of the original). The copy is now on permanent display in the lobby of the Patrick Power Library (Source: St. Mary's University Irish Studies website: <http://www.smu.ca/academic/arts/irish/>)





## OUT AND ABOUT WITH THE AMBASSADOR



*Presenting a cheque at U of A to the Wild Geese Endowment Fund (from left) Colm O'Carroll, Ralph Young, Chancellor, Honourary Consul Doodie Cahill, Ambassador Bassett, Jonathan Schaeffer, Dean of Science*



*Ambassador and Mrs. Bassett tour the historic Fort Edmonton Park*



*Ambassador Bassett with Liam McClelland, oldest member of the Edmonton's Irish Club.*

Ambassador Bassett's schedule has been as busy as ever during recent months. The following is a highlight of meetings and events.

At the beginning of October, the Ambassador welcomed and attended meetings with Irish Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport Leo Varadkar in Toronto. He was then off to Edmonton on a visit organised by the Government of Alberta, Colm O'Carroll, and our wonderful Honourary Consul Doodie Cahill. While in Edmonton, meetings included; the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Deputy Premier, the Lieutenant Governor, Minister of Enterprise and Advanced Education, the Minister of International and Intergovernmental Relations, the Edmonton Economic Development Corporation and the Building Trades of Alberta. He also toured the University of Alberta and met the Dean of Science, the head of International Affairs, chamber board members, and Irish born faculty members. He presented a cheque to the Wild Geese Endowment Fund (a fund which will give Canadian students the chance to study in Ireland). Mr. Tom Long, graciously gave the Ambassador and Mrs. Bassett a tour of the historic Fort Edmonton Park. The trip was not complete without a reception of numerous Irish community groups at Edmonton's Irish Club. The Ambassador returned to Ottawa to host a Cyberknife event at the Residence which raised over \$20,000 for children's surgery.

He attended the Hamilton Irish Club's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary reception, was the guest of honour at the book launch of "The Irish Tradition" at the Concordia University, Centre for Canadian Irish Studies in Montreal, and hosted the 3C's Foundation "Annual Gut Together" at the Residence which raised over \$85,000 for those living with Crohn's, Colitis and Colon Cancer. The Ambassador also visited the St. Patrick's Society in Montreal to honour distinguished Irish Canadians.

In November, the Ambassador welcomed Canadian Trade Minister Ed Fast to the Residence for an Ireland-Canada Chamber of Commerce event, headed back to Toronto to meet the trade mission led by Irish Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation Richard Bruton, visited Halifax, Nova Scotia for the unveiling of "Irishtown", represented the Embassy at the European Union Film Festival in Ottawa, attended the Toronto GAA banquet, celebrated with the Ottawa Irish community and spoke at their reception for Pat Kelly who received the inaugural Presidential Distinguished Service Award.

In December, the Ambassador attended the Polish Orphans ball as they have also been a great support of Irish causes, and celebrated the holiday season with the Ottawa Irish Seniors groups at their Christmas reception.



## NOTICE BOARD

# Comóradh

A Newsletter for the Irish Abroad  
in the Decade of Commemorations



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha  
agus Trádála  
Department of Foreign Affairs  
and Trade



“Over the coming years, this Government will be working at home and abroad to commemorate these events and to honour those who were part of them.”

Updates on forthcoming commemorative initiatives and future issues of this newsletter will be posted on the website of your local Embassy or Consulate, and on the website of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Useful links:

Department of Foreign Affairs  
and Trade  
[www.dfa.ie](http://www.dfa.ie)

Department of Arts,  
Heritage and the Gaeltacht  
[www.ahg.gov.ie](http://www.ahg.gov.ie)

Commemorations Unit  
Anglo-Irish Division  
Department of Foreign Affairs  
and Trade  
80 St. Stephens Green  
Dublin 2  
Tel: (+353) 1 408 2635

A new Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade newsletter for the Irish Abroad was launched in October in New York. The newsletter features information on the Decade of Commemorations (i.e. anniversaries of the Ulster Covenant, Dublin Lockout, First World War, 1916 Rising etc.).

It covers some of the initiatives and events which have taken place over the past six months as part of the Government's commemorative programme.



Comóradh newsletters available on the Ottawa  
Embassy Website at:

<http://www.embassyofireland.ca/home/index.aspx?id=34246>







## NOTICE BOARD



### Obtaining Irish Citizenship through the Foreign Birth Registration Process

**DUE TO CHANGES BROUGHT IN ON OCTOBER 1, 2012,  
ALL APPLICANTS MUST NOW APPLY ONLINE**

#### GENERAL INFO

Residents of Canada, Jamaica and the Bahamas may apply for Irish Citizenship through the Foreign Birth Registration process if that person has a grandparent born in Ireland. A person born abroad to a parent who, although not born in Ireland, was otherwise an Irish citizen at the time of the person's birth, can become an Irish citizen by applying for Foreign Births Registration. The online application is known as 'Náisiún'.

Please note the following:

Only after completion of the Foreign Birth process can a person apply for an Irish passport.

Due to data protection laws, the Embassy can only deal with applicants or in the case of minors, the guardian of the minor.

Once you have completed the online form you must send your printed application and required supporting documentation to:

**FBR Section  
Embassy of Ireland  
Suite 1105, 130 Albert St  
Ottawa  
ON K1P 5G4**

#### NEW FEES

##### **Applications from within Canada**

\$176 for applicants 18 years of age and over  
\$66 for applicants under 18 years of age

##### **Applications from the Bahamas or Jamaica**

\$236 for applicants 18 years of age and over  
\$126 for applicants under 18 years of age  
(includes return courier service fee)

Fees are to be paid in:

Canadian funds

Certified cheque or bank/postal money

Payable to the Embassy of Ireland.

**No Cash / Credit cards / Personal cheques will be accepted.**

Further information and access to online applications is available on the Embassy's website at:

<http://www.embassyofireland.ca/home/index.aspx?id=34281>

Carefully review guidelines prior to applying online.



## Irish citizens travelling or living overseas – Register with the Department of Foreign Affairs

Citizens who are outside the Common Travel Area, Ireland/Great Britain are encouraged to register their contact details with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Registration is voluntary. It is a facility available to all Irish citizens and is intended for use by people travelling on holidays, and also for business travellers and Irish citizens living overseas. While we encourage everyone to register, the facility is particularly useful for people travelling to remote destinations or locations where they may be at risk. The registration system records the dates on which people expect to be abroad, so it is worth registering, even for short trips. When you register your details with the Department, it means that we can contact you if there is an unforeseen crisis such as a natural disaster or civil unrest or if you have a family emergency while you are overseas. If there is a major crisis abroad, the Department already has a record of your details, so we can contact you at an early stage in a crisis. Your registration will assist us to locate you and, if necessary, provide assistance to you and your family in Ireland.

**You can find out more about the registration facility and fill out the registration form on our website:**  
<http://www.embassyofireland.ca/home/index.aspx?id=87262>



*Ambassador*  
**Dr. Ray Bassett**

*Passport Officer*  
**Ms. Siobhán Doran**

*Embassy  
Support  
provided by:*  
**Mr. Alain  
Tasse**



*Deputy Head of Mission  
(Political/Economic/Irish Community/  
Press)*  
**Ms. Hilary Reilly**

*Visa Officer/Accounts*  
**Ms. Gurpreet Bajwa**  
*Ambassador's PA*  
**Ms. Caoimhe Bennis**



*Consular and Cultural Officer*  
**Ms. Sarah Thorenton**

*Foreign Birth Registration*  
**Ms. Debbie Earwaker**

The Embassy is very grateful to Mr Daniel Reilly for his graphic design services in creating our original newsletter design. Anyone interested in Daniel's work can contact him at [danielpreilly77@gmail.com](mailto:danielpreilly77@gmail.com)

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### Office Opening Hours:

10a.m.-12.30 p.m and 2p.m. -4 p.m.

Telephone lines are open between 9 am and 5 pm Eastern Standard Time Monday –Friday.

An out of hours emergency service is available by dialling 613-233 6281-only genuine emergency situations will receive a response outside normal office hours.