
CONWAY MILL TRUST

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Conway Mill Trust Distributes Grants To Supported Organizations

Conway Mill Trust President Bob Kaniecki and Board Member Jean Kaniecki have delivered several grants to organizations supported by Conway Mill Trust. In the course of their recent visits to Belfast, Derry and Portadown they distributed grants to ten separate organizations that have been supported by you, our donors, either as earmarks or as general contributions. These grants had previously been discussed and approved by the Conway Mill Trust Board.

A number of the organizations receiving grants are housed within the Conway Mill complex itself:

Conway Education Centre: The single largest grant authorized by Conway Mill Trust was in the amount of £450 to the Conway Education Centre. These funds had been raised through the creation of the Mary Mannion Merit Grant, which was designed to support students returning to programs that are similar to high school equivalency programs in the U.S. Conway Education Centre provides such programs to young adults, aged 19 years and older, who have not completed their secondary education but who are returning to this program to get equivalency certification.

Over 20 applicants applied for the three awards created by this fall's initial grant. Tuition for students who are taking the equivalency-related General Course Secondary Education (GCSE) certification program being offered by the Conway Education Centre is £150. Contributions to the Mary Mannion Merit Grant are *directly* helping returning students to complete the equivalency certification they need to greatly enhance their potential for future employment. This fall's grant of £450 will go directly to cover the tuition of three students who are selected by the staff of Conway Education Centre.



Fr. Des Wilson expresses his appreciation of support to Conway Mill Trust Board Member Jean Kaniecki.

Construction and renovation, which have been taking place on the interior as well as the exterior of the Mill, have resulted in changes that have already had a positive impact on some of the structures currently being used by the Conway Education Centre. Noteworthy among these changes is that the existing auditorium will find its utility increased through the addition of an accordion-type door to permit multiple use of this area.

Health Matters Healing Centre: Another organization housed within the Conway Mill complex and supported by Conway Mill Trust is the Health Matters Healing Centre. The Conway Mill Trust Board authorized and President Bob Kaniecki delivered £100 to Health Matters to further its work. The Health Matters Healing Centre has specializations that include aromatherapy, reflexology, and Indian head massage.

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Drumcree Community Trust Involves Families Through Fun, Education and Health



Young girls love the “Bubbles” program sponsored by Drumcree Community Trust.

Drumcree Trust is a community-led neighborhood organisation which for the past 20-odd years has tried to respond to various local needs. It does this by seeking funding to support a number of programmes in the fields mainly of children’s play, youth work, education in young adult parenting and healthy living.

We also intervene in other areas of support – provision for the elderly and those with disability and, more recently, for children from ethnic minorities—and engage in lobbying around environmental and planning issues. Our base is the Drumcree Community Centre, which struggles at times to accommodate the demands of space put on it.

During this current year, a wide range of activities has taken place, starting from groups such as ‘Bubbles’ and ‘Little Oaks’ for the youngest, through the ‘Cabin Club’ for primary age schoolchildren, to the ‘Drop In’ for the older teenagers. There have been projects on parenting for young adults, as well as education in drug use, first aid and sexual health.

Regular events for the younger clientele have been trips to a number of fun centres and parks in the district, relying, as always, on a strong team of volunteers. Other highlights have been Fathers’ Day, when dads – often absent or distant – were

encouraged to discover how to engage their children doing and making things together, and the well-attended Summer Scheme and mini ‘World Cup’ soccer tournament, the trophy for which was awarded in honour of a long-standing and esteemed volunteer, and husband and father of volunteers, who died recently in a tragic accident.

The Health Programme -- run from the Health House nearby -- has offered courses in healthy eating, reflexology, walking, health advice for the young, as well as participating in health fairs for all in the area.

Members and users of the Trust are regularly consulted on various issues affecting the local community, such as the new town planning scheme, development of facilities in the adjacent park, and distribution of resources to more needy sectors within the local area.

(This report was contributed by Michael Bingham of the Drumcree Community Centre.)

Construction and Expansion Planned At Museum of Free Derry

The Museum of Free Derry was a recipient of a Conway Mill Trust grant of £200. Adrian Kerr and John Kelly report that Phase 1 of the Museum’s current project is now complete, and plans for funding requests have been submitted to governmental authorities for Phase 2.

Phase 2 will include construction of a second story to the existing building, with an estimated cost of £1,500,000. This will allow space for a classroom, conference, and reflection room while providing additional space for exhibits.

Since salaries and fundamental expenses are only available until 2011, monies received by your donation are used for operational expenses. All income generated by the museum will go towards sustaining and developing the museum and securing long-term jobs for its employees. The museum will not just be a collection of artifacts and documents, but will be an active part of the local community, and will expand its activities outside the confines of the building.

Grants Distributed (continued from page 1)

Pauline Kersten, Manager of Conway Education Centre, reported to Bob Kaniecki that an application has been filed for government funding for the Health Matters Healing Centre. Presently, they have a professional training program that requires a government audit. The Centre not only provides health care services, but also trains professionals to provide services throughout Ireland. The government funding is being sought for hospital access, a General Practitioner and a full-time Therapist to measure the results of a decrease in the use of anti-depressants.

Woodworking Shop: The Woodworking Shop at Conway Mill was also a recipient of Conway Mill Trust funding, with the current grant at £300. The woodworking shop is a skill teaching center for young people to learn this craft. Previous grants to the woodworking shop have resulted in an increase in the inventory of tools available to students.



Window replacement is underway at Conway Mill.

Mill Construction Update

In their October, Conway Mill Trust President Bob Kaniecki and his wife Jean were given a tour of the Mill's renovations, led by Construction Coordinator Teresa and Site Superintendent Jim Ryan.

“Many of the windows have already been replaced on the exterior of Building A facing north (which has 60 windows),” Bob Kaniecki reported, “and some of the windows facing into what is to become the atrium have been replaced as well. Not all of these will be replaced based on the integrity of the panes.” Over 120 of a total of more than 400 windows have been already been replaced. Steel enclosed fire escapes have also been constructed at both ends of the building.



Among the recent exhibits at the Irish Republican Museum are documents and letters produced by prisoners on the Argenta prison ship. More artifacts are being sought through appeals to the public.

Irish Republican Museum Receives Grant from Conway Mill Trust

Among the organizations receiving grants from Conway Mill Trust is the Irish Republican Museum, also housed within the Conway Mill complex. The most recent grant of £350 was presented to Johnny Haddock in October by CMT President Bob Kaniecki.

The Irish Republican Museum continues to add to the collection of its exhibits on display. Among the new exhibits is a listing at the entryway to the Museum of the names of all of the women Volunteers who were killed while on active service from 1971 to 1992.

Future plans for the Museum are focused on a full color pictorial portrayal of the republican struggle from the rebellion of 1798 onward. The first stage is complete, which includes pictures of the patriots of 1798, with descriptions of causes, battles and results that will line the first portion of the wall. Plans are to continue the military history in chronological order.

Also on display are drawings and letters produced by prisoners on the *Argenta* prison ship as well as a Long Kesh cell door and related items.

Conway Mill Preservation Trust Prepares for Its 30th Anniversary

As preparations are being made for the 30th Anniversary of the Conway Mill Preservation Trust, which will be conducted at the Clonnard Monastery, the recent construction at the Mill has brought to light historical documents and recordings that are significant for the history of the Mill's renovation.

When items were recently moved from one building to another to facilitate construction, a surprise finding was the records of the purchase of the structure by the Trust as well as copies of a recording made by Christy Moore at the Inaugural Celebration.

Pauline Kersten, Manager of Conway Education Centre, is arranging for Christy Moore to autograph the recordings and they will be sold on e-Bay.

An invitation has been sent to President Barack Obama to attend the dedication of the Mill in October 2010 after the Mill's renovations have been completed.

Grants to Altram and Naiscoil na Rinne

Grants of £100 each were provided by Conway Mill Trust to Altram and Naiscoil na Rinne. Altram provides support for over 1,000 Naiscoil students in the North of Ireland. Schools must have a minimum of eight aged 3-4 to qualify for government support of £1,300. Four new Naiscoils are scheduled to open that will not receive government support and each community will be responsible for the funding until audited. All new schools must abide by Preschool expansion program (PEGS) and Altram vets all the staff for child protection and provides six mandatory training sessions per year in Derry and Belfast.

Our New Mailing Address

Please note our new mailing address:
Conway Mill Trust, Inc.
P.O. Box 101529
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Dove House Receives Grant

Dove House in Derry was awarded a £100 grant from Conway Mill Trust. Deborah Cross reports that a new education and training program has been directed toward people ages 19-65 living in the Bogside, Creggan and Fountain Estate areas to evaluate their educational, computer, and instructional needs. This course strives to increase their marketability for employment by increasing basic skills toward achieving a BSCE.

Other targeted areas of Derry for the "Youth First" program include Bogside, Waterside, Creggan, and travelers or immigrants. This is a life scheme plan to negate anti-social activities for young people aged 5-25. While older groups are involved in painting murals over graffiti and inter-community activities that promote working together, the youth and adolescents are engaged in age appropriate activities to promote interaction.

Grant to Springhill Community House

The October grant from Conway Mill Trust to the Springhill Community House amounted to £250. Ongoing projects at Springhill Community House include education, training and suicide prevention. A ground level program for young people takes them on "A Journey Through Self," an eight-session process of self-discovery, change and positive goal development.

The program assists young people with low self-esteem or who might come from dysfunctional families to prevent drug and alcohol abuse and thereby help to offset suicidal tendencies.

These programs are person-centered and the course theme of the "It's My Life!" program, aimed at young people ages 15 to 24 years old, aims to foster personal responsibility through the development of positive coping skills that can be used through their lives. A particular emphasis is placed on helping these young people to overcome negativity, reduce stress and change their behaviors.

One of the many strengths of the program is that some of its facilitators are former students who have experienced and successfully dealt with similar problems.