



# Conway Mill Trust

Formerly "Doors of Hope"

P.O. Box 101529  
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Summer 2015

---

## Grants Delivered!

*Your donations at Work*

Conway Mill Trust board members Ed McManus and Sandra Haas travelled to Ireland in April to deliver grants and observe how your donations are being put to work.

As always, your generosity is both needed and appreciated by all recipients. Most of the groups we support are dependent on government grants.



**CMT board members Ed McManus and Sandra Haas with Fr. Des Wilson**

The current political and economic climate in Britain has created a difficult environment for community groups to function. In Northern Ireland, as in many post-conflict societies, there is a heavy reliance upon public sector work. Currently, the British government is trimming these jobs from their budget. The result is a significant increase in reliance for the services community groups provide. Coupled with the drastic cuts being made in grant awards, these groups are finding it increasingly difficult to survive.

In this edition, we will detail the delivery of your donations. As always, no money from Conway Mill Trust is used to fund these trips. Our board members personally cover 100% of their expenses.

### Drumcree Community Centre

*Renovations Complete!*

Breandan MacCionnaith and Michael Bingham of the Drumcree Community Centre were presented with a £1600 (\$2,542) grant. They both were surprised and delighted with the size of the grant and thanked our donors for their generosity.

After just over nine months, works to completely refurbish and partially extend the Drumcree Community Centre in Portadown's Garvaghy Road area are now finally completed.

**cont. pg. 3**

# Conway Education Centre

*Changing Lives and Making a Difference*

The Conway Education Centre in West Belfast was awarded two grants— £700 (\$1,112) for the Design and Technology Program and £400 (\$635) for Conway Health Matters. Pauline Kersten indicated that she had to borrow from another program to make the needed repairs to the woodshop woodworking equipment or the students' projects would not get finished in time for grading so the grant came at a very opportune time to replace the funds used from the other program.



**Design and Technology Program Students**

She said the Education Centre was fortunate this year in that the funding she received last year was for two years. However next year will be another matter. We asked about this fall's GCSE classes and what she will need for tuition assistance and she said she will need around £800 from the Mary Mannion Merit Grant Program to maintain the level we supported last year.

The Mary Mannion Grant program provides funds for low income people to pay for the courses necessary to obtain their high school diploma. In the U.S., people who did not complete high school can sit for a single exam to obtain their G.E.D. In the U.K., students must complete a series of classes, at their own expense, to obtain their diploma. The cost associated with these classes prevents many people from completing their education and improving the lives of themselves and their family. The Mary Mannion Grant has already helped many people continue their education. If you would like to help, just write "Marry Mannion Grant" in the memo of your check or money order and 100% of your donation will be applied to this fund. The money to fund this program is generally needed in the fall, so this will be our last opportunity to raise money for our 2015 grant.

## Want to Make A Difference?

Your donations can help projects like the Mary Mannion Grant or the Design and Technology Program to succeed.

Please partner with Conway Mill Trust and send a tax-deductible contribution today to Conway Mill Trust Inc., PO Box 101529, Pittsburgh, PA 15237-8529.

If you wish to direct your donation to a particular group, write the name of the group in the memo of your check or money order and they will receive 100% of that donation. Or go to [www.conwaymilltrust.org](http://www.conwaymilltrust.org) and click the DONATE button to donate securely online through PayPal using your checking account or credit card.

## Drumcree from pg. 1

In the past few weeks, willing volunteers assisted in moving all the centre's belongings from Drumcree College back to the community centre. Beginning June 15, a week of celebration will see a range of activities operating again in the centre, with the annual summer-scheme for children commencing in a few weeks' time in July.

As we reported in our last edition, the old Drumcree Centre was built with small windows and was surrounded by a formidable steel fence because of the heightened security risk that existed at that time.



**Drumcree Community Centre before and after renovations.**

The physical transformation of the Drumcree Centre, both internally and externally, has met with a very positive reaction from the community.

“We are so pleased people have embraced the refurbished centre,” said Michael Bingham, chairperson of Drumcree Community Trust. “It is a vital facility for the local community – whether individual adults, children, young people, or families.”



**Drop-in/Social area**



**Children's Room**

Linda O'Neill, the centre's senior youth worker, commented, “The entire building has been completely transformed beyond recognition. It is now a very attractive building and is one which will be fit to cope with the many purposes to which it will be put. I've no doubt that we will see greater numbers of people using the centre.”

**cont. pg. 7**

# Irish Republican Museum

## *1916 Commemoration plans underway*

In March of this year, a portion of the total grant to the Irish Republican Museum was wired to their account. Ed and Sandy met with Johnny Haddock and Susan Hickey to deliver the remainder of the funds. They were also presented with an additional grant for funds designated by donors for the museum beyond the wired grant, making their total grant £5530 (\$8,567).



**Johnny Haddock and Ed McManus**

Johnny and Susan were stunned at the size of the grants and expressed their deep appreciation for the generosity of CMT donors.

They are in the process of developing exhibits commemorating the 1916 Easter Rising and were in need of funds to be able to carry out their plans for the anniversary celebration. The grant enables them to proceed with their plans and they hope to have the exhibit on display later this year and carry it through next year's celebrations.

---

## Dove House

A grant in the amount of £600 (\$953) was presented to Dove House. We learned that Dove House like all the other groups has been negatively impacted by this year's government funding cutbacks. The Divert Project program lost all of its funding. Seven staff members will lose their jobs. Additionally, they are in the process of fighting to preserve funding for the other programs targeted to vulnerable young people.

Despite all the funding issues, their programs have experienced great success. They are currently establishing a satellite Youth Club drop-in location in Centre City Derry which they expect will attract many youth due to its convenient location. Ryan Tracy, Youth First Coordinator, has been extremely instrumental in the success of the Youth Club's projects.

In spite of the cutbacks, Dove House is moving forward with additional new programs to help at-risk members of the community. Their willingness to fight through seemingly insurmountable financial obstacles is motivated by the true need that exists for their services. We will keep you posted on their progress.

# Still Imprisoned Project

Ed and Sandy met with Joe Austin, Paul “PJ” Jones and Loretta McKee to present the Still Imprisoned Project with a grant.

When told our donors designated funds for their organization, Joe said, “This couldn’t come at a better time.” They went on to explain that the other ex-prisoner support groups lost their funding and have discontinued their services. This has placed a heavier case load and increased financial pressure on SIP’s limited resources.



**Ed McManus and Sandy Haas with SIP Volunteers**

Loretta, who handles SIP’s finances, commented that as of that morning they had £12 in the bank and were faced with kicking in personal money to buy some petrol. Upon hearing this, Ed and Sandy added another £100 to the grant, making it £700 (\$1,112).

SIP is not government funded but rather relies totally on private contributions and volunteer staff to carry out its mission of helping ex-prisoners to successfully reintegrate into their communities.

Even the smallest donation can help keep the doors open for groups like Still Imprisoned Project. If you would like to help, you can designate SIP or any of the groups we support and 100% of your donation will be delivered to that organization.

## Springhill Community House Receives Grant

As pictured on page one, CMT Board members Ed McManus and Sandy Haas met with Fr. Des Wilson to present a grant on the amount of £600 (\$953) to the Springhill Community House. Ed and Sandy were also able to spend time with Father Des, Ciaran Cahill and Peter McGuire.

They all said the grant is very timely in that they had just experienced a 25 percent cut in their funding which equates to about £1200. Our grant will cover half of the funding cut. If you would like to help, write “Springhill” in the memo of your check or money order and we will forward 100% of your donation to Springhill House.

Fr. Des will be celebrating his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in July! Please join us in wishing him a happy day with many more to come.



# Altram

## *Keeping the Irish language alive*

As we previously reported, due to sweeping changes in the structure and delivery of Irish language education in Ireland, Altram is faced with an uncertain future. Despite these many challenges, Altram remains dedicated to preserving and expanding use of the Irish language.

During their visit, Ed and Sandy met with Danny Cassidy over lunch to present him with a £500 (\$794) grant and get an update on the status of the naiscoil and Altram. Danny was deeply appreciative of the grant and said it would enable him to ready an office in the naiscoil building to move Altram from Rathmore Centre to the naiscoil. The relocation of the Altram office will be much more cost effective and Danny has been occupying the space in Rathmore without paying the rent for 1-1/2 years and must vacate.



**Altram**

He continues to get temporary funding from the Department of Education as the restructure of the Irish language schools in the Republic and the North is currently at a standstill because the agency that was to carry out the restructuring in the North can't get it done because they lack the knowledge and expertise and must rely on the experience and knowledge of Danny, the Altram staff and others to integrate the two vastly different Irish language educational systems.

When asked about the naiscoil itself, Danny said that the naiscoil has not been reopened as yet because there is work that must be done on the building. However, he is very confident that it eventually will be reopened.

Organizations like Altram are on the front lines of the battle to keep the Irish language alive. They bring to the table the ability to understand and adapt their approach to the community they serve. If these organizations are lost to the larger government structure, there is the risk that decisions about the funding and delivery of Irish language education will be politically driven.

If you would like to help, you can direct your donation to Altram. We will continue to closely monitor their financial situation. Although they face serious funding issues, they are currently in a stable situation according to Danny. They have a core of dedicated people who are determined to keep their doors open. Your donation can help keep them afloat until they secure permanent funding. If at any point we determine they cannot recover, we will inform our donors.

**Drumcree, from pg.3**



**New and Improved Main Hall**



**New Kitchen**

Back in April, as works were nearing completion, three trustees from Conway Mill Trust were able to visit the Drumcree Centre and to see for themselves the tremendous changes which had been made at that stage.

Drumcree Trust’s vice-chair, Breandán Mac Cionnaith said, “It was good that Ed, Sandy and Carmen were able to see at first hand the huge differences that have been made to the community centre. Given that Conway Mill Trust has been a good and constant friend to us in Portadown over many years, it was appropriate that their trustees should be among the first visitors to the Drumcree Centre.”

Breandán added, “It’s important to point out that the support and the generosity of Conway Mill Trust is really appreciated by us in Portadown as well by other groups across the Six Counties.”



**The center serves all members of the community – from children to senior citizens**



**Renovations to the outdoor space provide children with more room to play outdoors**

Next year, in 2016, Drumcree Community Trust will be celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary – a significant milestone in the organization’s history. Plans for that celebration are already being prepared which will involve a photographic exhibition; a book tracing the development of Drumcree Community Trust, as well as a series of public discussions with guest speakers, and a major community festival.

# Museum of Free Derry

A grant in the amount of £600 (\$953) was presented to Adrian Kerr of the Museum of Free Derry.

At the present time, the museum is housed in temporary quarters on Shipquay Street in Derry. Construction of the new museum has not as yet begun due to a delay in release of funds. From Adrian's point of view, it is more



**CMT Board member Ed McManus touring the temporary exhibit space.**

of a political than a fiscal issue. He is still optimistic that the monies will eventually be forthcoming and that this is just another challenge to overcome. At the present time, Adrian isn't predicting when the construction will begin.

Although the current space is temporary, they have designed a very attractive exhibit area which tells the full Bloody Sunday story. They are working on moving a couple of the smaller display cases into the temporary museum but are having difficulty finding a mover willing to give them a quote on cost to move them. The major concerns of the movers are that they are mostly glass and they would have to navigate a set of steps to get them inside the temporary museum. Because they are a charity they must get bids on the move so they aren't sure whether they are going to be able to display any artifacts in the temporary museum.

Despite the challenges in completing this project, the new museum promises to be well worth the effort. Securing a suitable space for this exhibit will ensure that future generations will understand the story of Bloody Sunday in its proper context.

If you would like to help the museum preserve the story of this important time in history, you can designate your donation to the Museum of Free Derry. 100% of your donation will be directed to the museum

## **Sign up for our E-Newsletter**

Would you like to receive our newsletter electronically? Just send us a message including your email address to:

**[trustees@conwaymilltrust.org](mailto:trustees@conwaymilltrust.org)**

You'll receive our next newsletter via email. It's faster, complete with color photos, and without the cost of print.

**Sign up Today!**