



Conway Mill Trust

Formerly “Doors of Hope”

P.O. Box 101529
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

December 2011

Conway Mill wins Regeneration Award

“Best Use of a Heritage Building in a Regeneration Project”



Conway Mill before and after

The Conway Mill Preservation Trust was presented with the award in London in July of this year. Chairman Jim Neeson accepted the award, stating that “for the mill, the trustees, committees and local community, it is fantastic for the project to be recognized.” Neeson also said that “it really shows what a community can do when it puts its mind to it.”

Fr. Des Wilson was also pleased with the award, stating “We did not expect that the mill would be getting prizes – most of our history during the last thirty years has been of having to give up one expectation and create another! But the recognition of the Mill as an outstanding example of how a local community with so many friends can change desolation into hope and then achievement has certainly helped to change a lot of things.

Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive of the Prince’s Regeneration Trust, said she was “proud” of the trust’s involvement in such a challenging project. She added that “Conway Mill is a huge success; we often refer back to it as a blueprint for local people everywhere who are concerned to bring a much-loved historic building back into use.”

Reflecting on the significance of the award, Fr. Wilson added that “people are still strangely unwilling at times to admit their own abilities and the sight of what could have been a deserted abandoned heap turning into a glorious living, working space was good, but somehow it often takes someone else’s praise to switch us away from mild satisfaction to a feeling of triumph. We do have a lot of friends, and occasionally our friends in Britain take the opportunity – as they did on this occasion – of sharing with us. We are glad of that. Now the work of ensuring that the Mill will be a living, working and enjoyable part of life for everyone in Belfast goes on – too difficult I must say for me personally, but it is in good hands.

It is a beautiful building and has caused many gasps of astonishment. And some of us are now thinking more about just how beautiful Belfast is, and how even more beautiful it will be. Thank you for being a part of that good work.”

“What Did the Events of June 15, 2010 Mean To You?”



Congratulations to the winners
of the essay contest!

Bloody Sunday Trust, Bloody Sunday Weekend Committee and Pat Finucane Centre announced the winners of the schools' essay competition launched in June this year as part of the series of events held to mark the first anniversary of the publication of the Saville Report.

All post primary schools in the Derry City Council area were invited to take part and ask their pupils to submit an essay on the subject of “What did the events of 15 June 2010 mean to you?”

The winners, announced in October during a short ceremony in the Museum of Free Derry, were Charlotte Walker from St Mary's College in first place, and Kevin Mellon (St Peter's High School) and Shannon Doherty (St Mary's College) in joint second. The three received plaques and gift certificates as prizes. In winning the competition, Charlotte Walker also secured a prize of £250 for her school.

Speaking after the winners were announced, Adrian Kerr, Manager - Museum of Free Derry, from the Bloody Sunday Weekend Committee said:

“This competition was launched with the aim of enabling young people in this city to express their opinions about what happened that day and to generate an important contribution to the historical archive of what was such a momentous day in the history of the city.

“We were delighted with the response, and would like to thank all of the schools and pupils who took part and sent in essays of such high quality that the judges had a tremendously difficult task in selecting the winners. We would also like to thank the panel of judges – Robin Percival, Jenni Doherty and John Dunne – for all their hard work, and all those who supported this competition financially or otherwise, including Derry City Council's Community Relations Department, who were the main funder, Derry Credit Union Ltd, Guildhall Press and the Conway Mill Trust.

“Finally, we would like to thank and congratulate all of those who took part in the competition, and special congratulations to Charlotte, Kevin and Shannon for their success.”

All entries to the competition have been published in a special commemorative booklet, copies of which will be given to all those who took part, and the rest made available to all schools, libraries etc. in the city.

Dove House P.R.A.M.S. Project Helping Mothers



Martina Anderson, MLA, Junior First Minister with the Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister, NI Assembly visiting P.R.A.M.S.

The Dove House Positive P.R.A.M.S Project (Positive Relations Amongst Mothers) enables mothers from the Bogside & Brandywell area to come together in a supported capacity to share their experience of being mothers.

The P.R.A.M.S group meets one morning per week. Core activities include varied programs to help mothers develop practical skills as well as enabling them to gain knowledge which contributes to them developing a higher and healthier degree of emotional and mental wellbeing. The project is funded through the

National Lotteries, Awards for All Programme.

The mothers involved with the P.R.A.M.S Project choose thematic issues and invite guest speakers to discuss and explore chosen topics. Some of the topics explored by parents include advice on welfare benefits, better of calculations for those seeking employment, visiting mental health speakers or those in the drug and alcohol field speaking on thematic issues such as Hidden Harm or Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

The Dove House – P.R.A.M.S. Project were recently invited and hosted by Martina Anderson, MLA, Junior First Minister with the Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister, NI Assembly. Martina extended this invitation to local Mother's from the Bogside area of Derry.

The visit provided mothers with an insight into the operational workings of Government. Whilst on this visit the mother's were also afforded a tour of the Stormont building and met with a number of Martina's party colleagues and explored issues of concern to mothers in the Bogside area of Derry.

In addition the mothers also visited a local Women's group in the Shankill area of Belfast. This enabled the mothers from different communities in the North to share their experiences of motherhood in 2011.

It is anticipated that involvement in the PRAMS Project will have a positive impact on the lives of mothers as well as the lives of their families through the development of skills, the acquirement of knowledge and increased involvement in local community life. Your donations will ensure that Dove House can continue to provide the community with these invaluable programs.

Ta' Failte Roimh Chach (Everyone is Welcome)

By Larry Brophy, Conway Mill Trust Trustee

In August of this year, the Brophy clan travelled to Ireland to attend the National Commemoration of the 30th Anniversary of the 1981 Hunger Strikes in Camlough. During our stay, we also travelled to Belfast so that I could visit the Conway Mill and meet the good folks that manage the programs supported by the Conway Mill Trust. We found the Conway Mill to be a bustling enterprise; a destination for any and all Irish Americans visiting Ireland.

As our good luck would have it, the Conway Education Centre was celebrating their "Open Week" from the 15th to the 19th. We met with Ms. Pauline Kersten, Manager of the Education Centre, who provided insight into the goals and challenges of equipping residents of the community with the tools necessary to enter and compete in the work force.

Danny McAree, General Manager, gave us a tour and history of the Conway Mill. The biggest surprise of the tour came when we entered the large open space between the old mill buildings. It is now big and bright; a warm and welcoming place that is illuminated by the Atrium enclosure. The restoration is remarkable.

The highlight of the tour for us was the Irish Republican History Museum. Their mission statement says it all: "To preserve and promote through art, crafts, and artifacts the history of the Republican struggle for Irish freedom...for Republican history to be told by Republicans. To educate so that our youth may understand why Republicans fought, died and spent many years in prison for their beliefs."

We came away from our two day visit to the Conway Mill assured that the efforts of the Conway Mill Trust is contributing to the work being done for economic, social and cultural development in Northern Ireland.



Altram Congratulates Recent Graduates!

Altram offers its congratulations to those candidates that graduated from the University of Ulster with the brand new Certificate in Irish Immersion: Early Years. The graduation ceremony took place in the Millennium Forum Derry City in June.

Altram pioneered the development of the new Certificate in Irish Immersion Education: Early Years which the University of Ulster is offering in partnership with the North West Regional College. The course was accredited by the University of Ulster Academic Council in 2008. It is the first of its kind in Ireland or Britain.

Altram is a community-based regional support organization for the 48 Irish-language preschool and naiscoils across Northern Ireland. They fulfill a critical need in enabling educators to continue teaching the Irish language effectively. Your donations are critical if they are to continue in their work.

A Message from Bob Kaniecki, President of Conway Mill Trust

This past year has been difficult for most of the organizations which we support due to the reduced flow of funds from the British government into Northern Ireland. We, the Board of Trustees of Conway Mill Trust extend our sincerest thanks to all of our supporters for their prayers and monetary contributions to continue our work in the North.

May you, your families and friends enjoy a blessed and peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Nollaig faoi shean is favi shonas duit



Conway Mill Trust would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our 2011 donors and to express our heartfelt appreciation for your thoughtfulness and generosity.

Tell Us What You Think!

Our newsletter allows us to keep you up to date on the programs we support with your donations. We also try to share with you the impact your donations have on the lives of the people served by these programs.

We'd love to hear any and all suggestions or feedback you have to offer. Feel free to send us an email or write us a letter!

Thank you for your continuing support.

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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 and click the DONATE button to donate securely online through PayPal using your checking account or credit card.