



Conway Mill Trust

Formerly “Doors of Hope”

P.O. Box 101529
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

March 2013

Partners in Progress

Conway Education Centre Turns 30!

Four representatives of Conway Mill Trust will be traveling to Northern Ireland the end of March to attend Conway Education Centre’s 30th Anniversary Celebration and deliver grant monies. During the past 30 years, the generosity of people like you have allowed the Conway Education Centre, and other community groups, keep their doors open to people in need.



When Fr. Des Wilson and the eight other community leaders acquired the two main blocks of the abandoned Conway Mill 30 years ago, they had a vision – use the Mill to stimulate and support economic development in the West Belfast community. One important element of their vision was to devote one floor of the Mill to education as there was little official provision for continuing education, and they saw a need to create opportunities for adults to return to education and reengage young people in learning.

As Fr. Des Wilson, also founder of Springhill Community House, related in an article he wrote for Conway Mill Trust’s June 2008 newsletter, “We wanted two things running parallel – opportunities for people to study and have state examinations if they wished, and (more importantly as I saw it) to enable people to create their own arrangements for learning, holding inquiries, classes, exhibitions, inviting visiting speakers. We wanted to establish an environment where people worked creatively in surroundings in which they felt safe and comfortable and which they themselves governed.” Thus the Conway Education Centre was born.

Conway Mill Trust’s partnership with Conway Education Centre had its roots when Elizabeth Logue and her husband Seamus and a committee of five other Irish Americans in New Jersey traveled to Belfast in 1985 and saw first-hand the deplorable conditions in which people were working in the Mill and particularly the lack of books in the Education Centre. They returned to

Continued on Pg. 4

Derry - City of Culture

The following is from the website that was established to promote Derry as the UK City of Culture for 2013. For more information, visit: www.cityofculture2013.com.

Derry-Londonderry made history in July 2010 when it was awarded the inaugural UK City of Culture designation for 2013. The journey towards City of Culture is both compelling and ambitious and will help unlock creativity and generate new connections to shape the new story of our city's vibrant future.



Culture Company 2013 is the lead partner in the delivery of the City of Culture program and seeks to utilize and build upon existing infrastructure in terms of people, physical venues and shared space to develop a cultural program of activity in the lead up to 2013. It aims to produce a series of key events in 2013 and a complete year-long program of cultural activities, act as a catalyst to build the economy of the region and deliver a lasting legacy for the people and economy. The core themes of the City of Culture project are Joyous Celebration and Purposeful Inquiry with four distinct components:

- 1, Unlocking Creativity**
- 2, Creative Connections**
- 3, Digital Dialogue**
- 4, Creating a New Story**

A key strand of the delivery of the program will take place through extensive digital engagement across a series of online platforms – website(s), social media, web TV and mobile apps.

After many years of turmoil Derry-Londonderry is enjoying the dividend of the peace process and undergoing a renaissance, transforming physically and culturally. Being designated UK City of Culture for 2013 enables the city to accelerate the pace of change and provides a new story for the city to tell to the world.

Continued on Pg. 6



Culture Minister encourages people to take up the Líofa challenge in 2013

Culture Minister Carál Ní Chuilín is encouraging people to take up the Líofa challenge in the New Year. Minister Chuilín writes:

As Minister for Culture, one of my priorities in office is the promotion of Gaelic language and culture to as wide an audience as possible.

I believe that the rich cultural and linguistic heritage on this island is something that we all share and something that we can all embrace and enjoy.

Therefore, I intend to introduce measures aimed at broadening the appeal of the Irish language and returning it to a status where it can be practiced and enjoyed by people of all backgrounds and traditions.

The Líofa 2015 project aims to encourage 5000 people from all walks of life across the North to sign up to becoming fluent in Irish by 2015.

This is obviously a challenging target and will require a significant degree of commitment from the participants involved but I am greatly encouraged by the discussions I have already had with stakeholders from across the community and I firmly believe this is a realistic goal.

*Carál Ní Chuilín
Minister of Culture Arts and Leisure*

One way you can help Líofa reach this goal is through your donations to Altram. Altram is the regional support group for Irish medium early years projects. Altram was founded in 1990 by local preschools in Derry, Belfast, Armagh and Newry. They provide invaluable support to Irish language teachers, and actively promote the importance of Irish medium education for young children.

Sign up to receive our newsletter via email!

Send us your email address and you will receive our newsletter faster, complete with color photos and without the cost of print. We will never sell or share your email address with any other organization.

trustees@conwaymilltrust.org

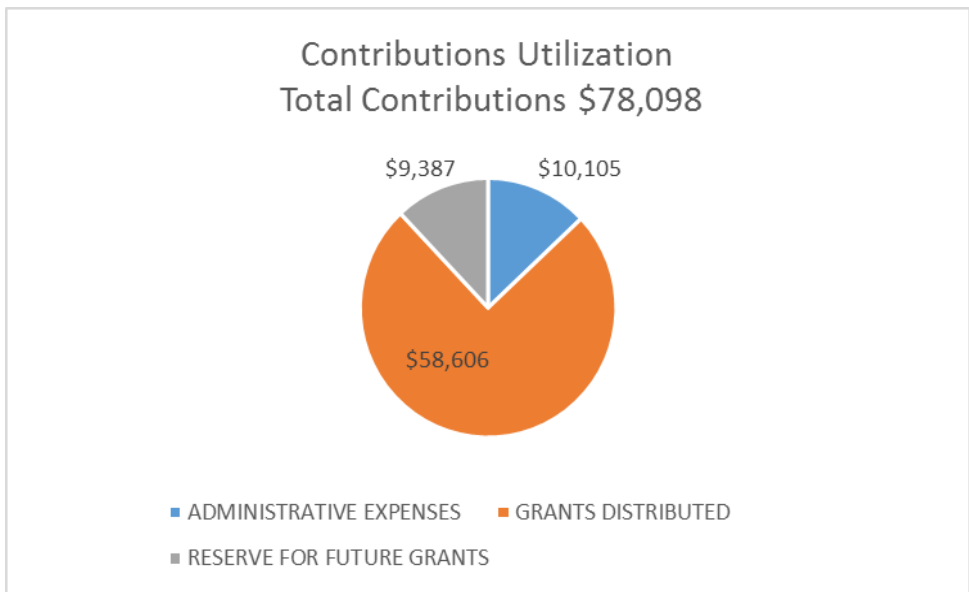
Partners In Progress, from Pg. 1

New Jersey and in less than a month raised \$3,000. This marked the beginning of Doors of Hope, predecessor to Conway Mill Trust. Over the early years of the Conway Education Centre, Doors of Hope enabled the Centre to keep its doors open and make a meaningful impact on the West Belfast community.

When Elizabeth decided to retire in 2005, eight people from the Pittsburgh Irish community offered to carry forward the work of Doors of Hope. The organization changed its name to Conway Mill Trust, continuing the journey that Elizabeth began of improving the lives of the people and communities in Northern Ireland.

Conway Education Centre’s 30th Anniversary Celebration is a wonderful opportunity for Conway Mill Trust to highlight our contributors’ achievements this past seven years. Over the seven year period you collectively contributed over \$78 thousand to Conway Mill Trust, evenly divided between non-designated and designated donations.

Your outstanding generosity over the seven years has enabled us to give more than \$58 thousand in grants to the eight community groups Conway Mill Trust supports. After administrative costs, 87 percent of the contributions we received were used for grants. Designated giving totaled almost \$38 thousand. As we continually remind you, one hundred percent of designated contributions are given to the groups/programs you designate.



Continued on Pg. 5

Partners in Progress, from Pg. 4

The distribution of grants by community group was as follows:

<u>Community Group</u>	<u>Total Grants Awarded</u>
Conway Mill Community Centre	\$ 7,855
Conway Education Centre	23,223
Irish Republican History Museum	7,692
Springhill Community House	3,167
Holy Cross Ardoyne Trust*	650
Museum of Free Derry	4,399
Dove House	2,214
Altram/Naiscoil na Rinne Irish Language	6,943
Drumcree Community Centre	<u>2,464</u>
TOTAL GRANTS	\$ 58,606

*Holy Cross Ardoyne Trust became an active project in 2008.

Administrative expenses during the same period were \$10 thousand or 13 percent of contributions, well below the average non-profits' administrative costs of 15 percent. More importantly, one hundred percent of our administrative costs are direct operational expenses, and we work very hard to keep these expenses to a minimum. In addition, Trustees are not compensated in any way for our work. Any and all personal expenses associated with our involvement, including travel expenses, are our responsibility.

Moving forward, we assure you that we will continue to keep you, our donors, informed of the impact your donations have on the community groups we support. Together, we can continue to help rebuild lives in Northern Ireland.

MARY MANNION MERIT GRANT FUND DRIVE

Your outstanding generosity has allowed the Mary Mannion Grant to continue changing lives. Many people who were unable to complete their high school education find themselves locked out of opportunities for jobs that allow them to support their families. Unlike the United States GED program where those who do not graduate from high school can take a single test to obtain their diploma, people in the U.K. must complete a series of courses at their own expense to obtain their degree. The Conway Mill Education Centre offers the GCSE classes, but cannot afford to underwrite the tuition costs for those who cannot afford it. The Mary Mannion Merit Grant was created to assist students to cover the cost of courses and complete their education.

If you would like to donate to this fund, write "Mary Mannion" in the memo of your check or money order and 100% of your donation will go toward helping a deserving student.

City of Culture, from Pg. 2

We have already begun a program of unparalleled cultural activity, which will result in 2013 being an extraordinary year in an extraordinary place. 2013 also marks the building of the walls by the City of London livery companies and the potential for the renewal of relationships with London.

The Cultural program for 2013 is already substantially developed and will feature a calendar full of big 'cultural brands' including the Turner Prize, London Symphony Orchestra, Royal National Ballet, Lumiere, Hofesh Shechter.

The unfolding story of our physical renaissance is spectacular. The Peace Bridge and the former military base at Ebrington have been formally recognized in national awards.

The City is part of Project Kelvin with the fastest transatlantic digital links and is, courtesy of Culture Company 2013's principal partner, BT, now 100% superfast broadband enabled, the first Irish, or UK, city to be so. The City intends to grow its digital capacity adding to the range of global companies who already do business here including Seagate, DuPont, All State, Fujitsu and First Source.

The City has been rapidly developing its tourism offer and its exceptional assets include the most complete walled city in Europe, its peace making history and the lively youth culture make it a 'cultural powerhouse'.

The purpose of the City Of Culture designation is to accelerate the change in the City's fortunes by driving a step change in the economy, principally through the tourism and creative media sectors. It is the ambition of the Culture Company to deliver a world-class program that will more than double the day trippers and overnight visitors to the city.

DID YOU KNOW?

- ♣ There are 34.7 million U.S. residents with Irish ancestry. This number is more than seven times the population of Ireland itself.
- ♣ Irish is the nation's second most frequently reported ancestry, ranking behind German.
- ♣ Across the country, 11 percent of residents lay claim to Irish ancestry. That number more than doubles to 23 percent in the state of Massachusetts.
- ♣ Irish ranks among the top five ancestries in every state except Hawaii and New Mexico. It is the leading ancestry group in Delaware, Massachusetts and New Hampshire.
- ♣ There are approximately 144,588 current U.S. residents who were born in Ireland.

Want to Make A Difference?

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

Conway Mill Community Centre is home to a mixture of small and medium-size manufacturing industries, service businesses and creative arts enterprises. Much of the grant monies to the Community Centre went toward the refurbishment project.

Conway Education Centre (CEC) is an integral part of the Community Centre and provides a host of educational opportunities to children and adults in the West Belfast and surrounding communities including its After School, Day School and Industrial Arts programs for children and youth and General Course Secondary Education (GSCE) courses in English, Math and History for adults. Through the Mary Mannion Merit Grant Program, many students have been able to take advantage of the GCSE certificate program.

Irish Republican History Museum houses a vast collection of artifacts, memorabilia and prisoner handcrafts representing all periods of the struggle for Irish freedom. The museum is an all-volunteer independent organization, solely reliant upon private donations for its operation and capital improvements.

Springhill Community House, founded by Fr. Des Wilson, offers adult education, technical training, intervention and community health programs. Springhill works very closely with the Conway Education Centre to provide educational opportunities and health programs to the all residents in West Belfast and surrounding areas.

Museum of Free Derry is a permanent exhibit of Derry's civil rights movement, particularly Bloody Sunday. The museum houses more than 20,000 artifacts.

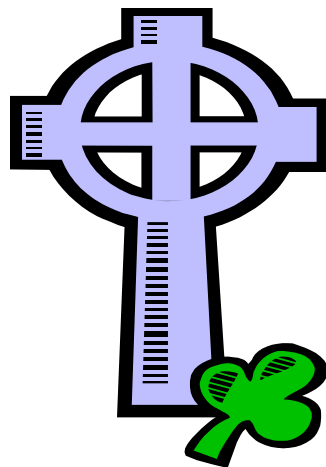
Dove House encourages and empowers women to overcome poverty, unemployment, domestic violence and social isolation through education, training and social interaction. As a key women's organization in Derry, it also serves the elderly and disabled and has robust drug and alcohol prevention/intervention programs for area youth.

Altram is a regional support group for the Irish language early years naiscoils (equivalent to our early learning preschools) in Northern Ireland, providing certification training and immersion education to Irish language early years naiscoil workers.

Naiscoil na Rinne is an Irish language early years preschool located in the Creggan Community of Derry. It works with children ages two to primary school age and must raise its own funds to serve children younger than four years of age.

Drumcree Community Centre serves families and children in the Gavarghy Road/Drumcree area in Portadown. Its programs are educational, cultural, arts, personal and social development programs as well as health and fitness for children and adults.

Beannachtaí na Féile Pádraig oraibh !



St. Patrick's Day blessing upon you!