



# SKÅL NEWS

Newsletter for members of Skål International - Dublin - Club No. 37 Autumn 2009

## "Dubs for the Danube"

A large group from Skål International Dublin has already signed up for the 70th. Skål International World Congress which is being hosted by our twin club, Skål International Budapest from 1- 6 November 2009.

The week-long event will give Dublin Skålleagues an opportunity to meet up once again with George Paldi and his colleagues who visited Dublin for the twinning ceremony in 2007 and who hosted a memorable return visit to the Danube City the following year.

Skålleagues attending the Congress will also have an opportunity of supporting the bid by the Skål Club of Kerry to host the 72nd. World Congress in Killarney in 2012. National President Geraldine Rosney has launched a special appeal to all Irish members to make a special effort to attend. 'We will be publicly launching our bid to host the 2012 World Congress in Ireland, and so it is vitally important to us that we have as many people and as high a profile as possible in Budapest', she says. 'Although the voting for the 2012 Congress destination will not be held until the 2010 Congress in Sydney, we have been advised that the higher the profile we have in Budapest, the better will be our chances of a successful outcome in Australia.'

Geraldine adds that participation in a World Congress is a memorable experience. 'For those of you who have never attended a World Congress, you don't know what you're missing', she says. 'It is always a wonderful occasion and one for which the host country really puts on a spectacular programme of events and entertainment. And given the levels of sponsorship and subsidies that the Congress attracts, it makes for the best value break you will ever experience'

The Dublin delegation will be headed by President Kathryn Johnston. Attractive air fares are currently available with Aer Lingus.

Further details of the Congress are available at <http://www.skål.org/congresos/Budapest09/budapest09.asp?idoma=1>



Tony and Christine Bennett of Skål International Cambridge and East Anglia with President Kathryn.



Tony Bennett, National President Skål UK and K J Maurice Steer, President Skål Club Cambridge and East Anglia with President Kathryn Johnston at the Conrad Hotel.

### East Anglians Enliven Lunch

Skål International Dublin was delighted to welcome a group of Skålleagues from East Anglia at the September lunch in the Conrad Hotel.

All are members of the Skål Club of Cambridge and East Anglia and they made the journey to Dublin specifically to meet up with Dublin Skålleagues.

East Anglia is a traditional name for a region of eastern England named after one of the ancient Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, the Kingdom of the East Angles, It includes the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk with Cambridgeshire and Essex. Its many visitor attractions include the University City of Cambridge, the famous Norfolk Broads boating region and Colchester which is Britain's oldest city.

Cambridge and East Anglia Skål is a small but active club and the members who visited us in Dublin were certainly full of vitality and enthusiasm for Skål. They included club president Maurice Steer, Tony Bennett, who is currently UK National president, his wife Christine, Ron Avery, who has been club president on three occasions, Bill Irwin and his guest David Eatwell.

The group was given a 'Céad Mile Fáilte' to Dublin by our president Kathryn Johnston who presented each guest with a Skål tie or scarf while Maurice also made a presentation to Kathryn and extended an invitation to all to consider paying a return visit next year.

The lunch was another jolly affair as members left all thoughts of the recession at the door and instead enjoyed the splendid fare of the the Conrad Hotel, provided with customary flair by general manager Martin Mangan.

## Local 'Boy' makes good!

**Brian Spain**, a member of Ashbourne Golf Club led in his team at his home club to win the Skål Perpetual Trophy for 2009. Members were treated royally on the day, helped in no small way by the fact that our President Kathryn Johnston is currently Lady Captain of Ashbourne Golf Club. In welcoming everyone Kathryn particularly thanked our National President Geraldine Rosney who travelled from Killarney with husband Michael, to participate. A fine turnout of 32 golfers were joined later by some non-golfing Skål members for a wonderful meal and amicale!

Overall winner with the best team score of the day, 92 points, was the Xcelerate team of Joe Gavin, Frank Manning, Donal Byrne and Joe Fitzpatrick. In second place, just one point behind, was Brian Spain's team including Brian, Jim Fitzpatrick, Jamie Morton and Fintan Price.

Longest drive winners were Donal Byrne and Nancy Noone, and Nearest-the-Pin winners were Marc Thornton and Geraldine Rosney.



*Brian Spain holds aloft the Skål Perpetual Trophy which he won at the Annual Skål Dublin Golf Classic.*



*The Xcelerate team which won the team prize at the Skål Golf Classic pictured with President Kathryn Johnston.*



**Two Tony Kelly's:** President Kathryn Johnston with Tony Kelly (on left) and Tony Kelly (on right) Marketing Director of Irish Ferries who was our guest speaker at the Skål lunch in the National Yacht Club.

## FROM ZOO TO BBQ

'The Best Evening of the Summer' was how several Skålleagues described the Skål International Dublin Barbecue at the SAS Radisson Hotel, St. Helen's, Stillorgan on Bastille Day.

The July lunch planned for Dublin Zoo had to be cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances, and the hotel kindly stepped into the breach with an offer we just could not refuse.

Despite typical Irish Summer weather (showers and more showers), some 60 club members enjoyed the magnificent facilities of this splendid hotel in the former home of Lord Gough.

General manager Neil Lane welcomed us to the formal gardens, the panoramic terrace and the elegant Le Panto Restaurant where he provided a gastronomic hot and cold buffet which featured everything from lobster to Dublin Bay Prawns, organic poultry and fine Irish and Continental meat dishes, not to mention girth-enhancing desserts – all washed down of course with a selection of wines.

Vice President Douglas Jordan thanked Neil and his staff on behalf of the club and Skålleagues fortunate enough to be there have since been telling colleagues just what they missed.

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## Find a Member and Visit Sydney

**Skål International** is offering all Club members a chance to win free registration to the World Congress in Sydney in 2010.

All that is required is to introduce a new member to your Club by 15th. October 2009. The names of all nominees will be included in the prize draw which takes place during the President's Gala Dinner in Budapest on 4th. November. There is no limit to the number of times a Skålleague can enter the draw—each new member brings an automatic entry. Clubs which sign up the greatest numbers of new members will also be honoured with awards during the Congress.

Skål International is seeking to grow membership by 10% this year and has asked Dublin to recruit ten new members as part of this drive. Readers can view a graph of the current membership classifications of the Club at the following hyperlink – <http://www.skal.org/pdf/Dublin/.pdf>

## Have Your Say in Skål Survey

Members of SKÅL are invited by President Hulya Aslantas to give their opinions on key questions relating to the present position and image of Skål and its role in the world of hospitality. A survey open to all Skålleagues asks a series of important questions and the results obtained will be considered by a special Task Force which will update Skål's Mission and Vision Statements.

In a message to all members President Hulya asks:

**Where are we today? Do all of our members in 90 countries have the same objective and understanding of the Skål Movement? Do we have a common, clear vision and mission for all the members, or have we slightly lost our focus? Where should we be heading? Shall we stay and enjoy our friendship or can we, on our strong base of amicale, start assuming responsibilities for the healthy growth of our industry?**

During this year, I have discussed these issues with many members during Area Congresses, Club visits and also at the Mid-Year meeting and I was amazed to see how many members were interested to find the answers. At our Executive Committee meeting we decided to form a task force comprised of Thomas Vincent, ISC Canada, Mok Singh, ISC USA, Sylvia Liebisch ISC Austria, Andrew Wood, ISC Thailand, Bob McGill, ISC Australia, Nicholas Keglevich, SI Argentina, which will assist us in compiling the views of all members and in evaluating their answers so we may revise our mission and vision statements together and come up with a clear objective shared by the majority of the members and, on the basis of which we can move forward'.

To this end we have prepared a survey. We want to know how SKÅL is perceived TODAY and in the second part we ask questions so that we may understand where you would like to see Skål positioned.'

The survey can be completed in about ten minutes, on-line at:

<http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/?p=U2CWSHVBXKY>

## Tourism ideas for Government

A number of tourism proposals are among 17 ideas sent to the Government by the 'Ideas Group' set up by journalist Aileen O'Toole. They include the encouragement of schools to organise transition year trips at home rather than abroad, the development of an 'Ireland Brand' to attract international students and the promotion of Ireland as a 'green food island.'



President Kathryn Johnston with Frank Corr and Douglas Thornton at the Skål lunch in the Fitzwilliam Hotel.

## Free Listings for Skålleagues

Skålleague Stephanie Abrams, member of Skål International Boston, invites Skål members to post photos, at no charge, of their destinations, properties, tourism products and services and attractions in the Members Photos gallery of [www.Travelers411.com](http://www.Travelers411.com) Skålleagues are also invited to click on FORUMS on the navigation bar at [www.Travelers411.com](http://www.Travelers411.com) and [www.sAbrams.com](http://www.sAbrams.com) and post text to explain, feature, promote and start a dialogue with the community of users at the site which acts as the 'oasis' for fans of Abrams nationally syndicated U.S. radio shows Travel WITH Stephanie Abrams, Travelers411, and her TV show, JetSet411.

To post an unlimited number of photos, go to [www.travelers411.com](http://www.travelers411.com) click on Member Photos, create a User ID and Password of your choice and follow the directions prompting you through the process. An email address is provided for assistance. To start a 'thread' of dialogue, choose the country or niche market or start a new topic after you have given yourself a User ID and Password.

Abrams directs listeners to her broadcasts to the photo gallery and Forums give easy visual access to guest interviews. Abrams invites Skål members to contact her if they would like to participate in a telephone interview that can be arranged as part of a live broadcast or pre-recorded for later airing. She can be reached by email at [stephanie@sabrams.com](mailto:stephanie@sabrams.com).



Deputy President Douglas Jordan pictured with Fiona Teehan and Natasha Kinsella, who have recently joined the Dublin club.

# THE GOOD NEWS COLUMN

## More Fly Aer Lingus

Aer Lingus carried 1.08 million passengers in August, an increase of 7.7 per cent on the same month last year. The airline's load factor – the average number of seats filled on each aircraft – increased by 2.4 percentage points last month to 83 per cent during the same period.

## New Air Services Welcomes

Two new air services from Copenhagen and Oslo to Dublin Airport are bringing a welcome boost for inbound tourism to Ireland. The two new routes, launched by Scandinavia's second largest airline, Norwegian, will operate three services a week between the Scandinavian capitals and Dublin Airport. Norwegian carried more than 9.1 million passengers last year and operates 40 aircraft on 170 routes to 87 destinations.

## Jurys Inns Plans Expansion

The Jurys Inns Group has announced a €70m. fundraising and a major expansion plan for the UK and Europe.

Jurys Inns plans to open its first hotel on mainland Europe in Prague in September and has earmarked several sites in the UK, where it has already opened five new hotels this year, in Sheffield, Watford, Exeter, Swindon and Derby.

The group also plans to refurbish a number of its UK and Ireland hotels, spending up to €6m. on an upgrade programme. Two Dublin hotels, Christchurch and Custom House Quay, and its Manchester hotel will be the first to be refurbished.

## Cliffs are a 'Wonder'

The Cliffs of Moher in Co Clare have made it to the final stage of the 'New 7 Wonders of Nature' campaign.

The 700ft cliffs looking over the Atlantic are competing for one of the top places with 28 other finalists which include the Amazon rainforest, the Dead Sea, the Grand Canyon, the Matterhorn, the Maldives, Ayers Rock and Table Mountain.

## Keen Web Interest in Ireland

Tourism Ireland's suite of international websites experienced a record 5.9 million visits in the first half of 2009. New figures show that visits to the websites up to the end of June surpassed 5.9 million, a 21% increase in the organisation's web activity over the same period in 2008. In the month of June alone, there were over 1 million visits to the sites. This follows on from last year's record for [www.discoverireland.com](http://www.discoverireland.com), when the sites attracted 10.3 million visits, a 54% increase on 2007.

## Dublin is 'The Business'

Feedback from Fáilte Ireland's Business Tourism Initiative shows that 95% of potential buyers would recommend Dublin as a business tourism destination and 89% would propose Dublin's Doorstep region (Dublin, Kildare and Wicklow) to their clients.

# TOURISM NEWS

## People

- Niall Gibbons, newly appointed chief executive of Tourism Ireland has been the Director of Corporate Services and Company Secretary of Tourism Ireland since 2002. Niall played a key role in the formation of Tourism Ireland and its subsequent development over the past seven years. Prior to his appointment to Tourism Ireland, he held senior roles in the private and public sector. He is a business graduate of Trinity College, Dublin and a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland.
- John Caffrey has been appointed general manager at the newly reopened Tulfarris Hotel and Golf Resort, Blessington Co. Wicklow. John joins the team from the Castleknock Hotel and Country Club where he also held the position of general manager. A graduate of Newcastle College, Newcastle Upon Tyne, John has worked for Holiday Inn, Wellesley Inn and the Tower Hotel Group.



Presidents Kathryn Johnston and Geraldine Rosney at the Skål Dublin Golf Classic.



Pictured on left: Deputy President Douglas Jordan and Neil Lane, general manager of the Radisson St. Helen's Hotel pictured at the Skål Dublin Summer Barbecue; and on right: Michael McCarthy with Natasha Kinsella at the Conrad.



*"To fellow Skålleagues everywhere Happiness,  
Good Health, Long Life, Friendship"*



*The Class of 1969 ... graduates of DIT meet after 40 years for a re-union and golf day. Pictured from left are John Carey (Senior Lecturer, Athlone IT), Denis Kane (Druids Glen Golf Club), Michael Mulvey (Principal of DIT Cathal Brugha Street), Barry Wise (Harrys Cafe, Dawson Street) and Aiden Hughes (24Sevenbackup).*



*Aidan Doyle, Micheline Corr, Kieran Moore and Natasha Kinsella ,putting on the Ritz' at the Skål Barbecue in the Radisson St. Helen's Hotel.*