



SKÅL NEWS



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

December 2009

'GREEN ARMY' IN BUDAPEST



The Green Army at the Skål World Congress in Budapest

Twelve members of Skål International Dublin were part of a 'Green Army' of Irish Skålleagues who made a major impact at the World Congress in Budapest during the first week of November.

They joined a delegation of more than 40 from Ireland who were kitted out in bright green rugby shirts with 'lucky leprechauns' on their sleeves.

The large, visible and 'musical' presence was all part of a bid by Kerry to attract the Skål International World Congress to Killarney in 2012. National President Geraldine Rosney made a presentation at the Congress supported by former World President Mary Bennett and Dublin Skålleagues helped distribute literature and gifts to all delegates during the Plenary Session.

The key vote on Ireland's bid will take place during the World Congress in Sydney, Australia next October and every effort will be made to enlist a large and effective 'Green Army' for this Congress. The 2011 Congress will take place in Turku Finland which was a surprise winner in its bid against Dubai.

When the Budapest Congress concluded the only bid for 2012 was from Kerry but other cities have until January next to submit formal bids. It is believed that Seoul in South Korea is planning a bid and Dubai may also come back into the running. As a result a continuous and effective campaign will be needed if Kerry is to win the 2012 World Congress which is likely to attract at least 1,000 delegates to 'The Kingdom', many of whom will also take pre and post Congress tours.

Despite the economic downturn more than 1,000 Skålleagues attended the Budapest Congress which was organised by our twin club, Skål International Budapest. Club president George Paldi played a leading role in the organisation of the week-long congress which received high praise from participants for its professionalism, efficiency and creativity.

From the opening reception in the massive Old Market to the Farewell Dinner in Lazar Equestrian Park, the Congress provided an opportunity for Skålleagues from all over the world to network. The programme provided many opportunities to explore the historic city of Budapest and to sample its culture and heritage. Skålleagues had a panoramic view of the many elegant floodlit palaces and civic buildings during an evening dinner cruise on the Danube and we travelled in a 100 year old train to the Railway History Park for the Gala Dinner.

For Dublin Skålleagues it was an opportunity to renew friendships with members of our twin club of Skål International Budapest and for President Kathryn Johnston to make a special presentation to George Paldi.

We also provided several prominent members of the Irish Skål Choir which delivered enthusiastic renditions of 'Molly Malone', 'The Wild Rover' and 'The Fields of Athenry' during the Farewell Dinner. Auditions for the Sydney choir will be held shortly.

Joe Meets President Obama

Joe Collins our Hon. Treasurer and his wife Patricia were photographed with the U.S. President Barack Obama at Caesar's Palace, Las Vegas in May. Joe and his wife Patricia, were guests of their daughter Therese and her husband Byron Georgiou who is active with the Democratic Party in Nevada.

The occasion was a fundraiser on behalf of U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid as he kicked off his 2010 re-election campaign.

It was the first fundraiser at which the president was present since taking office in January. In excess of \$2,000,000 was pledged on the night, a record for the state of Nevada at a political fundraiser.

In the U.S. Senate in Washington D.C. there are 100 Senators, two from each state and on election they serve a six year term on completion of which they must stand for re-election. Even though Senator Reid, as Majority Leader, is the most powerful member of the Senate, he must raise up to \$20,000,000 to fund his re-election campaign.

The House of Representatives in Washington D.C. has 435 elected members (known as Congressmen/Women) representing all 50 states. Each serves a two-year term after which they must again stand for election. As in the case of Senators, there is no limit to the number of terms they may serve, provided they are re-elected. The number per state is based on population with a minimum of one per state. California with 53 has the largest number while sparsely populated states such as Alaska, Delaware, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming and Vermont each have one.

Joe had a four minute conversation with the President during which they discussed his Irish roots and the possibility of visit by the President to Ireland and particularly to Moneygall at some future date.



Democrat Senator Harry Reid from Nevada, Senate Majority Leader, Patricia Collins, U.S. President Barack Obama, and Joe Collins pictured at the US Senate Fund Raiser.

Skål Grows

During the Gala Dinner held during the 70th Skål World Congress, 103 Clubs were presented with certificates for increases in their membership of at least 10% in the period from October 2008 to September 2009. The top three Clubs with the highest net growth were Bali (58 new members), Singapore (38) and Rio de Janeiro (28).

Nik Heads Skål International

Nik Racic from Croatia was elected World President of Skål International at the Budapest Congress. He heads a new Executive committee which includes, Tony Boyle (Australia) Vice President, responsible for Development, Enrique Quesada (Mexico) Vice President, responsible for Finance, Lone Ricks (Denmark), Director - Special Projects, Karine Coulanges (France) Director - Communications and Public Relations, Mok Singh (U.S.A.) Director- Statutes with responsibility for the repositioning of Skål International, Marianne Krohn (Germany) Director - Business Affairs, Bent Hadler (Denmark) President of the International Skål Council and Jim Power (Ireland)- Secretary General



During the Gala Dinner, President-elect, Nik Racic promised to work for all members in order to make Skål even more professional and to become the most important and significant international business and friendship club in the tourism industry.

Cork Beckons

Skålleagues will be gathering in Cork on 27th and 28th March for the 2010 National Convention. A new format has been introduced which enables Skålleagues to attend on one or two days. The two-day programme which costs €189 pps includes two nights bed and breakfast at the Rochestown Park four star hotel, a 'Taste of Cork' tour, Gala Dinner and an additional optional golf trip. The One Day programme costing €145 pps offers the same programme with one night bed and breakfast. There is a single supplement of €25 per night and delegates can stay an extra night in their hotel for €40 pps.

Booking forms and further information are available from Nora Cronin, president Skål International Cork at: Tel: 021 - 430 9090 or cork@cronincoaches.com.

PRESIDENT REMEMBERS IRELAND

Outgoing President of Skål International Hulya Aslantas recalled her visit to the Skål Ireland Congress at Shannon during her address to the Budapest Congress. She complemented Irish Skålleagues for their continuing good work and thanked her hosts Shannon Skål Club and Ian Dodson for their hospitality. A report on her visit to Ireland and other travels around the world are included in a book which has been published by Skål International.



Pictured opposite: Edward Stephenson, general manager Croke Park Hotel, Linda McCoy and Angela Canny, GAA and Chris Kane at the recent Skål lunch in the Hotel.

CELEBRATING 'ARTHUR'S DAY'



Aidan O'Hanlon (who was returning to his 'alma mater'), at the Guinness Storehouse with Aidan Doyle, Linda McFadden of The Firm, Chris Kane and Sam Wilson.

It may not have been his actual birthday, but Dublin Skålleagues nevertheless raised a glass of the black stuff to the one and only Arthur Guinness when they gathered at the famous Storehouse for the November lunch.

'Team Budapest' made a remarkable recovery, having arrived back in Dublin only 48 hours previously and were ready to join their colleagues and guests in some serious networking over a splendid lunch.

President Kathryn Johnston was delighted to welcome Anna Maria Lorang from the Skål Club of Philadelphia, who was visiting Ireland with her husband.

During the lunch President Kathryn also welcomed new members John Carty of DIT Cathal Brugha Street and Michelle Conaghan of Net Affinity.

A special thanks was extended to Paul Carty general manager of the Guinness Storehouse and event manager Helen McManus who looked after us splendidly on the day.

Following the lunch Skålleagues repaired to the Gravity Bar and as a tribute to Uncle Arthur were still 'in situ' there at 17.59.

Awards for Top Hospitality Managers

Five leading hospitality industry managers were honoured by their peers at the IHI Founders Banquet.

Charlie Sheil, general manager of the Clarion Hotel Cork was named 'Hospitality Manager of the Year - Hotels', Joe Kenny of Aramark is 'Hospitality Manager of the Year - Catering' and Maeve Kelleher of the Clarion Hotel Cork is 'Hospitality Manager of the Year - Human Resources.' The inaugural award of 'Hospitality Manager of the Year - Environmental' went to Dympna McGlinchy of The Westin, Dublin and the 'Young Hospitality Manager of the Year' is Aidan Ryan of the Royal Marine Hotel, Dun Laoghaire. Niall Fitzmaurice of DIT was named 'Hospitality Graduate of the Year.'



Charlie Sheil, winner of the Hospitality Hotel Manager of the Year award with Linda McFadden of The Firm at the IHI Founder's Dinner.

Skål History

A book recounting the history of Skål International was launched during the 75th. Anniversary celebrations in Paris. Author and Honorary President Antonio García del Valle, provided numerous historical records going back to the foundation of Skål in 1932, two years before it became an international association.

The book was sponsored by the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Turkey. The Skål Story is now available for sale from the General Secretariat at €25 plus postage and packing. Twenty per cent of the sale price will go to the Florimond Volckaert Fund. Please send us an e-mail if you are interested to skål@skål.org

TIME TO PAY

Members should note that our Honorary Treasurer Joe Collins has now prepared invoices for membership fees for the coming year and these will be posted in the near future. Because of a change in Skål operations payment of fees must be made to the head office in Torremolinos earlier than in the past and members are therefore requested to return their cheques on receipt of the invoice.

CHRISTMAS LUNCH AND RAFFLE

As this issue of 'Skål News' goes to press we are counting down the days to our annual Christmas Lunch at Fitzpatrick's Killiney Castle Hotel. Once again we thank Eithne Scott-Lennon and general manager Nicky Logue for hosting this highly popular Skål event. We will be holding the usual raffle in aid of the St. Vincent de Paul Society during the lunch and we thank those who donated prizes. Angela Dillon says that she is very heartened by the generous response to her request for raffle prizes, given the current economic environment. We will acknowledge all prize donors in the next issue of 'Skål News.' Please support this good cause with your customary generosity.

DENIS IS TOP GOLF MANAGER

Denis Kane was named 'Golf Manager of 2009' at the annual Irish Golf Awards.

Denis, who is general manager of Druids Glen, has been a strong supporter of Skål over many years.

The 'Large Golf Hotel' award went to Randles Hotels Killarney and the 'Small Golf Hotel' award was won by The Ice House Ballina, Co. Mayo. The Old Head of Kinsale was named 'Golf Course of the Year' and Adare Manor won the 'Golf Resort of the Year' title.

The event is run each year by the Ireland Golf Tour Operator's Association (IGTOA) and a host venue, which this year was Carton House. The IGTOA has over 15 Irish based golf tour operator members and over 250 IGTOA Industry Partners.

'Irish Celebrate in Style at



Sam Wilson, Douglas Jordan and Dermot Cronin in 'uniform' at the World Congress.



Presidents Geraldine Rosney and Kathryn Johnston at the Gala Banquet in Budapest.



Mike and Kathryn Johnston, Douglas Jordan, Marlene Sullivan, Aidan Doyle and Dermot Cronin in Budapest.



Una Wilson with former Skål World President Mary Bennett.

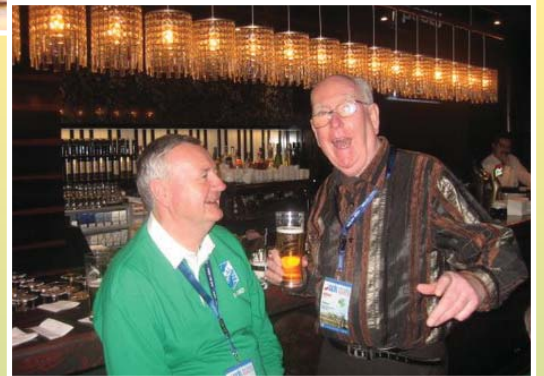
Budapest World Congress'



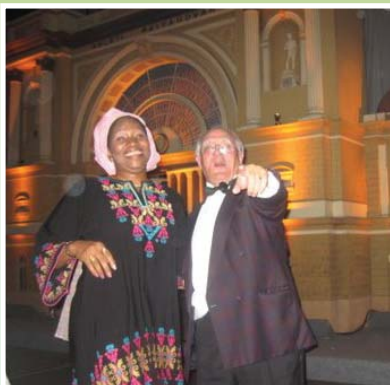
Irish and South African Skålleagues take time out to discuss rugby in Budapest.



Kathryn Johnston, president of Skål International Dublin makes a presentation on behalf of members to George Paldi, president of our twin club, Skål International Budapest.



Douglas Jordan and Aidan Doyle enjoy a pint in Budapest.



'Ireland is that way'.... Frank Corr gives directions to a friend.



Dermot and Bernadette Quinn with Mary Bennett, former World President of Skål International.



Geraldine Rosney, national president, Skål International with Conor Hennigan, president, Skål International Kerry, Kathryn Johnston, president, Skål International Dublin and Aidan Doyle at the Kerry Skål Dinner in Killeen House Hotel, Killarney.

Celebrating with 'The Kingdom'

A group from Skål International Dublin joined their colleagues from Kerry at a dinner in Killeen House Hotel hosted by national president Geraldine Rosney. On arrival at Killarney station the group were welcomed with Champagne and canapés in the Malton Hotel by general manager Conor Hennigan before proceeding to Killeen House.

It was not all relaxation, however, for the Dublin Brigade were put to work by President Geraldine who had them serve the starter to the other guests. Members of the Kerry club reciprocated by serving the dessert.

President Kathryn Johnston thanked the Kerry Club for their hospitality and said that we look forward to them paying a visit to Dublin.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Following a request from national membership development officer Angela Dillon, members of Skål International in Ireland received a personal letter from the secretary general Jim Power, inviting them to recruit at least one new member during the current year. 'We have had an excellent response to this initiative', says Angela. 'Members of the Dublin Club and Skålleagues from all over the country are working very hard to identify and contact potential new members. I have sent each Club Secretary a list of the categories which qualify somebody for Skål membership and this is proving to be very useful in identifying potential members. Our Dublin club has welcomed 14 new members in 2009 which is a remarkable achievement – and there are four applications being processed at the moment', she said.



New members of Skål International Dublin - John Ronayne, Marlene Sullivan, Brenda Daly and Jim Flannery.

Welcome to New Members

A big Skål welcome to the following who became members of Skål International Dublin in 2009

Geraldine Aherne, Malev Hungarian Airlines.

John Carty, Tourism Research Centre, D.I.T.

Michelle Conaghan, Business Development Manager, Net Affinity

Alex Connolly, Head of Communications, Fáilte Ireland

Brenda Daly, Marketing Manager, Dublin Port

Edward Finn, Product Development Manager, Abbey Travel

Jim Flannery, U.N.W.T.O.

Natasha Kinsella, Chief Executive, I.H.I.

Fergal O'Connell, General Manager, Fitzwilliam Hotel

John Ronayne, Ronayne Tourism Consultancy

Edward Stephenson, General Manager, Jury's Croke Park Hotel

Marlene Sullivan, Tour Director/Manager

Fiona Teehan, General Manager, Pembroke Townhouse

Peter Wilson, General Manager, Whites of Wexford

Pat Delaney, Ovation Global DMC

Paul Gallagher, General Manager, Buswells Hotel.

The Skål Toast

We join in the Skål Toast almost every time we meet - but do you know what SKÅL means?

The word 'Skål' has its origin in Scandinavia and was used to greet strangers as they entered a house, when they would be presented with a bowl containing a welcoming drink.

'S' is for 'Sundheit' (meaning 'Good Health')

'K' is for 'Kariék' (meaning 'Friendship')

'A' is for 'Aruger' (meaning 'Long Life')

'L' is for 'Lycka' (meaning 'Happiness').

John Honoured for Lifetime Achievement

John D. Toner FIHI from Slieve Donard Resort & Spa, was the recipient of the highest honour bestowed by the Irish Hospitality Institute when he was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award at the IHI Founders Banquet by president Shane Cookman.

John became the Director and General Manager of the Europa Hotel just after a bomb attack in 1993, which caused major destruction to Glengall Street. Within three years, President Clinton's entourage booked 110 rooms, in November 1995 after major redevelopment. He has worked with Hastings Hotels for 37 years and is currently director and general manager of the Slieve Donard Hotel, Newcastle, Co. Down. John (61) is a former president of IHI. He is married to Cathy and they have five grown up children.

Six members of IHI were inducted into the College of Fellows during the banquet. They are Dr. Seán Duffy FIHI, Head of School of Tourism, Letterkenny Institute of Technology, Therese Sadlier FIHI, Catering Manager, AIB Bank Centre, Michael Brennan FIHI, General Manager Europa Hotel Killarney Deirdre McGlone FIHI, General Manager Harveys Point Country Hotel, Matthias Muller FIHI, General Manager Abbey Court Hotel and Adriaan Bartels FIHI, General Manager, Cliff House Hotel.

Paul to head IHF

Skålleague Paul Gallagher, general manager of Buswell's Hotel, Dublin, has been named as President-elect of the Irish Hotels Federation and is likely to succeed current president Matthew Ryan at the forthcoming agm.

Shane Calls for Skillnet Funding

Skålleague Shane Cookman, who is the current President of the Irish Hospitality Institute said that most Irish hospitality businesses have reacted to the current economic crisis with creativity and innovation. Speaking at the IHI Founder's Banquet, he said: 'Such businesses do however require support and assistance from Government and it is vital at this time that the cause of tourism and the wider hospitality industry is articulated strongly at the Cabinet Table'. He said that a combination of a decline in visitor numbers, the contraction of discretionary spending among Irish consumers, credit and financing difficulties and economic upheavals in many of key tourism markets have created the 'perfect storm' in which the Irish hospitality industry now battles for survival. 'Inevitably it has resulted in casualties, in failed businesses, in job losses and in severe cash flow problems. Despite all of these adverse trends, however, our industry has survived, with thousands of businesses responding creatively to the many challenges, which they face. They have managed to retain their markets, their customers and most of their staff and are operating more efficient operations, which are well placed to thrive once the economy and tourism begin to recover', he said.



Denis O'Reilly, Wild Wicklow Tours, Bill Morrison and Jim Deegan, Raitours Ireland at a recent Skål lunch.

A YEAR TO REMEMBER

Skål International Dublin has enjoyed a highly successful year with large attendances at all of our events. We would particularly like to thank our hosts during 2009 who were The Fitzwilliam Hotel, The Shelbourne Hotel, The Abbey Tavern, Howth, The Dylan Hotel, the National Yacht Club, the SAS Radisson St. Helen's Hotel which was the venue for our Summer barbecue, Ashbourne Golf Club which hosted our Golf Day, the Conrad Hotel, the Croke Park Hotel the Guinness Storehouse and Fitzpatrick's Killiney Castle Hotel.

Fitzwilliam starts 2010

Skålleagues can get 2010 off to a great start by attending the Skål Dublin lunch in the Fitzwilliam Hotel, St. Stephen's Green on Tuesday 9th February. Please put the date in your new diary.



President Kathryn Johnston and Anna Maria Lorang from Skål International Philadelphia exchange pennants at the Skål lunch in the Guinness Storehouse.

The Good News Column...

Leisure Park to Employ 1,200

Up to six million visitors a year are expected to visit a €430 million tourism and leisure park that includes a year-round skiing facility and concert arena being proposed for Dundalk.

The project, the first of its kind in Ireland, is being proposed for a site adjacent to the Dublin-Belfast motorway by Innovative Leisure Systems Ltd, who say it will create more than 1,200 full-time jobs.

Looking around the Corner

Fáilte Ireland CEO, Shaun Quinn, stressed that as Ireland grapples with the enormity of the current economic climate and plots its way to becoming a smarter economy, it is imperative that it does not neglect sectors such as tourism which have delivered time and time again.

Mr Quinn was speaking at Fáilte Ireland's National Tourism Conference which was held at the Royal Hospital in Kilmainham. He pointed out that there may be some reasons to be optimistic, saying:

'Thankfully, the news from the tourism marketplace is now slightly more positive than a few months ago. So far this year, Fáilte Ireland has hosted over 500 international trade buyers from 23 countries to tie down business with Irish tourism operators for next year and beyond.

From these meetings we can detect that interest in Ireland is as strong as ever, our competitive position is improving and there are definitely signs of those elusive green shoots, particularly in North America. This is welcome news for the 18,000 tourism businesses across Ireland and the 200,000 plus people they collectively employ.'

Damian for World Sommelier Test

Chile is the destination for Damian Corr, manager of the Cellar Restaurant and Bar in the Merrion Hotel.

Damian took part in the National Sommelier competition, organised by the Irish Guild of Sommeliers to select the Irish candidate at the World Sommelier Competition in Chile in 2010. Six sommeliers competed in a day long event which took place at the Four Seasons Hotel.



Michelle Conaghan of Net Affinity and John Carty of DIT receive their membership certificates from President Kathryn Johnson at the Skál lunch in the Guinness Storehouse.

Major Leisure Centre for Tipperary

Planning permission is being sought for a €460 million cultural, sporting and leisure development featuring a casino and new all-weather racecourse on an 800 acres site at Two Mile Borris, Co. Tipperary.

The development, called the Tipperary Venue is proposed by Thurles-born Richard Quirke, who has been involved in the Carlton Cinema site on O'Connell Street Dublin. He is also a major shareholder in Dublin Pool and Juke Box Co, which runs the 'Dr Quirkey's Good Time Emporium' arcade on O'Connell Street.

The developer estimates that 1,000 jobs would be created in building the facility, which would eventually create 2,000 full-time jobs. The project would however depend on legislation being passed to legalise casinos.

Dublin architect Brian O'Connell, who designed the Tipperary Venue, said it would include a 500-bedroom, five-star hotel; a 6,000sq m casino; an all-weather racecourse; a greyhound track and a golf course.

It would also include an underground entertainment centre with a retractable roof capable of holding 15,000 people which would be 'the rural equivalent of Dublin's 02 complex'.

Viking Wall Display

An underground section of Dublin's 900-year-old Hiberno Viking city wall has been put on public display for the first time at the Civic Offices at Wood Quay.

The wall was discovered during excavations of the site in the late 1970s and early 1980s in preparation for the construction of the new Dublin Corporation, now Dublin City Council, buildings.

The wall was at the time earmarked for demolition and storage off site, but in the end it was left in situ in the building's basement in an area used until recently for motorbike and bicycle storage.

Measuring just under 20 metres in length and 4.3 metres in height, the section of wall is now visible through a glass viewing platform, with each stone bearing the identifying number painted on when it had been due for demolition.

The wall is part of the new Wood Quay Venue at the civic offices which houses a conference and events space and a new permanent exhibition on the development of the city.

The My City exhibition, which opened last week, allows the public to view plans for the city through videos and interactive touch-screen maps. They can also record their ideas for the city or their views on plans via a web cam.



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