



Conway Mill Trust

Formerly "Doors of Hope"

P.O. Box 101529
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

October 2010

"Unjustified and Unjustifiable"

British Government Exonerates Bloody Sunday Victims



Jean Hegarty ripping apart a copy of the Widery report

Jean Hegarty, Administrator of the Museum of Free Derry and sister of one of the victims, Kevin McElhinney, shares her thoughts about the long-awaited release of the Saville Inquiry into the Bloody Sunday murders. Jeans' letter is on page 4.

More information on Bloody Sunday and the Museum of Free Derry can be found on page 6.

Altram Still Needs Our Help!

As we reported in the June newsletter, Altram, the community-based regional support organization for the Irish-language early years naiscoils [preschools] in Northern Ireland is struggling to keep its training centre doors open. Conway Mill Trust and several generous individual Conway Mill Trust donors made it possible for the training centre to remain open in July and August by sending two grants totaling \$1,466 USD to Altram. At the same time Project Manager Danny Cassidy and Altram's Planning Board have been looking at alternatives for funding its rental gap. We also informed you in June that we would keep you abreast of Altram's

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Tribute to Maggie and Bill Denney

We regret to announce the resignation of Maggie and Bill Denney from the Board of Trustees of Conway Mill Trust. Due to personal and professional responsibilities, Bill and Maggie resigned effective July 2010.

Maggie's initiative and leadership resulted in the successful transition of activities from "Doors of Hope" to Conway Mill Trust with the approval of Elizabeth Logue in September 2005. Maggie served as President of the trust for four years, and Bill served more recently as a Trustee and Newsletter Editor. Maggie recruited trustees, extended fundraising efforts and developed the organizational structure we presently follow to successfully support the needs of community groups in Northern Ireland.

We wish to extend our heartfelt thanks to Maggie and Bill for their years of service.

“A Symbol of a New Start for Enterprise in West Belfast”



Construction is scheduled to be completed by October 1.

October promises to be a historic and exciting month in Belfast. Thanks to the tenacity and hard work of countless people in the community, the refurbishment of the Conway Mill is scheduled to be completed by October 1 of this year. The formal dedication is scheduled to take place sometime in 2011.

The following is a message from Father Des Wilson to CMT Trustee, Jean Kaniecki:

Dear Jean,

Great to hear from you. As usual we are having winter one day, summer the next. Pity the coolness is not an exportable product. But they say it will be fine in October!

The builders and all concerned now say the finishing date of refurbishment of the Mill is September 29th. So we are happy about that and the building looks good. The artists are now in the throes of moving and that does not make for calm artistic contemplation of the world but they are bearing up well.

The new accommodation is very good and those who worked in the Mill in the days of anxiety and want are happy at the change. The radio studio - Radio Failte - is showing signs of strain but for the wonderful reason that it is getting more responses to broadcasts than it can handle without overtime!

Now the time has come for advertising the extra space available for new business. At present the economic situation is not as encouraging as it should be - the economy of N. Ireland has been reliant on public service work more than creative employment and that has to change and meanwhile reducing public service employment is high in government policies. But in the long run this is best and now the Mill is as it should be, a symbol of a new start for enterprise in West Belfast and therefore in Belfast as a whole.

We presented the Tom Cox Award in the theatre of the Education Floor in the Mill during the West Belfast Festival. The presentation this year was to Clara Reilly who has been one of the leaders in the protection of people's rights during the past forty years. The education and health programs for next term in the Mill are ready, so we have a lot of optimism.

Thank you for all your help. Looking forward to seeing you in October.

Des

Altram, from page 1

funding situation. Sandy Haas, Conway Mill Trust Secretary, received the following email from Danny Cassidy September 1:

Sandy a chara,

Sorry for not getting back to you sooner but I have been looking at all possibilities in relation to our present situation. As it currently stands we are in the same position regarding our training unit. In my last email I explained that we were looking at the possibility of re-locating our office into the training unit, however, to enable us to carry this out would mean that we would have to build a small office into the training unit to ensure that trainees would not be disturbed by phone calls etc. When we inquired about the cost of carrying out the work we were quoted in the region of £2,500 which at the present time is not affordable considering our current financial situation. However, I am deeply aware of the enormous pressure we have placed upon your organisation. We are extremely grateful for all the support you have given us and I don't want to keep imposing upon your generosity. I have requested that our landlord allow us a months' grace on our rent and I am hopeful that this will be agreed by the Board of Creggan Enterprises Ltd. At the very least this will give us another month to try and come up with something and more importantly it will also mean that we won't have to rely upon your generosity for yet another month.

I am sorry that I don't have anything more positive to report but I will keep you informed of any developments as they arise and once again many thanks for your kind support.

Is mise

Danny

Danny's email says it all!

Please partner with Conway Mill Trust and send a tax-deductible contribution, marked "for Altram" on your check or money order, today to Conway Mill Trust Inc., PO Box 101529, Pittsburgh, PA 15237-8529.

Or go to www.conwaymilltrust.org and click the DONATE button to donate securely online through PayPal. Altram desperately needs our help!

Thanks to Adams County Irish Festival!



Shari Krepps, Festival Operations Mgr., and CMT Board members Ed McManus, Jean Kaniecki, and Bob Kaniecki

Conway Mill Trust is happy to announce that we are one of two non-profit organizations named as benefactors of the Adams County Irish Festival in Gettysburg, PA.

On behalf of the Conway Mill Trust, we would like to thank the festival organizers for their support.

“Unjustified and Unjustifiable”, *continued from page 1*

By Jean Hegarty

Years of campaigning, even for me who came to the campaign late. Years of sitting through the inquiry trying to take it all in. At the close of the inquiry the anxiety as to what they would find!

The delay, the further delays...Then a date, finally something you could mark up on a calendar and count down to.

A date, *the date*, Tue 15th June 2010.

Who would see it, would we get a pre-read and will there be time to digest it; questions, questions, so many questions.

Two from each family were going to be permitted to pre-read the report under lock-in conditions. We had a draw within the family to decide which two from the four of us (our father was in hospital and would not be able to attend) What if I didn't get to do the pre-read? Thankfully, my brother and I were selected.

The morning of the report...what to think, what to expect, what if, oh no that couldn't happen, could it? All of this to and fro went on in my mind from about 5:30am until I sat down in the Guildhall and opened the report.

Relief, yes, relief when we read the words Kevin was innocent. Not a perfect result, maybe soldier L or maybe soldier M says the report. Not clearly stating Kevin was not carrying a rifle but definitely stating he was crawling away, posing no threat.

Sitting there comparing notes and watching faces become smiling faces was a moment to treasure. Watching a big screen TV and seeing a British Prime Minister stand up in Parliament and use the words “unjustified” and “unjustifiable”, the elation, the joy. I had never expected such a gracious apology. To walk outside to see the Guildhall square jam packed with people, Derry people, indeed the world via media coverage, there to support us was truly mind blowing. Listening to family member by family member read something personal along with a quote from the report about their innocent loved one was wonderful, and when the opportunity presented itself to publicly rip up an original copy of the Widgery Report (aided and abetted by John) I couldn't resist the urge.

And now we await decisions from the PPS (Public Prosecutions Service in NI) and CPP (Crown Prosecution Service in England) as to whether there will be prosecutions or not. The three demands of the campaign were Declaration of Innocence, the repudiation of Widgery and Prosecutions.

In calling for a new Inquiry in 1998 Tony Blair repudiated Widgery.

In delivering his report Lord Saville has delivered a declaration of Innocence.

Will the judicial system deliver?

Education Grants to be Awarded Soon

The Conway Mill Trust will again offer Mary Mannion Merit Grants to GCSE students at the Conway Mill Education Centre in Belfast for the 2010-2011 school year.

This program helps secondary students procure what is equivalent to our GED, in order to continue their education or better prepare for entrance into the work world.

Pauline Kersten, the manager of the center, together with her committee, will choose the recipients, based on knowledge of the students, information on their application forms, and their rate of attendance.

These grants are possible due to the generosity of our readers' individual donations. Last year five educational grants were awarded. We hope to match or exceed that number this year.

Since these grants will not be distributed until October, there is still time to make your tax-deductible donation to this very worthy cause. Be sure to indicate the Mary Mannion Merit Grant on your check memo. Or go to www.conwaymilltrust.org and click the DONATE button to donate securely online through PayPal.

When the West Belfast community was given access to the vacant Conway Mill in 1982, Fr. Des Wilson and a group of community leaders immediately decided that one floor should be devoted to education.

Since then the Education Centre has evolved to offer a host of adult and youth educational, training and cultural opportunities.

Peace Brings Tourism to the North

Belfast's Black Taxi Tours Lead the Way

In the twelve years since the Good Friday Agreement, tourists have been coming in greater numbers to Belfast. They come to see the beautiful city, its murals and political districts, the Titanic Shipyards, its universities and traditional pubs plus much more. According to an article published in the August 18-24, 2010 Irish Echo, Northern Ireland's tourist trade is worth around £529 million a year and underpins as many as 40,000 jobs. The Northern Ireland Tourist Board predicts tourism in Northern Ireland will reach the £1 billion mark by 2020.

A unique way to see Belfast's many attractions is in a world-famous Belfast Black Taxi. A Belfast Black Taxi Tour promises to be fun, friendly, educational, and even a bit unpredictable! It has been said that a city is defined by its taxi drivers. Nowhere is that more true than Belfast. Each of the Black Taxi Tour guides[drivers] are a great source of local stories, legends and happenings and are equally knowledgeable of the city's history, the shipyards, the universities and of course the pubs. Their wit and humor make for an extraordinary experience. As one tourist remarked in her review on the Taxi Tour's website, "What a city! Our guide should be a standup comedian!"

Belfast Black Taxi Tours got its start as a shared taxi service in West Belfast, evolving in the early 1970's during periods of civil unrest in the city that caused the public bus service to operate in an unsatisfactory

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Peace brings tourism, cont.

manner. As a result, some residents of the area used their own cars to take neighbors to work, and a jitney service developed. The service became formalized as a workers' cooperative under the name "People's Taxis." The first association was founded in 1971 when owners/drivers formed the Falls Taxi Association which eventually became the West Belfast Tax Association. The service was and still is based on the use of second-hand London cabs and thus its name "Black Taxis."

In 1982 the association moved to Conway Mill, giving it a long-awaited opportunity to open a spare parts department. After careful research and long investigation, West Belfast Motor Factors opened in December 1987. The association has since relocated, but the taxi repair business Conway & Erne remains a private tenant of the Conway Mill.

Jim Neeson, Conway Mill's Management Committee Chair, managed the Black Taxis for over 25 years. The black taxis and Belfast Black Taxi Tours are a cross-community endeavor catering for both the Shankill and Falls Road communities. Check out the Official Black Taxi Tours of Belfast at www.belfasttours.com. And be sure to make Conway Mill one of your stops.

Electronic Version of Newsletter Available

Would you like to receive Conway Mill Trust newsletter electronically? Let us know your email address and you'll receive the newsletter faster, complete with color photos, without the expense of print. Please send us an email to:

editorconwaymilltrustinc@comcast.net

The Museum of Free Derry

On January 30, 1972, 13 people were murdered in Derry, Northern Ireland when British soldiers opened fire on a civil rights march against internment without trial. The day became known as "Bloody Sunday."

In response to the shootings, the British government launched the Widgery Tribunal, lead by the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Widgery. The Tribunal published its report in less than three months. The report was widely regarded as a whitewash. In 1998, a new investigation was launched, the Saville Inquiry. Saville became the longest running inquiry in British history. Finally, on June 15, 2010 the report was published. It confirmed what eyewitnesses and the families of the deceased had long known – the victims were innocent. British Prime Minister David Cameron said he was "deeply sorry" and that the shootings were "unjustified and unjustifiable." The families of the killed and injured waited decades to hear these words. They led a long, frustrating and ultimately successful campaign to clear the names of their loved ones.

The Museum of Free Derry is dedicated to preserving the history of Bloody Sunday and the civil rights movement of the 1960's and 70's. It houses a permanent multi-media exhibit and over 20,000 artifacts, mostly donated by local residents.

Please partner with Conway Mill Trust and send a tax-deductible contribution, marked "Museum of Free Derry" on your check or money order payable to Conway Mill Trust Inc., PO Box 101529, Pittsburgh, PA 15237-8529. Or go to www.conwaymilltrust.org and click the DONATE button to donate securely online through PayPal.