

Consulate General of Ireland

Newsletter for the U.S. Southeast

July 2018

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Hosted by the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce, Consul General Shane Stephens speaking with business and academic figures about intensifying connections between Ireland and North Florida.

Message from the Consul General

A chairde,

This week I had wonderful visit to Jacksonville, Florida's largest city. I learned about the role generations of Irish people have played in building up this city and North Florida, in schools, hospitals and Churches, and I got to visit Irish businesses and people who are now making a vital contribution locally.

Today, Irish firms with operations in Jacksonville include convenience foods producer Greencore, automation solutions engineers Modular Automation and building material firm Oldcastle - all leaders in their fields who provide employment and enrich the area's commercial ecosystem. Irish-born entrepreneurs have also established great businesses of all types in the city, ranging from global firm APR Energy to Culhane's Irish Pub and the Mezza Restaurant.

I met many Irish Americans who are deeply proud of their bond with Ireland and provide exceptional service to their communities in business and civic life, academia and the media. I was also fascinated to hear about the cutting edge research partnership between Johnson & Johnson Vision Care in Jackson, Science Foundation Ireland and the University of Limerick.

I look forward to supporting the development of this important relationship.

Best wishes for a lovely summer. I hope you have time for a break. Our next newsletter will issue at the start of September.

Shane Stephens June 29, 2018

Business, culture and education engagement around the Southeast





Jacksonville, Florida

Left: Thank you to Greencore GM Nick Sillitto for the tour and briefing new investment and plans for expansion

Below: At Modular Automation's U.S. HQ with key members of its engineering team - Trevor Donnellan, Martin Zborovjan & Beata Zborovjan



Great catching up with Irish entrepreneur and Philanthropist John Campion (left) and Rob Udell on APR Energy and John's role as an Ambassador for Motorsports Ireland

Ard-Chonsalacht na hÉireann
Consulate General of Ireland

**JOIN THE JAX ALLIANCE
AS WE WELCOME
IRISH CONSUL GENERAL SHANE STEPHENS**

THE CONSUL GENERAL WILL SHARE HIS PRESENTATION:
"IRELAND AND FLORIDA —
OLD FRIENDS AND NEW GATEWAYS TO GROWTH"

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 27, 2018
8:00 TO 9:30 A.M.

NORTH FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION
980 N. JEFFERSON ST., JACKSONVILLE, FL 32209

PLEASE RSVP TO CHRIS QUINN,
VICE PRESIDENT OF INDUSTRY & GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS,
AT CHRIS.QUINN@MYJAXCHAMBER.COM



Above: Enjoyed speaking with Mike Clark at The Florida Union Times about the ties that bind Jacksonville and Ireland

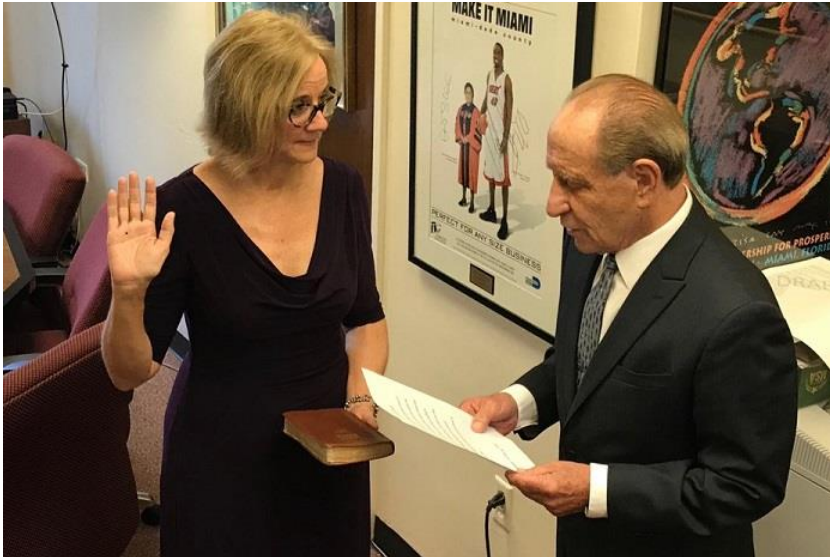


And in Miami:

Above: Lively debate on Brexit and UK-Irish relations with David Prodder, UK CG in Miami, and CG Stephens, with organizers Seán Murray and Sarah Fitzpatrick of the South Florida Irish American Chamber of Commerce

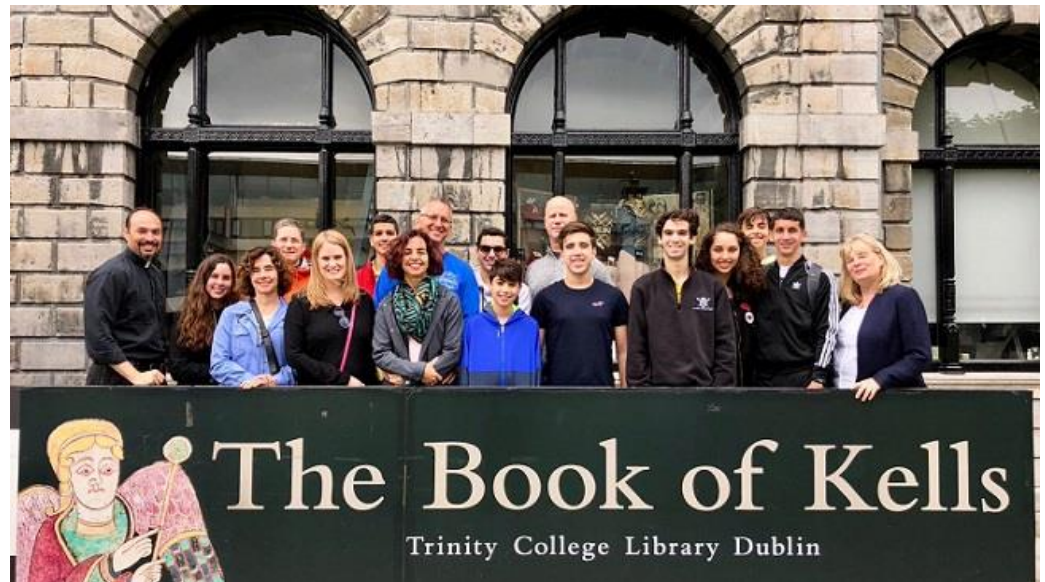
Right: With Beacon Council seminar participants for discussion on commercial opportunities between Ireland and South Florida





Congratulations to Eileen Higgins on her election as Commissioner for Miami-Dade County's 5th District

Lovely to see friends from Miami's Belen Jesuit Prep School at Trinity College Dublin, CG Stephens' alma mater.



Students from the College of Charleston Summer School in Ireland, enjoying a break on the Killary Fjord, a highlight of the [Wild Atlantic Way](#)



Congratulations to plastics manufacturer Mergon on the 20th anniversary of their operations in Anderson, South Carolina



Siobhán Miley, press officer at the Irish Embassy in Washington, and the rest of her EU Press Counsellor colleagues from DC visiting CNN in Atlanta.



A pleasure to meet Atlanta Journal Constitution Editor Kevin Riley with Embassy press officer Siobhán Miley during her Atlanta visit with EU counterparts.



Great chat about Ireland at the Consulate with high school teachers participating in an Advanced Placement Human Geography Summer Institute at Woodward Academy in Atlanta.



CG Stephens joined the crowds at Saint Jude the Apostle Catholic Church to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the ordination of Msgr. James Fennessy

Wonderful briefing from Dr Thomas Curran, visiting Irish Fulbright Scholar at NC State University from UCD's School of Biosystems and Food Engineering. Dr Curran is joining forces with researchers from NC State on a mission to battle [fatbergs](#)!



Irish News

Taoiseach Leo Varadkar and the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Simon Coveney launched [Global Ireland – Ireland’s Global Footprint to 2025](#), an initiative to double the scope and impact of Ireland’s global footprint in the period to 2025. [7 new Missions](#) globally including Los Angeles have been announced. Atlanta and Austin Consulates will each receive a second diplomat this summer. Plans for increasing engagement by Ireland’s economic agencies in the southeast were included in the document.

Government Ministers also launched initiatives under [Project Ireland 2040](#) including the [‘Linking People and Places’](#) programme that will invest almost €25 billion in transport, tourism and sport infrastructure over the next 10 years, and the [Climate Action](#) priority. On the latter, the Taoiseach said “Climate action is a top priority of this government. Future generations depend on the actions we take today. Project Ireland 2040 sets out our ambitions in regard to building a sustainable, low-carbon society...”

In a [speech at the National Economic Dialogue](#) at Dublin Castle, the Taoiseach outlined the Government’s economic policy. Finance Minister Paschal Donohoe T.D also published [the Government’s Summer Economic Statement](#), with budgetary policy framed “to reduce borrowing, rebuild our fiscal buffers and support steady, sustainable increases in living standards to ensure we are protected into the future.”

In early June, the [Taoiseach visited Northern Ireland](#) for engagements in Belfast and Newry to hear the views of business and community sectors on a range of current issues, including a visit to the Orange Heritage Museum, the first such visit by a serving Irish Taoiseach.

Tánaiste Coveney issued a [statement](#) on the publication of UK proposals in Brexit negotiations, saying “It remains vital that a legally-binding backstop is agreed to provide certainty that, in all circumstances, a hard border will be avoided.”

President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker and European Chief (Brexit) Negotiator Michel Barnier visited Ireland where they [underlined the backing of Ireland](#) by the other EU Member States.

The Tánaiste [Mr. Coveney met with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu](#) during a visit to the Middle East and Cypress, stating: “We had an open and frank dialogue, discussing possibilities and concerns, issues we agreed on and issues we did not. As in my meetings earlier today with other key Israeli figures, and with Palestinian leaders, my focus was primarily on looking ahead to areas where we hope to make a difference.”

President Michael D. Higgins led a commemoration of [60 years of Irish involvement in UN Peacekeeping](#) operations, remarking: “While this ceremony will be celebratory for all Irish people... for some it will also be poignant, as we commemorate and honour those who paid the ultimate price in the cause of peace.”

Pope Francis will visit Ireland in August for the World Meeting of Families 2018. Preliminary public information is available [here](#).

The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Michael Creed, announced a new [Call for Research Proposals in selected agri-food areas](#) under the US-Ireland Research and Development Partnership, with new funding opportunities for collaboration with Northern Ireland and US-based counterparts.

The Government published a policy statement [outlining Ireland’s approach to the development of data centres](#), with a view to enhance Ireland’s position as a location of choice for technology investment and entrepreneurship.

Following the Trump Administration’s imposition of tariffs, 29 EU Ambassadors based in Washington, including Ireland’s Dan Mulhall, published an [open letter on trade](#) in the [Washington Post](#) on the trade and

investment relationship between the EU and the U.S. EU Ambassador to the US, David Sullivan, also spoke to this theme on [Fox Business](#).

CRH/Oldcastle, Ireland's largest investor in the US, with headquarters in Atlanta, finalized a [\\$3.5 billion investment](#) in Kansas.

[Guinness](#) will open their first brewing operations in the US since the 1950s, creating 200 jobs in Baltimore County.

Tánaiste Conveny welcomed the start of [the first direct flights](#) between Beijing and Dublin.

June 24th marked the 25th anniversary of the decriminalization of homosexuality in Ireland. The Taoiseach issued remarks on [video](#) and acknowledged in a [Statement](#) those who brought about change

Ambassador Dan Mulhall marked [Bloomsday](#), June 16th, the day in 1904 on which all of James Joyce Ulysses takes place, with a scholarly and personalized [blog](#).

Upcoming Events in the Southeast

On June 30th the [Atlanta GAA Peach Cup](#) tournament will start at 9am in Peachtree City. Teams from Atlanta, Charlotte, Greenville, Knoxville, Memphis, Raleigh, South Florida and Winston Salem will be competing.

[The South Florida Emerald Society](#) invites you to join in their march at the Key Biscayne 4th of July Parade, on July 4th, 8:30am. St. Agnes Catholic Church. Inquire or RSVP [here](#)

The Broward Chapter of the South Florida Irish American Chamber of Commerce and the British American Chamber of Commerce jointly host a [Summer Social](#) on July 19th at Bokampers in Fort Lauderdale.

Planning a trip to Ireland in July? Be sure to catch the National Library's upcoming exhibition "[Seamus Heaney: Listen Now Again](#)", curated by Dr. Geraldine Higgins, Director of Irish Studies at Emory University. The exhibition will open to the public on Friday, 6 July 2018 in the new Bank of Ireland Cultural and Heritage Centre at College Green.

Mr. Christopher Campbell from our Irish Abroad Unit in Dublin will be with us through July 17th.

Note: Our next Newsletter will issue at the start of Septemeber. Be sure to send in your public event notices for September and October, to carol.jordan@dfa.ie.

The second edition of our Heritage Series follows...

Red hair, green roots: My family's journey from the south of Ireland to south Alabama ... and beyond

By Charles McNair

[Editor's Note: Charles was a long-time member of Atlanta's Irish and Scots Irish community. A writer by trade, he recently published "Play It Again, Sam", a biography of Atlanta's former Mayor Sam Massell. His story here has been edited for length, but will be published soon (as will others in this series) on the website of [EPIC Museum](#) in Dublin.]

Here I stand, blended and proud—Viking, British, Celtic (Scots Irish), Eastern European, north Africa and heart of Africa.

My green branch, the Irish, descends from my mother ... a McCrory, her own mother a Carr ... and the Carr line from the south of Ireland.

James Jasper (Jim) Carr, born in 1838 in County Cork, immigrated with his family to America at age 19. A sister, Catherine Carr, settled in North Carolina near Chapel Hill, an area known today as Carrboro.

Jim Carr came down the pioneer trail to Alabama, settling south of Eufaula in the small Barbour County community of Elamville. His family struggled. The boys had no trousers, so they wore Mother Hubbard smocks when they played, and when they worked in the fields. In all, the boys got three months of school in their lives, the girls none. One story holds that the Carrs lived up the road from Native Americans, who taught them to count 10 in the Indian language.

Jim Carr went off to fight in the Civil War. (Armed conflict might have seemed better than farm labor.) He returned to settle for good in south Alabama. Brothers, sisters, and cousins eventually joined him.

Jim married Martha M. Danner, and they had eight children. The first son, Thomas Henry Carr (1870-1946) married Nora Emma Clarke (or perhaps Clark, as we find both spellings in the records). Nora was Tom's third wife; he lost his first to pneumonia, his second in childbirth. Tom won a plum job for those days – engineer on the Central of Georgia Railroad.

By accounts, Nora Emma was the prettiest girl in Eufaula, and a devoted 19-year-old bride to her 32-year-old, twice-widowed, war veteran husband. Tom and Nora Emma lived on camp cars and followed the railroad during the first year of their marriage. They would produce four children. Cherry Wood, their first, weighed 12 pounds at birth, though his mother only weighed 95 pounds.

The second child, Dee, my grandmother, was born in Webb, Alabama, in 1906. She would marry William Webster "Bill" McCrory, in January 1930, and bear three children. The oldest, my mother Nora Joyce McCrory was born in 1931. She married Charles Cunningham McNair, of Troy, in 1953, and I came into the world the next year, 1954, with five siblings to follow. My dad built houses in Dothan, and he raised pine trees and preserved pioneer cabins on land he bought. My mother survives, after raising six children and making pocket money as a beloved and well-remembered substitute teacher in the Dothan city school system.

The blending continues. On June 21, I will marry a beautiful woman here in Bogotá, Colombia. I followed Dra. Adela Castro, a respected ophthalmologist and eye surgeon, to this magical land after we met five years ago waiting to board a flight across the USA. Our children, if we're so blessed, will proudly join her Spanish, South American Indian, and Moorish genome with my own Irish (etc.) one.