

Consulate General of Ireland

Newsletter for the U.S. Southeast

June 2017

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Waiting for Godot opens to stellar reviews in Charleston's Spoleto Festival with Irish actors Aaron Monaghan, Garrett Lombard, Rory Nolan, and Marty Rea

Message from the Consul General

A chairde,

May was a time for celebrating EU investment and Irish culture in the Southeast.

In the middle of the month, I joined my German and French colleagues for a European Union visit to South Carolina, calling on BMW, Michelin and our own Mergon. The three facilities we visited have 9250 employees between them. The EU's huge contribution to the region was also discussed at a European American Chamber of Commerce seminar attended by the [Update Business Journal](#) and other media.

Last weekend, I experienced exceptional Irish artists take Spoleto Festival USA by storm. The Druid Theatre's *Waiting for Godot*, directed by Garry Hynes, has received superlative reviews ([Post and Courier](#) & [Charleston City Paper](#)). Separately, the glorious success of Vivaldi opera *Farnace* is also largely down to Irish talent. The creative team includes Garry Hynes, Francis O'Connor and David Bolger. When I read the [Charleston City Paper's](#) review of this performance, I was amazed to see my son James quoted at length!

It is a delight to see Ireland punching above its weight once again in Charleston, building on a tradition of over 300 years duration.

Shane Stephens

Irish Business and Culture Around the Southeast

Deepening ties in Charleston, South Carolina



Farnace photo: Feargal Hynes



Druid Theatre's renowned director, Garry Hynes, shines at Spoleto with standing ovations for *Waiting for Godot* and *Farnace*.

Right: Advancing collaboration with Provost Brian McGee at the beautiful College of Charleston.

Below: Receiving key to the City of Charleston from Mayor John Tecklenburg





EU Consuls General Detlev Ruenger of Germany, Louis de Corail of France, and Shane Stephens of Ireland visit great EU companies in upstate South Carolina.





A great discussion on North Carolina-Ireland business opportunities hosted by the Chamber's Wake County Economic Development division. In addition to CG Stephens, panelists included (l-r): Bill Pappas, Partner at Parker Poe Adams and Bernstein LLP, Kim Boericke of ICON's Clinical Research Services, and Adrienne Lester, a Senior Manager with Citrix. ICON is Ireland's largest investor in the area, and [Citrix](#) has recently expanded its investment in Ireland.

An honour to host celebration of Irish-US research collaboration with Science Foundation Ireland and NSF I-Corps South researchers & university partners



SFI's ADAPT Team from Dublin City University posed for photo

Connecting culture and business in Huntsville, Alabama



Consul General Stephens paid a courtesy call on Mayor Tommy Battle, met with investors in Ireland, and spoke to the North Alabama International Trade Association, the Irish Society of North Alabama and WHNT TV.

Special thanks to Bill McCauley (top photo), President of the Irish Society of North Alabama, for facilitating these great connections.





The Consulate welcomed in North Georgia Technical College students embarking on a study programme in Ireland inspired by recent MOU between Waterford Institute of Technology and the Technology College System of Georgia.



Like so many members of our community across the Southeast, Consul General Stephens had a wonderful evening when Riverdance came to town.

Irish News

An Taoiseach [Enda Kenny](#) TD retired as leader of Fine Gael on 17 May. Today, Leo Varadkar became the 11th leader of Fine Gael after taking 60% of the votes in the leadership contest.

Denis Naughten, T.D, Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment has issued a [Statement](#) on his disappointment following the Announcement by President Trump on the US leaving the Paris Agreement.

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Charles Flanagan T.D. opened a conference of the Royal Irish Academy on [Retreat from Glocalisation?](#) and underlined that “I have no hesitation in saying we should not, as I see no advantage in isolation or narrow nationalism.”

Minister of State for European Affairs Dara Murphy T.D. represented Ireland at a [meeting of the General Affairs Council](#) in Brussels where they completed the EU’s preparations for the first phase of negotiations with the UK on its withdrawal from the European Union.

The three day visit of the Prince of Wales and Camilla the Duchess of Cornwall to Ireland was a major highlight of the month. See our Minister’s [words of welcome](#) at Kilkenny Castle.

Expressing sympathy to the UK following the [Manchester bombing](#), a statement released by the Taoiseach also underlined that “all necessary measures will be taken by our authorities to counteract such deadly threats.” President Michael Higgins also issued a [Statement on the attack](#).

The Government widely promoted Europe Day on May 9th, celebrating peace and unity and the roots of the European Union of today. Ireland joined the EU on 1 January 1973 and on 1 January 1999 was among the founding members of the Eurozone.

The IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook shows [Ireland’s competitiveness ranking](#) up one place in 2017, to 6th most competitive economy in the world and second most competitive within the EU.

Mr. David Stanton, T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Justice and Equality announced grant funding of €1.8 million for 14 projects across the country to help the [integration of immigrants](#).

Minister of State for the Diaspora and International Development, Mr Joe McHugh, TD, hosted an important gathering on [the undocumented Irish in the United States](#) and committed an additional € 50,000 funding from the Government’s Emigrant Support Programme budget for the Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers. He also announced a new [Government funded mentoring programme](#) to support returning Irish emigrants who wish to set up businesses in Ireland with funding of up to €100,000 to the project.

At a special ceremony attended by Minister of State Sean Canney on behalf of President Higgins, a plaque was added to the [Washington Monument](#) marking the 100th anniversary of the Easter Rising and Ireland’s links with America. It was the first time since 1982 that a new plaque has been added to the monument’s interior.

Ireland has submitted its bid to host the [2023 Rugby World Cup](#). Take time to check out the excellent bid video!

A [new J! Visa Guide](#), is available now for J1 students traveling to the US this summer.

Remember! It’s now possible to [renew Irish passports online](#) – check it out.

Upcoming Events in the Southeast

Druid Theatre's spectacular production of [Waiting for Godot](#) at the Spoleto Festival in Charleston will run until June 10th. Vivaldi Opera [Farnace](#), which is also directed by Druid's Garry Hynes, is another fantastic production that you need to see.

Atlanta's [Arís Theatre](#) presents a staged reading of [Ulysses](#) adapted by Dermot Bolger (and back by popular demand) on June 6th and 7th at 7:30, [The Shakespeare Tavern](#), 499 Peachtree St. NE.

Irish Network Atlanta will host a viewing party for the USA v Ireland rugby match on June 10th. Logistics details to be posted soon to the group's Twitter account @IrishNetwork ATL.