

Message from the Consul General

It has been a great privilege to serve as Ireland's first Consul General for the US south-east these last five years. As I prepare to return to Ireland this month – and to hand over the reins to my successor, Shane Stephens – I did not want to let the opportunity of this newsletter pass without taking the chance to say a very sincere 'thank you' to all our Irish, Scots-Irish, US and other friends across the region.

Anything we have been able to accomplish here at the Consulate is built on the remarkable goodwill that so many of you - and your forebears – have generated for Ireland across this region. A growing share of the almost 38 million people in the US who claim Irish or Scots-Irish ancestry are now living in the US south-east. And the fact that so many identify so readily with Ireland is a testament to the way our communities here celebrate Irish culture and sport and all that so many generations of brave emigrants and their families have contributed to southern life.

Atlanta has proved a wonderful home for Ireland. As host city for the busiest passenger airport in the world and so many world class companies and universities, there is no better base for Ireland as we seek to grow our business, educational and cultural connections. But we know too that this is just one city in a region rich with possibilities for trade, investment, tourism and artistic exchanges. Together with our superb IDA team and assisted by our terrific Honorary Consuls of Ireland in New Orleans, Orlando and Charlotte, we now have an architecture in place to support all our efforts to scratch beyond the surface of the possibilities for deeper cooperation.

I am hugely grateful for all you do for Ireland. Whether that involves talking to work colleagues about Ireland's economic recovery or strengths as a place to do business; making introductions for Irish companies exploring new markets; encouraging friends or loved ones to visit or study in Ireland; or whether it's simply buying tickets to an Irish play or performance of any kind, thank you! Ireland and the American South share a mountain of historical, social and cultural ties – but we also, I know now, share people who are warm, generous and engaging and who recognise the value to extending a hand of friendship.

As we make this transition, my colleague, Adrian Farrell, at our new Consulate General in Austin, Texas, will assume responsibility for the state of Louisiana. And my successor here, Shane Stephens, will be devoting all his energies to the states of Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, Tennessee, Alabama and Mississippi. I hope your paths cross.

Le gach dea-ghuí,
With all good wishes,

Paul Gleeson,
Consul General of Ireland

News about Ireland

Six young Irish students were killed and seven injured after a [tragic incident in Berkeley, California](#), when a fourth-floor balcony on which they were standing collapsed. The [Taoiseach](#), Enda Kenny TD, said he was "shocked and saddened" to hear the news. The [Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade](#), Charlie Flanagan TD, expressed his "deepest sympathy to the families and loved ones of those who lost their lives in this appalling incident". Survivor [Clodagh Cogley](#) shared inspiring words on Facebook in the aftermath of the tragedy.

The Government unveiled [plans to commemorate Ireland's Easter 1916 Rising](#) around the world in 2016, including with this short and uplifting [video](#).

Former US diplomats Earle and Barbara Scarlett took a look at [Ireland's public diplomacy](#) efforts in the wake of the Consulate's celebration of the 150th birthday of W.B. Yeats at Emory University.

Standard & Poor's raised Ireland's credit rating to [A+](#). And Irish consumer sentiment has hit a [nine-year high](#).

[Global Atlanta](#) reported on the Aer Lingus College Football Classic which will see Georgia Tech take on Boston College at the Aviva Stadium in Dublin on September 3, 2016. Information on planning for the trip of a lifetime is at www.gt2ireland.com.

[Tourism Ireland](#) celebrated figures which show holidaymakers from the US visiting Ireland increased by 7% in the first three months of 2015, while the [Pensacola News Journal](#) reported on "The Irish Experience" which saw sixteen University of West Florida students travel to Ireland in June.

And The Irish Times featured '[The Irish in New Orleans](#)', the new book by Tulane University academic Laura Kelley.

Upcoming Events

The [Baton Rouge Irish Film Festival](#) in Louisiana takes place this year between July 31 and August 3 and promises to be another wonderful celebration of the best in Irish cinema.

Mark your diaries for the Arís Theatre production of J.M. Synge's '[The Playboy of the Western World](#)' which opens at Georgia Public Broadcasting on September 24 and runs until October 12.

The [2015 Shamrock Open](#), the main fundraiser for the Atlanta St. Patrick's Day Parade, will take place at the famous Peachtree Golf Club this year on Monday, October 5. Registration is currently full, but you can sign up for a place on the waiting list by emailing Melanie.Sherman@Fitzco.com.

If there are Irish events you'd like us to highlight in future newsletters, [please let us know](#).

Consulate General of Ireland
Monarch Plaza, Suite 260,
3414 Peachtree Road NE,
Atlanta, GA 30326.

<http://www.consulateofirelandatlanta.com>

Follow us on Twitter [@IrelandAtlanta](#)

There will be no newsletter in August. Enjoy the summer – we will be back to you in September!

July 2015