

Message from the New Consul General

I am honoured to have this opportunity to serve as Ireland's Consul General in Atlanta, covering the Southeast states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee.

I am conscious of the fact that for more than 300 years people from Ireland and people of Irish and Scots-Irish descent have contributed to the great achievements and special character of this part of the United States. I will pay tribute to this legacy, while working to support and develop Ireland's contemporary relations with the Southeast. As my predecessor said in his farewell message, there is no better base for Ireland as we seek to grow our business, educational and cultural connections.

Over the past month, the welcome and support I have received from the Irish American community and all friends of Ireland has been inspiring. I look forward to working with you in the months and years ahead.

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Shane Stephens
Consul General of Ireland

News about Ireland

The [Taoiseach](#) and Prime Minister Cameron have today invited the Northern Ireland parties to talks to address the critical issues which threaten the stability of the devolved institutions.

The latest economic data from Ireland is strong. The economy grew by 4.8% in 2014 and growth of 4% is expected in 2015, the highest growth rate in the EU in both years. Export levels are at an all-time high. Unemployment was at 9.5% in August 2015 from a peak of 15.1% in 2012.

In August the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade launched a [report](#) on the successes of St Patrick's Day 2015 around the globe.

In August Google announced the establishment of a new Operations Centre in Dublin, which will work with location based products Google Local and Google Maps. Google expects this to create 200 new jobs immediately.

Upcoming Events

The [21st CelticFest Mississippi](#) will take place in Jackson MS, September. 11-13. It will feature performances from renowned musicians and dancers as well as workshops on dance and culture.

[Dancing at Lughnasa](#) will be performed on September 12 at the University of West Florida

[Celebrating the Irish of Mobile Bay](#), an event organised by Irish Network Mobile Bay, will take place on September 18

Chloe Agnew will perform with the [ATL Pops Orchestra](#) at the Mable House Barnes Amphitheatre, Mableton, GA, on September 20, 2015, at 7:00 PM. Chloe was an original member of *Celtic Woman*.

The [Arís Theatre](#) production of J.M. Synge's *The Playboy of the Western World*, a classic of Irish Theatre, opens at Georgia Public Broadcasting on September 24 and runs until October 11.

The [43rd Stone Mountain Highland Games](#) will take place on the meadow at Stone Mountain Park, Atlanta GA, October 17 and 18.

Excitement is building for [IrishFest Atlanta](#), to be held November 6 and 7 at the Wyndham Atlanta Galleria Hotel

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

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