

O'Connor Irish Heritage House

Teach Oidhreacht Eireannach Uí Chonchubhair



Home of Culture, Heritage and Learning

Winter 2006/07

Volume 2 Issue 3

2006 Annual Report

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In Summary:

O'Connor House as our Toronto home for Irish Culture, Heritage and Learning moves from strength to strength.

We continue our outreach to promote and increase awareness around the GTA and surrounds. This project is rich in history and holds the promise of vast possibilities. People are our strength: many individuals have responded by taking a Founding Membership @ \$100; or made a donation; volunteered; or have given of talent to perform at our popular Celtic Family Sundays – held five times a year.

Founding Members and Volunteers are our life force. Professional support has been gratis – invaluable in these early days of our work to raise funds. We remain ever grateful. Sponsors: individuals and businesses hold a treasured place in our hearts – we are ever appreciative of their profound generosity to any appeal for support – amid, no doubt, numerous similar requests.

Let each one of us tell one other person about O'Connor Irish Heritage House. Bring one more person out with us to our activities and events planned for 2007. Share the Vision – share the good news.



O'Connor Irish Heritage House (location)

60 Rowena Drive
Toronto, Ontario
M3A 3R2

Mailing Address:

27 Crowland Drive
Etobicoke, Ontario
M9W 2S5

Lease Agreement

Lease Agreement between the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) and O'Connor Irish Heritage House (O'CIHH) to review: is 21 years less a day for \$1 per year.

Cost of repairs and restoration to moving-in condition (estimated \$750,000) is borne by O'CIHH. Taking into account that this number may be reduced, by major gift donations from Government and other Grants, the cost to O'CIHH translates to an equivalent rental cost of approx. \$12,000 per year for 21 years - a bargain for a property of this stature.

Operating costs are estimated at approx \$60 – 80,000 per year which will be covered by programmes and like-minded community group fee for use of space. It is imperative that we raise \$250,000 so that we qualify for the TCDSB



Fundraising...

Fundraising consists of ...

- [i] Founding Members 200 @ \$100 each
- [ii] Two major gift donations of \$5000
- [iii] conditional grant from Trillium of \$100,000
- [iv] pledges valued @ \$10,000
- [v] Celtic Family Sunday fundraisers 2005/06 \$10,000
- [vi] other donations \$15,000
- [vii] balance to raise \$80,000



Building Repair...

Building Repair...

due to the property not being occupied five years, the utilities have not been used, requires upgrade and new installation to code. The sooner repairs begin and the house is brought to moving-in condition, the sooner we move in and begin to make use of 'our home.'

The Architect's estimate is \$750,000 (it is reasonable to assume an adjustment to one million dollars). Initial quotes have been submitted for plumbing, electrical, windows and roof and Project Managers have assessed the property.

Building Usage...

Building Usage...

our Model House (second floor pictured above) will help those who have not visited the property to see the distribution of space and imagine the potential use of rooms.

Community meeting rooms and small gathering rooms; community arts & leisure space for language, dance, readings, drama, music, arts & crafts and so on are available at O'Connor House.

Space is available to the local school community and School Board use of rooms for teacher in-service, retreats as well as day-time Provincial school programs.

Conferences, small family celebrations, Culture & Heritage Library and Archives, rotating Museum displays and a community office reception are all viable possibilities at O'Connor Irish Heritage House.

Founders...

since our invitation to become a Founding Member was issued mid-way through 2005 we have been thrilled with 200 generous, visionary responses! Each and every Founder is the reason we have progressed and come along this far – without your financial assistance and personal support we would be struggling along at a snail's pace.

Our work has been consistent, progressive and far-reaching and we thank you for your part.

At the January 2007 Annual General Meeting, it was voted that our Founders be also our General Membership.

Outreach...

our website: www.irishheritagehouse.com is created and maintained by Jeff Storey of *WhatstheStorey.ca Web Design*. Jeff is an invaluable asset to the continuation of our work – again we are ever-grateful.

Mail-outs, word-of-mouth, Newsletters, articles we submit to the Toronto Irish News, Nuacht (Montreal), Shamrock Leaf (New Brunswick) and as far as to TAIN, Australia – we endeavour to work with an array of media to spread the word. All the above is backed up by email and telephone communication.



Culture

Celtic Family Sundays: afternoons presenting music, ceili dance, readings, conversation and tasty Irish kitchen.

Day at Woodbine Races: Spring and Fall 2006 we gathered a cosy group of race enthusiasts from which a smaller contingent was chosen to present a blanket to the winning horse of one race; sponsored by O'Connor Irish Heritage House. O'CIHH is acknowledged in the Programme and the presentation is seen for a moment on the Track TVs around the racing circuit. Our winning horses in 2006 were: "Initforthemoney" and "Saydnighttothebadguy" – with winning jockey each time, Emile Ramsammy.

Eve of the 25th Anniversary of Ontario Trillium Foundation: held November 2006. O'CIHH as recipients of a conditional grant was invited. We met fellow awardees and OTF Directors as well as Premier McGuinty – with Donegal heritage and Honourable James Bartleman.

Heritage

St. Patrick Parade Toronto: March 2006 was the first time O'Connor Irish Heritage House entered the Parade. Many supporters and friends walked along the route holding our green Banner, handing out information cards – all with a little help from delightful young Irish dancers.

Irish Heritage Night w/ the Toronto Blue Jays: O'CIHH responded to an invitation early in 2006 from the Blue Jays to help organize Irish Heritage Night at Rogers Centre – their first year of hosting their Heritage Series. The visiting team was the New York Yankees. Thanks to a generous response from the Traditional Irish Dancers, Irish language, Paschal the Leprechaun, Hugo singing the Anthems and the public's enthusiastic on-line purchases of tickets, with a bonus limited edition Blue Jays cap w/ shamrock motif this September evening was a terrific success.

Founder's Gathering: in February and November 2006 we hosted an evening for our Founders to provide updates, answer questions and provide an opportunity to meet and greet each other. At the November gathering O'CIHH was presented with the seven Flags originally used at Grosse Ile and more recently used at the Elmbank Cemetery opening. These flags are destined for proud display at O'Connor Irish Heritage House. Thank you John Masterson for this most generous gift.

Learning

March as Month of the Celts: in a letter to the TCDSB in April 2006 we invited the Board to consider having March named Month of the Celts: all embracing of the Scots, Welsh, Manx, Breton, Acadian, Irish, parts of Europe and so on. Our invitation is aimed at a consciousness raising of the contribution the Celt peoples have made to Toronto and Canada. Precedent is set in the City of Toronto with March named Irish Heritage Month.

In the Government is Ontario Minister John O'Toole (Durham) in Bill 130 naming March 17 Irish Heritage Day. In the TCDSB there are 20 schools named after Irish saints and scholars not counting those named after Welsh and Scottish saints. In the spirit of O'Connor Estate owner, Frank O'Connor, support of education for the young in life-long learning with Celtic Studies is among our goals.

Volunteers

People giving their time, talent and treasure toward the success and building up of O'Connor Irish Heritage House are an invaluable help. Each Volunteer, as with Founders, we acknowledge as the life force of this venture. Volunteer hours are recorded.

It is important to be aware that both Ontario Trillium Foundation and Revenue Canada take note of the percentage of volunteerism at work in projects such as this – considering they have given O'CIHH Grant dollars and have awarded Charitable status, respectively.

“My dear friends, may every mark of affection and every gesture of friendship that you give to others be a sign of God's peace for you.”

Source: the Mass of Christian Burial



Treasurer Report - 2006

O'CIHH has their accounts with the Bank of Montreal. We hold two: one for our operations for which the source of funds are Founding Members and Celtic Family Sundays. The second is our capital into which we deposit donations for which tax receipts are given. Those who have made pledges, when such pledges are collected, these will go into the capital account. We carefully maintain both accounts with the minimum fee-free \$5000 balance for best use of your funds. During the year we invested \$8000 into a GIC @ a 3.5% compounded interest. Our 2006 Financial year end is March 31 and the figures are: *Total Revenue: \$27,368 Total Expenditure \$11,080 Net income \$16,288.* Thank you all for making this all possible.

Board of Directors 2006

Raymund Domian, Colman McSweeney, Mary Fay, Cormac Monaghan, Maura Walsh, Christine Doyle, Leslie Hennessey

The Board of O'Connor Irish Heritage House has been active since coming together at the Town Hall meetings early 2005. Board meetings have been every two weeks on a Monday night for two years throughout the year. Countless hours of volunteer time and countless contributions of expertise have helped bring our work to this stage:

Incorporation: October 27 2005
By Laws established: February 13 2006
Charitable Status awarded: April 1 2006



Acknowledgements

Oliver Carroll - Chair of the Board Angela Kennedy - Trustee TCDSB Ward 11

Angela encouraged the establishment of a website and has been an intercessor between Senior Staff and the O'Connor school staff and O'CIHH to bring us this far. Trustee Kennedy serves on the Heritage Committee at TCDSB. Mrs. Kennedy walked with us during the 2006 St. Patrick Parade. Phone: 416-512-3411

Donation or Pledge in Support of O'Connor Irish Heritage House

✂

YOUR NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ POST CODE: _____

EMAIL: _____

TELEPHONE: _____ / CELL: _____

✂

"Share the Vision"
 and get involved support
 O'Connor Irish Heritage House.
 Your contributions and donations
 to this project are welcome.

Write your cheque to
"O'Connor Irish Heritage House"
 and mail to:

Maura Walsh (*Treasurer*)
 303 Runnymede Road.
 Toronto ON M6S 2Y5

<i>SUGGESTED PLEDGE or</i>	SINGLE MAJOR GIFT	\$10,000 – 25,000	[]
<i>DONATION LEVELS:</i>	BUSINESS/CORPORATE	\$ 5,000 – 10,000	[]
	IRISH COMMUNITY GROUPS	\$ 2,000 – 5,000	[]
Thank	FAMILIES	\$ 1,000 – 2,000	[]
You!	INDIVIDUAL	\$ 100 – 1,000	[]
		(Tax receiptable)	