News from the Áras

The weather may not have been always what we were hoping for this summer but there's been plenty going on over the last few months at the Áras. A special thank you to all the volunteers and members of the local community who as always have played such an important part in the life of the Home this summer.

We celebrated Féile Bealtaine in the Áras throughout the month of May. As part of these celebrations, we invited potter, Martha Williamson, to carry out pottery classes for our residents. This was a great success with some lovely pieces being produced by those who took part. Mile buiachas do Martha agus maith sibh chuile dheuine a ghlac páirt.

As part of Féile Bealtaine, a number of residents and staff took a day trip to An Spidéal where an ice-cream (or two!) was enjoyed at the Sean Chéibh in the glorious sunshine. A wonderful day with plenty of laughter, chat and reminiscing.

Well done to all members of the Áras team on the Home achieving the Quality Mark for Nursing Homes and reaching the finals of the national Quality Mark Excellence Awards next month - a great achievement!!

The flowers and gardens are in full bloom and looking beautiful. A huge big thank you to our gardener, Eddie, and Laslo for planting and nurturing all of the beautiful flowers and plants in and around the Áras; they not only bring great colour to this beautiful building but also immense joy and happiness to us all! Súil againn go bhfuil sibh uilig ag baint sásamh as an Samhradh - nuair a thagann an ghrian amach bainígí sult agus spraoi as!!!!!!!

Congratulations to Martin, one of our nurses in the Áras, and his bride Siobhán, who got married recently. Wishing you a long life, good health and much happiness together!!! Grá mó o chuile dheuine san Áras.

The Áras team are training hard these days as members of the caring team are participating in The Kerryman Dingle Full & Half Marathon on September 3rd to raise funds for the Western Alzheimers Association. Good luck to Bertie Reaney, Cliona Ní Ghriallaigh, Cathal Gorham, Molly Delaney, Brendan Coyle, Nancy Mullen & Sinéad Murphy who are all taking part. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this good cause. Well done also to Dearbhla Ní Dhroighneáin and Nancy Ní Mhaoláin who climbed Croagh Patrick in May to raise money for Breast Cancer Research. Tá sibh iontach, a chailíní, agus muid anbhrodúil as sibh beirt!

Congratulations to our nurse Bertie and his fiancee, Naomi on their engagement! All of us at the Áras couldn’t be happier for them both and we wish them long life, health and happiness in their future life together. Saol fada, sláinte, folláin díbh beirt.

Beidh muid ag reachtáil Gradam Áras Chois Fharraige arís i mbliana. Tá cuireadh seolta amach againt chuig na scoláirí a rinne an ardteistimeireacht le déanaí agus a bhi ag freastal ar na meánscoileanna Gaeltachta i gConamara - Coláiste Chroí Mhuiire, An Spidéal, Coláiste Cholmcille, Inndreabhán, Scoil Chuimisitheach Chiaraín, An Cheathrú Rua, Gairmscoil na bPiarasach, Rosmuc agus Scoil Phobal Mhic Dara, Carna. An spriocódta do na hiarrataisí ar an ngGradam ná 30 Meán Fómhair 2016.

Katie Úi Chulain
Activities co-ordinator
Áras up for Q Mark award

The Áras has reached the finals of next month’s National Q Mark Business Excellence Awards - well done to all staff on this great achievement!!!

The Home was selected as a finalist after getting one of the highest marks in Ireland in its Quality Mark for Nursing Homes inspection. The Áras scored highly across all areas examined, with Quality of Life doing particularly well.

The Excellence Ireland Quality Association (EIQA) noted results of the resident & relatives survey were "excellent" with a 100% satisfaction rating. Similarly the employee satisfaction survey showed "very positive results".

EIQA commended the Áras for it’s focus on caring for Cois Fharragie’s elderly people through their first language, noting, “The home has fostered a tradition of caring for local Irish speaking elderly and employing people from the local community.”

EIQA said that management and staff were committed to a person centred approach to enhancing the daily lives of all residents in their care and said they observed “very positive interactions between staff and residents” at the Áras.

The Áras is now one of only a handful of care homes in the country to meet exacting criteria for the award set out by the Excellence Ireland Quality Association (EIQA) to achieve the Quality Mark for Nursing Homes. Comhghairdeachas mór tuilte ag bainistíocht agus foirann ar fad an Áras. Maith sibh agus coinnigí suas an dea obair.

Centre of Excellence

The Áras has also recently been identified as a Centre of Excellence for social care, after a study by leading Irish gerontologist Professor Ricca Edmondson.

Professor Edmondson said that the study, which was completed over several years at Áras Chois Fharragie and another care centre in Dublin, would hopefully provide insights into positive elements of the care provided, so that other centres could learn from it.

The research was published in the latest edition of the Irish Journal of Applied Social Studies with the title, Identifying Key Elements of Social Care Practise in Successful Care Settings for Older People in Ireland. The study is available for free online on the website of the Irish Journal of Applied Social Studies www.arrow.dit.ie/ijass

Professor Edmondson complimented Áras staff on their ‘wise care’ practices and said the Áras was “a place, where not only are people happy to be, but where very high expressions of well-being can be found.”

Féile Bealtaine

In May we celebrated Féile Bealtaine in the Áras. This is a very important occasion, held each May in nursing homes countrywide. As part of these celebrations, we invited Martha Williamson (potter extraordinaire!) from The Ceardlann, An Spidéal to hold pottery classes for our residents here in the Áras. Not only was it great fun, but as you can see from the pictures, some beautiful pieces were made by our residents. What talent we have here in the Áras!

Mile buíochas do Martha agus maith sibh chuile dhuine a ghlan páirt sa togra seo. Tá an Áras maisithe go hálainn de bharr an obair iontach a déanadh le linn Féile Bealtaine! Nár laga Dia sibh.

Martha Williamson
Havin' a Blasta
Thanks to everyone who came to supported our ‘BLASTA’ event this spring. A big crowd gathered together for chef, Eric Hamels, cookery demonstration which was most enjoyable and informative. We have no excuses now! Well done, Eric, and thank you for the wonderful demonstration.

A huge thank you also to relatives and friends of the Áras (you all know who you are!) who brought in their own home made recipes for tasting on the night - delicious!!! Needless to say, nobody went home hungry! And finally, a very big thank you to Aodán Mac Donncha, management and staff of the Áras who helped out in the run-up to and on the night itself - always ready to help out at these events - your help and support is much appreciated. Nár laga Dia sibh

A recipe booklet was produced using the recipes and if anybody would like a copy of this booklet, please contact me at the Áras or through the Cairde An Áras Facebook page.

Áras receives Gold Award for Excellence
We were delighted to be awarded the Gold Award for Excellence in Accommodation at the Irish Accommodation Services Institute (IASI) Awards in the Westport Hotel, Co. Mayo earlier this year. The awards recognise exceptional standards in hygiene and cleanliness. Well done to Laszlo and all of the Áras team on this wonderful achievement. The fruits of their labour are to be seen each day in the Áras. Comhgáirdiúis libh ar fad as an éacht seo a bhaint amach. Maith sibh!!!!!

• The Áras has achieved accreditation as a Sonas Registered Centre for dementia care. Well done to Katie and all the members of the Care Team, particularly those who have successfully trained as Sonas Licensed Practitioners!!!

Cuairt ar an Spidéal
Tá sé ina Shamhradh!!!! :) Mar chuáid de cheiliúradh Féile Bealtaine, thug roint cónaitheoirí ón Áras cuairt ar an mbaile beag, An Spidéal, inniu. B’iontach an ócáid é seo d’ár gcónaitheoirí agus don fhloireann a bhí in éindigh leo. Chaith muid seal ag an trá (An Prom) agus ag an Sean Chéibh, áit ar bhain muid an-sásamh go deo as uachtar reoite nó dó! Ansin ar aghaidh linn go dtí an Séipéal le coimhle a lasadh d’ár mhuintir agus cairde go léir.

Lá Fhéile Pádraig sa Spidéal
Ghlac foireann agus roint cónaitheoirí an Áras páirt i bParáid Lá Fhéile Pádraig sa Spidéal inniu agus b’iontach an ócáid a bhí ann. Mile buíochas don té an d’eagraigh an ócáid seo - an-obair curtha is-teach ag an gCoiste agus fair plé do na grúpaí agus bainiste ar fad a ghlach páirt. Is iontach an headh síbhh!!!!!!!
Pictured: Staff members Sinead Murphy, Nancy Mullen, Fionaughuala Folan and Dearbhla Thornton

Congratulations!
Congratulations to Bertie and Naomi on their engagement!
Hollywood for a day
The Áras became Hollywood’ for a day earlier this year!!! The latest ‘Jack Taylor’ series was being filmed in Galway and the Áras was chosen as a location for one of the storylines.

Approx 25 actors/production crew from Táillíúir Films Ltd., c/o Telegaïe Teoranta, joined us for the morning to shoot scenes for this latest series. Watch out especially for two rising stars from the Áras, Sinead Murphy and Nancy Mullen!! This series is based on the well known figure of Jack Taylor which was written by our own acclaimed Galway novelist, Ken Bruen, who we were fortunate enough to meet when his Mother spent some time in the Áras. This latest series will be broadcast on Netflix and on German TV Channel, ZDF.

We wish Táillíúir Films Ltd. and Telegaïe the very best of luck with this latest series. It was a pleasure working with you all, even if it was for only a day!!

Furbo 1916 remembrance garden
As part of the 1916 commemorations a Remembrance Garden was created in Furbo by the Furbo Tidy Towns Committee. The garden in Furbo village contains a statue of an Easter Lilly by sculpture Mick Wilkins and a carved copy of the 1916 proclamation.

Pat, Matron of the Áras unveiled the statue of the Easter Lilly at the opening of the Garden during the summer. Pat, who is the Great-Granddaughter of James Connolly, said she was honoured to be invited to officially open the garden by the Tidy Towns Committee who organised this project as part of the 1916-2016 celebrations.

“I think it was a lovely thing for them to do to make a garden of remembrance there. It’s a nice peaceful place to sit and look. It was a nice honour to be involved with the opening.

“The remembrance garden is a great credit to a small community. It was a community project and I think well done to the committee who saw it through; it’ll be there forever, captured in stone.”

Pat was at the official commemorations at Arbour Hill in 1966, for the 50th anniversary of the rising, with her grandmother Ina, James Connolly’s daughter, who was a teenager when her father was executed. Pat says that Ina frequently spoke about her father.

“James Connolly came from a very poor background and that was his main interest really: fighting for the poor. He was involved in the unions and was very much involved in women’s rights. Ina was always upset when she talked about the Rising. He was a good family man and his children were all very fond of him.”

Pat tells the story of James Connolly’s visit with his family, the night before his execution. His wife Lillie was distraught at his impending execution saying: “Oh but your beautiful life James, your beautiful life.” To which James Connolly replied: “But wasn’t it a full life Lillie and isn’t this a good end.”