



 **News from the
NATIONAL MILLENNIUM COMMITTEE**

Issue 3 March 2000

CONTENTS

- [LASTING LEGACIES](#)
- [MILLENNIUM EVE](#)
- [CHILDREN'S HOUR £3M BOOST](#)
- [WORK ON LIGHTKEEPERS HOUSES UNDERWAY](#)
- [IRISH WHEELCHAIR ASSOCIATION](#)
- [BATTLE OF BOYNE SITE DEDICATED TO PEACE AND UNDERSTANDING](#)
- [MILLENNIUM SITE A 'BIG HIT'](#)
- [SHARING IN THE MILLENNIUM MILLIONS](#)
- [COUNTY BY COUNTY GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN 2000](#)
- [LIVING GIFTS FOR NEW MILLENNIUM](#)
- [£1M HOSTEL WILL AID PATIENT RECOVERY](#)
- [THE SAMARITANS](#)
- [MAYO'S UNIQUE OAK PLANTING](#)
- [FOOTPRINTS FROM THE SECOND MILLENNIUM](#)
- [WHAT THE MEDIA SAY](#)
- [MILLENNIUM PIANO COMPETITION](#)
- ['LIFFEY OF LIGHTS' ILLUMINATES CITY FOR NEW MILLENNIUM](#)
- [EXTRACT FROM QUESTION TIME IN THE DAIL 16/2/2000](#)
- [100 YEARS IN 365 DAYS \(RTE\)](#)
- [NEW LOOK FOR CORK OPERA HOUSE](#)
- [A LIGHT OF HOPE FROM OMAGH FLAME](#)
- [NATIONAL MILLENNIUM COMMITTEE](#)
- [ATHSHLOINNI - RECLAIM YOUR NAME](#)
- [THE PEOPLES' MILLENNIUM FORESTS](#)
- [GLASS TO TRANSFORM BAKER PLACE - LIMERICK](#)
- [NATIONAL MILLENNIUM OFFICERS](#)

LASTING LEGACIES

The National Millennium Committee has allocated most of its £33 million in direct funding for hundreds of projects that will be lasting reminders of Ireland's marking of the Millennium.

During 2000, the official Millennium year, celebrations will continue building on the enormous success of the events and ceremonies on New Year's Eve. More than 60 national projects and 200 locally based initiatives will be completed. Almost 2,000 events will take place in cities, towns and villages across the country.

Most of the original budget of £30m has now been allocated. An additional £3m was secured in the Budget, for specific projects, on the recommendation of the National Millennium Committee. The total £33m Millennium package is being broadly allocated as follows:

- Environment projects - £9.5m
- Social projects - £7.0m
- Community projects - £6.0m
- Arts/Education projects - £3.8m
- Church/Christian projects - £2.0m
- Exiles project - £2.0m
- Millennium Celebration - £2.2m

The Millennium Committee is now considering outstanding projects to allow for allocation of remaining funds. This final task will ensure a broad thematic and geographic spread.

Five flagship projects have been selected.

The Peoples' Millennium Forests: A visionary project with more than 1.2 million native Irish trees, primarily oaks, planted in 13 forests around the country.

The Children's Hour: The Millennium Committee has already awarded £1m and, on its recommendation, a further £1m was allocated in the Budget.

Battle of the Boyne Site: The State has purchased the historic Battle of the Boyne site as a flagship Millennium project dedicated to fostering the message of peace and reconciliation on the entire island.

The Irish Landmark Trust: £500,000 for the restoration of historic Lightkeepers' houses on five of Ireland's headlands.

The Last Light Ceremony: A special Millennium Candle and Scroll, delivered to every household in the country, enabled people to join with family and friends on New Year's Eve to witness the last sunset of the 2nd Millennium.

MILLENNIUM EVE

According to Dunsink Observatory, the last sunset of the 2nd Millennium on the Irish mainland would take place at Dursey Head at 4.41 p.m. A local voluntary committee including Tadgh O'Sullivan put together a simple commemorative ceremony.

Sculptor Turlough Cowan from Youghal came up with an imaginative work to mark this unique occasion, a sundial mounted on a pillar made by Allihies stonemason Pat O'Sullivan. Overlooking Dursey Sound, the sundial has carved into its facestone a map of the locality and features a line that shows the exact position of the sun on the horizon at precisely 4.41 p.m.



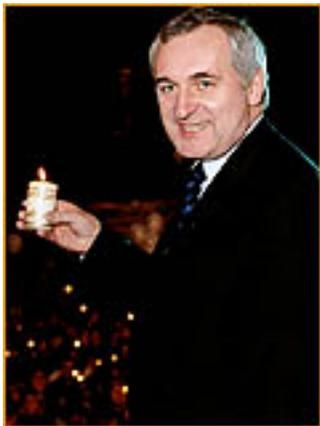
On New Year's Eve a dense, wet and wintry fog had shrouded the tip of the Beara Peninsula all day. Undeterred, a large crowd gathered by 4 p.m. The Allihies Parish Choir sang 'Ag Chriost an Sial'. Local Parish Priest Fr Liam Comer and Ms Maud Lewis, Church of Ireland Deacon, Castletownbere, each read a short Millennium prayer.

As Uilleann piper Brendan Ring from Bonane played 'An Aisling Geal' and the special Millennium candle was about to be lit, Nature produced a coup de theatre that even Hollywood might have considered over the top. The thick fog lifted and the heavy clouds parted to reveal the setting sun in all its splendour.

In the words of John L Sullivan, local teacher "The sun burst forth from behind the clouds. Three huge bonfires, two on Dursey Island and one at the foot of the cliffs below the sundial were lit as the last wisps of fog disappeared, driven away by the changing north-west winds.

The huge red sun descended slowly and majestically towards the sea and the horizon in the far southwest. It was a truly magical and almost miraculous sight, one that everyone present says they will never forget.

The sky remained totally clear until the last sliver of sun slipped beneath the Atlantic, far out beyond the Calf Rock as the assembled crowd clapped and cheered." The vivid and striking scene, captured live by RTE television and transmitted to many countries around the world, struck an almost mystical chord.



On the east coast the Last Light Ceremony had started 20 minutes earlier. In Dublin's Merrion Square more than 25,000 had gathered from 2.30 p.m. and danced to the timeless Kilfenora Ceildhe Band. At 4.15 p.m. An Taoiseach Bertie Ahern lit symbolic candles held by members of the armed, emergency and public services, specially

chosen to represent the "family" of Ireland.

An Taoiseach took his light from the Omagh Beacon which had been brought to Dublin earlier. He quoted Kerry writer Bryan McMahon; "Mention the word candlelight and a host of memories - sacred, romantic, sentimental, dramatic, joyous and sorrowful - bombard the mind."

"Candlelight", he said, "signifies direction, lighting Ireland's way to a new Millennium". In villages and towns all over Ireland people joined their families and friends either privately or in specially organised community events to light their Millennium candles.

At the same time, President Mary McAleese led a live television ceremony from Áras An Uachtaráin. The special Millennium Scrolls will bear the names of those who shared the moment and will become a treasured keepsake for our future generations. Outside government buildings, Merrion Square became a sea of flickering lights as the flame was passed from the stage, candle by candle through the hushed crowd. It was a solemn, moving and beautiful occasion. Ronan Keating sang an unaccompanied version of the haunting ballad 'She Moved Through the Fair'. Thousands of voices were lifted in a rendition of Phil Coulter's anthem, 'Ireland's Call'.



And for the younger members of the crowd, as afternoon faded into evening, the party became all the more special when Ronan Keating joined Brian Kennedy on stage for an impromptu pop session. Ireland's important international role as a peacekeeper abroad meant that some who wished to be home on this special day could not be. But they were not forgotten.

In the Lebanon, a special overseas enactment of Ireland's Ceremony of Light was held in 'Tor-on', a 900 year-old Crusader Castle in the village of Tibnin where Camp Shamrock, Headquarters of the Irish Battalion is based. Irish people living abroad also joined in the Last Light ceremony in their adopted homes. Sandra Fox, living in Naples, Florida, brought her Millennium candle from her Irish home. She and her husband Jay took it to the nearby beach to light as the sun set over the Gulf of Mexico. The unique symbolism of the Irish Last Light ceremony captured the imagination of many people worldwide as Mary Hatch of the Irish Women's Network of British Columbia wrote in a letter to the Irish Times.

CHILDREN'S HOUR £3M BOOST

The Children's Hour, the main Millennium fund-raising initiative, was given a significant boost of £2m from the National Millennium Committee. The Children's Hour is committed to helping more than 100 children's support organisations and charities. The five main beneficiaries are: Barnardos, Focus Ireland, Temple Street Children's Hospital, the National Youth Federation and The Children's Museum. The £2m donation was announced by Minister Seamus Brennan and Boyzone's Ronan Keating, of the National Millennium Committee.

The Committee directly donated £1m and, on it's recommendation, the Minister for Finance promised a further £1m. The Children's Hour hopes to raise about £5m. Seamus Brennan, expressing the Committee's pride in being associated with such a worthwhile initiative commented 'it is appropriate, going into the new Millennium that every child in Ireland should enjoy a happy, healthy, safe and fulfilling future.

The generosity of the Irish workforce can help the most vulnerable by donating millions of pounds'. Bill Cullen, Chairman of the Children's Hour said: 'Our slogan is simple and effective-Give an Hour, Change the Millennium'.

WORK ON LIGHTKEEPERS HOUSES UNDERWAY



The benefits of a £500,000 award from the National Millennium Committee for the rescue and restoration of historic Lightkeepers' houses around the coast are now being seen. The award to The Irish Landmark Trust was towards the restoration of houses on headlands at Galley Head, Co. Cork; Cromwell Point, Valentia Island, Co. Kerry; Loop Head, Co. Clare; St. John's Point, Co. Down and Black Head, Co. Antrim.

Work has already begun at Galley Head with the appointment of an architect whose initial design returns the two houses to their original symmetrical layout, each accommodating four to six visitors. An architect has also been appointed to the Blackhead Point properties, Co. Antrim.

It is hoped the Galley Head houses will be open for visitors by September 2000 and Blackhead Point soon afterwards. Galley Head was built in 1875 on the Dundeady Headland. It is 130 feet above the waves and encircled by a low white wall. It encapsulates the romantic attraction and mystery associated with lighthouses, perched on the edge of wild and beautiful headlands. Early reports of a sea serpent there are said to have inspired Ray Bradbury to write his story, 'The Foghorn', about a sea monster who falls in love with a Lighthouse.

The lighthouse and houses at Blackhead Point are built on a spectacular headland with stunning views out across the Irish Sea. The three houses contain interesting fragments of lighthouse paraphernalia, including the whistle pipe system used to wake up the next watch.

IRISH WHEELCHAIR ASSOCIATION

The Irish Wheelchair Association will receive almost £340,000 from the National Millennium Committee. A specialised National Mobility Centre will facilitate assessment in Ireland, of people with significant disabilities who currently must travel to Britain. The Centre, at Clane, Co. Kildare, will include a display area for equipment, offices, assessment rooms, a driving simulator, an independent living facility for long term residents and a roadway for driver assessment and tuition.

Almost £70,000 is going towards special awards evenings in all counties to mark the Millennium and the 40th anniversary of the Association.

Under the £3m Millennium Events Awards the Wheelchair Association received the following support for County Recognition events:

Carlow £2,000; Cavan £2,500; Clare £3,000; Cork £2,500; Donegal £2,000; Dublin City £500; Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown £4,000; Fingal £2,000; South Dublin £1,250; Galway City £3,000; Galway County £500; Kerry £1,500; Kildare £4,000; Kilkenny £300; Laois £1,250; Leitrim £2,000; Limerick £2,000; Longford £3,000; Louth £3,954; Mayo £1,000; Meath £4,000; Monaghan £1,000; Offaly £1,500; Roscommon £800; Sligo £1,100; Tipperary North £2,000; Tipperary South £2,500; Waterford City £3,500; Waterford County £1,700; Westmeath £2,000; Wexford £2,700; Wicklow £3,000.

Under the Millennium Recognition Awards the Association in Westmeath is receiving £20,000 for a specially adapted vehicle for wheelchair users in remote rural areas.

BATTLE OF BOYNE SITE DEDICATED TO PEACE AND UNDERSTANDING

The Battle of the Boyne in 1690, the biggest battle fought on Irish soil, shaped the political nature of Ireland.

A new era, dedicated to fostering a greater understanding of the historic battle in the context of reconciliation and mutual understanding, has now begun. The State purchased the 550 acre site at Oldbridge, mid way between Drogheda and Slane.

The National Millennium Committee is donating £500,000 towards the cost of Phase One of the development and is one of its' flagship projects. The Chairman of the National Millennium Committee, Minister Seamus Brennan T.D. said the project will be dedicated to fostering the message of peace and reconciliation on the island.

'This is a most appropriate gesture as we come to the end of a century and a Millennium. The engagement at the Boyne in 1690 brought divisions, bitterness and bloodshed. Now we are embracing a new relationship and it is important for future generations that we preserve this site and explain its enormous historical significance, as part of the healing process.

It must become a source of learning so that we can build a peaceful future for all'. An Taoiseach, Mr. Bertie Ahern T.D. has spoken of the 'great historical significance of the Boyne site to all citizens, but particularly to those of the unionist tradition. I believe that, if the site is presented sensitively, the divisions of the 17th century can be explained in a way that will help foster reconciliation and mutual understanding in the 21st century'.

MILLENNIUM SITE A BIG 'HIT'

The National Millennium Committee website: www.2000ireland.ie is enormously popular. Since August, 1999 to date there have been over 750,000 'hits' on the site. The site is the most comprehensive guide to all events organised for the Millennium. Travel/tourism information can be accessed through Bord Failte's main information number - 1850 230330. The site allows direct input details of events being organised. It feature all editions of the Millennium Committee newsletter, press releases issued and a comprehensive round-up of coverage in the regional newspapers.

SHARING IN THE MILLENNIUM MILLIONS

Overall the National Millennium Committee secured £33m in direct funding. It is being broadly allocated as follows:

Environment projects £9.5m
Social projects 7.0m
Community projects 6.0m
Arts/Education projects £3.8m
Church/Christian projects £2.0m
Exiles projects £2.0
Millennium celebrations £2.2m

ENVIRONMENT PROJECTS

¥ £2m - The People's Millennium Forests. Planting of a native Irish tree in the name of every household in the country.

¥ £1.5m - The River Liffey Boardwalk will run from O'Connell Bridge to Capel Street Bridge.

¥ £1.1m - Permanent illumination of the most prominent bridges in cities of Dublin, Cork and Limerick.

¥ £1m - Galway Millennium Bridge and Children's Park, both in Galway City.

¥ £850,000 - Waterford Clyde Wharf Plaza will create an outdoor performance area and recreational amenity space.

¥ £600,000 - Limerick City projects include: the redevelopment of the Tait Monument at Baker Place.

¥ £500,000 - towards purchase symbolic and historic Battle of the Boyne site in project dedicated to fostering the message of peace; To the Irish Landmark Trust for the rescue and restoration of historic Lightkeepers' houses; New Millennium footbridge spanning the River Lee between Cornmarket Street and Popes Quay.

¥ £150,000 - GreenTown 2000 Awards initiative to encourage towns and villages to 'go green' by developing projects at local level.

¥ £100,000 - National Field Study Centre, Co. Sligo as location for local archaeological and social studies; Athlone Millennium Park a major recreational and sporting facility for Athlone town; £100,000 - Development of Roscommon Millennium Park.

¥ £80,000 - Tallaght Millennium Plaza in Tallaght town centre.

¥ £75,000 - Towards preserving landscape in conjunction with Irish Farmers Association.

¥ £60,000 - Dawn Oak 2000 involved the planting of 2000 in Balla, Co. Mayo.

¥ £50,000 - Reintroduction of the Golden Eagles to Ireland almost a century after they

were hunted to extinction; Roscommon Millennium Town Park. The development of a recreational and amenity area around the Roscommon Castle area of the town; Restoration work to Woodstock Gardens, Co. Kilkenny.

SOCIAL PROJECTS

¥ £2m - The Children's Hour fund-raising initiative.

¥ £1m - National Rehabilitation Hospital, Dun Laoghaire to establish a hostel for visiting families of patients and for use by post-operative patients.

¥ £750,000 - S.H.A.R.E. in Cork towards a day care centre for the elderly.

¥ £400,000 - Gascoigne Home for elderly in Dublin. The flagship project of the Church of Ireland it will provide a new home for elderly with 44 beds.

¥ £250,000 - St. Vincent de Paul to develop site it owns at Mountjoy Square as a sports facility and community resource centre; Irish Wheelchair Association for a national mobility assessment centre at Clane, Co. Kildare.

¥ £210,000 - Simon Community for refurbishment of centres in Dublin, Cork, Galway and Dundalk.

¥ £200,000 - Irish Hospice Foundation - £100,000 for Whoseday Book and £100,000 for Donegal hospice building project.

¥ £150,000 - Millennium Cottage, Barretstown Castle. To provide another cottage for Barretstown Gang Camp which provides therapeutic recreation to seriously ill children.

¥ £100,000 - Children's Centre, Stillorgan. A major Church of Ireland project is designed to meet the daily needs of children 2-12 years.

¥ £60,000 - The Samaritans for awareness campaign and details of support services .

¥ £50,000 - Concern for specific projects relating to recruitment and increased safety for aid workers; GOAL for specific projects relating to recruitment and increased safety for aid workers.

¥ £100,000 - National Prototype Youth Centre, Killarney. It will provide residential training and conference facilities for national and international youth groups.

¥ £25,000 - The Jo Jo Dullard Memorial Trust plans to erect a sculpture in recognition of missing persons in the grounds of Kilkenny Castle.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROJECTS

¥ £3m - Millennium Events Awards: a total of 1, 959 events and projects are to be funded between now and the end of the year 2000 the following: Carlow-36, Cavan-66, Clare-57, Cork City-49, Cork County-5, Donegal-60, Dublin City-145, Dublin South-46, Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown-33, Fingal-43, Galway City-37, Galway County-69, Kerry-92, Kildare-29, Kilkenny-83, Laois-44, Leitrim-74, Limerick City-33, Limerick County-47, Longford-55, Louth-40, Mayo-77, Meath-37, Monaghan-53, Offaly-53, Roscommon-93, Sligo-84, Tipperary North-69, Tipperary South-39, Waterford City-31, Waterford County-83, Westmeath-34, Wexford-66 and Wicklow-46.

¥ £3m - Millennium Recognition Awards: Original awards system for supporting locally based projects. Awards of up to £75,000 have been made to 193 applicants as follows: Dublin-40, Cork-16, Galway-14, Kerry and Limerick-9 each, Clare and Kilkenny-7 each, Wicklow, Tipperary, Waterford, Mayo, Sligo and Donegal-6 each, Westmeath, Kildare, Meath, Leitrim, Roscommon and Louth-5 each, Longford, Monaghan, Offaly and Wexford-4 each, Carlow, Cavan and Laois-3 each.

¥ £150,000 - GreenTown 2000: An awards initiative to encourage towns and villages to 'go green' by developing in a practical, hands-on way projects that promote the concept of environmental sustainability at local level. More than 700 towns and villages will be eligible to enter for the awards competition which will be run over the years 1999 and 2000. ARTS,

EDUCATION & CULTURAL PROJECTS

¥ £1m - Millennium Festivals Ltd. to promote particular events.

¥ £700,000 - Towards production of TV spectacular of MESSIAH XXI For a New Millennium.

¥ £500,000 - Refurbishment of front-of -house area of Gaiety Theatre; Provision of

mobile cinema bringing film and arts to remote rural area.

¥ £450,000 - New frontage for Cork Opera House and a Millennium plaza.

¥ £300,000 - Towards relocation of Francis Bacon studio in Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery.

¥ £250,000 - To redevelop arts/theatre facilities in LarCon Centre, Liberty Hall.

¥ £200,000 - M'laois na Gaeltachta, a multimedia illustrated encyclopaedia of the Gaeltacht.

¥ £175,000 - Lartigue Mono-Rail Restoration, Listowel, Co. Kerry, a section of a unique rail service which ran between Listowel and Ballybunion.

¥ £150,000 - RTE educational CD Rom for schools with interactive history of Ireland.

¥ £100,000 - Towards Irish Origins, a genetic history and geography of Ireland.

¥ £80,000 - The 23 volume Millennium Book.

¥ £73,000 - An exhibition of Christian Architecture on the island of Ireland.

¥ £70,000 - Allahies Mine Museum in West Cork in old copper mines.

¥ £50,000 - The Ark children's theatre for events devised to mark the Millennium.

¥ £43,000 - The Island Journey Millennium Concerts to be held North and South.

¥ £25,000 - To develop of Wicklow film trail.

¥ £15,000 - "Dublin 2000-A Celebration", a 90 minute musical composition.

¥ £10,000 - AXA Dublin International Piano Competition; RIAM Concert Series.

CHURCH/CHRISTIAN PROJECTS

¥ £258,000 - Floodlighting of churches, Christian monuments and heritage sites.

¥ £250,000 - Glendalough 2000 to reinstate famous location as centre of Christian pilgrimage; Croagh Patrick Millennium Peace Park to be developed as an area of peace and reflection.

¥ £200,000 - new bells, restoration of old bells and bell towers.

¥ £100,000 - St. Fin Barr's Cathedral, Cork for developing of crypt as interpretative centre; For erection of Mayo Millennium Spire in Ballyhaunis.

¥ £60,000 - An exhibition of Christian architecture, a North/South joint project.

¥ £50,000 - Upgrade walks based on routes to ancient pilgrim sites in number of counties.

¥ £35,000 - Ecumenical celebration for the new Millennium in National Concert Hall.

¥ £30,000 - Statue of St. Patrick on St. Patrick's Purgatory, Lough Derg, Co. Donegal; Bridge of Peace , a North/South project to reaffirm the goodwill people the peoples.

DIASPORA PROJECT

¥ £2m - Towards the Irish World Heritage Centre, Manchester in recognition of the sacrifice and contribution world-wide of the Irish Diaspora

CELEBRATING THE MILLENNIUM

¥ £1.4m - The Last Light ceremony which involved delivering a candle and scroll to 1.28 million homes in the country.

¥ £600,000 - New Years Eve celebrations, concerts and fireworks.

¥ £40,000 - National safety campaign concentrating on roads and fire safety over the Millennium period.

COUNTY BY COUNTY GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN 2000

CARLOW: Mar - Millennium Day Care Reception in Tullow to recognise contribution of senior citizens. May - Myshall "Millennium Mural" involving 101 school children Jun - Carlow "Eigse Millennium" Arts Festival (9-18) - "Millennium Play-house", converting pig house in Clonegal village to children's play area - Muinebheag Millennium River Music Festival - Carlow Choral Society present "Elijah 2000-Mendelssohn for the Millennium" (17-18).

CAVAN: Mar - Lavey Community Group show to celebrate Millennium through song, dance and comedy (16-18) - Historical pageant depicting 2000 years of Cavan history, Ballyjamesduff (27) - Choral Orchestral concert in St. Patrick's College, Cavan (25th). May - Erne Rally-includes boat rally, racing and free water rides -Belturbet (May 26-June 5). Jun - Reconstruction of Virginia's fair day and practices (25). Aug - Horse Drawn to Horse Power, a Millennium of wheel transport, Knockbridge (27).

CLARE: May - New County Museum in Ennis opens - Exhibition on last 150 years in East Clare, Feakle. Jun - Floating Theatre Co. present "The Millennium Voyage", Mountshannon. Jul - Theatrical production in memory of poet Brian Merriman (6-8) - Classical music festival, Killaloe (19-23). Sep - History of Local Government in Co. Clare 1899-1999(1)

CORK CITY: Apr - Corcadorca Theatre Company large scale outdoor Passion Play, St. Patrick's Hill (21st). Jun - 2000 set dancers perform celebration set, Grand Parade (23rd) - Bereaved Parents erect memorial water fountain - Street show portraying Cork down the years, Inner City (23rd). Dec - Ceremony to honour famous sons and daughters of city, City Hall.

Cork COUNTY: Mar - St Patrick's Millennium Parade Bantry (17th) - St. Patrick's Weekend Festival including Philadelphia Woodland String Band, Kinsale & UDC erecting sculpture based on theme of birds - Kilbrittain Tidy Towns erecting sundial at end of the village. Apr - Rahan Historical group compiling book on area for publication. May - Celebration to launch newly restored "Sprigging School", Rathbarry - Tower Community building a replica tower at entrance to the village green

DONEGAL: Mar - Rossnowlagh Orange Order Millennium video. Inishowen Traditional Singers Circle large scale music/drama event (24-27) - People of the Century Millennium night, Letterkenny. Apr - Preamhacha Milaoise (Millennium Roots)-recording the history/culture of Gaoth Dobhair, Easter Week 2000. Jun - Rossnowlagh Church of

Ireland Millennium Wild Flower Festival - Doherty Clan reunion for Millennium, Inishowen 23 Ð 7 July). Jul - Earagail Arts Festival, (14-16) at three locations. Aug - Clonmany community hold 10 open air concerts to welcome emigrants home, (6-13)

DUBLIN CITY: Mar - Irish National Youth Ballet evening of dance and music, three venues, (16-19). May - Salvation Army Millennium Concert for homeless, (6) - Waterways of Ireland "Two Canal Millennium Rally" (13-28). Jul - Millennium Rose Festival, St. Anne's Park, Clontarf (15-16) - Dublin Steel Orchestra celebrate Latin America week (9) - Ballyfermot Grand Canal festival. Aug - Dublin Youth Theatre One Act Festival, 20 -2 Sep). Sep - Millennium Liffey Swim, (2) Oct - Cabra Youth Millennium Expedition, Nepal 2000, 19 Ð9 Nov) - Drama League of Ireland celebration of Dublin wit.

Dublin SOUTH: Feb - Rathfarnham Concert Band prom type concert (Rathgar). Apr - Irish Veteran and Vintage Motor Cycle Club Millennium Motor Cycle Show - Dublin Youth Orchestra concert involving four orchestras - Clondalkin Historical Society book "A Walk Through the Past", (and May). May - Rathfarnham Concert Band prom type concert (Tallaght). Jun - Tallaght Travellers Youth Service five day event. Jul - Dodder Park Valley Residents present Riverdance 2000.

Dublin FINGAL: Mar - Opening of Seamus Ennis Centre in the Naul. Jun - Exhibition of history of Howth in Martello Tower - Rush Dramatic Society present Shakespeare on the Millbank. Apr - Portmarnock Parish Messiah for the Millennium - Lusk Tidy Towns Millennium Easter card - Loughshinny Millennium walking trail. May - Baldoyle Family Resource Services Millennium Festival. Aug - Garristown Historical Society publication of Millennium Book. Sep - Swords Pride of Place festival

Dublin DUN LAOGHAIRE/RATHDOWN May - Balally parish organising celebration bringing together all Christian denominations and religious faiths (14). No Date - Event involving pageant, audio, visual and music to celebrate centenary of Eaton Square, Monkstown - Weekend of Chamber Music featuring an international String Quartet, Dalkey - Swim Ireland organised Dun Laoghaire Harbour Race which has cultural, social and sporting significance - Cill Inion Churchyard Group rehabilitate 6th century graveyard and ruined church - Shankill Bowling Club opening of all weather bowling green - Good Shepard Primary School, Churchtown plan special Millennium Garden/Pond - Kilcross residents Association to introduce young people to video and film making - Publication by Ballinteer Family History of a history of the "Big Houses" in the area.

GALWAY CITY: Mar - Millennium Youth Drama festival, (1st) Ð Colaiste Einde exhibition and sale of arts and crafts, (17-19) - Seachtain na Gaeilge, throughout city (10-17). Apr - Knocknacarra Theatre Society present passion play (16-19) - Ballybane Youth Development variety show, (15-16) - Millennium Music Movie, Eyre Square Centre, (1-8). Jun - Galway Millennium Music Showcase - Renmore weekend festival (2-4). Oct - Millennium Festival of medieval plays. Autumn - Festival of Lady Gregory plays.

GALWAY COUNTY: Mar - Launch of Travellers Folklore Stories and Song, Tuam - Millennium Pageant of Children's Literature, Lisheenkle, Oranmore. Apr - Literature and Music festival, Letterfrack. Jun - Floating Theatre Company Millennium Voyage, Ballinasloe - Millennium production of Synge's Plays, Inis Meain - Oranmore two-day walking festival (9-11) - All Irish speaking Millennium pilgrimage, Loudres (21). Jul - Roundstone Open Arts Week (1-9). Aug - Athenry Millennium Festival (12-15). Sep - Lady Gregory Autumn Gathering, Gort, September 2000. Dec - Glenamaddy Millennium Festival, (5).

KERRY: Mar - International Women's conference, Tralee (2-4). Apr - "Eigse na Milaoise" on honour of Dr. Seþn O SŽileabhain (1903-1996) (28-May 1). May - Clonfert to Mount

Brandon Millennium walk (5-16). Jun - History of lives in Inch since 13th Century (29) - Skellig Region Walking Festival, Caherciveen - Millennium Homecoming Festival, Brosna (24-26). Aug - Puck Fair, Kilorglin (10-12) - Sean McCarthy Memorial Weekend International Ballad Festival, Lixnaw (4-7). Nov - A celebration of Traveller Culture, Tralee. Dec - Publish Knocknagoshel Millennium Book (1). All Year - Christy Brown centre Millennium Mobility Project, Tralee.

KILDARE: Apr - Social history of Leixlip (Easter). May - Friends of Elderly recognition awards for elderly, Monasterevin (5) - Bealtaine Millennium Festival, Newbridge (1). Jun - Irish Wheelchair Association awards to those involved in disability, Kildare and Dublin (and Nov) - Kildare Youth Services arts event of work of young people (and Jul) - T'r na M—na, Nass ecumenical pageant (24) - KARE Millennium Ball to celebrate contribution of voluntary workers, Newbridge.

KILKENNY: Mar - Jubilee Pilgrimage through Diocese of Ossory - Staging of Piana Millennium Concert in Watergate Theatre (15). Apr - Developing of riverside walk from Inistioge village. May - Ballyragget Community to erect Jonathan Swift Sculpture at Swift Heath (to September) - Butler Gallery Exhibition of new work of artist Eamon O'Kane (20 - 25 June) - Establishing a blue bell garden, Castlecomer Demesne. Jun - Brennan Clan reunion, Castlecomer (23-25). Aug - Millennium Festival of hurling, Black and Whites GAA Club (4-7) - "Strollers 2000", a touring theatre spectacular, Barnstorm. Nov - Clontubrid millennium group to convert waste ground into garden.

LAOIS: Apr - Millennium Passion play, Ballylinan (9 & eight other dates). May - Launch of River Barrow Walk Project, Portarlinton (29) - Abbeyleix Jubilee 2000 ecumenical open air pageant (7). Jun - Plan to restore St. Abban's Well, Arles (4). Jul - Opening of Millennium Memorial Garden over festival weekend, Durrow (31 - 7 Aug). Sep - Unveiling of Millennium Plaque and services to recognise achievements of National Ploughing Championships, Athy (26-28). Oct - Weekend of events to celebrate contribution of saints and religious to county, Abbeyleix (20-21).

LEITRIM: Spring - Selection and presentation of Leitrim GAA team of the Millennium. Mar - Breffini Players present a Millennium production of "Fiddler on the Roof" - Mohill Millennium Storytelling (17) - Drumshambo Millennium Committee present Millennium Pageant (17). Apr - The Co. Leitrim Millennium Fleadh Ceol , Drumshambo 29 to 1st May). Summer - Art and sculpture exhibition of local artists, Ballinamore. Jun - Publication of photographs of "Leitrim at the Millennium" (and July). Jul - Joe Mooney Summer School of master classes in traditional music and song (15-23). Oct - Beeznee Theatre Company presents "Lovely Leitrim", a play dealing with immigration, death and redemption, at venues in UK - "Joseph and His Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" (29 to 5th Nov). Sep - Shannon Erne Guild of Folk Artists show as culmination of countrywide folk art education programme, Ballinamore (and Oct). All Year - Border Area Cinema showcasing of "Movies of the Millennium".

LIMERICK CITY: Apr - St. Mary's Parish community tapestry based on parish heritage - Limerick South City recognition of youth achievement and contribution of senior citizens. May - Limerick Youth Services Millennium Dance Project - Limerick School of Art and Design Millennium Design Show. Jun - Sunflower project on community development through the ages, Moycross. Jul - Youth Musical Theatre Summer School, University Concert Hall.

LIMERICK COUNTY: Mar - Friarsgate Theatre launch of Millennium Book (10-11). Apr - Millennium Festival with medieval banners, Rathkeale (29-30) - ICA Millennium "Knees Up" in celebration of ICA sisterhood (10) - Extravaganza of workshops with drama, drums, mask making and dance, Foynes (28-30) - Irish Chamber Orchestra series of Millennium Family Concerts, (4 and 4 May). Jun - Chamber Music Festival, University of Limerick (and Jul) - Oola weekend for senior citizens to honour their contribution. Jul -

Pallasgreen GAA erect monument to world and Olympic hammer thrower Paddy Ryan (17). All Year - Glenbrohane Millennium parish survey and restoration of church (to July).

LONGFORD: Spring - Longford Historical Society exhibition of photographs and post cards, County Library. Mar - Lanesboro's first St. Patrick's Day parade with parade of boats on River Shannon (17) - Millennium Concert featuring Finbarr Wright and Michelle Sheridan, St. Mel's Cathedral. Apr - International Boat Fishing competition, Lough Gowna (30 to 1 May) - Planting of 1,300 Irish oak trees to take place in Millennium garden, Dromard - Kenagh Exhibition of arts, crafts and old photographs - Opening of Longford ICA's new Women's Centre, Longford town. Jul - Ballymahon Music Festival, street pageant and parade (9) - Farrell Clan Rally (10-16). No Date - Sean N—s Workshop conducted by SŽamus MacMathuna during Fleadh Ceoil, Granard.

LOUTH: Mar - Theatrical presentation by more than 100 young people from Drogheda area, St. Mary's Presbytery. Jul - Design and construction of memorial Millennium garden, Louth village. Oct - Darver Historical Research group launch video of the local area, Dromiskin. No Date - Assistance to Red Cross Society towards purchase of bus to carry elderly in Carlingford area to and from functions - Special Millennium exhibition of "Agriculture Through the Ages" at annual Dundalk Agriculture Show - Publication of "Dundalk's Millennium Book" and its presentation to primary school children - Erection of stylised sundial with circular paved area in Blackrock - Creation of a Millennium Sculpture Garden in grounds of St. Vincent's School, Dundalk.

MAYO: Spring - Opening of nature reserve along banks of River Dee, Crossmolina. May - Mayo Associations World-Wide Millennium Convention (26-28). Jun - Mayo Association (Dublin) to bring 20 emigrants who have fallen on hard times home to county for holidays - Free admission to be offered to every household in county to visit the county museums (3-5) - Millennium Fun day for 194 primary schools at 20 venues (14). Jul - Exhibition and lectures relating to heritage, history and culture of Ardagh (27-30) - Louisburgh Heritage Day (15). Aug - Ceol na Locha concert of traditional music featuring Matt Molloy, Sharon Shannon and Michael O Domhaill (16) - Unique festival to revive tradition and way of life of donkey, Lahardane (11-13). Sep - Day long musical celebration "The Wind Quintet Millennium Day", Straide (16).

MEATH: Spring - Forum on 'Our Town in the New Millennium' hosted in Ashbourne. Easter - Art and craft classes for disadvantaged children, Trim, Easter. Summer - Twelve performances throughout county in 2000 of 'A Galway Girl' by Meaths Millennium Mobile Mealttime Theatre: Millennium Summer Solstice Festival includes currach voyage along the Boyne, Donore. May - Irish Cultural Centre, Kells plans 'Meath Music at the Millennium project': Millennium Leisure Cycle festival, Slane (26-28). No Date - Publication of book to celebrate Moynalty to include photos of everyone in parish - Meath Tourism project involving all schools in county in a Limerick writing competition with theme of Meath and the Millennium - Millennium garden entitled "Tir na n-Og" to be developed and maintained by children in Rath Cairn.

MONAGHAN: Mar - Millennium events to run as part of Castleblaney Drama Festival (2-11) - Monaghan International Gymnastics Show (25). Apr - A Millennium Walk planned to introduce new walking trails, Knockatallon (9) - Peace Garden planned for Castleblaney: Farney Youth Group plan week long workshop to design and complete Millennium Mosaic, April 2000. May - Clones Millennium Laughter Festival over five days. Jun - Celebration of Patrick Kavanagh weekend entitled 'Celtic Spirituality of the Millennium', Inniskeen - Castleblaney Community Enterprise competition for invention that will contribute to peoples well being - Gaelscoil Ultain present Millennium concert as gaeilge with music, song and dance (17). Aug - Mass at Poll an Aifrinn, Eshcloghfin with access to Mass Rock (13). Sep - Castleblaney Players present a community play based on the life of Christ (and November) - Harvest Time Blues present Blues Festival.

OFFALY: Mar - COSMOS 2000 Astronomical All Ireland Festival, Tullamore (3-5) - Tullamore Gramophone Society present Music of the Millennium (23 & 30 and other dates). Apr - Millennium Puppet Festival, Birr (28-30) - Clara Musical Society present George Gershwin's Crazy for You and exhibition on societies history. May - Floating Theatre Co. present Millennium Voyage, Edenderry and Ferbane, (and June) - Rahan Comhaltas Ceolteoirí Eireann present the Millennium Archival Exhibition of audio and visual material (13-14). Jun - Two day event centring on Edenderry Canal and Harbour - Millennium Voices, a choral spectacular featuring 300 primary school children, Birr. Aug - Birr Festival of Flowers (18-22). Sep - Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise Great Jubilee Pageant for Pattern Day (17). No Date - Birdwatch Ireland (Midlands Branch) to produce a Millennium farmland birds poster.

ROSCOMMON: Mar - Millennium sensory garden for people with learning disabilities to be opened at Brothers of Charity Respite Centre. Apr - Boyle Arts Festival, May 2000: Strokestown Millennium Poetry Festival (28-30). May - Josie McDermott Memorial Festival, Ballyfarnon (Bank Holiday Weekend) - Percy French Society Millennium cross Border cultural weekend, Roscommon (5-7). Jun - Official opening of Ballaghadreen Day Care Centre for Elderly. Jul - Cloonbonniffe Millennium Parish booklet with all who lived in parish 1900-1999 (and Aug)- Eileen íg Millennium Festival. Ballintubber - Country and Western Millennium Carnival, Boyle (10-13) - Ballaghaderreen 2000 Celebration Exhibition (and August) - RosFest 2000 featuring street pageant and showcase of local talent, Roscommon town.

SLIGO: Mar - Sligo Heritage and Genealogy Society celebrate 300 years of genealogy (17-19) - Friends of Rosses Point to erect Millennium sculpture (10). Apr - Ox Mountains Development Company organising Millennium Walking Festival (14-16). Summer - Mullach Ruadh Development Group organise a celebration of Irish scientists, Skreen. May - Sligo Field Club, Ballymote publication of 'A Celebration of Sligo' (1) - Millennium Sports Jamboree, Sligo (to Sep) - Silver Apples Production stage play celebrating history of Sligo Abbey, Sligo (1-6). Jun - The Sligo Concert Band will give Millennium concerts (1-4) - Rockwood Rowing Club, Ballintogher organising Millennium Regatta on Lough Gill (and Jul) - Connacht Veteran Motor Club Millennium Car rally, Sligo (24-25). Aug - Millennium Yeats Summer Festival, Sligo (1-14). Nov - Sligo International Choir Festival (1-5).

TIPPERARY: Easter - Tipperary GAA to compile and publish collection of gaelic games ballads from county - Regional Youth service Millennium art workshop. Apr - Nenagh Singers Circle present 'A New Millennium of Singing Festival'. May - Millennium Book Fair and Literary event, Cashel (26-28). Jun - Rejuvenating of Multeen River environment by Milestone development Association - Anglican Diocese of Cashel "Celebration of Faith" (25). Aug - Medieval Millennium Pageant, Roscrea - Millennium 'Cailin Gaelach Festival', Ballinaclough - Gallowglass Theatre Company special production of "Gulliver's Travels", Clonmel. Sep - Diocese of Killaloe Jubilee Committee includes ecumenical boat trip on Shannon. No Date - Ned Kelly Millennium Committee to promote historical links between Kelly and Moyglass - Clogheen to erect town clock in belfry of community centre - Theatrical performances by young adults and teenagers, Cahir - Stained glass window to be installed in Lisronagh church - South Tipperary Arts Centre to establish music trust to provide tuition to primary school pupils.

WATERFORD CITY: Mar - Edmund Rice Choral and Musical Society present full scale production, "Maritana 2000", composed by Waterford man William Vincent Wallace (and Apr) - Millennium Family Concert by E.U. Chamber Orchestra (5) - Setting up of narrow gauge railway on disused track from Kilmeaden to Bilberry (17). Apr - Waterford City Choir give two performances of Brahms German requiem and Borcain's Polovtsian Dances (29-30). Summer - Waterford Youth Drama to develop young peoples theatre project. No Date - Waterford Healing Arts Trust to erect a water based, mobile

sculpture art work, Waterford Regional Hospital.

WATERFORD COUNTY: Spring - Dungarvan Alzheimer Group open sensory garden at St. John's Hospital (to Summer). Mar - Abbeyside Youth Choir to make commemorative tape, Dungarvan. Apr - Feile na nDeise weekend of Irish music, song and dance, Dungarvan (28 to 1 May). Summer - Floral display for Millennium in Ballinagoul, Ring. May - Event in Ballylaneen to commemorate poet Tadhg Gaelach O'Suilleabhain (14). Jun - Stradbally Millennium Book commemorating 100 years of history - Combined Dioceses Celebration of Faith, Waterford Inst. of Technology (25) - Waterford Museum Society to commemorate 'Copper Coast' at Bonmahon and Dunhill/Fenor Bog. Jul - Munster Fleadh Ceol, Lismore (21-23) - Millennium Motor Sport Weekend, Dungarvan (14-16). No Date - Knockanore community erect Millennium Cross in graveyard.

WESTMEATH: Mar - Floodlighting of Mullingar Cathedral (17). Jun - Colour catalogue and six colour postcards produced by local artists to be launched, Mullingar Arts Centre - Mullingar Festival with theme of 'Hope for the Millennium' (11). Jul - Publishing of Moate Millennium Book (and Aug) - Designation of Mass paths as part of Mullingar Parish Pilgrimage (23). Aug - A 'Moate Quakers millennium Celebration'. Sep - Extension to Little Theatre, Athlone (and Oct). Oct - St. Michael's Millennium Pattern Day on site of Mass Rock, Castletown Geoghan (1). No Date - Construction of Millennium monument entitled "Tranquillity-A New Beginning" in Moate.

WEXFORD: Mar - Photographic exhibition "Gorey Past and Present" - "Millennium Women's Month" at Wexford Arts Centre. Easter - Millennium Passion Play involving all the community, Camross. Apr - Wexford Children's Choir choral and percussion concert - Wexford Persons of the Millennium Exhibition, Wexford. May - Whitty Clan Gathering, Wexford (26-29) - Millennium Music and Song Festival, Rosslare (1). Jul - Memorial trail and garden based on maritime tradition, Kilmore Quay - Sand sculpturing exhibition, Cockleshell Arts Centre, Duncannon (7-16) - Wexford Millennium Storytelling festival, November: Ecumenical Flower Festival, Bunclody. Autumn - BirdWatch Ireland (Wexford Branch) launch Millennium Wetlands Birds poster. Aug - Kilmuckridge Mardi Gras. Sep - Launch of film "Paster's Gate" telling story of Hook Lighthouse.

WICKLOW: Mar - A Millennium Festival of New Music, Greystones Youth Orchestra (and Apr). Apr - Millennium Fisheries Folk Festival, Arklow (28 to 1 May). May - Publication of the 1838 Ordnance Survey letters for Wicklow, Roundwood - Major choral work, Verdi's Requiem, to be performed by choral groups from county, Bray and Arklow (20-21). Jul - Swimming races the 1.25 miles from Bray Harbour to Bray Head Hotel (1). Aug - Arklow Millennium Wall, a permanent exhibition of art photos, to be opened (Bank Holiday). Oct - Creative writing workshops in Bray and Wicklow primary schools as part of Oscar Wilde Autumn School (16-20) - Cine Art 2000 to provide platform for young film makers, Bray - Millennium Concert as part of Wicklow Regatta to feature Maelgwyn Male Voice Choir from Wales, Wicklow (30).

LIVING GIFTS FOR NEW MILLENNIUM

Struggling families in Third World countries will receive living gifts of dairy goats as a result of funding from the National Millennium Committee. One Irish dairy goat yields an average of four litres of milk per day enough to support a full family. Any additional milk can be sold to raise funds for schooling.

Limerick-based Bóthar group received £12,500 under the Millennium Recognition Awards towards the cost of transporting 100 goats to families in Northern Tanzania in January. The Millennium funding matched funds raised by John Garrett of Bóthar and Fr. Derek Leonard who set up a scheme within his parish of Raheen/Mungret/Creora in Limerick.

Fr. Leonard said it was the most moving experience of his life to witness the enormous impact that one dairy goat can have in improving a family's standard of living. Bóthar has so far sent 1,700 goats to Third World countries. Bóthar can be contacted at 99 O' Connell Street, Limerick.
Tel. 061 414142 www.bothar.ie

£ 1M HOSTEL WILL AID PATIENT RECOVERY

A £1m award has been made to the National Rehabilitation Hospital in Dun Laoghaire for building accommodation for families of recovering patients.

In its application to the National Millennium Committee the hospital said that a large number of patients who are victims of traumatic brain injury, stroke and spinal cord injury live outside Dublin so their families have considerable difficulties supporting patients in the major post trauma period.

At any one time in the hospital there are patients from all 26 counties being treated.

The new hostel, to be built adjacent to the hospital, will:

¥ Accommodate parents in the Paediatric Traumatic Brain Injury Unit to stay overnight.

¥ Allow families of patients with limited recovery time to learn skills required to support their relatives in the home setting.

¥ Provide accommodation for brain injury survivors who would benefit from rehabilitation services. The award of £1m was made in the Budget by the Minister for Finance in response to a recommendation from the National Millennium Committee.

THE SAMARITANS

Calls to the Samaritans increased by nearly 17% in January. A £60,000 grant from the Millennium office enabled the largest ever Irish Samaritan campaign to take place. This was aimed at increasing public awareness of the confidential emotional support available across the Millennium.

Calls to The Samaritans always rise at Christmas and the New Year but over the Millennium, even more contacts were expected with other support services closed for longer than usual. The campaign used slogans like "2000 MUCH?" and the new cartoon character adverts are designed to appeal to younger people, the group at highest risk of suicide.

The campaign started on Christmas Eve and continues well into 2000 with free space donated by media owners. The message was carried on all print and broadcast media as well as on a quarter million beermats, distributed to 114 pubs in Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Galway.

MAYO'S UNIQUE OAK PLANTING

Planting - not partying - occupied the people of Balla, Co. Mayo on 31st December, 1999. The town's own unique marking of the Millennium, Dawn Oak 2000, brought men, women and children to the local park to help plant 2,000 Irish oak trees starting on the stroke of midnight on New Years Eve.

The imaginative project, which received £60,000 in funding from the National Millennium Committee, proved to be a great attraction. About 100 had been expected but as the time for planting drew near a crowd of more than 600 assembled. The honour of planting the first tree went to the oldest citizen of Balla, Mattie Larkin (93), assisted by his grand nephew, John Larkin (14), a pupil of St. Joseph's School for the Blind in Dublin.

Three strong blows to the ancient drum of Balla then signalled the volunteers to begin planting the remaining 1,999 trees. Stephen Clancy, Chairman of Dawn Oak 2000 sums it up. "It is beyond doubt that it will be long remembered and talked about by all those who took part in the planting ceremony and those who attended. The story of the night of Dawn Oak 2000 will enter the folklore of Balla". Now the people of Balla are preparing their case for a place in the Guinness Book of Records for recognition of Dawn Oak 2000 as the first planting by a local community of 2000 oak trees for the new Millennium.

FOOTPRINTS FROM THE SECOND MILLENNIUM

The Millennium book, a 23 volume chronicle of the lives, hopes dreams and fears of our young generation, has been handed over to the National Library of Ireland. the library will preserve this manuscript work on behalf of the nation for future generations. The book is the work of over 2,000 Irish sturdents, all of whom set down their thoughts for the new millennium onto specially prepared paper which was then bound into the multi-volume manuscript. Late last year, in the presence of student representatives from each county, the book was handed over by President McAleese.

Millennium Committee Chairman, Minister Seamus Brennan TD and Committee Members Eithne Healy and Deirdre Purcell also attended. The project, the brain child of Deirdre Purcell, has been fully funded by the National Millennium Committee and is suported by the Department of Education, Science & Technology, RTE, the TUI, ASTI & INTO.

MILLENNIUM PIANO COMPETITION

For almost a dozen talented young Irish musicians there was little time at the last Christmas of the 20th century for partying.

The holiday passed in a blur of practice and then more practice.

Facing them on December 28 was the Millennium Preliminary Irish Round, for the AXA Dublin International Piano Competition 2000,

which takes place in May. The five pianists chosen in December

were Conor Linehan, Maria McGarry, David McNulty, Isabelle O'Connell and Peter Tuite.

Conor Linehan (28), is a graduate of Trinity College Dublin and is on the teaching staff of the RIAM.

Maria McGarry (22), a prolific prizewinner and with a First Class Honours Degree in Music performance, is currently studying with Dr John O'Connor at the RIAM.

David McNulty (20), studies with Hugh Tinney. He recently performed in the RIAM Millennium Series of concerts, which are funded by the National Millennium Committee.

Isabelle O'Connell studied at the RIAM, and now studies at the Manhattan School of Music for a Masters Degree in Performance having been awarded Fulbright and John F Kennedy scholarships.

Peter Tuite is an Honours graduate in composition from Trinity College and recently won the Millennium RTE Musician of the Future title worth £7000.

The Dublin International Piano Competition is held every three years and is now recognised as one of the most prestigious events of its kind in the world. It is now a launching pad for successful international solo careers for its winners. This year the Competition's stature is further enhanced thanks to a substantial grant from the National Millennium Committee, which will allow it to develop its potential to help groom Irish talent for the international stage.

Irish competitors in the Dublin International Piano Competition are at a disadvantage compared to many of their overseas rivals, who have usually played with orchestras at their Conservatoires or colleges. Steps to level the playing field in this area. Max Levinson, winner of the 1997 Competition who will give a Masterclass to the Irish competitors to prepare them for working with an orchestra. This has been made possible by a special grant from the National Millennium Committee.

'LIFFEY OF LIGHTS' ILLUMINATES CITY FOR NEW MILLENNIUM

The night-time face of Dublin was changed forever at 6pm on New Year's Eve 1999. A new after-dark glow appeared on the 'Liffey of Lights' at Wood Quay, just 100 yards from the site where the city of Dublin was founded over 1000 years ago. The Lord Mayor of Dublin, Cllr. Mary Freehill, was joined in the switching-on ceremony by An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern TD and Minister Seamus Brennan TD, Chairman, National Millennium Committee major sponsors of the project. The 'Liffey of Lights' scheme illuminates thirteen bridges over three miles of the Liffey from Sean Heuston Bridge to the East Link Bridge.

400 individual light fittings and 600 metres of light strips have been installed; 39 lanterns and 11 candelabras restored to their former glory. The bridges will be lit all year, from dusk to midnight. The Lord Mayor said: "Dublin, Baile Átha Cliath, started around a crossing of the river over a thousand years ago. We are recognising the origins of our capital city, honouring our ancestors and their contributions to Dublin and sending a message of confidence to our descendants".

The project cost £1.3m and was funded by the National Millennium Committee, Dublin Corporation and Míle Átha Cliath - Dublin's Millennium Partnership. 'Liffey of Lights' was the brainchild of Robbie Cahill (23) from Dublin's Liberties who won the Míle Átha Cliath 'Dream It for 21st Century Dublin' competition in 1998. The scheme was designed by Duilio Passariello of Philips LiDAC and the project was implemented by Dublin Corporation's public lighting department. Dublin's Liffey-side ambience will be further enhanced during the year when the Liffey Boardwalk is opened.

QUESTION TIME IN THE DÁIL

Extract from Question Time in the Dáil on 16th February, 2000

Minister Seamus Brennan answered questions on the work of the National Millennium Committee. Minister Brennan: "Many of the capital projects are only starting. We are funding bridges, forestry, community and church projects, floodlighting, lighthouses and the Battle of the Boyne site. All of those projects are starting now and I expect the money to be drawn down quickly.

The flagship projects were the millennium forest, our proposal to plant 1.2 million native trees, the children's hour, to which we allocated £2 million and the light ceremony, which was a magnificent success throughout the State. Mr. Ruairi Quinn T.D. (Leader of the Labour Party) " I agree."

100 YEARS IN 365 DAYS

A fascinating glimpse into the day to day events in Ireland in the 20th Century is being screened each day of the year 2000 by RTE 1. "100 Years", narrated by Brian Farrell, is televised twice daily, in the afternoon at approximately 5.15 p.m. and following the Late News.

The programme is being broadcast in association with the National Millennium Committee. The programme draws on archival newsreel footage, newspaper accounts and RTE's own film library to piece together events that made the news at home and abroad on the date in question.

NEW LOOK FOR CORK OPERA HOUSE

The Cork Opera House, a venue synonymous with entertainment in the City for almost 150 years, is about to undergo a transformation for the new Millennium.

With an injection of £450,000 from the National Millennium Committee the Opera House will acquire new glass frontage, additional audience capacity and a Millennium Plaza for public concerts. The front of the Opera House will be extended, doubling the public floor space and increasing audience capacity to 1,600.

The enlarged foyer area will have a permanent historical display of Cork using the latest multimedia touch technology and with updated exhibitions on archaeological finds in the region. Another unique feature will be the use of technology during the evenings when the new building and plaza will be lit with a brilliance and intensity seldom seen in this country. The front-of-house area is greatly enhanced by the new Plaza which has just been completed by Cork Corporation.

The plaza will feature a variety of events and celebrations from classical proms, rock concerts, sporting parades, promenade theatre, public sculpture and outdoor events linked to the Jazz, Film, Folk and Choral festivals. The Cork Opera House, the only purpose-built opera house in the country, will close from March 21st to October 12th to allow the refurbishment. The total cost of the work is estimated at more than £3.5 million.

THE NATIONAL MILLENNIUM COMMITTEE



Mr. Séamus Brennan
Government Chief
Whip and Minister of
State (Chairman)



Mr. Joe Barry
Former Director
General RTE



Mr. Peter Barry
Former
Government
Minister



Ms. Eithne Healy
Chairman,
Dublin Theatre
Festival



Mr. Richard Holland
Principal Officer,
Department of the
Taoiseach



Mr. Ronan
Keating
Boyzone



Mr. Derek Keogh
Chairman,
Millennium
Festivals Ltd



Mr. Howard
Kilroy
Governor, Bank
of Ireland Group



Mr Paul McGuinness
Manager, U2



Ms. Monica
McWilliams
Northern Ireland
Women's
Coalition



Mr. Brian Murphy
Chairman, Office
of Public Works



Ms. Patricia
O'Donovan
Deputy
Secretary, ICTU



Ms. Deirdre Purcell
Author / Journalist



Mr. Lochlann
Quinn
Chairman, AIB
Group

ATHSHLOINNI - TOGRA PERSANT MÍLAOISE DUITSE

RECLAIM YOUR NAME - A PERSONAL MILLENNIUM PROJECT

How about reverting to the original Irish-language version of your surname as your personal way of celebrating the new millennium! It's an easy, practical, positive and personal way to mark the new millennium - agus n' g† duit a bheith l†n'ofa sa teanga ag an am seo le tabhairt faoi athshloinni.

You don't even have to be fluent in Irish to reclaim your name and make your personal millennium statement through one or other of two equally legal ways. You can just start using your surname in Irish from this moment forward, without any ceremony, or you can change it formally by making a simple declaration through a commissioner for oaths so th at the Irish version is henceforth your official name Either way will raise your spirits because it is your personal way to I'm Irish and proud of it.

Irish has been spoken on th is island for possibly four millenniums. What else has lived so long here? The founding of Conradh na Gaeilge in 1893 not only helped arrest a decline in use of the language but fuelled a great surge of cultural renewal and identity. Census statistics over recent decades have sh own increasing numbers of people claiming an ability to speak Irish - it's around the 1.4 million figure now, or some 30% of the State's population, and growing. Surveys indicate that about 40% of that number use at least a little Irish daily. Conradh na Gaeilge is there to help you if you need a copy of the simple form required to change your surname formally to the Irish version. Just call or write to us at 6 Sráid Fhearchair, Baile Átha Cliath 2, or alternatively contact us by email at eolas@cnag.ie, or by sending a fax message to 01 4757844.

Tá go leor daoine ann a bhfuil Gaeilge l'ofa acu an Ghaeilge go rialta - fi go dt—gann siad clann le Gaeilge - is í an sloinne Béarla amhain a s†ideann siad in ngach gnó den saol. Tá sí le hargaint go gcuirfeadh sí go mór lena meanma phearsanta an leagan Gaeilge a s†id feasta. Chuirfeadh sí freisin go mór le seasamh na Gaeilge sa tsoca' go mbeadh n'os m— den phobal ag s†id an leagan Gaeilge d† sloinnte.

THE PEOPLES' MILLENNIUM FORESTS

It is a project that will grow and grow for generations. The People's Millennium Forests will be a source of inspiration well into the future for all those committed to protecting the environment and will rescue Ireland's native forests.

During 2000 a native Irish tree, primarily the oak, will be planted in the name of every household in the country. Every household will receive a certificate showing the location of their tree. The £5m project to help rescue and restore native forests and woodlands is sponsored by the National Millennium Committee, AIB Bank and the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources and is promoted by Coillte and the Woodlands of Ireland Group.

The project, already underway, will be guided by the seasons. Acorns collected last Autumn are now set under polythene at Aughrim, Co. Wicklow. In Autumn the young trees will be planted out at the 13 forests chosen. These are: Ballygannon and Shelton-Co. Wicklow, Rosturra and Derrygill-Co. Galway, Muckcross and Rossacroo-Co. Kerry, Derrycorry-Co. Monaghan, Lough Gill Co. Sligo, Brackloon-Co. Mayo, Portlick-Co. Westmeath, Woodlands-Co. Kilkenny, Galtee-Co. Tipperary and Camolin-Co. Wexford.

GLASS TO TRANSFORM BAKER PLACE - LIMERICK

One of Limerick's favourite landmarks, Tait's Clock in Baker Place, is a central part of plans to transform the area using a hi-tech glass based structure. This development will be a tribute to Irishman Peter Rice, one of the world's great glass technologists, whose work until now is little known in his native country.

The National Millennium Committee awarded £300,000 for the project. The existing concrete and tarmac paving at Baker Place will be replaced with a rectangular glass plaza around the monument which has been a part of Limerick since 1867. Inspired by Peter Rice's glass creations in modern buildings (e.g. Pompidou Centre in Paris) the plaza will be surfaced in a high-tech, frameless structural glass.

The glass surface will be strong enough to carry pedestrian traffic. By day it will reflect the Tait monument. In the evening lighting beneath the surface will create a subtle effect giving a glow to the square. It is hoped the Square will become a focal point for meetings and light refreshments. Limerick Corporation believes the Baker Place Plaza will highlight the contribution of Irish architects and engineers to the 20th century high tech construction industry.

NATIONAL MILLENNIUM OFFICERS

Carlow: Bernie O' Brien Tel.: 0503-70300 Fax: 0503-41503
Cavan: Seamus Neely Tel: 049-4331799 Fax: 049-4361563
Clare: Mairin Hill Tel: 065-6821616 Fax: 065-6820882
Cork County: Ian McDonagh Tel: 021-346210 Fax: 021-343254
Cork City: Pat Duggan Tel: 021-924154 Fax: 021-314238
Donegal: Liam Ó Ronain Tel- 074- 21968 Fax 074 26402
Dublin City: Gerard Egan Tel: 01-6723307 Fax: 01-6722200
Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown: Peter Corcoran Tel: 01- 2054742 Fax-01-2806969
Fingal: Shay Barker Tel: 01-6727136 Ext 2841 Fax: 01-8272247
South Dublin: Michael Coleman Tel: 01-4149131 Fax: 01-4149202
Galway City: Martina Moloney Tel: 091-568151 Fax: 091-563964
Galway County: Tony Murphy Tel: 091-509000 Fax: 091-509010
Kerry: Marie Ni Cheallaigh Tel: 066-7121111 Fax: 066-7122466
Kildare: Charlie Talbot Tel: 045-873870 Fax: 045-876875
Kilkenny: John McCormack Tel: 056-52699 Fax: 056-64316
Laois: Dolores Murphy Tel: 0502-22044 Fax: 0502-22313
Leitrim: Michael McAuley Tel: 078-20005 Fax: 078-21023
Limerick City: Fergus Quinlivan Tel: 061-415799 Fax: 061-415266
Limerick County: Joan MacKernann Tel: 061-318477 Fax: 061-317280
Longford: Michael Clancy Tel: 043-46231 Fax: 043-41233
Louth: Brian Harten Tel: 042-9332276 Fax: 042-9336761
Mayo: John Maughan Tel: 094-24444 Fax: 094-25891
Meath: Gerardette Bailey Tel: 046-21581 Fax: 046-21463
Monaghan: Somhairle MacConghail Tel: 047-82928 Fax: 047-71189
Offaly: Anne Coughlan Tel: 0506-46800 Fax: 0506-52769
Roscommon: Caitlin Ni Fhloinn Tel: 0903-37100 Fax: 0903-37108
Sligo: Kevin Colreavy Tel: 071-56624 Fax: 071-41119
Tipperary (NR): Melanie Scott Tel: 067-31771 Fax: 067-33134
Tipperary (SR): Vacant Tel: 052-25399 Fax: 052-23228
Waterford City: Tom Hartery Tel: 051-309900 Fax: 051-870813
Waterford (County): Tom Keith Tel: 058-41111 Fax: 058-41501
Westmeath: Ciaran McGrath Tel: 044-40861 Fax: 044-42330
Wexford: Fionnuala Hanrahan Tel: 053-24922 Fax: 053-21097
Wicklow: Seamus Walker Tel: 0404-20100 Fax: 0404-67792.