
CONWAY MILL TRUST

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Dove House Lobbying Results in Extension of School Uniform Grants

Dove House Community Trust (DHCT), located in the Bogside area of Derry, was established in 1984 to promote self-help, self-sufficiency and empowerment for the people within the Bogside and Brandywell area of Derry City. Dove House is supported in part by Conway Mill Trust.

Through the work of Kathleen Bradley, Advice Worker at Dove House, information was transmitted earlier this year to Martina Anderson, MLA for Foyle, concerning the need to extend the school uniform grant program to include primary school children.

At present, only the parents of secondary school pupils receive a means-tested grant toward the cost of school uniforms. Providing school uniforms for children has placed a huge burden on families from all communities, particularly those with low incomes.

Recognizing this gap in the current provisions, Kathleen was prompted to lobby MLA Anderson in order to bring the issue to the direct attention of Education Minister Caitriona Ruane. This lobbying enabled Dove House to advocate on behalf of the many clients who were experiencing difficulty relating

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Kathleen Bradley, Dove House Advice Worker, (second from right), greets Minister of Education Caitriona Ruane (center) on March 31, 2009, following her announced intention to extend the school uniform grant program to include primary school children. Also pictured are Eugene Bradley, Dove House Community Trust Advice Project Coordinator (far left), Deborah Cross, Manager of Dove House Community Trust (second from left), and Martina Anderson, MLA (far right).

Donation “Instrumental” in Helping Children Learn About Climate Change

Following Conway Mill Trust’s recent \$200 grant to the Conway Education Centre, Pauline Kersten, Manager of the Centre, wrote:

The children in the Afterschools Club completed their project on climate change with an art exhibition on global warming and recycling. A local artist donated her time free of charge to work with the kids on preparing for the exhibition and it was opened by Belfast Lord Mayor.

The books that were bought with your donation for the global warming project were instrumental in enabling the children to understand, at their level, about climate change and everything that goes with it.

With many thanks for all your help and warm regards,

Pauline Kersten

Our New Mailing Address

Please forward all correspondence and donations to our new address:

**Conway Mill Trust, Inc.
P.O. Box 101529
Pittsburgh, PA 15237**

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to the financial and social implications associated with purchasing school uniforms.

Kathleen's lobbying has been successful. Although the Minister had no legal obligation to implement this change, Kathleen said, "I am delighted that she has secured the necessary funding that will allow her to extend this scheme. On our behalf Martina Anderson was able to raise the issue directly with the Minister and have it adequately addressed."

Kathleen credited devolved administration for enabling this change. She said, "This demonstrates the local benefit to be gleaned for having a devolved administration in place with local accountability benefiting people at the local level." She also thanked Minister Ruane and MLA Anderson for their commitment to addressing this inequality.

Conway Mill Trust Blog is Launched!

The site features information and updates from the organizations supported with your grant dollars. The new site and blog were developed by Stephen Wayhart and John Graf, members of AOH Division 32. Funding was provided by Division 32 to underwrite the project

conwaymilltrust.org

Irish Society Awards \$1,000 Grant For Conway Education Centre

The Board of Directors of the Irish Society for Education and Charity has allocated \$1000 to Conway Education Centre located in Belfast. The Centre has various education programs for adults, high school teenagers, and children aged 7-12.

The Irish Society donation will be allocated to the Mary Mannion Merit Grant, a financial aid program established by Conway Mill Trust, announced in the most recent issue of this newsletter.

This grant will assist returning students to complete their high school equivalency certification. The program helps students 19 years of age and older who have not completed secondary education to achieve General Course Secondary Education (GCSE) certification. This award will cover the costs of full programs for several students this fall.

The Irish Society for Education and Charity, a non-profit organization, is an offshoot of the St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee in Pittsburgh. It supports the Echoes of Ireland radio program, awards scholarships to students needing financial aid and contributes to various Irish community educational programs.

Latest Displays at the Irish Republican History Museum



A replica of an Armagh Gaol cell at the Irish Republican History Museum (located in the Conway Mill complex in Belfast) is completed and is proving to be very popular with all of the Museum's visitors. The cell door and complete

contents are from the women's prison, and the cell contains many examples of handicraft work by the former women POWs.

The first of the six renderings is now completed and in place. It covers the period of the United Irishmen and the 1798 uprising and Robert Emmett's Rising in 1803. It looks very impressive and has attracted many favorable comments from visitors. The remaining five are a work in progress and over time the Museum plans to display a timeline of Irish history on the Museum walls.

Also have added to the Museum's display is one of the rifles and a bullet from Roger Casement's boat, which lies off the coast where he was arrested on Banna Strand in 1916 as he attempted to land a shipment of weapons for the Easter Rising.