

AGM

The 39th Annual General Meeting of Newbridge Chamber was held on 5th March last. Deirdre Coghlan-Murray handed over the chain of office after two years of dedicated service to incoming President Joe Fennell. Deirdre said 2006 was a very busy, exciting and rewarding year.

Her goal as President was to build on the existing foundations of the Chamber and to hand over to her successor a vibrant, focused and successful Chamber which is financially viable, well regarded and ready to take on another phase of growth and development. She cited some of the major achievements in 2006 to include:

- ◆ Membership growth of 40%. One of the fastest growing memberships in the country out of a network of 60 Chambers.
 - ◆ The successful launch of our new identity - Newbridge Chamber - which enhances our reputation as a leading, professional provincial chamber.
 - ◆ A packed event schedule with monthly opportunities for networking, training or corporate entertaining."
- Joe kicked off his 'reign' by thanking Deirdre for her energy and enthusiasm which was infectious and has brought the Chamber to a new era. His vision for the coming year is two-fold:
- ◆ Firstly, he would like to see the negativity surrounding our town taken off the front pages of our local papers. "Why can't we lead with the positives of the town? We have a brilliant town, the envy of many others, let's start marketing it to the best we can for the betterment of both the community and business."



The Top Table at AGM



Orla Rooney, Pamela Keeley, Linda O'Neill

- ◆ The second part of Joe's vision is the creation of the concept of **Team Newbridge** as featured in this edition's lead article. This idea is all about the various organisations in the town helping each other out for the common good.

He went on to say he looks forward to meeting members at the various upcoming events during 2007 including Team Newbridge launch, President's Lunch, Business Briefings, Pre-Derby Newbridge Chamber Garden Party, to name but a few.



Five past and present presidents meet at AGM: Con McNamara (2000), Corinna A. Hopkins (2002), Joe Fennell (2007), Deirdre Coghlan-Murray (2005 & 2006), John Commins (2003/04).



Evan Arkwright, David Wright, Fiona McLoughlin, Sean Quirke

Chamberchat

SPRING 2007



TEAM NEWBRIDGE SPRINGS INTO ACTION

Joe Fennell's tenure as President of Newbridge Chamber starts as he means it to go on – rolling up his sleeves and getting 'stuck in to Spring cleaning'. In an exciting new initiative, he is calling on all businesses to participate in **Team Newbridge** to help spruce up the town now that Spring is here. Along with Newbridge Tidy Towns, the Chamber is calling on everyone to do their bit to clean up their premises, and recycle items no longer needed, as part of a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) project.

At the recent Chamber AGM, Joe announced "We at Newbridge Chamber want to commence a forum under the CSR banner. CSR is all about ensuring that businesses of all sizes should be focused on the wider stakeholders that can directly impact and influence their business success. These stakeholders include not just their staff, customers, suppliers and shareholders, but also the community in which they are based and the public at large. We want to create the awareness to make this happen. This will be a long term commitment by us until Newbridge and its environs can be actually branded a CSR community."

Team Newbridge was launched on Tuesday 27th March 2007. It includes practical and easy ways of recycling various items including

- ◆ large unwanted items ◆ out of date medicines
- ◆ old spectacles ◆ old school books ◆ old mobile phones

It is possible only because of the fantastic support and involvement of **Bord Na Mona, Curragh Carpets, Ger Cauty Opticians, Cosgrove's Pharmacy** and **Paul Duane's Mobile Phone Shop**

to kick off. We look forward to your active participation in the roll out of the project all over town! If you are already organising some project or task of a corporate social nature in your business, please let us know at the Chamber office – tel. 438296 or email office@newbridgechamber.ie - so we can let all the members know!



Fairtrade coffee morning

Bank of Ireland joined with the Chamber to host a Fairtrade coffee morning on 5th March last. Joe Fennell (seen here with coffee pot!) donned both hats as Bank of Ireland Branch Manager and Newbridge Chamber President to mark Fairtrade Fortnight for customers and members. According to Sadie Barlow, the Newbridge Fairtrade Committee is receiving great support in its campaign to make our town a Fairtrade town. For instance, Sean Quirke of McDonalds was in touch to say that only Fairtrade tea and coffee are now served at their restaurants in Newbridge and Naas. Events such as this coffee morning happened throughout the fortnight to raise awareness of the importance of consumer-driven demand for Fairtrade products in our shops, restaurants, pubs and places of work.



Joe Fennell plays host to David Cooke of Cooke Design and Sharon Butler of The Gift Tree at the Bank of Ireland/Newbridge Chamber Fairtrade coffee morning.

Pre-Derby Meitheal announced for Summer!

A **Meitheal Mór** or 'great gathering' is being planned for Newbridge this June to prepare the way for the Budweiser Derby. One of Ireland's leading horse-racing events has long provided punters with a reason to party, but this year the Curragh Racecourse is working closely with all elements of Newbridge life – including Newbridge Town Council, Newbridge Chamber, The Riverbank Arts Centre, Whitewater Shopping Centre and many, many, community groups - to extend that excitement into Newbridge during the week leading up to Derby Day.

Watch out in the local media for a full programme of events – and in particular put a very important date in your diary: **Thursday 28th June**, for the **Pre-Derby Newbridge Chamber Garden Party!** It will be held at The Keadeen Hotel and if all members pray for good weather we should be assured of a good evening! The off' will be at 6.30pm and full details will be issued nearer the time. We hope it will be a great way to tap into the craic of Derby week, raise some money for The Samaritans, and get some corporate entertaining done at the same time.



Grey Swallow winning the Budweiser Derby in 2004. This was the last Curragh trained horse to win the race - trained by Dermot Weld and ridden by Pat Smullen.

New Litter Warden for Newbridge

The Chamber has thanked Newbridge Town Council for their part in securing a new Litter Warden for Newbridge, **Pat Conway**. This much needed position should go a long way to improving this lovely town in which we all live and/or work. Pat has been invited to attend the next Chamber committee meeting to see how together we can optimise the success of his role. We will keep you posted with any further handy hints for your business.

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New Corporate Member - John Commins Financial Services

We are delighted to welcome a new Corporate Member to Newbridge Chamber – John Commins Financial Services, incorporating Sunscope Properties Ltd. A long time member and supporter of the Chamber, and indeed a past president, John has been in the mortgage and insurance broking business in Kildare since 1987. From his base at Henry St. he has been serving the financial needs of Newbridge for the past eight years. The company employs four staff members and specialises in mortgages, life insurance, pensions, savings, investments & overseas property sales. They are independent mortgage brokers with a full range of lenders. Check out www.newbridgechamber.ie/network.htm for details of their affinity offer exclusive to Chamber members.



President Joe Fennell presenting John Commins with his Corporate Membership certificate

As a not-for-profit organisation, without corporate members, like John and Whitewater Shopping Centre, the Chamber would find it much more difficult to provide the level of services to business which we presently undertake.

If you are interested in exploring the benefits of corporate membership, please call Breda on the Chamber office on 438296 for full details.

THE SAMARITANS is Chamber Chosen Charity for 2007

Newbridge Chamber has chosen the local branch of The Samaritans as its charity for 2007. Annie Griffith, Director of Samaritans Newbridge accepted the Chamber nomination with great pleasure. She said "We have been in McElwaine Terrace for the past 14 years now and the need for our service is continuing to be of crucial importance to those who find themselves in a time of crisis and need". They are also always seeking volunteers to help, so if you have even an hour a week to spare, Annie would love to hear from you at 045 435 299.

Forthcoming dates for your diary

April 2007 – **President's Lunch** - full details to follow

10th May 2007 – **Free HR Legalities Seminar**, Osprey Hotel, Naas

28th June 2007 – **Pre-Derby Newbridge Chamber Garden Party**, Keadeen Hotel, Newbridge

A full Activities & Events Calendar 2007 can be downloaded from www.newbridgechamber.ie/events.htm

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CHAMBER COMMENT

Newbridge Chamber President speaks about what's on his mind right now:

This is my first newsletter as President and I would firstly like to thank all our members for their continued support and good wishes for my term. I really look forward to meeting you all at the various events we have planned during the year ahead.

As the longer evenings arrive in tandem with the daffodils, we see the things that need to be done around the garden. But it's not only the garden that needs a "spring clean"; Newbridge is crying out for one too. The Council is doing its bit by putting the litter warden in place, so why aren't we playing our part? I know some are, but I am calling on all business owners to specifically clean up around their own premises. If we all did a little, it would help a lot to promote a cleaner Newbridge.

One of our long-term initiatives for the chamber is to make Newbridge a CSR town. I launched our CSR blueprint on 27th March, which forms part of the Chambers Ireland CSR initiative being launched nationally on 2nd April in The Guinness Storehouse in Dublin.

The other major new event we are working on for 2007 is tapping into the racegoers who will be in The Curragh on Derby weekend. We will be working on ways to encourage the visitors to come into Newbridge itself and enjoy the additional festivities that are planned around the town, including our own Chamber Garden Party in The Keadeen Hotel on the Thursday (28th June) before Derby Day. This bodes to be an excellent evening to meet all chamber members in a relaxed social gathering while soaking up the pre-Derby atmosphere.

Finally, as a new president, I am more than happy to meet with any member to listen to their views on any subject. My door is always open; you can email me via the chamber at office@newbridgechamber.ie or just call into me in Bank of Ireland, Main St., Newbridge.



Joe Fennell
President Newbridge Chamber

Leading the way for Kildare charity

Everyone knows The Leinster Leader's Newbridge correspondent man-about-town Conor McHugh! After eight years working in regional journalism all over the midlands, Conor moved back to his home county and took up his position with the Leinster Leader in March last year.

"It's an exciting time to be working with the Leinster Leader with the media market and ownership changing so much over the past few years. The Leader is now a part of the Johnston Press group, one of the biggest in the country." The Leader is a long time member and active participant of Newbridge Chamber.

Over the weekend of Friday, March 30 to Sunday, April 1, Conor will be cycling from Maynooth to Galway and back in aid of Stepping Stones School for Children with Autism near Maynooth. That's a total of 242



miles, but it's all for a good cause! The event, which is in its 19th year, is organised by Maynooth Students for Charity which comprises students and alumni of the college. Conor is one of several people from, or working in Newbridge, to once again do the cycle. If you can help this worthy cause, please contact Conor on 087-8235822 or conor@leinsterleader.ie Stepping Stones is a registered charity and all donations over €250 are tax deductible.



Joe Fennell presents Moorefield GFC Secretary Peter Whyte with a cheque to help defray their costs of the 06/07 AIB Club Championship.

Come on the Moores!

Newbridge Chamber's committee felt very strongly about the pride Moorefield GFC's wonderful run in the AIB Club Championship created in the hearts of Newbridge people all over the country. A resolution was passed to give this team a practical 'well done' on behalf of Chamber members and a cheque for €1,000 was presented to Peter Whyte to help defray the costs of getting to Limerick (and subsequently Nenagh) and in general competing to such an advanced stage in the competition. Once again we thank the Club for a great season of nail biting action.

Vodafone Passion to re-ignite

Vodafone has confirmed to us that it intends to continue its wonderful 'Passion For The World Around Us' Awards series into 2007. We urge all members to get your thinking caps on for nominations of worthy contenders, as we will be seeking names from you in the coming months. These awards acknowledge people who demonstrate a keen commitment to improving the world in which we live; those who make a positive difference to their community. Please contact the Chamber office at tel. 438296 for nomination forms and further details.



Have you 'website presence'?

Newbridge Chamber's website offers you the facility to promote your business online to other members and the wider world! Simply send in a four line description of your business to breda@newbridgechamber.ie (or by post to the office at Canning Place, Newbridge) and we'll get your profile up and running. By having your company listed here it gives search engines another chance to pick up and list your business when being researched by a potential customer. Make sure your description includes the key words that someone would use to look up your products and services.

Visit www.newbridgechamber.ie/membersprofiles.htm to see some existing profiles.

And don't forget if you would like to offer fellow Newbridge Chamber members a discount if they support your business, then check out our Affinity Members' section on www.newbridgechamber.ie/network.htm and we will be delighted to publish your offer. Please use these services – they are currently FREE of charge!

Meet Newbridge Chamber Committee for 2007

The 2007 AGM, held on 5th March last, elected the following members onto Committee for this year:

NAME	COMPANY	BUSINESS TYPE
Joe Fennell (President)	Bank Of Ireland	Banking
Tim Dooley (Vice-President)	Dooley Insurance & Mortgage Brokers	Financial Services
Peter Byrne (C.E.O.)	Newbridge Chamber	Chamber of Commerce
Evan Arkwright	The Curragh Racecourse	Racecourse Management
Steven Cleaver	Whitewater Shopping Centre	Retail
Deirdre Coghlan-Murray	Clark Recruitment	Recruitment
Colette McGrath	The Office Centre	Office Supplies
Fiona McLoughlin	Privateseller.ie	Online service selling homes privately
Con McNamara	Department of Defence	Defence Forces
Michael Mullally	Management Consultant	Management Consultancy
Brid Nolan	Falcondale Properties Ltd.	Property Management
Linda O'Neill	Creative Performance Ltd	Motivation & Training
David Wright	Horse Racing Ireland	Horse Racing Authority

If you wish to contact any of the above committee members, please call the Chamber Office at 438296 or email office@newbridgechamber.ie.

A 'Céad Mile Failte' – calling non-nationals

At a recent committee meeting it was agreed that the Chamber can play an increasingly inclusive role by welcoming businesses run by non-nationals. If you know of anyone in business whom you feel would like to play an active role in local commercial life by becoming a Chamber member and/or come onto committee, we would love to hear from you! We will also be publishing this invitation in the local media to ensure the Chamber represents a true cross-section of all business types in our locality.

Meet New Members *We extend a welcome to recent new members:*

NAME	COMPANY	BUSINESS TYPE
Mr. Ger Canty	G. Canty Optician	Optician
Mr. Paul Duane	Mobile Phone Specialist	Mobile Phone Sales and Repairs
Mr. John Kelly	Kelly Hudson Properties Ltd.	Estate Agent
Mr. Declan Keogh	Keogh Financial Services	Financial Advisor
Ms. Alacoque Mollin	Mollin Estates	Estate Agent
Ms. Rebecca Murtagh	Nostra Systems	Business Technology Provider
Mr. & Ms. George & Brenda Prentice	Prentice & Associates Sales & Marketing	Toy Distributors

Chamber Chosen Charity for '06 collects your donations

Jacinta Carey of Teach Tearmainn was delighted to receive a cheque for €1,635 at the Chamber's recent AGM. It is the total of fundraising done during Chamber events last year – principally from the raffle at the Annual Golf Classic sponsored by Newbridge Silverware and all proceeds of the Campbell & Company-sponsored Budget Breakfast.

Jacinta thanked the Chamber members and said it was heartening to see the level of commitment and support within our community for women and their children who are in need of a safe haven from domestic violence. Teach Tearmainn is currently planning the building of a Women's Refuge, the first of its kind in Co. Kildare, and this donation will go towards the provision of this much needed facility.



Deirdre Coghlan-Murray and Joe Fennell present Jacinta Carey of Teach Tearmainn with the Chamber Chosen Charity cheque.

Membership via Direct Debit

We are currently doing the preparation work to get ready for a new option of Direct Debit collection of renewal subscriptions next January – yes 2008! We need to think ahead as it will take some time to get the system set up, but we believe it will make renewal collection more efficient in terms of time and money for all of us involved in Newbridge Chamber – members and office alike. Later this year you can expect to receive a Direct Debit form from us and if you feel that this once a year collection method would be a convenient way for you to renew your annual membership, you might please complete and return it to the office. More on this anon.

Close-up on Committee

In this issue we meet **Tim Dooley, MD of Dooley Insurance & Mortgage Brokers**, Wallace Court, Eyre St., Newbridge.



Tim recently was appointed Vice-president of Newbridge Chamber for 2007 and has been a committee member for the last three years. Originally from Kildare Town, Tim began his career in 1988, with Irish Life. He comes from a family steeped in insurance; his father Ned is still involved in this business and has been for some 50 years. Dooley's consequently is one of the longest established insurance family businesses in Ireland! In 2002 they came into Newbridge with the purchase of D&E Insurances on Eyre St. Newbridge. Three years later, they brought Gorry Insurances in Rathangan into the Dooley fold.

Today Tim and his staff give clients very specialised financial advice – his own QFA and FLIA qualifications are testament to that. Their focus is on providing top quality customer service, regardless of whether it is personal or commercial advice being sought, across the range of mortgages and general or life insurance / pension products.

Tim is married to Mary and they have three children, Tadhg (9), Rebecca (7) and Sophie (5). The family lives in Ballymore Eustace. In his spare time (of which he says there is not enough) he has a keen interest in politics, supports rugby, enjoys a game of golf and hill walking.

You can contact Tim on 045 431642 or email tdooley@dooleyinsurances.com

Spring 2007 Programme Training continues

Our Spring 2007 programme of heavily subsidised courses, being delivered locally, is coming to an end after ten weeks of action.

If you wish to suggest subjects for future courses, just let Breda McHale know and we'll be happy to look into organising them! Contact her at tel./fax 045 438 296 or email breda@newbridgechamber.ie