

Is your Business Safe?

Lots of members poured in to An Chistin at the 'Member meets Member' evening on 4th October 2007. The event was organised with **The Office Centre in Newbridge** and featured ergonomics expert Ciaran Dunne of Fellowes, who spoke on the subjects of Identity Protection and Ergonomics - the relationship between the person and their working environment.

You could hear a pin drop as he outlined the simple steps necessary for businesses to avoid criminals infiltrating their organisations and stealing their identities. Ciaran also focused on how to avoid costly absences from work by just getting the basics of back posture and seating habits right. A full house enjoyed refreshments, goody bags and the opportunity to meet fellow members in 'down town' Newbridge!



Colette McGrath, The Office Centre and Tim Dooley, Vice President, Newbridge Chamber, kick off proceedings at An Chistin.



Ciaran Dunne, Fellowes getting ready to address the assembled members.

Budget de-baffled

The aroma of a hot breakfast made attendees glad they had made the effort to rise early for the Chamber's recent **Annual Budget Breakfast** meeting. Over 100 people tucked into a scrumptious breakfast in The Silver Restaurant, thanks to the kind sponsorship of **Campbell & Company Chartered Accountants**. As members chatted with each other and their guests, the Christmas season in Newbridge was deemed officially open! After breakfast was served, an excellent analysis of the previous day's 2008 Budget was given by Campbell & Company's experts **Sasha Kerins and Stephen Connolly**. Questions from the floor followed and then summary 'hot off the presses' leaflets were distributed as everyone left to go to work by 9.15 a.m. Amidst the networking and education at the event, there was also another important reason for the gathering; €1,500 was raised by donations at the door for the Chamber's Chosen Charity for 2007 - The Samaritans. As President Joe Fennell pointed out at the outset, throughout all the forthcoming festive celebrations they will be working 24/7, even on Christmas Day.



Brenda Prentice, Liam Hargadan & Conor Ryan



David O'Reilly & Denise Souhan



Pat Ryan & Alan Nolan



Attendees at Annual Budget Breakfast, The Silver Restaurant



Shane Campbell, Joe Fennell, Sasha Kerins & Stephen Connolly

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Chamberchat

WINTER 2007



DON'T BUDGE FROM NEWBRIDGE!

That's the message being issued by Newbridge Chamber loud and clear this Christmas season... in a boost to keep the local economy flying high, we're highlighting the benefits to both consumers and retailers of 'shopping local'. Notices to this effect are popping up all over town to remind all shoppers that Newbridge has the

- * variety,
- * convenience and
- * value

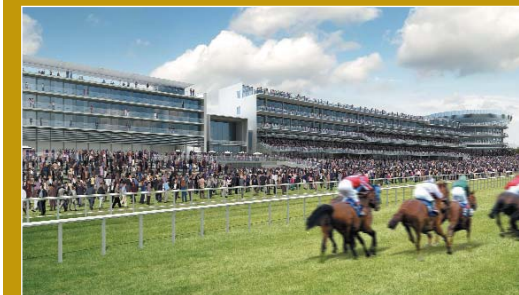
on hand to enable everyone to get all items on the list ticked! All members are encouraged to set the appropriate example and also remind your staff and friends to consider buying their gifts and Christmas preparations from shops in



the town. The campaign was launched by President Joe Fennell at The Man's Shop (one of the Chamber's longest standing retailers) on 1st November last, and the local media have

been really supportive of it since. From candles to chocolates, scents to silver - and all in between - there really is no need to budge from Newbridge!

Curragh Racecourse update



The current grandstand and other ancillary facilities will remain in place at the Curragh Racecourse for their 2008 racing season following a decision by An Bord Pleanála to defer a decision to grant planning permission for the redevelopment of the racecourse. The planning authority notified the racecourse that a decision would not be made until 21st December 2007. It is now hoped that some of the initial work on the new complex can commence to the rear of the current Stands soon, while demolition will take place at the end of the 2008 season. Ongoing objections from the Friends of the Curragh environmental group have been the main cause of the delay. The new plans will transform the racecourse into one of the most iconic sporting and lifestyle complexes in Europe to include new grandstand, hotel, conference and exhibition Centre, museum and visitors centre.

HR Help

Our friends at **Chamber HR** who offer the customised HR package exclusive to Chamber members, have sent us this synopsis of Christmas Working Arrangements 2007:

Public Holidays over Christmas are Tuesday 25th and Wednesday 26th December 2007 plus Tuesday 1st January 2008. As these are public holidays in the Republic of Ireland, **full-time employees** who qualify will be entitled to either the public holiday off, as paid leave, or one of the following alternatives:

- * A paid day off within a month of the public holiday
- * An additional day of annual leave
- * An additional day's pay
- * The nearest church holiday to the public holiday as a paid day off.

Part-Time Employees: For full details, please contact David McGrath at Chamber HR on 01-855 4861.

As long as the statutory requirements are provided, arrangements for leave over Christmas will be specific to each company and should be communicated to staff. Like all annual leave the policy for granting this over the Christmas period should be applied in a consistent and fair manner. If you have any queries regarding holiday entitlements please feel free to contact **David McGrath** at Chamber HR on **01-855 4861**.

Speed Networking Evening: 22nd January '08

Are you looking for a forum to promote your business to others in the locality? If you've a new business or you simply feel that not enough people know enough about your products and services, it's time to sharpen your pencil! Our Speed Networking Evening is scheduled for Tuesday 22nd January. When we ran this fun event two years ago it proved a great success with members, so make sure you book your place straight away! The event is limited to a maximum of 26 participants. Each person gets the opportunity to meet fellow attendees and pitch their business on a one to one basis. You'll need a supply of business cards, brochures / promotional information and your 'pitch' - verbal or written. Entry is €25 per person and first come first served! Please contact the office for an entry form on tel. 438296 or email office@newbridgechamber.ie **Make a new year resolution for your business!**

Forthcoming dates for your diary:

- Tuesday 22nd January 2008
- Speed Networking Evening, Hotel Keadeen, Newbridge.
- Wednesday 13th February 2008
- AGM & Fair Trade update - Hotel Keadeen, Newbridge.

- Wednesday 27th February 2008
- Colour Me Beautiful (Ladies' event!) provided by Shades N Shapes, George's St., Newbridge.

- Thursday 6th March 2008 - Member meets Member Event LEAP ahead with your business - Hotel Keadeen, Newbridge.

A full 2008 Activities & Events Calendar can be downloaded from www.newbridgechamber.ie/events.htm

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CHAMBER COMMENT

Newbridge Chamber President speaks out

Firstly I'd like to take the opportunity to wish all our members a happy Christmas and a very prosperous New Year. Secondly I'd like to congratulate Mayor Paddy Kennedy on the brilliant display of Christmas lights which have really made our town very festive looking this year.

It's hard to believe that we are now nearing the end of 2007 and what a 2007 it has been - for me personally as President and also for Newbridge Chamber too! This time last year filling our event calendar seemed a daunting task but I think we have really delivered on all fronts during the year.

Following the AGM in February we had some excellent Business training in the Keadeen Hotel and R.A.C.E., which continued into March. Towards the end of March we looked at the Work/Life Balance and launched our CSR initiative at a 'Member meets Member' evening. My President's lunch came in April and it was one of Michael McDowell's last public speaking events. In May we held a packed seminar on HR Employment Law. June's Garden Party was a huge success and even though the weather let us down, it was a brilliant night and got us all ready for the Derby weekend.

The annual Golf Classic provided some excellent networking opportunities for the many teams that competed on the day, we even had a "hole in one" to make it a really special day. We had a fun Ergonomics & Identity Theft 'Member meets Member' event in October and as usual we finished the year with our Budget Breakfast which, as always, was a great success. Looking at the calendar for next year, it looks like being an equally busy and exciting 2008!

Lastly I'd like to thank both Breda and Celia in the office, without whom the Chamber could not function, and to thank all our Sponsors for their kind support.

P.S. Don't forget to shop in Newbridge this Christmas.....

Joe

Joe Fennell
President,
Newbridge Chamber



Curragh Carpets claims Passionate Award

Winner of the second Vodafone Passion for the World Around Us Award for 2007 is Curragh Carpets Ltd., one of Newbridge's longest established businesses. Nominated by Newbridge resident Michael Mullally, who observed over the years many different ways the company has always been willing to help the community both in business terms and also by encouraging their employees to participate in local Community Games &

Tidy Towns initiatives. Earlier this year they accepted a large array of books from the Newbridge CSR initiative (Corporate Social Responsibility) at their new Green Road premises, sorted through them and forwarded two pallets of books to Book Aid International (at their own expense) for use in Sub Saharan Africa literacy projects.

Accepting the award, Eugene O'Mahony said he was 'absolutely delighted' to receive the award. He accepted it on behalf of the many workers, past and present, who have been with Curragh Carpets over the past 60 years. Although only a year with the company himself, he said he had heard great stories from staff of community involvement over the years and looked forward to fostering that ethos into the future. He added that no business can take its market for granted but they were very proud to note that the factory in Newbridge is now the only carpet manufacturer in the south of Ireland. An achievement indeed in today's competitive environment.

The Passion for the World Around Us Awards recognise and reward individuals and businesses who make an effort to improve their local communities.



Larry Donohue, Curragh Carpets, Karen Hogan, Vodafone, Eugene O'Mahony, Operations Manager, Curragh Carpets and Joe Fennell, Newbridge Chamber at the Award presentation at The Keadeen Hotel on 26th November 2007.



Kildare Salary Survey Results

Due to the success of last year's annual salary survey, Chamber member Clark Recruitment has just announced the publication of its 2nd edition. Once again it's a valuable research tool for companies of all sizes who are interested in knowing current salary levels for various positions within their organisation structure. The survey results, which are based on a sample of 300 companies across all business sectors, cover the geographical corridor along the M7 motorway from Parkwest to Portlaoise. Most job titles are covered in the results which include Accountancy, Sales & Marketing,

Office Specialists, HR, Manufacturing and Engineering.

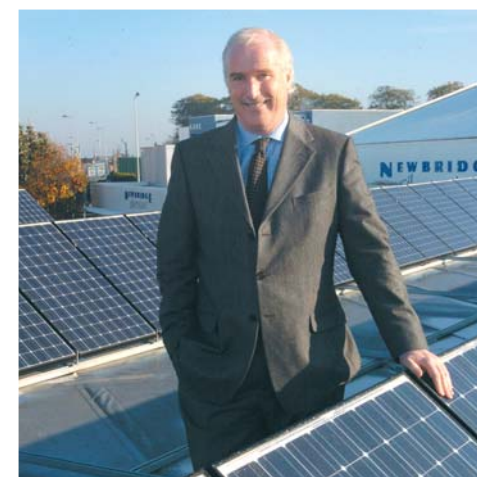
Clark Recruitment has recently relocated to new premises at Sycamore House, Millennium Park, Naas. According to Managing Director Deirdre Coghlan-Murray, this is a temporary move for approximately 18 months while they redevelop their premises at John's Lane, just off Main St., Naas. To receive a copy of the salary survey findings please contact Clark Recruitment by telephone 045 881888 or e-mail info@clarkrecruitment.ie

The greening of Newbridge Silverware

'Up on the Roof' is no longer just a song title from days of yore - it now has a resonance for Newbridge Silverware as they have embraced an eco-friendly energy policy in recent months. Visionary M.D. William Doyle explained to Newbridge Chamber that their recent changes were initially put in place because of financial reasons, as he was concerned about the prospect of rising energy costs over coming years. However, the 'eco' pay back is a welcome side effect of such decisions and he is now very zealous in how he describes the way the large Newbridge based company has changed its ways! A huge user of energy, here's some of the alternatives to fossil fuels they employ:

- company cars run on **bioethanol**;
- delivery vans run on **oilseed rape**;
- 90 solar panels** on the roof convert energy from sunlight to provide about 60% of electricity used in the museum, showroom and restaurant.

In October when Chamber visited the premises, it was off the national ESB grid, running on independent energy produced by **oilseed rape**. Engineer Jim Doyle explained that



M.D. of Newbridge Silverware, William Doyle.

an engine was converted by Biotec in Wexford to burn oilseed rape and this is located behind the factory. It almost seems superfluous to say that Newbridge Silver is the first company to remove itself from Ireland's national grid, the first company to use this type of converted engine to use alternative eco-friendly fuels... but being first is something we've come to expect from entrepreneurs like Newbridge Silverware!

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

Name	COMPANY	BUSINESS TYPE
Jennifer Harrington	Business Data Management Ltd.	IT Critical Data Protector
Agnieszka Barska	Galeria Handmade	Gift Shop - Candles & Angels
Ronan Connolly	Hickey's Pharmacy	Pharmacy
Carol O'Connor	IBSC - Integrated Business Solutions Consultancy Ltd.	Marketing Services Agency
John Wynne	J and C Bouncing Castles	Bouncing Castles Hire
Donna Hill	Noel Recruitment	Recruitment Agency

Bronze for Tidy Towns

Ger Ahern shows the bronze medal awarded to the Newbridge Tidy Towns group following the excellent marks received in the 2007 competition. This was presented to the group at a function in Auhgrim, Co. Wicklow on 26th November 2007 recognising all the tireless voluntary work put in by many Newbridge people all year round. Congrats to all involved on this fantastic achievement. If you think you could give a hand with preparation for Tidy Towns next year, why not contact Déaglán De Paor by email: newbridgetidytowns@eircom.net



Donal Horgan, Supervalu, Ger Ahern & Déaglán de Paor, Newbridge Tidy Towns & John Gormley, TD Minister for the Environment, Heritage & Local Government.

Close-up on Committee



In this issue we meet **Linda O'Neill of Creative Performance Ltd.**, who has been involved with Newbridge Chamber since 2002 and a valuable committee member since 2005.

With over 20 years of experience in Business and Human Resource Management, Linda established Creative Performance Ltd in 2001. She provides consultancy and tailored services to both small and large organisations in many areas including business coaching for owner-managers; business and process improvement; strategic planning; personality profiling for recruitment and performance improvement and diagnostic tools for measuring and improving human performance.

Linda played an instrumental role in researching the needs for our Skillnets Equine training cluster over the past two years, resulting in securing substantial funding for the project for Kildare businesses in this industry.

Linda is also a part-time lecturer at Trinity College, lecturing to mature students on the Human Resource Management module of the Diploma in Project Management. She is well qualified to deliver this service with a large amount of relevant qualifications herself: MBA, FCIPD (Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development), CMCA (Certified Management Consultant), and Certified Behavioural Analyst.

Originally from London, Linda worked in the UK and a number of European countries before settling in Ireland for 10 years and now says she wouldn't live anywhere else! A resident of Kill, she has three children; twin daughters Emma and Megan aged 10 and an 8 year old son Sean.

Florida Twin for Newbridge?

A delegation including Murty Aspell of Newbridge Town Council, Evan Arkwright of the Curragh Racecourse and Tracey Coughlan, Marketing Manger for Failte Ireland, recently visited **Ocala** in Florida, U.S.A. to look at twinning the town near Orlando with Newbridge. The delegation reported that there is a great synergy between the two communities, not only with the strong horse racing links (Ocala is known as the "Horse Capital of the World") but also through schools, businesses, tourism, culture and sports. Ocala also boasts a unique mixture of rural and urban lifestyles similar to Newbridge. A delegation from Ocala will visit Newbridge in January 2008.



Farrell's make 50!

Congrats to member **Farrell & Nephew Books & Gifts** which proudly celebrates fifty years in business this year. Set up in 1957 by the late **Michael & Kitty Farrell**, uncle and aunt to current proprietor **Dermot Finegan**, the shop is busier than ever today; an amazing achievement in 2007. Reflecting on fifty years on Main Street, Newbridge, Dermot puts their success down to

the sourcing of original and unusual Irish giftware, changing their complete book and card range regularly with the times and of course that renowned Farrell personal service! Dermot is delighted to steer the business towards another busy Christmas season and the Chamber wishes him all the best for many more years to come.

