

# Celebrating 30 Years

OF THE AUSTRALIAN IRELAND FUND

# 30

30 years ago, a group of Irish and Irish-Australian business people, with a connection to Ireland and a passion for supporting efforts underway there to build peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland, came together and formed The Australian Ireland Fund. Inspired by the success of The American Ireland Fund, founded 11 years earlier, the group consisted of Anthony McGrath, Cameron O'Reilly, Charles Curran AO, Peter Cosgrove and Kingsley Aikins, some of Irish Australia's most influential and connected people who had a desire to contribute to a prosperous future for the country of their birth or ancestry.



## ►► Launch of the Governor Programme

The Governor Programme launched in 1997, enabled the AIF to provide support to flagship projects, including Northern Ireland Children's Enterprise - NICE. In recognition of that support 'Australia House' was established in Belfast, where children from selected Catholic and Protestant schools, could meet in a peaceful, non-threatening and trusting environment. The Governor programme has continued to grow and from 2011 - 2016 contributed 19.6% of our total grants, with 30 Life Governors and 14 committed to the Programme.



1987

1997

## ►► The Australian Ireland Fund is launched by Chairman Anthony McGrath

Board Members include Mr Kingsley Aikins, Mrs Jane Cosgrove, Mr Peter Cosgrove, Mr Charles P Curran AO, Mr John O'Neill AO, Mr Cameron O'Reilly, The Rt Hon. Earl of Portarlington and Mrs Margaret Whitlam AO.



The Australian Ireland Fund, UNSW and the Irish community in Australia have shared a longstanding history as champions in establishing Irish Studies at UNSW. A campaign to fund Irish Studies was launched on the steps of the Opera House by the then President of Ireland Mary McAleese in 1998. The Australian Ireland Fund Chair of Modern Irish Studies was funded for a five-year period from 2010. As a result, UNSW became a hub of activity where researchers exchanged ideas, students learnt about Irish literature and culture and the community immersed itself in the richness of understanding the Irish experience.



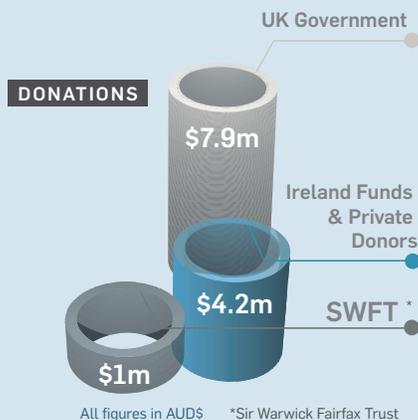
2004

►► Lady Mary Fairfax donates \$1m to Integrated Education

The Australian Ireland Fund has for 30 years actively assisted the peace process in Northern Ireland through supporting integrated education. Lady Fairfax donated \$1million in the name of her late husband, creating the Sir Warwick Fairfax Trust in 2004 specifically for this cause.

... this generosity sparked a significant \$12.1m commitment to Integrated Education

- The Ireland Funds donated \$2.27m
- Private US donors committed a further \$1m
- Chuck Feeney's Atlantic Philanthropy committed \$1m to form a joint communication and lobby strategy to lobby government for integrated education
- UK government committed at least \$7.9m



►► The Young Leaders network is launched in the Penthouse of the Grace Hotel in Sydney hosted by Consul General Pat Scullion

The Young Leader network also now operates in Melbourne and Brisbane, in 2016 the collective chapters raised \$60,000 to support flagship charities through the success of events such as the Christmas in July, The Melbourne Rebels event and the Global 5k run.

2009



In 2004 there were 50 integrated schools in Northern Ireland and 17,149 pupils. Today there are 62 schools and 21,500 pupils.



INCREASE IN SCHOOLS



INCREASE IN PUPILS



►► 2014 saw the first Young Leaders' Global 5k. The race takes place in 16 cities across the world and has been kicked off in Australia each year by the Global 5k Ambassador, Irish Olympian Sonia O'Sullivan.



2010

►► Australia has been a land of opportunity for many educated Irish people and we feel it's important for us to give back in Australia, the country that has been so good to so many people. One of the ways we have done this is by coming together with the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation and making a combined contribution of \$800,000 for indigenous scholarships at four leading Australian Schools by 2020. Figures published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics show secondary school retention rates for Indigenous students are still well below the average for non-Indigenous students. In contrast, in 2015 AIEF Scholarship Students achieved a 93% retention and Year 12 completion rate.



2014



The Sydney Garden Party, hosted in the grounds of Fairwater, home of Lady Mary Fairfax AC OBE, on the shores of Sydney Harbour has been The Australian Ireland Fund's flagship fundraising event for 27 years.

# 2015

▶▶ Dr Stanley Quek donates €1 million for the establishment of a cancer research centre at Trinity College.



The Australian Ireland Fund and Young Leaders support The Soar Foundation in Ireland. Inspired by the late Jim Stynes and the Reach Foundation in Melbourne, Soar provides early intervention and emotional well-being programs to young people aged 12-18 across the island of Ireland. To date the AIF have supported Soar with \$90,557 assisting them to reach 16,000 young people all over Ireland since 2012.



## SINCE THAT FIRST MEETING IN 1987, THE AUSTRALIAN IRELAND FUND HAS:

- contributed over \$9.5 million to 104 charities in Ireland and Australia
- supported 11 flagship projects ranging from \$200k up to \$1.5m
- donated \$1 million, from Lady Mary Fairfax, in 2004 for integrated education which has leveraged at least an additional \$12.1 million investment
- established Australia's first Chair of Modern Irish Studies at the University of New South Wales
- supported Indigenous Scholarships with the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation since 2010 with a commitment to 2020
- expanded from Sydney to cover Melbourne driven by local Director Kevin Luscombe AM and Brisbane with the help of Sallyanne Atkinson AO
- hosted 90 major events bringing together over 25,000 supporters
- founded three Young Leaders networks in Sydney (2009) Melbourne (2013), Brisbane (2015) hosting over 40 events bringing together 3,000 supporters
- hosted Irish Presidents including Mary Robinson and Dr. Mary McAleese, Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern, Australian Prime Ministers including The Hon. Gough Whitlam AO, Paul Keating and Malcolm Turnbull and every Irish Ambassador to Australia for the past 30 years as well as many Irish and Australian dignitaries and celebrities
- had generous and impressive Chairmen: Anthony McGrath, Cameron O'Reilly and Peter Cosgrove jointly, Charles P Curran AC, John O'Neill AO, Alan Joyce, and the newly-appointed Yvonne Le Bas

- ▶▶ The Australian Ireland Fund Board appoints its first female Chairman Yvonne Le Bas, CFO at BTFG.



2016



Today The Australian Ireland Fund marks a new era by joining other worldwide chapters in an organizational rebrand as "The Ireland Funds Australia." Yvonne Le Bas was appointed Chairman of The Ireland Funds Australia in 2016. She attended The Ireland Funds 2016 Conference in Dublin, and met charities that The Ireland Funds Australia has supported over the years.

"Our 30th year is a huge landmark for us. We're proud of all that has been achieved and looking forward to our future. We are using this opportunity to reflect on how far we've come, to thank our generous supporters and sponsors who have partnered with us on various stages of this journey, and to think about what we would like to have achieved in another 30 years."

"Attending the Conference really cemented for me that The Ireland Funds Australia, along with The Ireland Funds chapters around the world, make direct, real and lasting impacts on the lives of people in Ireland and Australia. Being able to contribute back to the country that I was raised and educated in through The Ireland Funds Australia has been a privilege, and, as I steer the organization, something I hope to continue for many years."

— Yvonne Le Bas, Chairman of The Ireland Funds Australia

