



March 2012: Students and staff at work during the Titanic Commemorative Dinner in aid of Galway RNLI

Dear Friends & Alumnus,

Welcome to the autumn edition of the Tourism Times. We have been very busy since our last newsletter, and hopefully this edition will update you on some of the changes.

In the first instance, GMIT is celebrating its **40<sup>th</sup> anniversary** this year. The college opened in September 1972, and during the last 40 years, we have served the region and indeed the country well. Look out for details regarding events happening this year - all will be listed on [www.gmit.ie](http://www.gmit.ie)

Over the last 18 months, GMIT has engaged in an organisation restructuring. The process was necessary due to the ever changing landscape in which we work. Following a period of consultation with staff, it was proposed that the Hotel School and School of Humanities come together to form a new college.

Following on from this proposal, a working group representing colleagues from across the schools was formed to work with the management team to consider the proposed structure and how it could best serve the various communities involved.

By the end of the academic year, all parameters were agreed and the **new College of Tourism and Arts** came into existence on Monday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Our new college is now the largest college in GMIT and is home to four departments on the Dublin Road campus and the Centre for Creative Arts and Media based in the Cluain Mhuire campus. This is a very exciting time for all of us as we bring together colleagues from a range of programmes to share experiences, and assist the college in our endeavours to become a Centre of Excellence for Tourism and Arts education in Ireland.

I look forward to sharing updates with you in forthcoming editions.

Finally, if you know of any alumni who have not registered their details with the LINKS office, please send this newsletter to them and encourage them to join. Contact details are listed on this newsletter.

My thanks as always to the LINKS Office team who helped prepare this edition.

Best wishes



Cáit Noone  
Head of College Tourism & Arts

## Dates for the Diary:

### 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> October, 2012:

GMIT Open Day

### 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> November, 2012:

GMIT Graduation, Radisson Galway

### 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2013:

GMIT Open Morning for Mature Students

### 5<sup>th</sup> February, 2013:

Foodie Forum, GMIT

### 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> March, 2013:

Irish Hotels Federation (IHF) Showtel 2013

### 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2013:

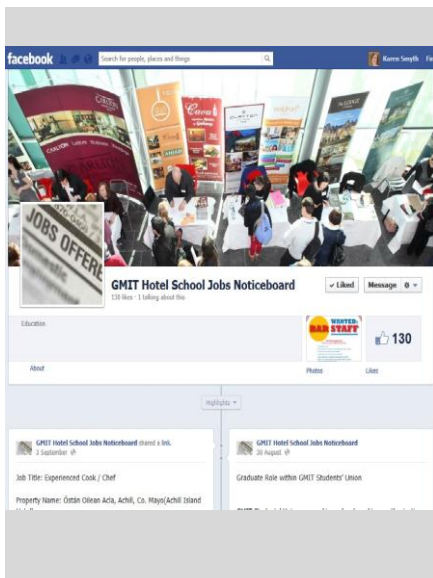
GMIT Open Morning

### 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2013:

Careers Fair, Café Foyer, GMIT.  
1.30pm – 4.30pm.

### 9<sup>th</sup> May, 2013:

Gastronomy West Symposium, GMIT



## Jobs Noticeboard now on Facebook

During summer 2012, the Hotel School launched a new "Jobs Noticeboard" on Facebook.

This was done in response to requests from industry looking for skilled students and graduates for specific roles or durations which are not covered by our work placement programmes.

Facebook has proved to be the best way to reach the target audience of students and recent graduates.

Roles advertised so far include Duty Managers, chefs, PR executives and

even volunteers for charity events.

The Jobs Noticeboard is being promoted to current students to highlight part time work opportunities, and is also being used to promote job opportunities to graduates.

This service is free of charge to all industry partners and graduates, so if you have a role you would like us to advertise, please email the team at [linksoffice@gmit.ie](mailto:linksoffice@gmit.ie) and we will post it for you.

## A Night to Remember the Titanic

On Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> of March 2012, the Hotel School hosted an 11-course black tie commemorative dinner replicating the meal served to guests in the first class dining room on the Titanic, in aid of Galway RNLI Lifeboat.

The evening kicked off at 6.30pm with a champagne and oysters reception followed by an 11-course dinner, each course served with a different wine. A string quartet provided entertainment throughout the evening.

GMIT Culinary Arts lecturer Noel Loughnane, who came up with the idea for this unique culinary experience, decided it would be fitting to do something for a maritime

charity – "Our menu on the night was the same as it was 100 years ago, but served in a contemporary style, and in a different order. It was a great learning experience for our students who were really excited about the event, and happy to be volunteering their time and energy for a charity like Galway Lifeboat while also respectfully marking the 100 year anniversary of the sinking of Titanic."

Chairperson of the Galway RNLI Lifeboat Fundraising Committee, Ciara O'Byrne, expressed sincere thanks to GMIT Hotel School, and in particular to Noel Loughnane and his team for organising this unique event.



Students and staff with a replica of the Titanic, made entirely from pastillage, at the Titanic Commemorative Dinner in aid of Galway RNLI



The 12 culinary arts students in Lycée Hôtelier de La Rochelle, France in March

## Student Cultural Exchange to La Rochelle & Bordeaux

12 Culinary Arts students and three lecturers from The Hotel School enjoyed an amazing foodie experience in La Rochelle and Bordeaux in France from the 28<sup>th</sup> of March to the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2012.

The group explored food and drink products in La Rochelle on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of March with in-class tuition in GMIT partner's Lycée Hôtelier de La Rochelle. They also visited the Musée de Cognac and Hennessy's Distillery in Cognac, and had the unique opportunity of an introduction to the manufacture of Grand Marnier

followed by a tasting and lunch in the Château de Bourg Charentes.

On the 31<sup>st</sup> of March, a guided tour of Bordeaux was followed by a wine tasting in the Bar à Vin de Bordeaux, and a walk around the Marché des Capucins.

Each evening, the group dined in a different restaurant to stimulate their taste buds, and enable critiques and comparisons of service and presentation. An exciting exploration of French cuisine in two gastronomic cities!

## First National "Foodie Forum" in GMIT

The Hotel School in GMIT hosted the first national "Foodie Forum" on Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012. The event was an interactive one day experience which showcased the abundance and variety of excellent local and artisan produce available in Ireland. In addition the event aimed to support local food businesses and promote consumer sustainability.

The forum included a series of Master classes with leading chefs and seminars by well known and established industry professionals. In addition, visitors experienced micro-brewers and participated in food and wine workshops coupled with an indoor market of local producers.

An impressive line up of contributors joined The Foodie Forum team in their quest to educate on the importance of the providence of food, the support of local suppliers and the use of seasonal Irish food.

The event concluded with a celebratory culinary dining experience, prepared by Hotel School lecturers and students with Mayor Hildegard Naughton and Cllr. Terry O'Flaherty in attendance.

This initiative, the inspiration of three Hotel School Lecturers, Cormac Handy, Colin Gilligan and Jacinta Dalton and supported by the Hotel School at GMIT, was pitched on



Left to right: Michael Carmody, President, GMIT, Cormac Handy, Jacinta Dalton, Mayor of Galway Hildegard Naughton, and Colin Gilligan.

Twitter to like minded "foodies" and momentum gathered within a matter of hours.

## Hotel School Careers Fair in its 6<sup>th</sup> successful year



Left to Right: Maeve O'Brien, Wade Murphy and Patrice McMahon from The Lodge at Doonbeg with Karen Smyth, Links Office, GMIT at the GMIT Hotel School Careers Fair on Wednesday, March 7<sup>th</sup>.

Now in its sixth year, the annual Hotel School Careers Fair was held on Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> of March, 2012, and attracted a number of international companies to recruit students, graduates and industry professionals.

There were over 40 exhibitors in total, including the following hotel groups – Carlton Hotel Group, Jurys Inns, Sinnott Hotels and the Hodson Bay group. Other employers in attendance this year included hotels, restaurants, recruitment companies and retail and tourism companies.

One of the exhibitors was The Hotel Hershey, one of America's landmark hotels, and one of the

official resorts of "Hersheypark", a family theme park in Pennsylvania run by the Hershey Chocolate Company. They recruited Hotel Management and Retail students for work placements starting in June 2012, and will be returning to recruit more students in 2013.

Those wishing to embark on an international career were attracted to Highlife Ski and Snowboard in Switzerland, an award-winning ski chalet company looking for chefs and hosts to run their exclusive, fully-catered ski chalets this winter.

Other international exhibitors included the renowned Landmark Hotel in London, and Selsdon Park Golf and Country Club in the UK.

## Competitions Round-Up

**NIFEX 2012 competitions** (Apr. 24<sup>th</sup>), Kings Hall, Belfast: Brian Dermody, Mihai Schirlu & Julia Babikova won silver, bronze and gold respectively. Students mentored by Maria Conboy

**Knorr Student Chef of the Year** (Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup>): Jason Mullen, 2<sup>nd</sup> year Higher Certificate in Culinary Arts, represented the college and was mentored by Noel Loughnane

**International Confectionary Art Competition 2012** (Mar. 5<sup>th</sup>): Averil O Connor & Kevin Ward competed in Paris, France, and Mary Reid was one of the judges at the event



Students Brian Dermody, Julia Babikova & Mihai Schirlu with culinary lecturer Maria Conboy

## Euro-Toques Partnership

The **Department of Culinary Arts**, one of four departments in the new College of Tourism & Arts and **Euro-toques Ireland**, the Irish branch of the European Community of Chefs – a professional association promoting local food sourcing & culinary heritage - have signed a memorandum of understanding which will provide graduate employment opportunities and internships for staff and students in GMIT.

The new college is the largest in GMIT and offers tourism and arts education to almost 2000 students. This new partnership has been offered to all Institutes of Technology offering culinary arts programmes, and the idea to create such an opportunity came from initial discussions with GMIT.

The partnership will offer free Euro-toques membership to students, opportunities for internships during culinary arts programmes and employment opportunities for students when their studies are complete.

In addition the MOU will also offer faculty an opportunity to spend time in industry to update culinary techniques, skills and knowledge.

As part of the agreement Euro-Toques will input into on-going programme development and curriculum updating providing invaluable input on priorities for industry.



JP McMahon, Cava/Aniar,  
Ruth Hegarty, Euro-toques,  
Wade Murphy, The Lodge at  
Doonbeg, Cait Noone, GMIT  
& Tim O'Sullivan, Renvyle House  
Hotel

## Staff Retirements

Best wishes to the following staff members who retired recently:

- Joe Loughnane
- Annette Bluett
- Mairtin Clancy
- Denis Murphy
- Larry Kenehan
- Seoirse Morris
- Carmel Wynne

## New Staff



### Dr. Francesco Noci, BEng, MSc (Food Science), PhD

Dr. Noci, prior to his appointment at GMIT, has been working at the UCD Institute of Food and Health since 2005 and lecturing in the area of nutritional biochemistry and metabolism and food product development. For the past seven years he has been researching on quality and safety of foods processed by non-thermal technologies. Overall, he has over 10 years of experience in research on physical and chemical aspects of food quality by instrumental and sensory methods. In 2010, he was awarded a grant from the European Commission (Framework Programme 7 – Research for the benefit of SMEs) as part of an international consortium. The research focused on the development of a new system for the processing of milk ([www.smartmilk.eu](http://www.smartmilk.eu)).



### Dr. Clare Gilsenan

Dr. Clare Gilsenan was awarded the ABBEST Scholarship in 2006 for her PhD proposal "An Investigation into Factors Influencing the Sensory Properties of Selected Irish Grown Organic and Conventional Vegetables", and was subsequently awarded her PhD from Dublin Institute of Technology in 2011. Prior to joining GMIT, she lectured in sensory science and food studies at St. Angela's College, Sligo, and was an assistant lecturer in culinary arts at Dublin Institute of Technology. She was also employed by DIT in a consultancy capacity to provide sensory support and expertise to a range of food companies. Her research has been presented at several conferences both nationally and internationally. She won best poster at the Annual Research Chefs Association Conference in Dallas, Texas, in 2009 and has had her research published in peer reviewed scientific journals. Her research interests are in the area of culinary arts and science, sensory analysis and new food product development.

## Student Showcase at GMIT Pavilion, Volvo Ocean Race

GMIT displayed a variety of student work in the GMIT Pavilion at Volvo Ocean Race in Galway from the 30<sup>th</sup> of June to the 8<sup>th</sup> of July, 2012.

The Hotel School display included pastillage displays, spun sugar pieces and novelty cakes, while colourful posters gave visitors a flavour of the student experience in the Hotel School.

It was a fantastic opportunity for GMIT students to showcase their work to a world-wide audience of industry representatives and visitors to Galway, as there were over 900,000 visits by spectators and tourists to the Race Village and Global Village during the nine day event.



President Michael D Higgins at the Hotel School section of the GMIT Student Showcase pavilion

## Staff Volunteer to "Feed" Volvo Ocean Race Competitors

A number of staff from the Hotel School had the privilege of preparing and serving food to the crews of the Volvo Ocean Race yachts after they crossed the finish line in Galway in the early hours on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012.

The Hotel School staff worked through the evening of Monday, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, to prepare the culinary delights for the team. (The photo on the right was taken at 2.30am, prior to the teams' arrival).

Given that the race lasted nine long months, and no fresh food is typically taken on board the yachts, the crew were ecstatic to receive such wonderful, fresh Irish produce on arrival.

The teams and the organisers of the Volvo Ocean Race were extremely appreciative of the effort from the staff, and the quality of the gastronomic display.



Minister Simon Coveney, Frank O'Connor, Cait Noone, Colin Gilligan, Martin Ruffley, Jacinta Dalton & Ann Kelly at the Race Village



## The Gathering Ireland 2013

The College of Tourism & Arts will be promoting a number of upcoming events through "The Gathering Ireland" initiative in 2013.

The Gathering Ireland is a year-long celebration in 2013 of Ireland and all things Irish, and is the biggest tourism project in the history of the State.

The Gathering is an open invitation to the global Irish diaspora – and indeed anybody who feels a sense of connection to Ireland – to come and spend some time in Ireland in 2013.

The website:

[www.thegatheringireland.com](http://www.thegatheringireland.com)

features a calendar of Events which will form the spine of the year and serve as a celebration and a showcasing of the best that Ireland has to offer.

The website will feature at least two events from the College of Tourism & Arts (Gastronomy West Symposium on May 9<sup>th</sup>, and THRIC conference on June 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup>), and will be promoted through a major overseas promotion campaign.

## Tourism & Hospitality Research in Ireland Conference (THRIC)

The 9<sup>th</sup> annual Tourism and Hospitality Research in Ireland Conference (THRIC) will take place in Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology on **Thursday 6<sup>th</sup>** and **Friday 7<sup>th</sup> June, 2013**.

THRIC is an opportunity to gather industry, academia and students together and offers a forum to discuss their research.

A number of keynote speakers will be announced in the future and a call for papers will be issued in due course. Papers will be sought on a wide variety of conference sub-themes.

For further information or for any queries, please email [thric@gmit.ie](mailto:thric@gmit.ie)

## Alumni Profiles

Please contact us if you would like to profile your career and company in future newsletters.

Email: [linksoffice@gmit.ie](mailto:linksoffice@gmit.ie)

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# 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Calendar

**GMIT IS CELEBRATING ITS 40<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY WITH A SERIES OF EVENTS THROUGHOUT 2012/2013 (PLEASE CONTACT GMIT FOR FURTHER DETAILS AS SOME EVENTS MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE):**

## SEPTEMBER

13<sup>th</sup> Nursing Conference with Mayo Medical Academy  
14<sup>th</sup> Cloudbusting Conference (GMIT/ITAG)  
16 Sep – 4 Nov CERN 'Accelerating Science' Exhibition  
17<sup>th</sup> liBC Spirit of Entrepreneurship Event (Castlebar)

## OCTOBER

7<sup>th</sup> Celtic Voyager Schools Competition  
5<sup>th</sup> Letterfrack 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Graduate Conference  
9<sup>th</sup> Careers Fair (Galway)  
12-20<sup>th</sup> GMIT Architectural Expo (Open House Galway), Galway Docks  
19 & 20<sup>th</sup> Open Day (Galway)  
26<sup>th</sup> Confering (Letterfrack)  
tbc CED launch

## NOVEMBER

2 Nov-Dec 20 GMIT Letterfrack 25 year anniversary exhibition in Farnleigh  
2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> UK and Ireland PASS Leader Conference  
5<sup>th</sup> Nationwide GMIT special  
9<sup>th</sup> Confering (Castlebar)  
9-24<sup>th</sup> Exhibition by Claire McLaughlin entitled *Trace and Transfer* at the Higher Bridges Gallery, Enniskillen  
12-18<sup>th</sup> Events in Library during Library Ireland Week  
12-25<sup>th</sup> Galway Science & Technology Festival  
15 & 16<sup>th</sup> Confering (Galway)  
16<sup>th</sup> Open Day (Castlebar)  
23<sup>rd</sup> Open Day (Letterfrack)  
28<sup>th</sup> Student event celebrating diversity and culture

## DECEMBER

6<sup>th</sup> Family Fun Day/Kids Christmas Party  
12<sup>th</sup> Paddy Ryan Memorial Lecture  
10<sup>th</sup> Launch of Dr Mark McCarthy's new book *Ireland's 1916 Rising: Explorations of History-Making, Commemoration & Heritage in Modern Times* (published by Ashgate)  
14 or 15<sup>th</sup> 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Staff Event/Christmas Party

## JANUARY

19<sup>th</sup> Open Morning for Mature Learners  
25<sup>th</sup> Open Day (Letterfrack)

## FEBRUARY

5<sup>th</sup> Foodie Forum  
25 Feb – 3 Mar Events for Engineers Week

## MARCH

11<sup>th</sup> International Construction Management Day  
13<sup>th</sup> College of Tourism & Arts Careers Fair  
23<sup>rd</sup> Open Day (Galway)  
tbc SU Anniversary Event  
tbc Education Conference

## APRIL

Wk beg 23<sup>rd</sup> SU Achievement Awards  
tbc Library hosting an event during Cúirt Festival

## MAY

9<sup>th</sup> Gastronomy West Symposium

## JUNE

6 & 7<sup>th</sup> THRIC (Tourism & Hospitality Research in Ireland) Conference  
*Celebrating Arts and Culture: A Gathering of the Tourism & Hospitality Family*  
4-7<sup>th</sup> CPD week  
tbc End of Year Graduate Show  
Centre for the Creative Arts & Media  
tbc End of Year Screenings