

IWN Woman of the Year Brief biographies (revised December 16, 2011)

2011

TERESA McDONNELL

Teresa is recognized for her efforts to ensure that the goals of the Irish Heritage Society are realized. She worked relentlessly as a key member of the Irish Heritage Society in securing permission for the building of an Irish Centre on their location in Langley and she continues to be involved in all their fund raising efforts. She was also instrumental behind securing Doolins as the Irish House during the Games. She volunteered at the Irish House almost every day, staffing the Irish Heritage Society Booth and through the Booth, promoted Irish culture and tourism information to visitors.

2010

ANNETTE SAVAGE

Originally hailing from Roscommon, Annette moved to Vancouver in 1975. Since then, Annette's contributions to her local community have been extensive, including volunteering with the Social Planning and Research Council (SPARC), the POCOMO Teen Society, Port Coquitlam Women's Centre and fundraising for United Way and the Canadian Cancer Society. In 2007, she fundraised for and participated in the annual Niall Mellon Township building blitz, an Irish charity that builds houses for the underprivileged in the township of Khayelitsha, near Cape Town, South Africa.

2009

EILIS COURTNEY

Eilis has been a part of the IWN since the beginning and treasurer since 2004. Following a volunteer position with United Way of the Lower Mainland in 1991, Eilis remained very involved in the UBC United Way campaign and for the past 10 years has played a lead role in the campus campaign, helping to raise over \$500,000 annually for the past few years. In 2007, Eilis took a leave of absence from her job at UBC to spend three months in Uganda volunteering with The Aids Support Organization (TASO).

2008

KATHY KING

Active in the Irish Community over the last 30 years, Kathy has been very supportive to new Irish moving into White Rock, always extending a warm hand of friendship and making them very welcome. Kathy, along with other local Irish people in White Rock, was involved in founding the White Rock Irish Club, which was established shortly after the Irish Women's Network. Kathy has also been very active in the promoting of Irish Dancing and Irish music and has been very involved with Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann.

2007

VI MOORE

In 1957, Vi Moore began the Violet Moore School of Irish Dancing at St. Patrick's Church at Main & 12th. Since that time, she has passed on her great talent and passion for this art form to thousands of children and adults. As many as 85% of Irish dance schools in Western Canada can trace their roots and beginnings to the work of Violet Moore. Through Violet's volunteer programs at lower mainland schools and performances at hundreds upon hundreds of community events over decades, people from all backgrounds have learned an appreciation for Ireland's unique dance form.

2006

CATHOLINE BUTLER

Catholine Butler is a founding partner in *The Celtic Connection*. Established in 1991, the publication serves over 35,000 Irish, Scottish and Welsh readers throughout Western Canada and Pacific Northwest. Throughout her working career, Catholine has always been involved in the Irish community, from owning Irish pubs to managing Irish bands to hosting radio shows. From 1974 to 1982, Catholine worked as a fundraiser on the Gatineau Pioneer Cemetery in Martindale, Quebec, which successfully raised funds to establish a permanent memorial with a graphic depiction of the events leading to the arrival of the immigrants on North American shores, along with a stone Celtic cross.

2005

GERALDINE MEGANNETY

Geraldine Megannety has been involved in her community since her arrival in the early 70's from Bray, Co. Wicklow. She was very involved in the parent teacher association at Thomas Moore Collegiate in Burnaby, as well as coordinating fundraisers and craft fairs and making costumes for school plays. Known for being very supportive and generous over the years to friends and neighbours, she quietly assists without attention. In 2000, Geraldine joined the Irish Women's Network, and very quickly took on the role as secretary, taking charge of many of the administrative tasks and events of the organization.

2004

ANN CARR

A long-time member of the Vancouver Irish Community, Dubliner Ann Carr has been a strong supporter of the Irish Women's Network since it started. Growing out her son's love of basketball, she founded a non-profit organization called DCY Basketball Association. In 2002 she received a Community Spirit Award from United Way of the Lower Mainland in recognition of her work with developmentally-challenged youth.

2003

PAM GLASS

Hailing from Malahide, Co. Dublin, Pam Glass has made a significant impact in South Surrey, the Lower Mainland and British Columbia. From her dedication to the youth of the area as school board vice-chair to a director of Sport BC and the president of the White/Rock South Surrey Chamber of Commerce, she approaches her varied endeavours with determination, enthusiasm and passion. A former judge of the Citizenship Court, Glass also visits Grade 5 classes to talk about citizenship.

2002

DEIRDRE O'RUAIRC

Deirdre came to Canada in 1974 from Glasnevin, Dublin, starting in Fort Ware BC and then moving to Vancouver in 1975 where she and her husband Brian started Shamrock Renovation and Construction Ltd. A mother of five children, she was actively involved in the parent/teacher association at the children's schools as well as the local CWL. She was one of the founding members of the Irish Women's Network and as President, has worked tirelessly to continue to promote the network as well as strengthening the connections between the IWN and other Irish organizations in the Lower Mainland.

2001

MARIE MORRIS

Marie (Byrne) Morris has been prominent member of the Vancouver Irish community since the early '60's. In fact, there are very few committees that have not had Marie as a member at one time. Her involvement with the Stage Eireann drama group is where Marie dedicated most of her years. Today she is an active committee of the Celtic Society Benevolent Fund and 3 theatre groups in the North Vancouver district. She has been a member of the IWN since its founding in 1998 and currently organizes the annual golf tournament.

2000

MAURA DE FREITAS

Maura (McCay) De Freitas was recognized for her contributions to the community through her work with The Celtic Connection. Founded in 1991 by Maura and her mother, Catholine Butler, the Celtic Connection continues to service the Irish, Welsh, Scottish and English communities of Western Canada, including a mix of international news and comment, feature articles, culture and sports reports and regional coverage, including a page for Seattle Irish news.

1999

MARY HATCH

Mary (Monks) Hatch founded the Irish Women's Network in 1998. Mary saw a need for Irish women in British Columbia to meet each other and network in an informal way. Her vision was to create an organization that would provide opportunities for companionship, conversation and mutual support to newly-emigrated Irish women as well as long-time residents who wanted to re-connect with women of similar backgrounds and traditions.