

**22-May-2006**

### **Roscommon Ambassador Programme launched**

Over 40 Roscommon people who have succeeded in commerce, media and government in Dublin and abroad were invited to participate in a new initiative to promote the County. The inaugural meeting of the Roscommon Ambassador Programme, organised by the County Development Board and hosted by Seán Mulryan, was held in the K Club, Co. Kildare in March.

County Manager John Tiernan said the purpose of the Ambassador programme was to salute the contribution of the Roscommon diaspora and to seek their help in advancing some of the many developments planned for the county. He highlighted tourism development particularly along the river Shannon as a priority.

Mr Tiernan outlined developments underway in the county including the €7.9 million redevelopment of Lough Key Forest Park and the planned Boat Training Centre and Aquarium at Hodson Bay. "These projects and more like them are essential for Roscommon to thrive as an attractive place to work, live and visit" he added.

Responding on behalf of the new Ambassadors, Liam Connellan, Chairperson of Connex Ireland, the company responsible for the LUAS in Dublin, said that all the people who had turned out to the meeting feel a great allegiance to their county of origin. The Strokestown man also complimented the Roscommon County Development Board on putting a structure and shape to the goodwill that's available.

The Roscommon Ambassadors programme will be administered by the County Development Board whose membership comprises of 19 different organisations including the local development agencies, Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, Roscommon County Council, Roscommon County Enterprise Board, Chambers of Commerce and a number of other agencies.

To mark the launch of the new programme, each Ambassador was presented with a specially commissioned piece of cut glass by Mayor Tom Crosby.

Among those who attended the launch were Michael Caslin of 747 travel, Jim Miley, CEO myhome.ie, Brian Carty, GAA Correspondent RTE, Connie Doddy of Lir Chocolates and Major General Dermot Earley. Other ambassadors involved in the programme who were unable to attend the launch include Mary Finan, newly appointed Chairperson of RTE, Owen Killian, CEO IAWS, and Aiden Heavey, CEO of Tullow Oil.

The Board will continue to keep in touch with the Ambassadors for the county through quarterly mailings and through regular updates.