

## Events calendar

Among the events planned for Mountjoy Square this year are:

### April

12th – An evening of favourites with world-renowned harpsichordist *Jory Vinikour*. €39 – including glass of wine. Tickets from

[www.mountjoysquaresociety.ie](http://www.mountjoysquaresociety.ie)

14th – Square Spring Clean

16th – Mountjoy Square Society AGM.

### May

26th – Opera Night

### June

23rd – Open Squares' Day

World Orchestra performance in association with Mountjoy Square Society

### August

18th-26th – Cultural events to mark Heritage Week (Events TBC)

### September

21st – Culture Night

### October

12-14 – Open House

### December

Christmas Concert (Date TBC)

To be sure you're kept up to date on these events, add your details to our mailing list by emailing [info@mountjoysquaresociety.com](mailto:info@mountjoysquaresociety.com)



### Culture Night 2011

[Left to right] Garrett Fennell, Chairman, Mountjoy Square Society, and Patrick Guinness. On Culture Night, 23 September 2011, Patrick gave a talk on the life and times of Arthur Guinness, whose townhouse was or near Mountjoy Square West.



### CD launch

At the launch of 'The Good Old Days of Music Hall' at 25 Mountjoy Square recently were [left to right] Senator Paul Coughlan, Gerry Noonan, Minister for Arts Jimmy Deenihan TD, Dara MacMahon and Maureen O'Sullivan TD.

## About the Mountjoy Square Society

The Mountjoy Square Society is an organisation created by and for people who live in, work in and have a passion for Mountjoy Square. To date, it has engaged with all leading stakeholders to seek improvement to the square, including Dublin City Council, the Gardai, Dublin Tourism, Dublin Bus and the GAA. These efforts are bearing results. Membership is free, with a voluntary subscription of €5 per person kindly requested, and can be done online. The fee for corporate members is €20. All members will receive our newsletter; get a discounted rate at events we run; and, most importantly, will be contributing to an organisation that is working hard for our community. To join call Aileen on 01 8198500 today. Alternatively visit our website

[www.mountjoysquaresociety.com](http://www.mountjoysquaresociety.com) or contact us on [info@mountjoysquaresociety.com](mailto:info@mountjoysquaresociety.com)



## Mountjoy Square Society Committee

### Directors

Garrett Fennell (Chair)  
Karin O'Flanagan (Secretary)  
Bernadette Manning (Treasurer)  
Ann Prendergast  
Stephen Bishop

# Mountjoy Square Matters

Building community spirit in Mountjoy Square

## Editorial

### A new vision

We are delighted to have some great news to report in our second issue of *Mountjoy Square Matters*. Since October 2011, Mountjoy Square has ceased to be used as a city coach park. This is a great step forward for one of the inner city's most densely populated areas and the largest green space in Dublin 1.

In 2012, we will build on the momentum of this achievement and take further steps forward in our plans to transform Mountjoy Square into place worthy of our community. Our vision is to make Mountjoy Square a better place to live and work and we invite you to get involved in a community organisation that represents your needs. Get in touch at [info@mountjoysquaresociety.com](mailto:info@mountjoysquaresociety.com)  
**Mountjoy Square Society**

### Decision welcomed

The Mountjoy Square Society has welcomed the recent decision by An Bord Pleanála to refuse planning permission for a new children's hospital at the nearby Mater Hospital site. The scale of the proposed development would have meant it dominated and overshadowed much of the local area, as well as seriously undermined the character of the north inner city. The Society will carefully monitor any new planning applications at the site.

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## Reinventing our park

Having secured the removal of coach parking from Mountjoy Square, residents are now in a better position than ever to access and enjoy Mountjoy Square Park. However, there is still a long way to go before the largest green space in Dublin 1 becomes fit for purpose for the bustling community of residents, students and business people who live and work here. Our park should be the jewel in the crown of the North Georgian Quarter but, instead, shows the signs of decades of neglect, lack of investment, loss of green space to inappropriate use and frequent anti-social activity. The Mountjoy Square Society has been lobbying Dublin City Council for a commitment to develop the park over the last few years and, in 2012, our campaign will advance considerably.

### Public realm strategy

We recently took part in the consultation process on Dublin City Council's proposed Public Realm Strategy. Our submission to the Council focused on the neglect of Mountjoy Square Park over the years and called for immediate action to make the park a pleasant, accessible and functioning part of the public realm in Mountjoy Square. In welcoming the development of the Public Realm Strategy, we pointed out that we share Dublin City Council's vision for removing urban blight, decluttering the public realm, greening the city and achieving high quality design. Our submission concluded that 'the degree to which the current state of Mountjoy Square Park blights the future regeneration of Mountjoy Square cannot be overstated. Its regeneration needs to be tackled as a short term priority rather than as a longer term objective. We require Dublin City Council to be more ambitious in its outlook and plans for the Park.'

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## Our priorities for 2012

### • Improve the park

Mountjoy Square Society will support the development of a world-class design proposal for the redevelopment of square.

### • Improve security

We are calling on Dublin City Council to introduce CCTV on the square and establish a 'neighbourhood watch' scheme.

### • Support conservation

We are been actively engaging with Dublin City Council on the Architectural Conservation Area process. We want to promote the square as a gem in the heart of the North Georgian Quarter and to improve connectivity between the Square and surrounding areas.

### • Improve enforcement

We want to see action taken to secure endangered and historic buildings, planning compliance to stop deterioration of buildings, and ensure appropriate use of buildings.

### • Support culture and jobs

Mountjoy Square should be an important tourist attraction, with a museum, information signage and plaques on buildings. In 2012, we will continue to engage in heritage week, Culture Night, open house and other initiatives which set out to showcase Dublin's Georgian heritage.

### • Build community spirit

We are developing a community charter that will give voice to those who live and work on the square and develop close liaison between Mountjoy Square community and adjoining communities.

Find out more at  
[www.mountjoysquaresociety.com](http://www.mountjoysquaresociety.com)

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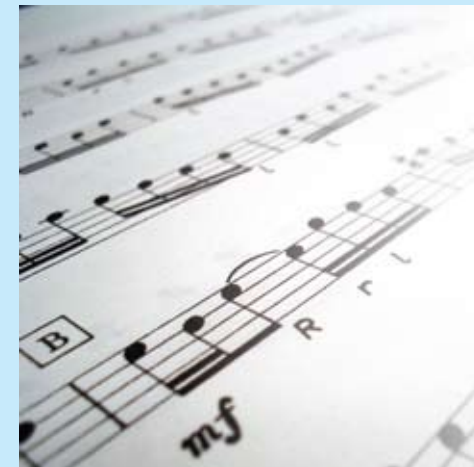
### Redesigning the park

Our intention is to commission a Conservation Plan which, in consultation with all local stakeholders, will provide a template for the redesign of the park. We believe there is an opportunity to create a world-class city park, one that provides for the needs of the Mountjoy Square residents, that highlights the very best of our beautiful Georgian square and gains us national and international profile for its sustainable nature. A serious proposal will require fundraising and Mountjoy Square Society is committed to raising the amount necessary to bring this vision to life. We believe approximately €20,000 will be necessary for the commissioning process and fundraising will be undertaken at home and abroad over 2012. If you have ideas on how you'd like to see Mountjoy Square Park developed or would like to be part of our fundraising initiative, please email us at [info@mountjoysquaresociety.com](mailto:info@mountjoysquaresociety.com)

### Goodbye to all that

Private coach parking, which blighted Mountjoy Square since Dublin City Council first allowed it in 1993, finally came to an end in 2011. Intensive canvassing over the year included publication of a 40-page report, produced by local conservationist Ruadhan MacEoin, which identified 10 different vacant sites around the city that potentially could be used as a coach park.

Finally, in September, Dublin City Council confirmed that the coach parking on Mountjoy Square South would be rescinded as of 2 October, 2011 and the area would revert to Pay & Display/Permit Parking. Private coaches were provided with alternative parking on North Wall Quay and, finally, after almost 20 years, residents could enjoy the full proportions and views of Mountjoy Square, access the park freely and safely, and avail of more parking spaces. The removal of the coaches is a major boost to our aspirations to redevelop Mountjoy Square and particular thanks must go to Dublin City Councillors Emer Costello and Mary Fitzpatrick, who championed the cause from the start, as well as to local Garda, including Superintendent Sean Ward and Inspector Gerard Donnelly, who ensured implementation of the changes took place immediately. The removal of coach parking received widespread praise, with the Dublin City Business Association, the Irish Georgian Society and An Taisce all expressing their support. Commenting on the council's decision, chairman of the Mountjoy Society Garrett Fennell said: 'We are delighted that the City Council has taken this measure for the protection, preservation and improvement of Mountjoy Square as a special part of Dublin.'



## Mountjoy Square World Orchestra

Mountjoy Square has many historic and cultural claims to fame – home to the first Dáil in 1919 and to Dublin's most beloved playwright Séan O'Casey. Over the next few months, a new chapter will open in our cultural history, with the creation of the Mountjoy Square World Orchestra. Celebrating the rich multicultural diversity of the square, this orchestra will be made up of people from all over the world and will have the support of musical directors from Italy and the US. The Mountjoy Square World Orchestra is being created in conjunction with Eli McBrett, Pavee Point, the Shed and a number of other local art and cultural groups. The orchestra's first concert is scheduled to be performed in the square on 23rd June. The Mountjoy Square Society is delighted to be part of a unique project that will bring people of all nationalities and backgrounds together to enrich arts, culture and community life in the North Inner City. In order to support the Mountjoy Square World Orchestra, a number of fundraising activities are now being planned. To find out more about our plans to fund the development of the orchestra and its first public performance please email us at [info@mountjoysquaresociety.com](mailto:info@mountjoysquaresociety.com)

## Draft ACA published

Dublin City Council has published proposals to designate Mountjoy Square Society as an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). This is an important move and will help to preserve and protect the special character of the square for future generations. Details of the proposals to set up the ACA can be viewed at [www.dublincity.ie/Planning/DublinCityDevelopmentPlan/Documents/smlMountjoy%20Square%20ACA%20Document.pdf](http://www.dublincity.ie/Planning/DublinCityDevelopmentPlan/Documents/smlMountjoy%20Square%20ACA%20Document.pdf) and comments are invited from the public on the proposed ACA by 21 March 2012. On 15 March 2012, the Mountjoy Square Society is hosting an information meeting on the ACA at 25 Mountjoy Square, starting at 4.30pm. Speakers from Dublin City Council will outline the background to the ACA and what it will involve for the square. ACA designation would provide long overdue recognition of the value the original Georgian buildings on Mountjoy Square and ensure higher standards in the maintenance and future development of the fabric of the square and the park. The Mountjoy Square Society believes that ACA recognition for Mountjoy Square is pivotal if the city is to progress with its plans to secure UNESCO World Heritage status for its Georgian core.



## Spring Clean calling

An Taisce will launch the National Spring Clean in Mountjoy Square on Wednesday 28th March, at 11 am. Environment Minister Phil Hogan will perform the launch, along with Alex Attwood, Minister for the Environment for Northern Ireland. Pupils from the three local National Schools – Gardiner Street Girls School, O'Connell's Boys School, and Lourdes Parish School – have all been invited to join. On Saturday 14th April, the Spring Clean itself takes place and all are welcome to participate in this fantastic opportunity to spruce up our historic square. The Spring Clean takes just two hours and starts at 10am. To join in contact [info@mountjoysquaresociety.com](mailto:info@mountjoysquaresociety.com)