



## THANK YOU

The Chamber would like to thank everyone who supported the raffle in aid of NI Hospice which was held at the 2007 Business Awards Gala Evening. The superb total of £3750 was subsequently presented to the NI Hospice. Mrs. Semina Bonar who received the cheque on behalf of the Hospice thanked everyone very much for their generosity, emphasising that the Hospice depends on donations for almost all of its funding.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- Tuesday 11th March:** Business breakfast hosted by 7FM at 7.30am. Adair Arms Hotel  
"What 7FM can do for your business!"
- Friday 11th April:** Business lunch with Guest Speaker First Minister  
The Rev. & Rt. Hon. Ian Paisley MP, MLA  
Topic: "Creating a vibrant and sustainable economy"  
Tullyglass House Hotel, Ballymena 12.00 – 2.30 pm.
- Wednesday 16th April:** Chamber AGM in Adair Arms Hotel at 6.00pm.
- Thursday 23rd October:** Ballymena Borough Business Excellence Awards 2008 Gala Evening in Tullyglass House Hotel

For full details on these and other events visit the Chamber website:

[www.ballymenachamber.co.uk](http://www.ballymenachamber.co.uk)



# Ballymena

Borough Chamber of Commerce and Industry

## Newsletter

Issue 6: March 2008

This newsletter is sponsored by

# McKillens®

IRELAND'S LARGEST SHOE STORE

## PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD



Since taking over the Presidency of the Chamber almost two years ago I have strived to grow it into a vibrant organisation, one which delivers on its core principles of establishing and helping new businesses grow and ensuring that existing businesses continue to prosper, create wealth and job opportunities. I have also tried to provide our membership with networking opportunities and communicated their concerns as appropriate. I sincerely hope the Chamber has delivered value for money.

Over the coming months further events have been organised which I am sure you will find of interest. Details are included in the Newsletter.

My period as President expires in April. I have enjoyed my role a great deal and would like to thank my Management team and Chris Wales for all their help over the last two years.

Please enjoy this edition of our Newsletter. I would like to thank McKillens Footwear for sponsoring this edition of the Newsletter. If you would like to sponsor a future issue, or if you have any issues or suggestions for the way forward, please don't hesitate to contact Chamber. You can keep up to date with Chamber news on our website –

[www.ballymenachamber.co.uk](http://www.ballymenachamber.co.uk)

**William McKean**  
President

## RETAIL CRIME PREVENTION SEMINAR



Ballymena Borough Chamber of Commerce and Industry organised a Retail Crime Prevention Seminar which was held in the Michelin Athletic Club on 30th October.

Chamber Vice President Alison Moore welcomed everyone saying "It is great to see so many people here and especially so many from the villages in the Borough. Christmas is traditionally a very busy time in the shops in the Borough and we want to try and ensure that it is as trouble and fraud free as possible".

Colin Davidson and Tony O'Kane from First Trust Bank then gave a presentation which concentrated mainly on debit/credit card fraud. They pointed out many of the most serious problems which retailers face, and gave excellent information on how to avoid being defrauded.

Dean McAuley, the local crime prevention officer and his team were also present.

They explained the best ways to identify and deter shoplifters and what rights retailers have when they catch a shoplifter. During a short role play, Trevor Parker, BRAC operations manager certainly showed his acting ability.

James Perry from Gloonan Gallery in Ahoghill thanked the Chamber for organising such a worthwhile event. He said "I am very pleased that I came along this evening. Everyone here learnt so much this evening and I will be putting a lot of what I learnt this evening into immediate practice in my business".

Alison Moore summed up by thanking everyone who had attended and thanked First Trust Bank and the PSNI for their participation.

... they say beauty is more than skin deep

# McKillens®

IRELAND'S LARGEST SHOE STORE

..we agree!

beautiful  
footwear  
fashion  
gifts  
coffee

78-90 CHURCH ST. BALLYMENA



## APOLOGY

In the November 2007 Newsletter we listed the Village Inn as winning the incorrect category in the Ballymena Borough Business Excellence Awards 2007. We apologise for this error and confirm that the Village Inn, Cullybackey won the Best Licensed Premises Award.

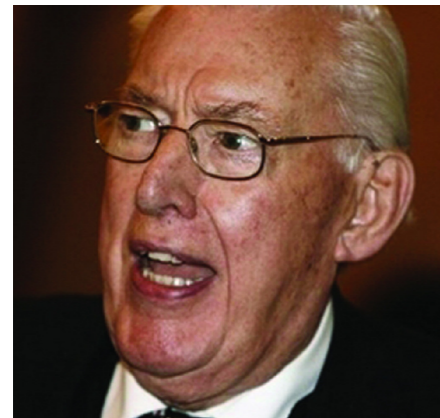
Well done!

## FIRST MINISTER LUNCH WITH BALLYMENA BUSINESS

It's another first for Ballymena Borough Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The business group has secured the First Minister, the Reverend and Rt. Hon. Ian Paisley MP MLA, before he leaves office, as a keynote speaker for a business lunch open to all Ballymena business people.

The lunch, being sponsored by NIE Energy, will see the First Minister imparting how to create a vibrant and sustainable economy for Northern Ireland. Taking place on Friday, 11th April at the Tullyglass House Hotel on the Galgorm Road, there will also be an opportunity for questions to the First Minister.



The First Minister, the Reverend and Rt. Hon. Ian Paisley MP MLA said that he is particularly looking forward to meeting with business people in his own constituency.

Alison Moore, Business Energy Manager from sponsor NIE Energy, recently visited the venue to discuss final arrangements, she said:

*"NIE Energy is delighted to be able to support this business event. It is a great opportunity for Ballymena business people to hear, in this moment of our history before the First Minister steps down, from someone who not only shaped our economy, but also travels the world as an ambassador for Northern Ireland business."*

*I am also Vice President of Ballymena Chamber, so I'm equally delighted that we have been able to secure the First Minister as a speaker at this event."*

The Chamber is hoping Ballymena business will support this event, the latest in a series of very well attended Chamber events, following on from the Ballymena Business Awards, which was a huge success.

Chris Wales from Ballymena Borough Chamber of Commerce and Industry added:

*"Bearing in mind the many changes that have and continue to affect our economy, the Chamber believes that this is an opportune time to improve links between business and government and encourage debate."*

*I'd like to thank NIE Energy for sponsoring this event which shows in a practical way, their support for Ballymena business."*



The event starts at 12.00 noon and will run to around 2.30pm on Friday, 11th April. Tickets are £20.00 for Chamber members and their guests and £25.00 for non-Chamber members.

To book tickets for this lunch, please contact Chris Wales at [office@ballymenachamber.co.uk](mailto:office@ballymenachamber.co.uk) or by phone on 07876 758797.

members of the Management Committee expressed their opinions. It was a useful and very constructive meeting.

President William McKean thanked the Chief Inspector for her time and wished her every success in her new role. Chief Inspector Gray said that she found the meeting very useful and would be happy to meet the Chamber at any time.

## CHAMBER WELCOME NEW AREA COMMANDER



The new Area Commander for the PSNI, Chief Inspector Barbara Gray was a guest at the February Management Committee meeting. She has recently taken up her post in Ballymena and the Chamber took the opportunity to welcome her to the town.

In an excellent discussion, Chief Inspector Gray put forward her thoughts and plans for policing in the Borough and the

## SISTER CITIES CONFERENCE 2009

Fifty years ago the world was still reeling from the destruction of two world wars and the cold war was heating up. President Eisenhower and a group of like minded people believed that if people could cross national boundaries and get to know each other personally, mutual respect and understanding could transform diplomatic relations and steer the world away from war. This vibrant grassroots people-to-people movement has flourished over the last 51 years. It has been instrumental in world affairs

and supported by world leaders of many nations. Today sister cities connects more than 2,500 communities in over 130 countries. As Northern Ireland emerges from its years of conflict it is entirely appropriate that the 2009 Conference will be held in Northern Ireland, the first time ever outside the USA.

Patrick Madden, Chief Executive, Sister Cities, and Deanita Holland, Conference Director were in the province in February and attended a reception by the First and Deputy First Ministers at Stormont. They

were impressed by the venues we have in Belfast and are interested in the idea of taking workshops around the province so this is where we in Ballymena need to try to get a group to our Borough. There is also a golden opportunity to get an add-on holiday packages e.g. Hotels and guest house two, three or more day special packages. Chamber members Audrey Wales and Deirdre Nelson met with Patrick and Deanita to ensure that Ballymena is considered favourably as the detailed Conference plans are drawn up.

## CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS



The Chinese New Year was celebrated in Ballymena on Saturday 16th February. The Success Lion Dance Troupe and the Youth Group starred in a noisy and colourful ceremony in the Tower Centre and the Fairhill Centre. The beating of the drums and banging of gongs and cymbals is meant to frighten bad spirits and drive them away and to ensure that everyone enjoys prosperity, wealth and good fortune.

The Chinese New Year this year began on 7th February and lasts for 15 days. There are over 20 Chinese restaurants and take-aways in Ballymena, and they have been an important part of the Ballymena business community for over 50 years.



This is a very important event in the Chinese calendar.

There are 12 Chinese Zodiac signs and 2008 is the Year of the Rat. People born in the Year of the Rat are natural leaders with a strong drive for success. They are charming hard working perfectionists, intelligent with a strong sense of curiosity and a powerful imagination and enjoy responsibility.

William McKean, President of Ballymena Borough Chamber of Commerce and Industry said *"The Chamber is delighted to be involved in the celebration of the Chinese New Year. The Chinese play a very important role in the economy*



*of the Borough. I wish them all a Happy New Year and continued success and prosperity".*

The Chinese New Year celebrations were organised by Ballymena Borough Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Fairhill Centre, Tower Centre, Chinese Welfare Association, Ballymena Inter-Ethnic Forum and Ballymena Safer Working Group. Thanks also go to Douglas and Anita Shek (New Manley) and Stanley Sung (Go Sun) who provided fortune cookies and sweets to give to the spectators.

## XMAS SOCIAL / NETWORKING EVENT (INCLUDING XMAS WINDOW DRESSING COMPETITION)

The Chamber held its annual Xmas social/networking event in Montgomerys, Ballymoney Street on Tuesday 11th December. A large number of Chamber members and guests were present.

William McKean, Chamber President welcomed everyone saying *"This is not an evening for speeches but I would just like to welcome everyone here. I wish to thank all the Chamber members for their support and help over the last year. It has been a very busy and successful year for Chamber and we look forward to working on your behalf in 2008."*

Montgomerys as always had provided an excellent buffet supper and the Chamber would like to thank Steven and his staff for the great food and service.

Every year the Chamber organise a Christmas Window Dressing Competition and the winners were announced on Tuesday evening. The standard this

year was exceptionally high and the winners were:

Pine and Pottery, Broughshane  
Greers Travel Office, Linenhall  
Street McQuitty and Davis Opticians, Wellington Street



William McKean presented the 3 winners with trophies.

The Chamber website ([www.ballymenachamber.co.uk](http://www.ballymenachamber.co.uk)) has improved dramatically in the last year, and is now very informative and user friendly. Much of the thanks for this must go to Michelin Tyre Plc. who maintain and update the site for Chamber.



William McKean presented Mairead Black (Michelin IT Dept.) with a bouquet of flowers in appreciation of her work on the website.

## CONGRATULATIONS

A4E on the opening of their new office in George Street



Robert Adair Jewellers (Mill Street) on their 50th Anniversary

Ulster Property Sales on the opening of their new office in Church Street



Flamingo Fitness (Ballymoney Street) on their 21st Anniversary

Galgorm Resort and Spa on the official opening of their £17m development

The Sitting Room Hairdressing Salon (Broadway) on winning several hairdressing awards

McKillens Footwear (Church Street) on winning a top award for their baby changing facilities.