



St. Patrick's
Society of Selangor
Estd. 1925



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The St. Patrick's Society of Selangor, founded in 1925, counts among its members most of the Irish community, from both north and south of Ireland, in Malaysia together with many other expatriates and Malaysians with Irish connections.

The Society holds many functions throughout the year, culminating in our annual St. Patrick's Ball. There is no religious significance to the term St. Patrick within the Society. This is emblematic only as a symbol of Ireland. St. Patrick's Day is the National Day of Ireland that takes place annually on 17 March.

The St. Patrick's Society of Selangor is a multi racial, multi religious, multi cultural and non political membership society that today has the privilege in arranging the largest annual Irish Ball in the World outside the USA, Ireland and the United Kingdom attended by over 1,000 guests in past years and today, continues to be one of the greatest and most celebrated Society Balls in the world right here in Kuala Lumpur.

The St. Patrick's Society of Selangor is a Malaysian Irish society that has contributed in successfully nurturing social and economic ties between Malaysia and Ireland whether it is economically, socially, Information Technology, Engineering or Education to name but a few successful trade and commerce developments between Malaysia and Ireland.

There are today over 800 family members living and working in Malaysia who have family ties or thriving commercial, trade, professional and educational links between Malaysia and Ireland. A significant proportion of our Irish members in Malaysia are married to Malaysian nationals, have thriving and successful businesses in Malaysia and who enjoy the privilege of calling Malaysia their home.

There are over 3,000 Malaysian students who have successfully graduated from colleges in Ireland. Today, almost 100 are active members of the Malaysian Irish Alumni Association.

Before Malaysia's independence in 1957, the majority of Irish residents were employed in the British administration, the British army, or with one of many British companies involved in trading, plantations, mining, or banking. There was no official Irish representation and the only outward sign of being Irish was membership of the Society. There was already a close relationship between the St. Patrick Society and the Loyal societies of St. George, St. Andrew and St. David, each of which, held an annual Ball attended by much the same crowd with relatively few non-member guests. Between the Balls, there were functions and an annual golf match - Ireland versus The Rest of the World.

Up until the early 80's, the St Patrick's Society Ball was held in the old Lake Club, with an attendance of 100-150. When the numbers outgrew the Lake Club, we moved to the Royal Selangor Club with numbers around 250-300. There was room for members to bring guests and yet, one could always find one's friends. When the membership outgrew the Royal Selangor Club, we moved to the old Regent, now the Park Royal, then the Pan Pacific, the Hyatt Saujana, the Shangri-La and this year, the Hilton Kuala Lumpur. As the saying goes, the rest is history!

In 1981, we introduced the first live Irish music. That same year, we had the first display of Irish dancing. Today, it is impossible to imagine a St Patrick's Society Ball without a live Irish band and a delightful display by a team of competent Irish dancers.

Over the years, other important developments affecting the Community and the Society were: The appointment of Dato' Kurnia Bakti Diraja Dr. Peter Mooney as Honorary Irish Consul; the establishment of a regional office of Coras Trachtala, now the Irish Trade Board, first in Singapore and then in K.L.; the accreditation to Malaysia of Ireland's Ambassador to India and finally, the establishment in K.L. of the first Irish Embassy in the region, with the arrival of Ambassador H.E. Mr. Brendan Lyons in 1995.

The St. Patrick's Society of Selangor is both privileged and honoured to have the D.Y.M.M The Sultan of Selangor as our Royal Patron. His Excellency The Ambassador of Ireland to Malaysia is a Patron of the St. Patrick's Society of Ireland.

Today the Society is no longer just a few CEO's of foreign companies, but a larger, younger, and much livelier group of professional Irish and Malaysian men and women who reflect the technical and social revolution that has taken place throughout Ireland.

Activities have expanded to include other sports and social activities. There is at least one social meet-up a month whether it's a children's or adult's party, a Summer party, a charity night, golf outings, family days or a ladies lunch.

Although we are a not for profit society, we try each year to achieve a surplus that we donate at the end of the year to one or more Malaysian charities. In recent years, the support of a number of generous sponsors has enabled us to make sizeable donations e.g. RM147,000 in 2004 and RM109,000 in 2005. The Irish community is today a leading light on the Malaysian business and social scene.