



## PRESS RELEASE

### REUNITED AT THE EMIGRANT FLAME

**New Ross 28.11.13:** Connect Ireland and the JFK Trust have announced that they are extending the deadline for entries to The Emigrant Flame competition in which the winner will receive a return economy class flight to Ireland from anywhere in the world in time for Christmas. This is an initiative with Irish emigrants and their families at its heart. The REUNITED AT THE EMIGRANT FLAME campaign will give participants a chance to win return flights to Ireland in time for Christmas and is sponsored by Connect Ireland and managed by the John F Kennedy Trust. The deserving winner will be flown from their current country of residence and reunited with loved ones at The Emigrant Flame in New Ross during a special reception to be held in the run up to Christmas this year. The competition which opened on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> of November closes on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December and already Twitter and Facebook are buzzing with enthusiasm.

For those unfamiliar with The Emigrant Flame it is a striking new addition to the New Ross Quayside, sitting alongside the Dunbrody Famine Ship Experience which has been recounting the Irish Famine Emigrant story since it first opened in 2001 in county Wexford. The Emigrant Flame was unveiled in June this year during the JFK50 celebrations which saw thousands of visitors descend on the charming Wexford town. A light was taken from the eternal flame at President Kennedy's graveside in Arlington Cemetery, Virginia, travelling across the Atlantic as a Gathering Torch. This torch was used to ignite The Emigrant Flame by his daughter Caroline Kennedy and his sister, former ambassador, Jean Kennedy Smith. The Kennedy legacy is just one inspiring story of triumph overcoming adversity which saw a family rise from Irish famine emigrant to the Presidency of the United States in only three generations. The journey of the Gathering Torch from President Kennedy's graveside to New Ross also fulfilled on a symbolic level his promise "to return to Ireland in the springtime". The Emigrant Flame provides a permanent flame of hope and inspiration to all Irish emigrants. As 2013 the year of The Gathering draws to a close it is clear that the Irish community has benefitted significantly from the thousands of Gathering events which have reconnected our society with our diaspora. This legacy warrants ongoing recognition beyond 2013 and The Emigrant Flame gives our nation an iconic symbol to serve as a permanent reminder to all our diaspora around the world that Ireland remembers and values them while we wait to welcome them home.

The significance of The Emigrant Flame is particularly poignant given that over one quarter of Irish households have seen a close family member emigrate in the past two years, according to a survey commissioned by the National Youth Council of Ireland earlier this year. This report also showed that half of those aged between 18 and 24 have considered emigrating. In addition a further four out of ten adults aged between 25 and 34 have also considered leaving the country. In the past four years, over 300,000 people have emigrated from Ireland; 40% were aged between 15 and 24. The report also showcases that emigration is not just affecting Ireland's youth as more than a quarter of those aged between 35 and 54 have also considered moving abroad.

Connect Ireland in association with the JFK Trust is offering the chance to win long haul flights home to Ireland this Christmas. Entering could not be easier! Simply give us a reason why you deserve to win return flights to Ireland to be reunited with loved ones at The Emigrant Flame in time for Christmas. Include the name and location of the person who will fly to Ireland. Entries will be accepted via through Twitter: @emigrantflame / Facebook : theemigrantflame or email: theemigrantflame@gmail.com Full details can be found at <http://www.kennedyhomestead.ie/be-reunited-at-the-emigrant-flame/>



Mary French, Brand & Marketing Manager for the JFK Trust commented, “Our aim is to spread the message of The Emigrant Flame around the world so that all of our diaspora and indeed anyone who feels a connection with Ireland can take inspiration from this symbol of hope. Emigration once again affects every family in our society and The Emigrant Flame will give people a place to connect and be reunited, be it online or in person. The essential point is that no one affected by emigration should feel isolated or disconnected from the Irish community.”

Terry Clune, Chairman of Connect Ireland added, “Connect Ireland is proud to sponsor the Be Reunited at The Emigrant Flame campaign. There is great synergy between the mission of Connect Ireland which is focussed on attracting new investment to Ireland with the help of our diaspora and overseas networks and the aims of The Emigrant Flame campaign in providing hope and inspiration to the Irish emigrant community.”

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#### BOILER PLATE

*The JFK Trust was formed in 1988 to commemorate the historic legacy of President John F Kennedy by involving itself in projects that would enrich the lives of the people of his ancestral home area of New Ross and its environs. 25 years later much has been achieved. The articles of association of the JFK Trust are broad in their remit, and pay particular reference to the cultural and environmental development of the town of New Ross and its environs.*

*ConnectIreland is an innovative way to create new jobs in Ireland by harnessing the power of the global Diaspora – at home and abroad. The mission is to attract foreign companies that are expanding internationally to Ireland through ordinary people – creating jobs and securing the future of the Irish economy. The Irish Government will financially reward those that attract new, sustainable jobs into the country. The objective of the Government’s Action Plan for Jobs is to bring 5,000 new jobs to Ireland within the next five years under the Irish government’s Succeed In Ireland Initiative, which is managed by IDA Ireland and implemented by ConnectIreland. [www.connectireland.com](http://www.connectireland.com)*