

## WIB Events

*Make room in your busy schedule for our WIB monthly events*

### Wednesday 28 January 2009

*'Voices Heard' (6:30-9pm)*  
Long Gallery, Parliament Buildings, Stormont,  
Chaired by our host, Anna Lo MLA.

### Thursday 19 Feb 2009

*The Sean Weafer Lecture (12-2:30pm)*  
The Pump House, NI Science Centre, Titanic Quarter  
Back by popular demand, WIB favourite and master coach, speaker, trainer and author, Sean Weafer will motivate us for the year ahead.  
£10 Member, £25 Guest

### Thursday 19 March 2009

*Joint networking event with the NI Chamber of Commerce (12-2:30pm)*  
Grand Opera House, Belfast  
Networking activities, seminars and lunch with NI Chamber members.

### Wednesday 29 April 2009

*Food for thought! (12-2pm)*  
Ormeau Baths Gallery, Belfast  
Networking with a difference. Join our guest speakers from innovative food companies.

### May 2009

*Women in Business Conference 2009*  
Further details will be circulated.

### Thursday 4 June 2009

*Virtual Golf – Real Networking! (6:30-9pm)*  
Citigolf, Belfast  
Another innovative networking event from Women in Business! With a lot of business conducted on the golf-course we have decided to bring the course to you! We're going to do some business networking and test out their ground-breaking golf simulators!

**For more information on, or to book online for these and other forthcoming events, please visit our website – [www.womeninbusinessni.com](http://www.womeninbusinessni.com) or email Nicki Bayes: [nicki@womeninbusinessni.com](mailto:nicki@womeninbusinessni.com)**



Women in Business events are supported by Invest NI

## Networking is Key



*Arlene Foster, Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment, who addressed the WIB Christmas event on 4 December at the Ulster Reform Club, with WIB Chair, Christine Boyle.*

Any review of the 2008 business year is dominated by the credit crunch and economic turbulence. Isn't it amazing how our topic of conversation has dramatically shifted from the property boom and how much equity we were building up in our properties, to the economic bust and how we are now feeling the debt pain.

Now, more than ever, networking can play a crucial role in helping you and your business to survive and indeed grow in the current economic climate. Every opportunity to network should be grasped. People working in small businesses or as sole traders – as many of our members are – can in particular, feel very isolated, especially when business is slow. If this is the case for you, don't forget that WIB is there to offer you support. I would urge you to stay in touch and to come to as many of our events as you can.

Despite the current climate, many of our members are reporting steady business at this time, and have told me that the WIB network has been a key element of this success. You say that you have been using the network to raise the profile of your businesses, build mutually beneficial business relationships, generate new business contacts, share ideas and experiences and increase your business skills and knowledge base. It is very rewarding to hear that our network is playing such an important role. We will continue to provide new and innovative networking opportunities for you in 2009.

WIB continues to grow and develop. We now have over 250 members' companies. As many of you know, we have been reviewing and restructuring aspects of how we operate; for example, we have contracted out the running of

our events to Redhead, a member business owned by Sarah Lyons.

WIB events during 2008 were a great success and very popular with those who attended. You will know this yourself if you've had a chance to attend one recently. In addition to presenting a series of top business figures as guest speakers, each included facilitated networking opportunities to help you make valuable new business contacts.

WIB are very excited about 2009. Not only are we lining up another strong programme of events, but we are also launching a major new project – 'Women into Business'. It will aim to help women who are considering a return to the workplace, through employment or self-employment, to develop their potential. More details on this important venture are included within this newsletter.

We are mindful of our network's duty to support our member companies through these difficult times, to enable them to emerge in a stronger position. We recognise how vital it is for us to continue to provide you with support and networking opportunities in order to help deliver the entrepreneurship that is needed to repair the damage to our economy and get us back on track. If you have a suggestion for how we might do more to help you, please do let us know.

I look forward to meeting with many of you at some of our forthcoming exciting events and wish you success in your business.

**Christine Boyle, MBE, Chair**

**Have you visited the WIB website lately?**

## **Sponsorship Opportunity**

WIB have introduced a fantastic sponsorship opportunity on the Women in Business website.

Key 'buttons' are available for you to use to promote your business. These branded 'buttons' provide a direct link to your own web site.

The Women in Business website has over 30,000 visitors annually.

Not only will sponsoring the Women in Business website increase your brand visibility, but it will also direct focused and qualified web traffic to your business.

These 'button' links are restricted to WIB Members only, as they are priced extremely competitively. They are available for either six months at £300 or twelve months at £500. The links will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

**For full details contact [nicki@womeninbusinessni.com](mailto:nicki@womeninbusinessni.com) or tel 0845 607 6041**



## **New Year Honour for Women in Business Chair**

The commitment of our Chair, Christine Boyle, to advancing female entrepreneurship, was publicly recognised recently when she was included on the 2009 New Year Honours list for the award of an MBE.

On behalf of all members, we congratulate Christine on this much-deserved honour.

Managing Director of Lawell Asphalt Roofing, inspiring businesswoman Christine's award was made for her services to women's enterprises in Northern Ireland.

Christine was one of a small group of female businesswomen who conceived the need for a Women in Business network and together set up our network in October 2002. She has been a Board Member since the start and took on the role of Chair in December 2005.

As we all know, Christine has been unstinting in the work she puts in on behalf of our network and more broadly to improve the local business environment for women. She has become an important role model for other women thinking of starting or developing a business.

When news of the award reached her, Christine commented: "I am very honoured and privileged to have received this recognition and I thank all who have supported me in my role as Chair of Women in Business."

"This award is a reflection of all the Northern Irish businesswomen who have been committed to encouraging and supporting others. It is their dedication to the Women in Business network that is helping to deliver the radical change needed in the business sector, not only to ride out the present recession but to continue to strengthen our economy on into the future."

She added: "It has been a fantastic start to the New Year and, with my family, I am really looking forward to our visit to Buckingham Palace!"



*Pictured at the network's December event are (l-r): Sharon Polson of Invest NI's Entrepreneurship Development Team, Christine Boyle MBE and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Arlene Foster.*

## Welcome on Board to three new Directors

A warm welcome to three new Directors who were recently co-opted onto the Board of WIB - Alison Armstrong, Catherine Colleary and Edel Doherty.

### Alison Armstrong



Alison has over 25 years' experience in financial services, and holds qualifications in Mortgage Advice and Practice, Equity Release and Commercial Loans.

Seven years ago she and another female partner started Mortgage and Financial Guidance, an independent mortgage and protection brokerage. Her specific remit is to develop and maintain strategic relationships with the firm's referral organisations, along with advising clients on residential and commercial funding and business solutions.

There are now five fully qualified consultants working within two offices, and the team has a very vibrant, positive and successful approach with a sound track record of growth and stability.

She is an Accredited Trainer within the Financial Services Skills Council and works closely with both Voluntary and Private sector organisations who use the resources Mortgage and Financial Guidance has to offer.

### Catherine Colleary



New to the WIB Board, Catherine Colleary is a Tax Director with PricewaterhouseCoopers. In this role she has worked with many of Northern Ireland's Top 100 companies, together with a portfolio of inbounds. She has gained significant experience in managing the tax aspects of large organisations, including significant group reorganisations and acquisitions and disposals projects.

Catherine is a Chartered Accountant and Chartered Tax Advisor.

### Edel Doherty



Operations Director with Selective Travel Group, Edel has always worked in the travel industry. She has experience of tour operation, retail and corporate travel. Her attention to detail has produced a world-class service and she has been instrumental in building up the Selective Travel Group to become one of the leading independent travel companies in Northern Ireland.

Selective Events is Edel's new business venture. This new venture has been set up to organise conferences, sales incentive trips and special events anywhere around the world.

"The travel industry has many challenges, but I have always sought to emerge from these - not with a sense of defeat - but with a renewed sense of determination and greater problem-solving skills," commented Edel.

## New Members

A warm welcome to our new members who have joined Women in Business recently.

Aileen Graham	A G Facilitator Services
Deepa Mann-kler	Artist
Irene McGee	Arttoo
Pamela Webber	Bank of England
Ciara Collins	Barclays Wealth
Sinead Dynan	Broadmind Consulting
Claire Hodson	E Synergy
Elaine McKeown	EMK Consulting Ltd
Barabara Lamb	Feedback Mystery Shopping
Anne Hughes	Hughes Energy Systems
Jennifer Kelly	Jennifer Kelly Image Studio
Kathy Hanna	Key Consulting
Emma White	Leadlines & David Esler Studio
Rebecca Spokes	MH Associates
Kathryn Walls	Mills Selig
Anne Huggins	Overseas Properties - turkish connexctions
Julie McGrath	Oyramid Law Employment Services
Cathy Waddell	Premier Inns
Ruth McKee	R Personal Shopper
Breda McKenna	Regional Wines
Denise Robinson	Robinson Consulting
Michelle Morris	Ulster Spine Centre
Pamela McNememy	Solicitor

## New Ezine



Did you recently receive our first, bright, new WIB ezine?

Nicki Bayes, who planned the first ezine and will be mailing them out regularly to us, explains:

"In response to feedback from some of you, we wanted to find a way to bring together and combine the individual messages that we send out. This new venture aims to reduce the number of mail messages you receive, while bringing you a regular informative read.

"The ezine is colourful and modern in design, tying in with our network identity and colours.

"Member or not, make sure you're included on the mailing list to receive our regular ezine; simply let me know you'd like to receive it and forward your email address.

"The new ezines will keep you up-to-date, being packed with lots of business information, members news, offers from member businesses, and network news, details of other events or courses of note – and more. So do keep me supplied with your business news items.

"The ezine offers a good opportunity for you to promote your business and its services or products, and perhaps to make special offers to your fellow members."

Please send any details you hope to have included in the ezine to: [Nicki@womeninbusinessni.com](mailto:Nicki@womeninbusinessni.com)

# Be confident for 2009

## The nature of women owned businesses ...

- Female entrepreneurs are more likely to produce a product or service unfamiliar to the market, to have fewer competitors, and they are more likely to be using technology in their products or services than their male counterparts. In addition, they are more likely than male owned businesses to be offering a product or service to the market that has been developed in the last year. (Achieving the Vision, Female Entrepreneurship British Chambers of Commerce, July 2004).
- 54% of women start a business so they can choose what hours they work, compared to only 35% of men. (Women & Men Business Owners in the United Kingdom).
- A pound invested in developing women's enterprise provides a greater return on investment than a pound invested in developing male owned enterprise. (Chief Executive of the Small Business Service, Martin Wyn Griffith, Speaking at the National Dialogue for Entrepreneurship, Washington DC, March 2005).
- Women are nearly three times as likely to collaborate with research institutions (universities in particular) than male businesses (11.4% compared with 3.8%) (Achieving the Vision, Female Entrepreneurship British Chambers of Commerce, July 2004).
- Women do not tend to collaborate with competitors as much as men do. 23.5% of male owner-managed businesses collaborate with other enterprises compared with 18.7% of female-owned businesses. (Achieving the Vision, Female Entrepreneurship British Chambers of Commerce, July 2004).
- 48% of female entrepreneurs own businesses in the service sector, compared with 36% of male.

(Statistics taken from the website of Prowess, the UK association of organisations and individuals who support the growth of women's business ownership: [www.prowess.org.uk](http://www.prowess.org.uk))

## Surfing or Sinking? - It's an inside job

by Niamh Shiells



As we enter 2009 with media prophesies of recession, doom and evidence of redundancies and business collapse, how can we make the best of bad times? Most of what we see happening in global money and property markets is outside our control. There are, however, factors firmly under our influence which will make a real difference in how well we ride the recession wave.

### Set goals & take action

Most of us fail to write down specific goals; research shows only around 3% of the population do so. Yet writing down your goals is a very powerful determinant in achieving them. More than 50 years ago Harvard University polled a class of graduates; fewer than 3 percent of them had written goals. When Harvard polled them again 20 years later, that small 3 percent had become wealthier than the rest of the class combined! Not only that, but they were also healthier and happier. Further research has shown that people who write down their goals and look at them every week are 5 times more likely to achieve them. When you also identify 2 or 3 action steps to reach your goal you are 10 times more likely to achieve it.

### Back it up with positive language & thinking

Harvard Medical School has found that our moods are strongly influenced by those around us and that our own happiness and positivity is dependent upon those people. So choosing positive friends and business partners is something you may wish to aspire to.

Clinical research has also proven that you can improve your confidence by repeating positive phrases to yourself before facing challenging situations. Let's face it; more confidence in our own ability to build business through challenging times would be helpful.

Let's talk a little about language because the way we talk and think about ourselves or business has a profound effect on our feelings and consequently our behaviours.

Our brain receives information in a very literal way. When you describe yourself as 'struggling', or the situation as 'impossible', your brain will work hard at making this a reality. This is called 'Gestalt' and it is the brain's desire to make sense of and create order in what you tell it. Stop for a moment and observe what feelings the above words create for you. I would guess worry, anxiety, panic are just a few for starters. Now consider what sort of behaviours or actions these feelings are likely to generate. Do you see where I am going with this?

It's really important to give your brain positive instructions to work on, a little like setting a satellite navigation system on a car. Do you want to programme in 'struggle', or does 'get creative' make more sense?

Replacing negative assertions with more positive affirmations such as 'I am creating new business solutions' or 'I can do this' creates more motivational and confident feelings. This in turn generates decisive action

that is more likely to achieve positive outcomes. Trust me I am a coach, this works!

### Taking a break really does solve problems

Sometimes when we keep pushing against a problem the solution can be hard to find. Research has found that our brain is working through a limited number of neural connections all associated with the problem. When we stop and take a step back this can create new connections, new possibilities and that 'light bulb' moment. Taking regular time away from work or business and creating a good life/work balance will actually help your brain to create new insight and inspiration to challenging situations.

***What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us*** (Ralph Waldo Emerson - attributed)

Niamh Shiells of Advance Coaching is an Accredited Association for Coaching Coach, Licensed NLP Master Practitioner, Trainer and inspirational speaker. Niamh provides personal, career and executive coaching programmes including training and team building events for private and public sector clients. She is the career coach expert for NI Jobs.com and has a regular coaching slot on Down Town Radio.

**For more information contact Niamh at:**

**[www.advancecoach.co.uk](http://www.advancecoach.co.uk)  
[niamh@advancecoach.co.uk](mailto:niamh@advancecoach.co.uk)  
Mobile: 07985 064908.**

# Members' business profiles

## arttöö - a dynamic energy, innovation and architectural practice



Dynamic businesswoman Irene McGee of arttöö (right), who was selected by the British Council Challenge Europe scheme to act as an advocate for climate change. She is pictured here with the Irish Minister for the Environment Eamonn Ryan TD and another selected advocate.

WIB Member Irene McGee, who joined our network last October, launched her dynamic consultancy and architectural practice in March 2008.

The energetic entrepreneur and inventor is bursting with exciting ideas to develop her very innovative and progressive business. Already, her work has won a number of prestigious accolades.

Having completed her architecture qualifications, Irene's 'arttöö' company is firmly in tune with key themes of the day. In its energy consulting and building design work, the team is focused on energy efficiency, conservation and sustainable design issues.

"As architects, engineers, energy consultants and project managers, we provide consultation across a wide range of sustainable projects of varying scale," Irene says.

Indeed, within its first few months in business, an arttöö design for a sustainable and zero carbon house was short-listed for the international RIBA Flood House Design Competition – the only entry from Northern Ireland and Ireland to be selected.

Committed to developing and even inventing new energy-saving products, another of Irene's projects won an Invest NI SMART Award of £40,000 award to develop a new method of 'energy-cladding' -

integrating wind energy in the design of new buildings.

"Within arttöö we have three separate but interlinked business strands – arttöö energy, arttöö innovation and arttöö architecture," Irene explains.

"arttöö energy is a fresh and vibrant energy consultancy firm which focuses on large-scale energy procurement, micro-generation and sustainable development in both the built and natural environment, and sustainable communities.

"arttöö innovation focuses on the design, development and project management of new inventions. We develop new technologies, particularly focused on the built and natural environment, in relation to low-energy products. We have several patent-pending low-energy inventions including for the SMART award winning 'energy cladding'.

"Within the recently registered RIBA arttöö architecture practice we work to procure buildings from concept to completion," Irene adds.

If any WIB member would like to avail of any arttöö service, Irene and her colleagues would be delighted to hear from you.

**Telephone or email Irene McGee - [irene@arttoo.co.uk](mailto:irene@arttoo.co.uk) 028 9077 7877, or visit the company website [www.arttoo.co.uk](http://www.arttoo.co.uk)**

## Lulu Rose vintage fashion

Rosie Moore is the face behind the Lulu Rose online vintage fashion business, which also retails her own Aubergine Line original creations. She outlines how she got to where she is today and just what her business is all about.

"After a lifetime working in telesales, I went back to college aged 45 to find a way of working in the field of textiles and fashion that was always dear to my heart. Textiles course completed, I worked for several years as a costume designer for TV, film, theatre and carnival. I started my own vintage inspired clothing business called Aubergine Lining in 2007.

"In November 2007, I took part in the first Belfast Vintage Fair, selling my own creations and a selection of vintage clothes. It was such a success I decided to start my own Northern Ireland vintage fashion business, Lulu Rose."

Vintage clothes and accessories from all eras are available to buy from the Lulu Rose online store. Rosie's own range of vintage-inspired designs are also stocked and she is happy to discuss specific commissions.

Rosie, who joined a year ago, says of her WIB membership: "I've made valuable contacts at the events and find it great for networking."

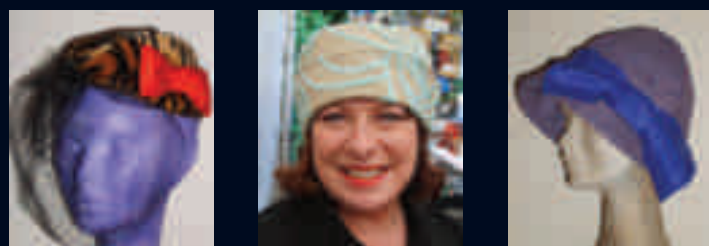
Alongside the retail and creative stands to her business, Rosie runs occasional workshops in costume design. With her business "currently doing fine", Rosie announces that new for 2009 will be her own line of knitted hats, branded as Loopy Yarns. This year she is also to write a fortnightly column for the Vintage Online newsletter – as Mrs Sew and Sew. "I'll be writing on the history of a different subject each time, giving readers useful further contacts; my first piece is on aprons," she explained.

In addition to online sales, there are opportunities to get hold of Lulu Rose garments when Rosie attends special crafts or vintage fairs, including for example, at the St George's Christmas Market in Belfast. In addition, Rosie runs a series of themed 'open nights' at her home.

"I'll be attending the next fabulous Vintage Fair which will take place **Sunday 15th February 2009** in the Wellington Park Hotel on the Malone Road - themed 'Frock around the clock' ([www.northernirelandvintage.com](http://www.northernirelandvintage.com))," Rosie advises. "The new Loopy Yarn hats will be launched here."

Why not put this event in your diary?

**For more information visit the Lulu Rose website – [www.lulurose.co.uk](http://www.lulurose.co.uk) or email [info@lulurose.co.uk](mailto:info@lulurose.co.uk)**



Rosie Moore of Lulu Rose and some of her own hat designs

# Your Business News

## Towry Law Financial Services Limited

Wealth Adviser, Catherine Greeves works with clients who want to stop worrying about the future or the 'here and now' and helps them to make sensible, informed financial decisions.

One of her clients, Melanie Donnelly, Business Coach, said: "Catherine guided me through the maze of financial products and jargon. Within a short space of time I knew exactly what I had and actually needed to have and together we set out an action plan to meet my goals."

"At Towry Law, we are an independent, impartial one-stop

shop for all your financial planning needs," says Catherine. "We also work closely with solicitors and accountants who often use us as a technical resource.

"So how can I help WIB members? Well, either on a one-to-one basis, by reviewing your own personal situation, or as part of your professional team helping you win new business and to strengthen your relationship with existing clients.

"Many successful women seem to lose confidence when considering their finances. Often they leave decisions to a partner

and are not aware of the consequences.

"My key aim this year is to continue working with existing clients and those referred to me, by developing strong, long term relationships. Ultimately the goal is to increase financial awareness and literacy by taking the fear out of financial planning for women."

**To contact Catherine, telephone her on 9269 9432 or 07912 267348**



## Focus Suites Ireland 'focuses' North

Focus Suites, one of Ireland's most prestigious, wholly independent market research facilities providers, have recently opened their new purpose built suite in Belfast. Focus Suites Northern Ireland hope to build upon the success they have attained over the last three years in the Dublin market place.

Lynne Wylie, Manager of Focus Suites Northern Ireland, who joined WIB during 2008, reminds readers: "In today's competitive market place, and in particular in these testing economic times, it is even more important for companies to ensure that they are targeting their customers in the right way.

"This is where a focus group can help – and your business might benefit from our services. A focus group is a form of qualitative research in which a group of people are asked about their attitudes towards a product,

service, concept, advertisement, idea, or packaging. Questions are asked in an interactive group setting where participants are free to talk with other group members."

Lynne's business provide the viewing facility for market research companies, advertising agencies, drinks companies, political parties, and so on. The groups can be viewed via a two-way mirror, and a recording on DVD or audio is taken away by the client at the end of the session.

Lynne added, "As we are completely independent, with no affiliations to any companies, we feel our neutral position, should encourage many new clients, who might be wary of using other viewed facilities in Belfast. Feedback to date has been encouraging and more than positive."

**For more information, call Lynne on 028 9033 9999, or e-mail [lynne@enterprisesuitesireland.com](mailto:lynne@enterprisesuitesireland.com) or visit [www.focussuitesireland.com](http://www.focussuitesireland.com)**



## Selective Travel launches new mobile holiday service

Are you too busy with work and family to go to the travel agents to book your holiday? If so, you might well be interested in the new service from Selective Travel.

WIB Board Member, Edel Doherty, explains: "With our new mobile service, Selective Travel can now come to you at home or at the

office to discuss your holiday requirements." She adds: "This new service has proved popular among busy professionals who need a holiday but can't get the time within working hours to get advice and suggestions on family, adventure, singles, city breaks, luxury or budget holidays."

**To find out more, call Deirdre on 02890 962010 or email [Deirdre@selective-travel.co.uk](mailto:Deirdre@selective-travel.co.uk) [www.selectiveholidays.co.uk](http://www.selectiveholidays.co.uk)**



## Maximising sales opportunities

McCambridge Sales Consultancy provides a completely tailored range of services which specifically help companies maximise their sales opportunities and grow a profitable business.

“The key to McCambridge Sales Consultancy success is that we have an in-depth understanding of the sales process and the know how to make it work for all businesses to maximise profitable sales,” Susan McCambridge said.

With more than eleven years’ experience with clients in Northern Ireland, GB and the US, Susan understands the dynamics of the sales cycle for large, global and small to medium-sized businesses. “Our advice is always practical, pragmatic, and cost effective and we can help you to:

- Generate more leads and qualified prospects.
- Develop a selling style that suits your customers’ buying process.
- Build stronger relationships with your customers.
- Focus on the ‘value’ you offer, not the ‘price’ of your product.
- Close only profitable deals.

Tessa Greer of Beat ‘n’ Track - Sound & Music Solutions, a recent customer who wanted to grow their business said:

*“My experience of working with Susan McCambridge has made the outlook for my business a more positive one. In today’s climate, this was essential work to do.”*

*I faced some realities about my business and was able to refocus my energies towards achieving bigger business and stepping up my game and developing short and long-term strategies for success.”*

**As a special offer for WIB members, we are pleased to offer half an hour free sales consultancy either face to face or over the phone. Please call Susan McCambridge on 07867 785824 or visit our website at [www.mccambridge.co.uk](http://www.mccambridge.co.uk)**

## Women more optimistic about role of entrepreneur in economic downturn

Sixty per cent of female business owners remain optimistic that entrepreneurship can help to address global issues, compared with 51% of male business owners, according to a new report from campaigning body ‘Make Your Mark’. Their report is based on a survey of over 185,000 business owners and is one of the first to compare male and female reactions to the credit crunch. Female entrepreneurs voice more concern over a range of social issues including poverty, health, education, conflict and violence. The survey also considers business expansion and shows women have more international contacts but remain significantly less likely to be considering expanding abroad. Download ‘Entrepreneurs, British Business and the Credit Crunch’ at: [http://www.makeyourmark.org.uk/publications/entrepreneurs\\_british\\_business\\_and\\_the\\_credit\\_crunch](http://www.makeyourmark.org.uk/publications/entrepreneurs_british_business_and_the_credit_crunch)

## Opportunities for a colour or style consultation

If you’d like a few tips on how to brighten up your own appearance for the year ahead or advice on what to wear that will suit you best, then why not make an appointment with Jennifer Kelly Image Consultant?

With over ten years’ experience as an image consultant, Jennifer offers a range of colour, style and makeup consulting services from the specialist studio premises just outside Bangor that she opened two years ago. Jennifer also has a range of specially-selected top beauty, makeup and accessory products (including scarves and jewellery) for sale.

“We bring clients a vibrant new concept that combines style with individuality and a personal

service and can help women maximise the impact of their wardrobes,” explains Jennifer.

Jennifer, who joined WIB during 2008, says of her experience to date: “The networking event I attended at Malone House in October was a new experience for me. I thought it was great. I have found that the contacts I have made with other women at all the events have been really excellent.”

Jennifer is offering WIB members a 10% discount across the board on all her services and products.

**To discuss an appointment, ring Jennifer on 028 9145 8948, or email her: [info@jenniferkellyimage.com](mailto:info@jenniferkellyimage.com)**

## A Premier Inn success tale

January 07 saw the start of Premier Inn’s launch into Belfast. Cathy Waddell, Sales Manager Belfast for Premier Inn recounts how busy she has been with the group.

“I spent five months spreading the word about a hotel that wasn’t ready and that no one could come and see! It was fun times and we would never have guessed what our first year would bring.

“We opened to great response, looking after a wide variety of guests: from the crew of City Of Ember to the support team for the new Ikea store. They say there is never a dull moment in hotels and that is certainly true in Premier Inn Alfred Street!

“Our first year was topped off by a big win at the annual Whitbread Conference where we were awarded the ‘Business of the Year’ – the highest award in the company: this recognises us for our guest service,

team development and overall approach to everything we do.

“We managed to take this a step further by winning ‘Best City Hotel’ at the Belfast Awards in November. This award was decided by mystery shoppers and we were up against some great hotels so to win was even more special.

“We opened our second Belfast City Centre hotel in October, taking on the redevelopment of the Fours Corners site, on the corner of Waring Street and Donegal Street. This has added 171 bedrooms to the 148 at Alfred Street. Our aim with the new hotel is to carry on the good work of Alfred Street – great service and great value!”

“My role in all of this,” Cathy explains, “is to drive corporate and leisure sales into Belfast and build long-term partnerships with key players in Belfast. So far we have had the pleasure of working with the

Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau, Belfast City Marathon, Athletics Northern Ireland, Belfast Pride and The Belfast Giants, to name just a few. 2009 is going to be another great year for our partnerships as we immerse ourselves in the arts & culture of the Cathedral Quarter, working with the likes of the Belfast Film Festival and the Open House Festival.

“Premier Inn is also expanding in Northern Ireland in 2009. Adding to our Belfast, Carrickfergus and Coleraine hotels, we will be opening Lisburn’s first hotel this summer – exciting times are ahead!

“Our aim has always been to ensure that our guests have a great stay and experience the Northern Ireland warmth and charm – smiling faces and the personal touch are the simple things that make all the difference. Our guest feedback reflects this and we are always striving to be better and better.

I am delighted to have become a member of Women in Business and I know Premier Inn has a lot to offer our members, not just here in Belfast, but across our 550+ hotels all over the UK – if anyone would like the grand tour of any of our hotels, please let me know – the coffee pot is always on!

**Cathy Waddell, Sales Manager Belfast for Premier Inn ([Cathy.Waddell@Whitbread.com](mailto:Cathy.Waddell@Whitbread.com))**



*Cathy Waddell of Premier Inn lets Todd Kelman, General Manager of Belfast Giants ice hockey team see how comfortable the hotel rooms are.*

# Network Events 08 Round up

Below are photographs from and short accounts of successful WIB events of recent months. The events offer you a great opportunity to hear from top speakers who can give valuable business advice or share their own experiences. Each event also includes organised networking activities: these are fun and very valuable in helping to ensure that you make new business contacts. A new feature added recently to our events, is the 'Member's Five Minutes of Fame'. This slot, gives you the

chance to outline the services or products your business offers. On top of that, refreshments are generally served, giving you more chances to catch up with old acquaintances and make new ones.

Here are just a handful of the many positive comments that you have sent us recently on our events:

*"The Christmas event was another excellent WIB event. Minister Arlene Foster was an inspirational*

*speaker and I enjoyed the opportunity to network, making some good contacts for my business."*

*"Well done for another well-run event [Malone Lodge Michael McIntyre event]. I am so glad I came. I find the moral support and exchange of views I get with other women to be very stimulating."*

*"I find that the networking activities at recent events have been well-organised, in particular*

*the Connect 4 games at the Connect and Reconnect event. Such networking with other women in similar business circumstances is good for the morale and for motivation."*

WIB events are managed by Redhead (info@redheadni.co.uk).



## Enterprise Minister Arlene Foster encourages Female Entrepreneurship and networking

We were honoured and delighted that Enterprise Minister Arlene Foster joined over 60 of our members at our Christmas Networking event on 4 December at the Ulster Reform Club, and addressed those attending.

The Minister highlighted the importance of female entrepreneurs to the Northern Ireland economy and urged more women to establish new businesses and seek out new

opportunities for existing female-led companies.

The Minister said: "During the three year period 2005-2008, over 4,000 women started a business here, as a direct result of Invest NI's Start a Business programme. While that is 45% of the start-ups from the programme for this period, the level of female entrepreneurship in Northern Ireland, in general, is still low and is in fact the lowest of all the UK

regions. There is therefore still much to be done to encourage more women to both start a business and to grow an existing business.

"Networking events such as this can encourage females to share best practice in starting up companies as well as improving business efficiency and sales and marketing techniques, to help increase profitability, competitiveness and export capability."

## Michael McIntyre of Envision helped us prepare for business growth

At November's event in the Malone Lodge, experienced business consultant Michael McIntyre of Envision offered those attending a wealth of practical tips and advice on how to aim for business growth in these more difficult times. Many of the tips served as down-to-earth reminders of practical common-sense steps we should all know, but often neglect to put into practice. For example, it's easier to aim for additional business from existing clients, by offering or letting them know of other services we can provide.

Each of Michael's tips were illustrated by the real-life experiences of his clients and how they were helped to improve their business.

Michael's sense of humour and quick wit – especially in answering questions and light-bantered heckling from his audience – made the presentation fly by.

Photographer, Jacqui Neill, availed of the 'Five Minutes of Fame' slot, giving an enjoyable visual presentation.

Afterwards, members networked happily over a light supper provided by Malone Lodge.



Above: Minister Arlene Foster addresses members.



Guests at the Christmas event at the Ulster Reform Club listen to speeches.



At the Christmas event, Chair Christine Boyle, Louise Wallace of the Enterprise Europe Network, and Women into Business Project Manager, Dr Elaine Rodgers, emphasised that networking is key.



## On our Marks with 'Speed Networking' event at Malone House

Members greatly enjoyed the opportunity to network with other business women from across Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland at our October event in Malone House.

The specially organised 'speed meeting' activities, similar to the speed dating concept, proved to be extremely popular and helped those there to make new business connections. Members networked with other female business women from as far away as Sligo, Fermanagh, Monaghan and Dublin.

"The atmosphere in the hall was electric," commented Chair Christine Boyle. "With over 50 business women participating, we managed to facilitate over 350 one-to-one meetings."



Promoting the networking event were (l-r) Aileen Ward of Genesis Strategic Management Consultants, Chair Christine Boyle, Patricia Gardiner of Walking Matters.ie and Claire Herron of Invest NI.



Members and guests enjoyed and made good contacts through the speed networking activities at our October event.

## Celebrating Women's Enterprise Day with Orla Corr of the McAvoy Group

We held an event to mark Global Entrepreneurship Week on Women's Enterprise Day, 19 November in the Waterfront Hall. Our guest speaker was local award-winning businesswoman, Orla Corr of the McAvoy group. A role model to us all, she told us the story of how she grew her company into one of Northern Ireland's most successful construction companies, operating in international markets.

Thanking Orla for her fascinating account, Chair Christine Boyle said her success story is an inspiration to all local business women. "In the past we have often heard from successful businesswomen from across the UK and The Republic of Ireland, but it has been a real delight to celebrate a local success story today. We hope our members can relate to Orla and recognise that success such as hers is indeed achievable."

Member, Beth Gibb used the 'Five Minutes of Fame' slot, to outline the advice on health and safety that her company can offer.



Christine Boyle with guest speaker at the Women's Enterprise Day event, Orla Corr of the McAvoy group, and member Beth Gibb of Beth Gibb Associates, a workplace health programmes provider.



Members and guests at the Waterfront listen to Orla Corr.

Before lunch was served, members vigorously contested prizes! completed table quizzes with a female entrepreneur focus, for

## Connect and Reconnect event

Our autumn programme of events got underway on 25 September at the Holiday Inn on Ormeau Road, when members and guests were given an opportunity to Connect & Reconnect.

Inspirational businesswoman Debra Reynolds, who set up the School of Sign Language in North West England, and who has been decorated with a number of industry awards in recognition of her achievements, shared her own business tale.

Our new 'Five Minutes of Fame' feature, where a member is invited to take to the stage to

promote their business, products or services, was launched at this event. First up this time was Pauline Knight of Pauline Knight & Co. Solicitors, specialising in collaborative law for both family and business disputes.

Taking part in the Connect 4 games that were part of the Connect and Reconnect event were: (l-r) member Pauline Knight, Christine Boyle, Speaker Debra Reynolds and Claire Heron of Invest NI



# Women into Business Project

## New Project Manager welcomed

*Dr Elaine Rodgers, Project Manager of the Women into Business Project*



We are delighted to welcome Dr Elaine Rodgers of Rodgers Consulting on board as the Project Manager of the exciting new Women into Business project. Elaine will deliver the project's programme of actions. Elaine was appointed in November 08 following an rigorous tendering process.

Elaine has worked on similar public funded enterprise and pre-enterprise support programmes in the past and has extensive experience in business, through both her own commercial experience and from her research work into the business arena in Ireland as part of her PhD doctoral studies.

### **Elaine's background**

Elaine graduated from Queen's University, Belfast, in 2008 with a PhD in Management.

Her PhD examined the barriers faced by and success factors of university spin-out companies across four Irish universities. During her PhD work she was also involved in a large-scale research investigation into female entrepreneurship in Northern Ireland as part of the international 'Diana' project.

In addition to her PhD, Elaine first explored her own entrepreneurial spirit in 2004 by setting up and managing her own business with a partner, the Chocolateer Ltd. She has since sold this as a successful business.

Elaine also has a background in IT and graduated with a First Class Honours degree in Business Information Technology from Queen's.

Since the completion of her PhD, Elaine has worked as a Project Manager and Business Advisor for East Belfast Enterprise, a local enterprise agency. Within this role she worked on the 'Start a Business' programme and on a range of enterprise support programmes. She managed a dedicated female-enterprise support initiative, the Women's 1-2-1 Mentoring programme.

Upon leaving East Belfast Enterprise, Elaine is now a self-employed business consultant and is delighted to come on board and deliver this exciting and innovative Women into Business project.

## Background to the project

Women in Business NI Ltd are delighted to announce the imminent launch of its innovative Women into Business project.

Our network was successful in securing funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) to develop such a project because of our network's recognition and contacts among women within the business arena, both female entrepreneurs and women in the corporate/private sector. The successful bid was spearheaded by Susan McCambridge, WIB network's former co-ordinator. The ESF, one of the European Union's Structural Funds, was set up to improve employment opportunities in the EU. It aims to help people develop their potential by giving them better skills and better job prospects. As a result of the innovative and exciting concept behind this new project, WIB NI Ltd also secured match funding from Invest Northern Ireland and Belfast City Council. The official project launch will take place in April 09.

## Project first steps

Explaining the concept of the project Elaine said: "At the core of the Women into Business project will be the creation of an online information portal to support the progression of women who are considering a return to the marketplace, through employment or self-employment.

"The new website will facilitate a new online community to provide a support mechanism for women to consider their career options, and to engage and network with other women in a similar position to themselves on the programme, and within the WIB network.

"As well as benefiting from e-learning, mentoring and online social networking, the participants on the Women into Business programme will be invited to a range of networking events, workshops, seminars and business visits. They will also be given the opportunity to develop a range of personal, employment and business skills and to participate in work placements to support their progression into the workplace or in starting their own business," Elaine added.



## Project website

The new Women into Business website will deliver a modern community-centric online portal to support the implementation and delivery of the project. Elaine explains how this will be achieved:

“Within this project, the website aims to embrace new age marketing techniques similar to



that observed in the extremely successful Barack Obama political marketing campaign. The Women into Business site similarly aims to find new and creative ways to drive the concept of community.

“This site aims to support the development of a ‘Women into Business’ community through viral marketing campaigns and by leveraging the power of tapping into social networks such as Bebo, Facebook and MySpace and by using YouTube. Innovative approaches to support this new programme will also ensure that the site is user-driven, through the development of Wikis [web pages designed to enable anyone who

accesses them to contribute or modify content], member groups, forum discussion boards, blogs, events calendars, member profiles and jobs bulletin boards. Members will be able to upload their own content such as E-Books, articles, pod casts, video clips and more.

“The site will provide regular news feeds and relevant information for its users. Members will also be able to drive and support the development of the site, and similarly the programme. Through the web portal, their input and voices will be heard, for example through online polls and through the content they upload to the site.”

## Project needs WIB involvement

The success of this programme very much relies on the involvement and support of existing WIB members and we would be delighted if WIB members would consider offering work placements to the Women into Business programme. More details will be available in the coming months and we look forward to inviting you all to help us review the new website portal due in April 2009.

This programme aims to support women re-entering the workplace or considering self-employment. We would love to hear from anyone who may be interested in this programme. If you know of anyone who may be interested, or as a business woman you would like to register an expression of interest in supporting this programme, please get in touch.

**For further information on the project contact Elaine or Nicki:**  
[elaine@womeninbusinessni.com](mailto:elaine@womeninbusinessni.com)  
[Nicki@womeninbusinessni.com](mailto:Nicki@womeninbusinessni.com)  
**Tel: 028 90224006**

### The Women into Business project is supported by:



## Useful business info websites

Belfast City Council:	<a href="http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk">www.belfastcity.gov.uk</a>
British Franchise Association:	<a href="http://www.thebfa.org">www.thebfa.org</a>
BSI British Standards:	<a href="http://www.standardsUK.com">www.standardsUK.com</a>
Companies House (for details on registering a Limited Company and other information such as legal, status, an on-line check of business names):	<a href="http://www.companies-house.gov.uk">www.companies-house.gov.uk</a>
H M Revenue and Customs (helpful for info on the legal status of a business and tax information):	<a href="http://www.hmrc.gov.uk">www.hmrc.gov.uk</a>
Federation of Small Business:	<a href="http://www.fsb.org.uk">www.fsb.org.uk</a>
Health & Safety Executive for NI:	<a href="http://www.hseni.gov.uk">www.hseni.gov.uk</a>
Intellectual Property Office (helps you get the right protection for your creation or invention):	<a href="http://www.ipo.gov.uk">www.ipo.gov.uk</a>
Invest Northern Ireland (its web site offers a wide range of business information):	<a href="http://www.investni.com">www.investni.com</a>
Keynote market intelligence:	<a href="http://www.keynote.co.uk">www.keynote.co.uk</a>
Law Society of NI:	<a href="http://www.lawsoc-ni.org">www.lawsoc-ni.org</a>
Management & Leadership Network:	<a href="http://www.mln.org.uk">www.mln.org.uk</a>
Marketing tips:	<a href="http://www.entrepreneur.com">www.entrepreneur.com</a>
NI Business Information Portal (hosted by Invest NI, this offers guidance and information on many business issues):	<a href="http://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk">www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk</a>
Prince's Trust (offers support to young Entrepreneurs and the possibility of mentoring a young person):	<a href="http://www.princes-trust.org.uk">www.princes-trust.org.uk</a>
Prowess, the UK association of organisations and individuals who support the growth of women's business ownership (WIB is a member):	<a href="http://www.prowess.org.uk">www.prowess.org.uk</a>

# Member profiles

## New French property rental business for Rosemary



*Inset: Rosemary Morrison  
La Colline, a gite in France that is now available for holiday letting from Rosemary Morrison*

Rosemary Morrison, who has served on the WIB Board for five years, is branching out to take on an additional new business venture for 2009. She is moving into property holiday letting in France.

Rosemary's Directus Business Training and Consultancy business is well-established in Northern Ireland. Trading successfully for over six years, Directus delivers business training in Finance and Marketing, as well as a post-start mentoring service to start-ups and established businesses.

But, Rosemary confesses to being 'a bit of a serial entrepreneur'. "Before I entered the training field, I had worked in the catering industry for more than 11 years, including owning and running a delicatessen and an outside catering business."

Explaining her 2009 new venture, Rosemary said: "I believe you have to have a dream and then make a plan with set goals for achieving it. Looking to the future, my personal dream is to live in France eventually. This new business is part of the steps I need to take to make this dream become a reality. I've set a goal and I'm working towards it."

"My personal belief is that having a plan for the future keeps you motivated and you can see your daily work as helping you towards it. You need to look to the future and always have an open mind. If you don't have a plan, then it's as George

Harrison said – 'If you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there'. Our daily work could become a treadmill, with us like hamsters on a wheel, directionless."

With such clear-sightedness a good example to us all, Rosemary has gradually built up a small property portfolio in the beautiful Vienne region of France, near the Loire Valley.

Her delightful gites, including the four bedroom La Colline gite located in the village of St Leger de Montbrillais, which is newly furnished to a high standard, are now available to rent. (Rosemary and her husband are developing plans to renovate a third property.)

Rosemary has set up a new website to generate lettings. She has also taken advantage of the new WIB opportunity to promote her business by sponsoring a 'button' on the WIB website. Plus, for any WIB member who wants to arrange a stay she is offering a 10% discount on the properties' weekly letting prices.

"A firm believer in the notion of transferable skills, it's funny to think that I might eventually come full circle, and return to using my original catering skills," said Rosemary. "If I move to France, perhaps I'll end up cooking meals too for my guests!"

**To view Rosemary's latest property in France and for further information visit: [www.lacolline.co.uk](http://www.lacolline.co.uk) or ring Rosemary on 07732104364**

## Women in Business – a Personal Journey



**Rosin McDermott**

I was still in my 20s when we started Women in Business. That was a time when I was single, before ipods or bebo, when my wages went on trendy tops, weekend partying and ski holidays. Seven years later and how life has changed. Now I shop online when the kids are in bed and my Saturday outing is to the Mo Mowlam swing park at Stormont! As for my wages, the crèche gets most of those, though I do have the odd treats like outsourcing my ironing or my recent discovery of the joy of hiring a cleaner!

Many of you won't have known the original Board and may think it was a business or government decision to set up the group. Far from it. I was the Coordinator of a Ledu Programme for 10 women, assisting them to develop their business. They were an amazing group of colourful and dynamic women who found kindred spirits, where they could share contacts and experience, or simply have a bit of 'craic' or a good moan!

And most of all they had passion – and wanted to reach out to other women. We also had a friend in Ledu, Sharon Polson, who has championed female entrepreneurship the past 10 years, and who encouraged us to take the plunge.

Some of the activities in the past couple of years have amazed me, particularly the luncheon with President Mary McAleese or the Charity Ball. They have gone way beyond my humble ambition for the group, and shown the professionalism that women can achieve. Christine Boyle has been the longstanding Chair, and now that I have stood down from the Board, remains our only Founder Director who has lasted the pace!

To my fellow Directors and friends, and those who have joined and left (and rejoined) along the way, it has been an education, a life experience, a journey and an honour.

*Rosin McDermott with Christine Boyle at a recent WIB event.*



## WOMEN IN BUSINESS

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