

WITS WORDS

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- ◆ Google Women Engineers Tech Talk
- ◆ WITS BITS
- ◆ Chairman's 2007 Programme
- ◆ Exploration Station Gets Lift-off
- ◆ 2007 Membership Renewal Form

WITS AGM - Nov 2006

The AGM was held in on the 18th November 2006 in the Mont Clare Hotel and was well attended.

The main issue that had been tackled during 2006 was the change in our financial status to bring the organisation into compliance with our Corporate Governance requirements.

Gayle Baird became our part-time administrator and will continue as such into 2007.

Monthly lunches were held successfully throughout the year in the centre of Dublin and a meeting on Women Mathematicians held in Trinity College was attended by a number of WITS members.

The next Committee is setting up a sub-committee in relation to Communications to cover e-mail, website, WITS WORDS as well as communications strategy. Another sub-committee in relation to Finance and Membership is also to be set up.

Ongoing projects include Talent Bank; Stars, shells and Bluebells and Plaques.

There was a tour of the National Gallery after the event. Aileen Mc Grath was warmly thanked for her work as chairperson over the year. Ena Prosser and Claire O'Connell, both very active members, for Funding and for WITS WORDS, stepped down from the committee and both were presented with a token of WITS appreciation for their hard work and enthusiasm for the organization.

The AGM for 2007 will be held on November 2007 [details on web site tbc]

The new Executive elected at the AGM is as follows:

Chairperson: Margaret Finlay

Secretary: Hilda Martin

Treasurer: Lisa Martinez

Executive Committee:



Frances Buggy

Anna Gethings

Maria Hill

Miriam Lee

Sadhbh McCarthy

Charlotte O'Kelly

Aileen McGrath



Google Dublin Women in Engineering

Tech Talk Night

Wednesday, 7 February 2007

Controlling the appetite of thousands of information hungry machines.

In this first of a series of Tech Talks, Kate Ward, Site Reliability Engineer (SRE) for the Google office in Dublin motivated and presented several threads of indirect research and the result of its application in the Google infrastructure. Having an infrastructure the size of Google's presents many challenges in the area of computation, networking, and storage, many which have never been seen on this scale before. As a result, Google has indirectly been able to study these areas through their volume of scale and statistical analysis. Kate presented an overview of some of the systems and talk about the latest trends learned. Kate is the Dublin Team Lead of the Bigtable Service. The Bigtable Service is one of the many back-end storage mechanisms used internally at Google. As the SRE for Bigtable Kate finds better ways of organising and accessing various types of disparate information. A number of **WITS**'s members supported this event run by new member Sara Hattem.

WITS BITS

A couple of high profile WITS are on the move:

Theoretical physicist and former Rose of Tralee, **Aoibhinn Ní Shuilleabheáin**, has decided to leave research in biocomplexities and concentrate instead on a career in television. In April she will grace our screens as the female panellist on RTÉ's The Panel. Before that she will tour the United States, singing with Irish music and dance group, Rágús. **WITS** wishes her well with her new career.

Catriona Ward has moved to Brussels on a three-year assignment for Enterprise Ireland as part of the National FP7 network - there is a major drive on in Ireland to increase Irish participation above the excellent levels achieved in FP 6. Her role as EU R&D liaison manager is to liaise on an informal basis with the commission and act as a resource for the Irish research community in Brussels. She is keeping a watching brief on gender and women in her spare time and looking forward to meeting any **WITS** members when they are in Brus-

EuroWistdom is being launched at a conference in Berlin on February 19, 2007. The project aims to create new Television drama featuring women scientist and engineers in leading roles. Writers, producers, editors, and representatives of business, science and technology and politics to participate. Further events are planned in Paris and Ljubljana.. See www.eurowistdom for more information.

International Women's Day event **WITS** and the Bar Council of Ireland are hosting an event on the 7th March, 2007 at 6:30 pm in the Bar Council's Law Library, Distillery Building on Church Street. The theme is Hard Science, Hard New Choices—Science, Ethics and the Law.

WATCH
OUT FOR
THE NEXT
TECHNICAL
TALK AT
GOOGLE

**JUST A NOTE
THAT THIS IS THE
LAST PRINTED
VERSION OF
WITS WORDS**



WITS 2007 Programme

At the first meeting of the new Executive in November the Committee initiated its programme formulated at the AGM and set the main objectives for 2007:

Administration – keeping in contact with members on a regular basis. This is facilitated by us having a part time administrator, Gayle Baird who will deal with all the correspondence and emails into the organisation.

Finance/Membership – A budget for the running of WITS on a yearly basis is already prepared. A sub-committee covering funding and membership is also up and running with three meetings held to date.

Communications – A sub-committee is already set up and are in the process of developing a communications strategy. In the process they are also reviewing the Website, and examining other ways of communication for example an electronic mail shot etc.

Projects – These are ongoing and a progress report will be available for the next issue of **WITS Words**.

Events – it is envisaged that at least two will be organised during the year.

It may appear an ambitious programme but we are optimistic with progress expected in a number of areas. Watch this space.

Margaret Finlay,
WITS Chairperson
February 2007

**JANE JERRY,
A WITS
MEMBER,
IS DIRECTOR OF
THE NEW
EXPLORATION
STATION**

Exploration Station Gets Lift-off

Plans for Ireland's first interactive science centre have been unveiled, with a site in Dublin set aside for its location. Dubbed the Exploration Station, the 6,600 sq m centre is aimed at fostering an interest in science among children and young adults.

The project is a public-private partnership between the Government and the centre's Board of Trustees. The Government partnership includes the Office of Public Works, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and the Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism.

The project is to be submitted for planning approval and it's currently slated to open in 2010 beside Heuston Station in Dublin. An estimated 650,000 children and adults are expected to visit over the first five years.

The centre's design includes interactive areas along with fast and slow routes through the facility. Some of its features are modelled on the international examples such as the Boston Children's Museum, the Boston Museum of Science and others in Europe. There will be seven permanent galleries, with flexible programme spaces built into each so that people's experiences will be different each time they visit. The space also includes a gallery for travelling exhibits that it's believed will change every six months.





2007 Membership & Renewal Form

Membership is open to women and men throughout Ireland who work, have worked or who are studying in any area of science, engineering or technology

Membership Type

- a) New Member
b) Renewal for 2007

Membership Fees

Individual €50 Concessions €20 (retired, unemployed and student members)

Receipt Required: Y N:

Membership Details

Title (Dr, Mr, Mrs, Ms)

Surname:First Name:

Job/Dept (optional):

Preferred mailing address:

Address:

.....

Contact telephone(s): homeworkmobile

Email Address (s) 1 2.....

Other Information

WITS will run 3-4 events in 2007. Any particular areas/activities you feel WITS should cover?

Suggestions: _____

WITS is interested in hearing from members with training skills:

Training Skills (please indicate subject area): _____

For Office Use Only

a) New member b) Renewal for 2007

Cash/Cheque/PO Received Date: _____ Processed by: _____

Please return 2007 subscriptions and completed forms to: **WITS, PO Box 3783, Dublin 4**

Address: WITS, PO Box 3783, Dublin 4, Ireland

E-mail: info@witsireland.ie Web: www.witsireland.ie

Note: WITS sends most communication electronically for cost reasons. Membership information will be stored electronically by WITS for administration and circulation purposes but will not be disclosed or circulated in accordance with Data Protection legislation.