

**'Work hard'**  
- John Giles

**'Be guided by your gut instincts'**  
- Brian Cody

**'All change is difficult, even from worse to better'**  
- Dr Garry Courtney

## MARY DAVIS

Organisational triumph of the 2003 Special Olympics



Gerry Mooney

MARY Davis' triumph in her organisation of the 2003 Special Olympics deservedly won over the hearts and minds of innumerable people throughout Ireland and the world. Her utmost dedication resulted in what can be held up as a shining example of an event carried off to the highest possible standards of international repute. With her at the helm, the Special Olympics Europe/Eurasia have overseen the growth and development of the Special Olympics across 58 countries. Though President McAleese recognised Mary's achievement by appointing her to the Council of State, her value cannot be overstressed.

## MICHAEL O'LEARY

Resented by some, he has given undreamt-of freedom to travel to many

MICHAEL O'Leary's fearless public pronouncements have earned him dislike and even resentment in many circles. None the less, he is worthy of inclusion for his extraordinary performance as an airline manager. The ruthlessness with which he has pursued his business goal, a so-called 'low fares' airline modelled on his earlier work with Southwest Airlines in the US, has become the standard by which such ventures are measured. Setting aside the sheer praiseworthiness of his skill as a businessman, we are all indebted to Michael O'Leary for the opportunities he has opened up to the average Irish citizen. Today, there are untold numbers of people, both in Ireland and abroad, who otherwise would never have dreamed of travelling as they do.



## MYRTLE ALLEN

Food pioneer who inspires generations

MYRTLE Allen has led the way in Ireland of achieving the highest possible standard for our food products, food appreciation, food preparation and food purity. Although she based herself in Ballymaloe House, her influence has spread nationwide and she has been in the vanguard of encouraging young cooks, chefs and professional people throughout the food industry — inspiring generations to take an interest in a style of cooking which was most likely unknown in Ireland up until a few decades ago. From her humble origins, she fought the good fight in her area of food, and continues to do so today.



## THE O'CONNOR CHILDREN (SINEAD, JOSEPH AND EIMEAR)

Arts family who excel in music, literature and art history

THE O'Connors must rank as one of the most prestigious artistic families that Ireland has produced. Sinéad, Joseph and Eimear have each excelled in their respective fields whether it be music, literature or art history. Of course, Sinéad is a household name throughout the world and has made a huge impression with her music. She has been in the tradition of contemporary Irish popular songwriters such as Bono and Bob Geldof, who have coupled the enormous commercial success of their musical output with strident, sometimes controversial, activism. Her outspoken views may have at times lost her fans, but she remains one of our brightest stars.

Joseph is an extraordinary talented novelist, one for whom I have a huge regard. Perhaps his magnum opus is *Star of the Sea*, for which he won several awards in 2004. In making a name for himself both here and abroad, he has produced a love of Irish writing in generations of people.

Finally, Eimear was curator of a renowned Sean Keating exhibition in The Hunt Museum in Limerick, the subject of an upcoming book. Like her siblings, she has worked extremely hard at her chosen vocation and her output as an art scholar, writer, and historian can only bear more fruit in years to come.



Photos: David Conachy

## ARTHUR RYAN

Penneys chief who is an example of what an entrepreneur can achieve

IN a world of extreme competition Arthur Ryan has made a huge contribution to the commercial world, both in Ireland and internationally, as the tentacles of his business stretched far outside this country. The durability of Penneys and its international counterpart Primark owe to his shrewdness as a businessman, identifying a specific market and concentrating his full attention on it. The many years that this enterprise has enjoyed success to this day, in a time when many retail outlets are floundering, confirm him as a consummate example to commerce students of what entrepreneurialism can achieve.

