

## ECHONEWS

# detail to lure tourists and traders

# docks dream



The Clarion Hotel is just one of the developments Howard Holdings has brought to Cork. It has now been granted planning permission for a new hotel on the city's Lavitt's Quay.

Picture: Eddie O'Hare

Before they started the process of rejuvenating the site three-and-a-half years ago, Mr Gormley said it was a derelict coal facility.

"We had a problem with the river bank buildings. They and the existing buildings were falling into the river so the first step was to rebuild the quay," he said.

As with any major development, the negotiations with Cork City Council were detailed and they centred to a large extent on height.

"We would have liked to have gone

higher but, with City Hall across the way, we had to compromise," said Mr Gormley.

The company's involvement in the redevelopment of the whole docklands, of which many say the City Quarter is the start, is far from finished and Howard Holdings are determined to have an impact in the major redevelopment of the Lee banks running through the city.

"We have already submitted a master-plan for the docklands and it is an area which we feel we could contribute a great deal to," said Mr Gormley.

## Company building on its success on banks of Lee

HOWARD Holdings are no strangers to the docklands of Cork city, having already completed two projects on the Lee banks. The City Hall multi-storey car park, Eglinton Street, was completed in 1999. The €6.6 million development boasts 395 space on seven floors. On Anglesea Street, Cork, Howard Holdings completed a €20 million five-storey building which accommodates commercial and office space. Completed in 2003, it houses the Anglo Irish Bank Corporation's new banking halls on the

ground and first floor.

Among its future developments, Howard Holdings have already started work on the Webworks building close to the quays and are also planning a detailed portfolio of what they would like to build as part of the north and south docklands plan.

On Lavitt's Quay, they have just been granted planning permission to develop a Comfort Inn Hotel for Choice Hotels. Outside Cork, the company is involved in almost €1 billion worth of development in Ireland and across the world.

## Plans shaped on table napkins

HOWARD Holdings has said that some of the decisions that would shape its future were mapped out on napkins over elongated coffee meetings.

But, with billions of euros changing hands, it is clear that this company's success would now be the stuff of a best selling business acumen book. With offices in London, Dublin and Cork — Howard Holdings has established itself as a leading player in the English and Irish property markets.

It is led by its founding member Greg Coughlan and his fellow industry specialist, Frank Gormley, and has expanded its business into Europe and Africa in recent years.

## O'Shea on Monday



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## The heat is getting to me as well, folks

I'LL give no apologies for the subject of this week's column.

The heat.

We've all had our go at attempting to describe it these past couple of weeks. We've rolled out the old clichés with everyone we've met.

Through many thousands of years of evolution, man has discovered that the best initial verbal assault when coming in contact with another person — whether friend or stranger or marsupial — has always been a few banal words on the weather (my favourite phrase, which I think is peculiar to Ireland, is: "The heat is hot.")

Why not try to be a bit more imaginative with your language the next time you happen upon such a conversation: use metaphors, similes.

Here are a few examples.

The temperature: "It is warmer than someone who is close in a treasure hunt." The sun: "The sun is brighter today than a torch shone in a dark room." The humidity: "It is closer than someone who is warm in a treasure hunt."

Feel free to use any of these or to invent your own.

The reason I won't apologise for the obvious choice of subject today is because there is no way I could write about anything else. To do so would mean research and more time indoors than absolutely necessary and on advice of my meteorologist, "that would be insane".

It is so rare to get such an extended period of fine weather on this island it is a good idea that we all relax a bit now anyway. Who knows when the next spell like this will come around? How often have we looked at the weather report on TV at this time of the year and saw an amber-red Europe, an orange Britain and a dimly yellow us? This fortnight has truly been our few hours in the sun.

Remember that old saying, 'My two favourite days in Ireland — Christmas and summer'. What has happened this year? How come the sun has been splitting the rocks for a fortnight?

I'm glad I asked that.

At the moment, a ridge of high pressure is hovering over the country. High pressure is a warm, moist air mass that is a complex mix of oxygen, nitrogen, carbon dioxide and isobars and it is a very good thing. This high pressure we have at the moment was formed somewhere deep in waters off the Caribbean, carried northeast by the gulf stream until it reached here where it shot out of the sea some miles

ROBERT O'SHEA talks about the weather, since any other topic would be too much like hard work

west of the smaller of the Skelligs and has been dispersing clouds and bathing us in sunshine ever since.

The bad news? There's low pressure on the way. Low pressure is a horrible thing; it is an air mass too, a complex mix of oxygen, nitrogen, carbon dioxide and more isobars, but this air mass doesn't like to see young women walking around town in skimpy clothing, wearing tops held on, not by straps, but by molecules. Low pressure doesn't want you to be drinking cider in the beer garden. Low pressure is the arch enemy of the lawnmower (it has some powers for good).

The good news though is that due to the depletion of the ozone layer, the Greenhouse and the Coriolis effect, we now have global warming. This means that in the near future our summers will be more like this one, except they will go anti-clockwise. However, because of the precarious ecological position the earth is in at the moment (some Inuit villages in Northernmost Canada and in Alaska will have to be sacrificed because of their proximity to melting ice caps/ use of electric hand-dryers in igloo toilets) there is the possibility that the gulf stream may be moving south. It is for this reason that Ireland signed up to the Kyoto Agreement which will allow us to lease it back of the Iberians for a fair price if this should ever happen.

But global warming is posterity's problem, so let's forget about it and worry about more immediate issues:

- It is lovely to sit out in the sun, but always be wary of its harmful UV rays. While pharmacies will try to sell you expensive creams to combat these, there is probably nothing more effective than a thick, leathery epidermis to refract this danger.
- Enjoy the sun, do, but never look directly into it, especially while driving.

- People always forget to rub sunscreen into their genitals, which is the most enjoyable place to rub it.

- Everybody, not just men, should be allowed to sunbathe topless in this country. That women feel pressurised to cover up is an example of cultural oppression. It's the 21st century for chrissake.

Now please excuse me, there is a bee I must kill.

**TOMORROW: Our series continues**