

... the daily rain
comes late today,
almost with a smile,
falling softly into the bog,
into the ocean.



...the sun falls in discs of gold
over meadows and trees,
lying there as round as coins and as bright as coins
and sometimes a coin hops
onto the back of a rabbit
and drops off onto the meadow.

(from Heinrich Böll:
Irish Journal)



Art communicates without boundaries as it lives on exchange

The German Nobel Laureate Heinrich Böll loved Ireland. To him it was a land of inspirational peacefulness, where the "cemeteries are full of people the world could not do without", a plentiful source of energy for his penmanship.

For several decades, he and his family spent many months in Ireland each year, particularly in their house in Dugort on Achill Island, Co. Mayo. This plain restored cottage amidst the hedges of gorse and fuchsia with its unbarred view onto the open sea served as birthplace for many - 68, according to his own information - of his works.

In 1985, two years before his death, Heinrich Böll visited this place, charged with memories and emotions, for a last time.

Since 1992, the **Heinrich Böll Cottage** has been developing into a modest centre for various artists from all over the world. With the support of the Heinrich Böll Foundation, the Böll family and Mayo County Council, it was possible to successfully implement an „Artists-in-Residence“ grant programme under the custody of the Heinrich Böll Committee, Achill.

On January 1, 1998, the German registered charity Netzwerk Irland e.V. (Network Ireland) leased the **Heinrich Böll Cottage** from the joint heirs, explicitly voicing the intent to follow the practice of specific support for artistic and cultural projects within the framework of its objective "to foster German-Irish understanding in the fields of culture, politics and society."

The idea is that this inspirational place shall provide artists and other cultural activists with a temporary domicile for the work on or realisation of their respective projects.

At the end of 1999, Böll's joint heirs decided to sell the whole property. However, it is the mutual aim of all involved, to do everything possible to allow for the continuation of the artistic scheme.

The activities necessary for a purchase of the property are beyond the financial abilities of Netzwerk Irland e.V.

Therefore, in agreement with Böll's joint heirs, a committee was entrusted with the preparation for the establishment of a charitable society to secure the sponsorship for the maintenance of the cottage and the continuation of the artistic scheme. The work of this committee is based on the programmatic four-point agenda Save the Cottage (cf. appendix). The charitable society has been established in the meantime and is registered with the Amtsgericht Frankfurt.

For the purchase and urgent renovation work, the initial sum of approx. DM 500,000 (IR£ 200,000) is needed. Böll's joint heirs conceded the committee a general right of first refusal until autumn 2000.

To keep up an exchange of art and culture between nations, truly "humanistic" in the sense of Heinrich Böll, we depend on and appeal for your support in whatever way.



Some forty years ago, with his *Irish Journal*, Heinrich Böll created one of the most beautiful and perceptive portraits of Ireland ever to be written. And despite many changes, even today "This Ireland exists" - especially so on Achill. Please help to preserve this inspirational reservoir.

How you can help to save the Heinrich Böll Cottage

1. Purchase and renovation

The most urgent task is naturally to purchase and maintain the property. By autumn 2000 some DM 500,000 (IR£ 200,000) are needed to secure the ownership of the cottage for the charitable society Friends of the Böll Cottage.

This is the necessary requirement to maintain the property and its use in the way described above. With such limited time available, this task is an "Emergency Case"!

2. Permanent preservation of the property

You can support the preservation of the property with a single donation or regular contributions. Contributions in kind (small car, personal computer, telecommunication device etc.) can help to facilitate mobility and working conditions of the artists. Details would have to be discussed with the board of artistic advisors to the society.

3. Supporting membership in the society Friends of the Böll Cottage

As a supporting member of the Friends of the Böll Cottage society, you would donate an annual contribution of at least DM 500 (IR£ 200) to add to the fund from which the regular grant for the artists is disbursed (cf. grant allocation guidelines).

4. Sponsoring individual projects

Individual artists or projects could be specifically supported beyond the regular grant with a personal stipend or by covering necessary expenses for the development of a project. In such a case, the board of artistic advisors to the society would be happy to identify appropriate projects. The expenditure for a stipend covering all costs for an artist's three week stay would amount to some DM 5,000 (IR£ 2,000)



The time pressure exerted by the deadline autumn 2000 makes it necessary to take relatively unusual steps: We need firm declarations of intent to contribute already now! The establishment of the society has been completed and the appointment of the board of artistic advisors will be undertaken as soon as possible and then of course tax-deductible receipts for any contribution can be issued.



Friends of the Böll Cottage

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Heinrich Böll Cottage

