

An tAire Stáit um Chúnaimh Forbartha Thar Lear agus Diaspóra
An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha
Office of the Minister of State for Overseas Development Aid and Diaspora
Department of Foreign Affairs



Heather McKeegan,
The Claddagh Association Inc.

24th May 2021

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Dear Ms McKeegan,

Many thanks for your correspondence dated 5 April. It was a pleasure to receive copies of Claddagh's book *From Home to Home: Oral Histories of Irish Seniors in Western Australia*.

I welcomed the opportunity to meet online last July, along with a number of other community organisations across Australia who are funded through my Department's Emigrant Support Programme, and to hear about the tremendous work you are doing for our community.

The onset of the pandemic has had a significant impact on many Emigrant Support Programme funded organisations' operations and capacity to deliver projects. Yet despite the difficulties presented by the pandemic, I have been struck by how innovative and creative our community organisations have been in finding new ways to maintain their engagement with the Irish community. This Oral History Project is one such example.

The output of the book, the online resource held by the State Library of Western Australia and its promotion through a local magazine is all commendable. What is equally striking is the impact you refer to on the Irish Seniors who contributed, and the local Irish community in terms of alleviating loneliness and reconnecting people in difficult times.

I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate you on such a successful initiative and to convey my appreciation for the services you provide to our Irish community.

Yours sincerely,

Colm Brophy T.D.
Minister of State for Overseas Development Aid and Diaspora