

Moscow St Patricks Day Parade

March 17th 2014

In the 5th century, St. Patrick arrived in Ireland to spread the gospel of Christianity. Over the long centuries since, he has become the patron saint of Ireland and along with the harp and shamrock - one of the enduring symbols of Irishness throughout the world.

As the Irish spread to the four corners of the earth, they have brought the image of St. Patrick with them as a reminder of who they are and where they have come from. This image is celebrated each year on March 17th, St. Patrick's Day, when the whole world is Irish for a day. The Irish and their friends mark their heritage with music and dancing, spectacle and merrymaking. Above all, it is a day of parades, with floats, brass bands, extravagant costumes, traditional arts and smiling faces.

On 15 March 1992, thousands of delighted Muscovites lined Novy Arbat to witness the first St. Patrick's Day Parade in the Russian capital's history. Yuri Luzhkov and Aer Rianta Chief Executive Derek Keogh were on the reviewing stand as a police escort led the way for Russian marching bands, Cossack horsemen, and 15 floats representing many Russian companies. The parade, which was the brainchild of Derek Keogh, was a big success, and ensured a repeat performance the following year.

Each year the floats became more numerous and sophisticated the bands bigger and more impressive, and the range of international and Russian participants and sponsors more wide-ranging.

The Moscow parade continued to be an annual event until 1998 when the last parade took place. After a lapse of 3 years The St Patrick's Society of Russia plan to re-establish the St Patrick's Day parade with the co-operation of the Moscow City Government, The Moscow police, various government bodies, The Irish Embassy and the Irish Community in Moscow.

We are confident that this year's parade will be as successful as previous years and re-establish it as one of the highlights of Moscow's public calendar.