

# Opening by Hovione facility at Ringaskiddy a welcome boost

By LEO McMAHON

'THIS is a vote of confidence in Ringaskiddy and Cork,' said County Mayor Noel Harrington at the formal commencement last week of the new Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API) manufacturing facility by Portuguese based Hovione at Loughbeg, Ringaskiddy, which over the next two years, will create 80 new jobs.

Founded 50 years ago by three Hungarians, including the Villax family which was represented at the opening by chairperson Diane Villax and chief executive Guy Villax, Hovione is today an international group specialising in the development and manufacture of APIs. Its contract services to a wide range of customers worldwide cover every scale of production and include research and development support and commercial manufacturing. Hovione, with the support of IDA Ireland, acquired the former Pfizer API facility at Loughbeg and will develop new processes for the manufacture of new compounds there.

Guests were welcomed by Mr. Lorcan McGarry, general manager at Loughbeg. Special guest H.E. Dr. Duarte Ortigao, Portuguese Ambassador to Ireland, said it was his first time visiting 'this beautiful county with its dynamic city' since taking up his appointment two months ago. Hovione had developed from a small family business to an important international company and he congratulated the Villax family and everyone associated with the Hovione project in Ringaskiddy and the effort being made by Ireland to attract foreign investment in difficult times. He predicted the new facility would be a valuable addition to the region that would help to further improve the excellent relationship between Portugal and Ireland.

Guy Villax, said Hovione were 'the new boys in town' but expressed confidence that it had the right team to succeed in servicing its customers from what was 'an incredibly and surprisingly beautiful site'. He also spoke of the company's commitment to being a constructive part of the community.

'The Ringaskiddy plant is multi-purpose and is able to address a large number of specialised chemistries. We have been manufacturing in China for over 25 years. We know very well what China can do for the pharma industry but we also know what it can't do and it is for those reasons we are now in Cork. As a contract manufacturer, we bring to Cork a new business model. It is one that offers a great future but success will require high levels of productivity and a tough attitude towards cost. This challenge is not exclusive to Hovione. We have the right team and I am confident we will succeed.

'These are tough, risky and challenging times but with clear vision, strong leadership and people pulling together, we can do amazing things,' said Mr. Villax, who thanked Pfizer, officials of the IDA (whom he first met on a visit to Co. Cork 20 years ago), the customers and especially all the workforce at Hovione in Ringaskiddy. A tribute to the staff was also paid later following a tour of the facility and a luncheon in the canteen by Diane Villax.

Mr. Miguel Calada, chief financial officer with Hovione, said: 'This latest investment is in line with our latest strategy to serve innovative companies launching new compounds. We decided to have a site in Cork because of the region's high concentration of API production, its vast and deep talent pool and its excellent cGMP record with health authorities. The Loughbeg site offers

everything that our customers want. It is modern, well equipped and meets the highest standards in the global industry.'

Mr. Barry O'Leary, chief executive of IDA Ireland, said it was a great occasion and on behalf of the Government welcomed the start-up of operations by Hovione in Ringaskiddy which he predicted would be a great asset and was on course to employ 50 people by the end of 2009 and 80 by 2011.

'The current global business climate of challenge, mergers and change offers forward-looking companies significant opportunities to implement a strategy of growth and development and Hovione is one of these. This investment displays Ireland's ongoing ability to secure high value investments in global foreign direct investment and it continues to be a prime location for projects from across all sectors,' said Mr. O'Leary, who pointed out that eight out of the top ten companies in the world operate here and export €45 billion of pharmaceutical products annually.

Congratulating Hovione on its 50th anniversary, the IDA chief pointed out that of 12 new foreign direct investment announcements for Ireland this year, five were in Cork and County and he went on to pay tribute to his 'persistent and patient' team including Barry O'Dowd, Pat McGovern, Ray O'Connor and Maura Saddington.

A welcome to Cork and offer of continued support from the county council was extended to Hovione by County Mayor Noel Harrington. Cork, he went on, had a lot to offer including excellent third-level institutions and plans for a Science Park at Curraheen which would ensure that the intellectual capability required would continue to come on stream. He also paid tribute to IDA Ireland.

Mr. Conor Healy, chief executive of Cork Chamber said Hovione was a very welcome addition to the pharmaceutical industry. Cork had proven to be a very successful location for such activity and this investment was based on the high standard of facility available as well as the capability and track record of the staff, appropriate infrastructure and links to the region's third-level institutions.

The large attendance at the opening included County Manager Martin Riordan, South Cork manager Declan Daly, Sean Forde and Audrey Hogan of Ringaskiddy and District Residents' Association; Matt Moran of IBEC, Deputy Lord Mayor of Cork Tony Fitzgerald; the Portuguese ambassador's wife, Isabel Ortigao; Brendan Kenny, customers, suppliers and Catherine Curtin, Isabel Pina and Cristina Barrodas from Hovione which had a large delegation from Portugal who travelled to Cork on the recently launched Aer Lingus Lisbon service.

Hovione was established in 1959 by Hungarians Nicholas de Horthy, Ivan Villax and Andrew Onody and the first two letters of their names together make the word Hovione. Main founder and chemist was the late Ivan Villax, husband of Diane Villax who attended the Ringaskiddy opening. Based in Loures, Lisbon, it also has plants in China and New Jersey, USA.



agan,

rowdy)

a day  
visit to  
telling  
ursday  
d; new  
e; con-  
voren

dance  
invita-  
1 this  
ch will  
7, July  
5. The  
num-  
nts to  
val. A  
e place  
at 8pm  
Social  
Three  
s are  
ne on  
nman-  
k City

tation,  
Choir  
in the  
e Con-  
rk, on  
ging a  
ymns.  
very  
rs and  
o cele-  
ed the  
a bou-  
to the  
gan in  
rform-  
recital  
e choir  
break.  
litions  
mem-  
for the  
e post-  
r, carri-

5  
parish  
ng for  
l make  
n over  
s. The  
urday,  
urday,  
thuire  
Girls'  
urday  
of the  
lay 23.



Guy Villax, Hovione Chief Executive, Dr. Duarte Ramalho Otiguo, Portuguese Ambassador, Diane Villax, chairperson of Hovione Board of Directors, Cllr Noel Harrington, Cork County Mayor, Barry O'Leary, CEO IDA Ireland, and Lorcan McGarry, general manager of the Loughbeg site, pictured at the start-up of operations by Hovione at its new API manufacturing facility in Loughbeg, Ringaskiddy.

(Pic: Diane Cusack)

ated to

Dan Desmond served as a Dáil deputy for the area from 1948

O'Leary, Mrs Murphy c/o F. O'Leary Jackie Bermingham

mentations were outlined as part of the evidence presented

prevailing winds of the proposed incinerator, and acknowl-