

# THE IRISH IN BIRMINGHAM....

Birmingham Irish Community Forum Ltd Newsletter

Issue No. 3, October 1998

## THE IRISH COMMUNITY IN BRITAIN ARE THE ONLY MIGRANT COMMUNITY WHOSE HEALTH DETERIORATES ON MIGRATION.

Research published last year showed conclusively that the health of the second and third generation Irish living in Britain is, if anything, worse than the health of their parents and grandparents. The Health and Social Services Sub-Committee aims to help redress this balance by ensuring that health, social services, voluntary and private care sectors are made aware of the needs of the local Irish Community and that their services reflect the needs of our people.

### COMING SOON.....

Birmingham Irish Mental Health Forum

supported by

Birmingham Irish Community Forum Ltd  
North Birmingham Mental Health Trust

and

Birmingham Health Authority  
present

### "THE INVISIBLE PEOPLE"

A Conference on  
The Health of the Irish in Britain

on: Tuesday, 27 October 1998  
at: The Irish Centre, Digbeth

Having achieved a great deal, much still needs to be done. This includes:

1. full recognition as an ethnic minority group;
2. addressing the concerning levels of suicide amongst the young women and men;
3. commissioning research into the mental health needs of Irish women;
4. the development of a mental health initiative for Irish people in Birmingham;
5. the development of initiatives for Irish carers and the needs of Irish people with learning difficulties.

### Older Irish Men: Health and Social Care in Birmingham

Jointly Produced by:  
Birmingham Irish Community Forum Ltd  
The Irish Welfare and Information Centre

Funded by:  
Irish Government Dion Fund  
Focus Housing Association



Presented by: Mr Bryan Stoten,  
Chair of Birmingham Health Authority  
will be launching the Report at our

### Annual General Meeting.

on: Thursday, 8 October 1998  
at: The Irish Centre, 7pm onwards

We are open for new recruits to our group as well as to trying to work in different ways with many of the groups that we still have not been able to reach. If you are interested or just want to share your ideas about the health and social needs of Irish people living in Birmingham then please contact the Birmingham Irish Community Forum Ltd on 0121 622 4102.

**CONTENTS - WATCH THIS SPACE - YOUTH NEWS - LETTERS - FUNDING and lots more!**

Views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Birmingham Irish Community Forum Ltd

## **Education Sub-Committee**



The good news is the growing interest in Irish educational issues.

In particular, we have had a very successful series of lectures on 17th Century Ulster by Brian McCuarta (SJ) at the Irish Centre. He continues in the Autumn term with another lecture series

The Irish Centre continues to develop its educational programme recently

adding computer courses alongside the well established cultural studies courses.

Members of the sub-committee met with the Chief Education Officer, Professor Brighthouse to discuss issues such as the achievement levels of Irish children. He agreed to encourage research into this field and to work with us in raising awareness of the issues within schools across the city.

Such awareness was most obvious in the week long celebration of Irish culture at St Edmund Campion School, Erdington. The week long festival was a great success, thanks to the hard work and dedication of the teachers and pupils, and in particular of Chris Gmitrowicz as well as having the support of the GAA, Comhaltas and the Dancing Schools.

In collaboration with Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann and the hard work of Anita Gallagher, we have introduced an 'Irish Music in Schools Project'. This programme encourages teachers to use Irish music as part of the children's music lessons. This project has already been piloted in 3 schools and more schools will be joining up during 1998/1999.

We continue to hope that Irish studies will develop in a Birmingham University as it has done so successfully in Liverpool, Bath and London.

Overall, I feel that things on the education front are beginning to move in a very exciting and celebratory way. In particular, the Irish Music in Schools project and research into levels of achievement have got tremendous potential and benefits for our second and third generations - crucially important for our long term strength and survival as an Irish community in Birmingham.

Tony Downey

*Chair of Education Sub-Committee*

## **Who is Who? Failté (Welcome)**



**Pauline Schofield** is the new **Project Co-ordinator** for the Birmingham Irish Community Forum Ltd.

Pauline was born in Kinlough, Co. Leitrim and has lived in England for 25 years.

She looks forward to meeting you all in the near future.

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## **Funding Information**

The National Lottery Charities Board have funds available to allocate on **small grants** to organisations with a turnover of less than £15,000.

The **7th programme - poverty and disadvantage** has been confirmed, and will be opened from 28 October 1998.

**Quest Millennium Awards** offer grants of £2,000 to £10,000. The judges are looking for imaginative ideas within three themes:-

1. activities that encourage residents to help themselves to improve their quality of life;
2. activities that bring people of different age groups together;
3. activities that strengthen links between Birmingham's multi-cultural communities.

If you are interested in applying or require assistance with your application, then please contact us

on ☎ 0121 622 4102.

### Watch This Space!

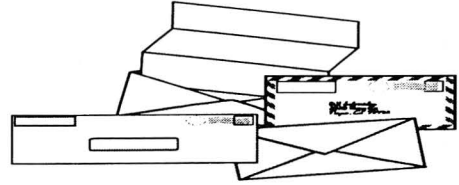
The Birmingham Irish Community Forum Ltd are:-

- In the process of appointing an **Administrator** (funded by the National Lottery Charities Board) and an **Administrative Assistant** (funded by Birmingham & Solihull TEC).
- Looking forward to welcoming into post Caroline Carr, the **Employment and Training Development Worker** (funded by Birmingham & Solihull TEC).
- Looking for their own premises in the Digbeth Irish Quarter for some time now. It is with great delight that Cara Irish Housing Association decided to buy our '**dream home**', Birchall House, right behind the Irish Centre where we will be able to lease some accommodation space to meet our needs.
- Setting up **two new sub-committees**, Personnel and Finance, bringing the total to ten.
- Thankful to all those who helped with the Irish Business Conference in April 1998. The **Irish Business Group** has been established from this conference.
- Looking forward to undertaking more work to ensure that **women** in the Irish Community feel supported and included in the Forum's work.
- Holding our **Annual General Meeting** on 8th October 1998, and as you can see from the cover, will be launching another highly relevant **report** on Older Irish Men: Health and Social Care in Birmingham. It is in this context that we thought it was appropriate to have a 'Health' theme for this meeting.

To all who have made 1997/1998 such a success, thank you and congratulations.

Pauline Schofield  
*Project Co-ordinator*

### Letters & Correspondence



#### Slán The end of yet another era

Gobnait has returned to her native home and I know I am not alone in singing praise to the wonderful work she has undertaken on behalf of all the Irish people living in Birmingham, young and old alike.

Her popularity showed itself to its fullest extent at her farewell party which was held at the Irish Centre when friends and colleagues joined in a celebration of her time in England. The evening was very informal with traditional Irish music performed by members of Coventry Comhaltas and impromptu tunes and recitations from the unlimited talent within the room.

I have worked with Gobnait at the Forum for over two years and have enjoyed the camaraderie we have shared and am proud to call her friend as well as colleague. She is sorely missed but I know that she is back where her heart lies and so would like to take this opportunity of saying good luck for the future and watch out Mary McAleese!

Cath Beniston  
*Administrative Assistant*  
*Birmingham Irish Community Forum Ltd*

What do you think?  
Please write with your views on this  
or any other topics of interest to you.

Address on back page.



## Birmingham Irish Youth Group

### Study this!

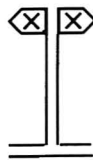
If you are a recently-arrived student, you may want to pick up a copy of our students' guide, produced in association with the College of Food. It's got details of Irish societies, banks and travel agents, as well as useful welfare and financial advice. If your Welfare Officer doesn't stock it, call the Forum office on 0121 622 4102.

### Fingers crossed for major funding...

We have just posted off a funding application to the Irish Youth Foundation, a trust fund supported by Irish businesses in Britain. We are looking for funding to employ a youth worker. We should know if we have been successful by November.

### Youth Survey

Thank you to over 100 young people who have completed our questionnaire since St Patrick's Day. We are now analysing the results to help us to plan future social, cultural and sporting events. In the meantime, if you want to get involved in the Group, please contact the Forum office.



From  
Dígbeth to  
Dublín



### GAA for Africa 1998 - July 12th, Pairc Na hEireann

Rain, rain and just for fun a little more rain. Because of the bad weather, live music did not happen this year but thanks to Patrick O'Brien we did have 'sounds' pumping through the system. Crowds were down but the sport continued from 12 noon through to 8.00 pm. During this time, Warwickshire Ladies won the British Championship with an excellent victory over the Lancashire Ladies team. Erin Go Bragh defeated St Peregrines (Dublin) in the Camogie final and Sean McDermotts winning the double - Football and Hurling champions. Oliver Cuddy, Sean McDermott's goalkeeper (Hurling), received a serious injury in the closing stages of the tournament. I'm pleased to report that he has made a full recovery, happy to see you back Oliver!

Thanks to the hard work of the young members of the Erin Go Bragh club who spent a year in planning and organising, and two days cleaning up. **£3,000.00** was raised for 'Save the Children' for famine relief work in the Sudan. Many thanks to all who took part and to those who helped in any way at all and to our sponsors and advertisers. We acknowledge and appreciate your continued support.

Gaelic games are played every weekend at Pairc Na hEireann. So after you have enjoyed this year's All Ireland finals, venture out to Pairc Na hEireann, enjoy the 'Craic', meet some old friends and feel the warmth of an Irish welcome in the heart of the British Midlands.

Dennis Neenan, Secretary  
Erin go Bragh GAA & Camogie Club

What do you think?



## Forthcoming Events



**Irish Language Classes**  
are available at:-

Monday: The Irish Centre.  
Contact: 0121 622 2314

Wednesday: SS Mary & John,  
Gravelly Hill North,  
Erdington.  
Contact: 0121 373 0263

Thursday: Worcester College.  
Contact: 01905 725543

Friday: Mount Carmel,  
Redditch.  
Contact: 01527 591248

**South Birmingham College**  
run History and Computer  
courses at the Irish Centre.  
Phone: 0121 622 2332  
or 0121 622 4102

### Sports Results:



### In the Midlands - SFC:

Sean McDermott's: 2 - 12

St. Brendan's: 0 - 7

### In Britain - Rugby

(Commemoration of the  
London Irish team's  
Centenary Year of sponsor-  
ship with AIB)

London Irish: 24

Wasps: 36

### In Ireland - All Ireland

Football Final

Galway: 1-13

Kildare: 1-10



Produced by Margaret Fitzgerald on behalf of:

**ionól na n-Éireannach Birmingham Té**

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