

*The Irish  
Counties Journal*

SPRING ISSUE 1986



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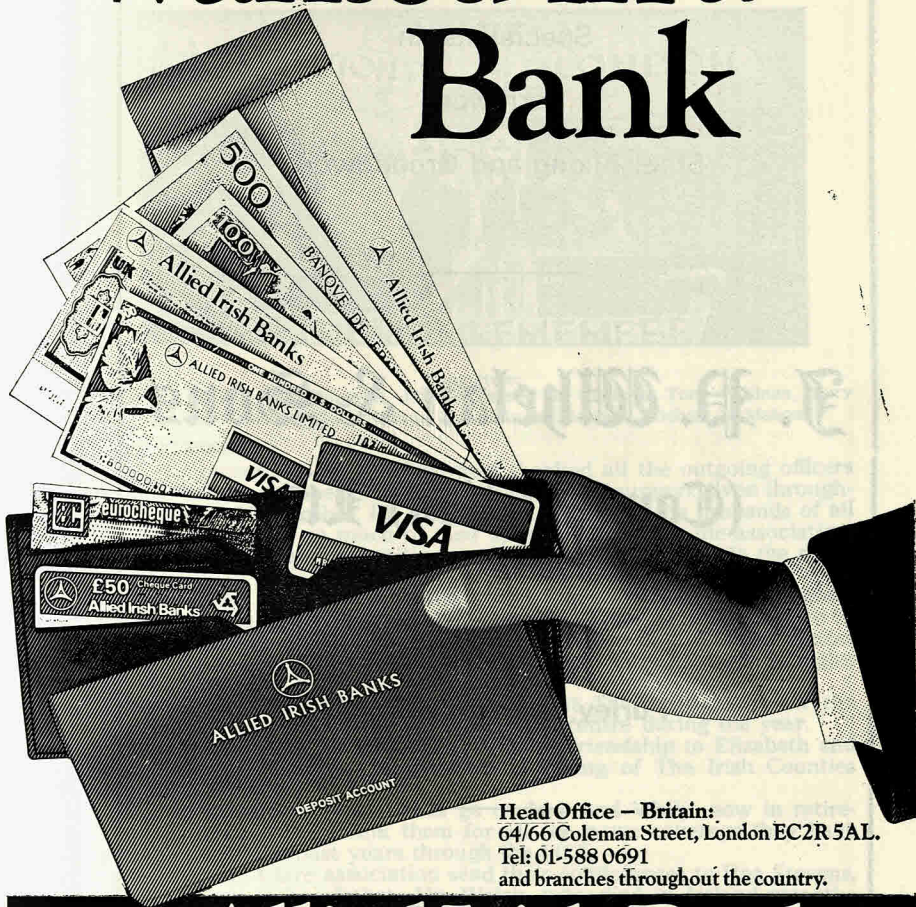
*A Happy  
St. Patrick's Day*



*To all our Readers*

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Chaplain: Fr. Andrew Clancy.

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91 Wymering Mansions,  
Wymering Road,  
London W9  
Tel. 01 286 1640

### Secretary:

Mrs. Bridie Shaw  
351 Amhurst Road,  
Hackney, London N.16  
Tel. 01 254 4251

### Treasurer:

Mrs. Teresa Doyle  
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Copenhagen Street,  
London N.1  
Tel. 01 837 6098

Vice-Chairperson: Una Stevens.

Assistant Secretary: Nancy Bonney. Tel. 01 521 4776

Press Officer: Tony Clark. Tel. 01 852 6282



### Committee:

Christine Bonney, Billy Boswell, Jim Commane, Pat Costella, Tony Cullinan, Mary Diggins, Maura Dowling, Tommy Egan, Susan Meaney, Michael McMahon.

Dear Friends,

At the recent A.G.M. the Chairman thanked all the outgoing officers and committee members for their hard work and support given throughout the past 12 months. He thanked the ladies and the husbands of all those who give up so much of their spare time to help the association. The new officers and committee members were welcomed to the ranks by Joe.

The Annual Dinner and Dance at the Rainbow Rooms was a great success and as usual very enjoyable. I am sure we all look forward to the 1986 Annual Dinner and Dance. Two Bacon and Cabbage dances were held at The Irish Centre during the year and one Reunion night, all of which were most enjoyable functions.

We express our thanks to all the staff at The Irish Centre for the hard work at the functions we hold at the centre during the year.

Also at this time we extend our hand in friendship to Elizabeth and wish her every success in the future running of The Irish Counties Journal.

Our most sincere best wishes go to Jane and Wally, now in retirement in Spain. We thank them for all the news coverage they have provided over the past years through the I.C.J.

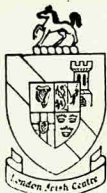
The London Clare association send their condolences to Una Stevens, on the death of her father, Mr. Walsh, who died in Ireland recently. May he Rest in Peace.

In conclusion, I know that I speak for all of us in the Association when I wish Joe, our Chairman, a most successful year.

Don't forget to fall in behind the Clare banner for the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Assemble at Horse Guards Parade, at 10.45 a.m.

Wishing you all a very Happy St. Patrick's Day.

Tony Clark — P.R.O.



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## PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

### Plans for the Immediate Future . . .

Grant aid is being sought for three new projects.

#### 1. Day Centre for the Elderly Irish.

The administration has kindly allocated a disused section of the old building for this purpose. A working party of experts has been set up to research and advise, and plans for redevelopment are underway. This project is in response to an urgent need, in an ageing Irish community. The unit will accommodate about 35 people and will hopefully cater for regulars, drop-in and the frail housebound or disabled who will need to be transported. It would provide meals, craft, keep fit, some nursing and chiropody, counselling, advice and information; social and cultural activities and above all companionship in a caring environment.

#### 2. Group Work with Unsupported Women.

This group will aim at strengthening socio-psychological growth for approximately 20 Irish women, who because of marital breakdown, abrasive interpersonal relationships or basic personality problems, are experiencing isolation, stress and unhappiness.

A facilitator, skilled in working with women's groups has already been interviewed and facilities will be available to care for small children during the session, if need be.

#### 3. Project for the Unemployed.

It is hoped to employ a full time "Outreach Worker", who in addition to the existing "Link-Studies" course, would supervise computer studies, offer formal career guidance and prepare for interviews.

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P.R.O.: Mr. Pat Looney  
Tel. 01 672 0888

Grateful thanks to all our Westmeath people and many friends who attended the Annual Supper/Dance in November. Thanks too to our neighbouring County Longford, who as always, gave their support, and that includes Longford's London Correspondent—John Armstrong, and his good wife Lil. I am not forgetting the ever-faithful "The Round Towers Football team."

I must say my apologies to the many supporters we had to disappoint on the occasion, but we were packed to capacity. However, please prepare yourselves now for the big night, our Twenty First Annual dinner dance on Friday, May 16th, 1986. The Empire Rooms, in the heart of London can hold the whole of the County Westmeath, and we expect a record turn out from all over the home county and many parts of England for this unique occasion. Our twenty first birthday.

The large number we did manage to fit in at the supper dance really enjoyed themselves and this was added to by excellent music from "Mick and the Moonshiners" Our own Bill Stenson did an excellent job in welcoming all the guests and ensuring a space was provided for them. Many asked me to send new year greetings to relatives and friends at home. The Ballynacargy folk. Our Vice-Chairman Bill Cashin and Mrs. Cashin. Joe and Mrs. Garry. Leo and Mrs. Penrose and two daughters (the Penrose family never miss a Westmeath function) and send kind regards. Our president Gerry Reilly and Gerty. Bill Stenson would like to be remembered to all in Mullingar. Our master of quiz and M.C. Ritchie Norton and family send best wishes to all in Athlone. Greetings too to all the Edwards family in Moate from Mrs. Rolfe and Mrs. Timms (sisters). Dan Fox would like to say hello to all. Greetings to all the Dempsey family in Attyconnor, Kilbeggan, from the Hanley and Talbot family Tooting, London. Best wishes from our Treasurer and husband Chris to all relatives and friends in Delvin/Killlulagh, Pearce/Mrs. McCormack. "Will you remember us all to those in Counties Cavan/Leitrim say professional photographer John King and his wife Pat. Also from our secretary Betty Walsh and family, to all in Kockdrin and Rathconrath. My personal thanks to all my Tooting supporters who never let me down. And Vice Chairman Bill Cashin wishes to thank everyone for their support throughout the year. A final thanks to Frank and Mrs. Prendergast of the 'Bull's Head' Clapham Common, for all their hard work in making the night such a success. Billy Attwell sends wishes to sister Sheila.

(Cont. on Page 15)

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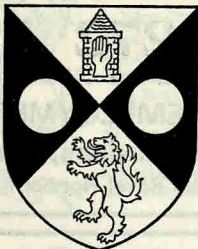
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Mrs. N. Kane  
Tel. 802 6962.

At our first convened meeting for 1986 — 3rd February, a number of fund raising ideas came forward for discussion with a full strength committee sitting, two charities were selected: Cystic Fibrosis Research, Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital and Oblate Mission Brazil (Provision of Amenities).

Cystic Fibrosis is an inborn disorder which affects the lungs and digestive systems of children. Unrecognised prior to the availability of antibiotics post world war II, it was always fatal — children died in the first year of life. It is a genetically transmitted disorder, 1 in 1,600 receiving this abnormal gene from parents. Statistics determine around 400 cases yearly. Prevention and control of lung infection the all important factor; antibiotics, physiotherapy and high protein diet as symptoms present themselves. There is no cure. The main long term air of research is to identify the initial Biochemical fault which the abnormal gene causes, and from which clinical manifestations must flow. This is being pursued in many countries with increasing momentum. The International Cystic Fibrosis Association throughout the world keeps workers in touch with each other. In the interim period children and their parents have to live through a childhood which may at times be alarming and difficult and they must integrate into their growing lives a variety of treatments which may be time consuming and tedious.

Our second project is for the Oblate Mission in Brazil. I would like to quote a paragraph from the National Director's letter: "Our Priests' work among very poor people who lack the essential amenities of life, living in dwellings that are little better than Hen Houses and despite the vast numbers of people living in confined spaces, deprived of running water and underground sewers some of our priests have organised a work force as the priests in most cases are the only ones these poor people can turn to, to dig and provide some underground sewers. However at present they are handicapped through lack of money." This plea came from Fr Pascal Dillon O.M.I. whom many of you met at our Annual Dinner/Dance 1985 and who succeeded Fr Paddy Sheridan O.M.I. Funds will be shared equally between these two worthy charities.

We hope you will help to increase membership strength by renewing your Annual Subscription if still outstanding. Our financial year began November 1st, 1985, and ends October 31st, 1986. With the influx of immigration, there may be young Cavan people lost and bewildered around the capital. Perhaps you can recruit some not yet known to our

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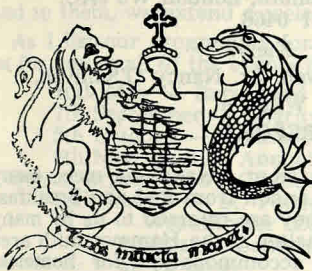
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**Hon. Treasurer:** Mrs. Kitty Groves,  
33 Kings Crescent, Finsbury Park, London N4.  
Tel. 01 359 5994.

**Membership Secretary:** Mrs. Sharon Whitehead  
46 Stoneleigh Terrace, Raydon St., London N19  
Tel. 359 5994.

Our A.G.M. brought no changes and the same officers and committee were returned unopposed. We would have liked a bigger turnout, but it was fairly well attended. As always Bishop Henderson was a very welcome sight. Get well wishes and prayers were offered for the speedy recovery of our Patron, The Most Rev. Dr. Michael Russell, who is now back home in Waterford recuperating.

The Council of Irish Counties A.G.M. was held on 2nd February, and again no change in officers and committee, with the exception of Assistant Secretary, who is now John Connolly.

Our Bacon and Cabbage Supper held on February 8th last was a great success and extremely well attended. A great night was had by all.

The St. Patrick's Night Dinner and Dance to be held at the Irish Centre on Saturday 15th March, will have as guests, The Ambassador Mr. Noel Dorr and Mrs. Dorr; Bishop Edward Daley from Derry and Mr. Peter Barry T.D., Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dail Eiraenn, to name but a few.

The St. Patrick's Day Parade will be held on Sunday, 16th March. Assemble at Horse Guards Parade at 10.45 a.m. Mass at Westminster Cathedral at 12 noon, to be concelebrated by Bishop Edward Daley. Once again the four provinces will have floats. So let's see you all behind the banner supporting Waterford. Don't forget — 10.45 a.m.

Easter Sunday — put this date in your diary. Venue: The Irish Centre, Kennedy Hall. The Waterford Theatrical group will be performing 'The Red Kettle.' Everyone welcome.

Anyone who likes a bet on the horses, come along to our Race Night on May 23rd in The Irish Centre. See your money go to a good cause for once, instead of the bookies pocket! Again, everyone welcome.

Finally, congratulations to Michael and Geraldine Aulsberry on the birth of a baby daughter.

HAPPY St. Patrick's Day.

Mary Allen — Secretary.



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### SOCIAL WORK REPORT

#### Young People.

Apart from those who come to use from Ireland we meet many young people who are drifting around London from Bed and Breakfast accommodation to Hostels to Squats. They are referred to us by many agencies including Riverpoint, a night-shelter in the Hammersmith area which provides a week's emergency accommodation for homeless people. As it is the only night-shelter in the West London area it attracts many of the alcoholic and homeless people who have deep personal problems. It can be a very traumatic experience for a timid young person who has recently left home to find himself in such an environment.

Most of these young people come to us penniless with not even a change of clothing. Because they are homeless, unemployed and without financial resources, there is a real danger of their becoming involved in addiction to drugs, alcohol and petty crime. Having come with the mistaken idea that they will get dole money immediately, they are overwhelmed by the complexities of the system and the signing-on procedures. First of all, they have not realised that they need an official document of identification (this year we wrote to Ireland for 67 birth certificates, which means a delay of at least one week); neither do they realise that they need an address from which to make a claim. To avoid the use of unsuitable lodgings the Bureau prefers to pay Bed and Breakfast costs for a few days until Supplementary Benefit is arranged. Accommodation for 465 clients was arranged at our expense in 1984 (£3,037.26).

To many it comes as a real shock to find out, the hard way, how desperate is the Housing situation in London and the exorbitant prices charged. There are few rooms to let in the area and those available are beyond the means of most young people, especially when huge deposits are demanded. Most are faced with a future in Bed and Breakfasts with no privacy or security, 3-4 sharing a room, shabby furniture, no cooking facilities and often dirty and dangerous conditions. Those who are fortunate enough to have found accommodation frequently risk losing it because of late and missing Giros and they end up back on the streets again. Very few landlords will allow residents to stay on even for one night if a Giro is late arriving. It is useless for these unskilled young people to take up employment as they would not earn enough to cover the high cost of their accommodation. (£70 for a single room—£56 sharing per week.)

It is obvious from the above that young people in this situation are at risk, and unless they are supported have little chance of getting on their feet in this country. To help them we run Austin House, where we can accommodate a limited number of young men between 18-25, when vacancies are available. There is a tremendous need for similar small, homely hostels, not run for financial gain.

#### Single Homeless.

The state of the older homeless (many of whom are Irish) is a matter of deepest concern here in London. The majority of these men are not alcoholic, mentally ill or 'down and out'. They are ordinary unskilled workers who worked hard while work was available and are now victims of the appalling housing and employment situation.

**Cavan Ass.** (Cont. from Page 9).

Association, who may be in need of friendship and guidance. To you and to them, we extend a welcome.

As I list our programme for 1986, it is with hope that you can join us for one or all of the events planned:

10th May — Bacon and Cabbage Supper Dance.

7th September — Charity Walk Lea Valley Area.

5th October — Boston Tea Party.

8th November — Annual Dinner Dance.

Events organised by Council of Irish Counties Association are:

16th March — St. Patrick's Day Parade. Horseguards Parade—  
Westminster Cathedral. Assemble at H.G. Parade at  
10.45 a.m. Concelebrated Mass at Westminster Cathedral  
at 12 noon.

Principal Celebrant, Most Rev. Edward Daly—Bishop of  
Derry. The Council extend an invitation to Irish Priests,  
who may be free to concelebrate, and to Altar Servers.  
We look forward to seeing you, family and friends, behind  
the Cavan Banner for this traditional occasion.

6th July — London Irish Festival.

Another important event though not under Cavan Association banner,  
is a coach trip to Lourdes, with the Anglo Irish Province of the Oblates,  
15th-22nd September, 1986. Visiting Nevers en route. Our Treasurer,  
Pat Denning, will be organiser, and co-driver as in 1985.

Congratulations to our Senior Quiz team who reached the final, but  
were narrowly beaten by Kilkenny. Despite disappointment they have  
pledged a come-back in 1986. We join in wishing them success and  
the proud possession of the coveted Guinness Cup once again.

**A Happy St. Patrick's Day to all**

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### **Irish Centre (Cont. from Page 4)**

that the quality of the whole complex will create co-responsibility and a good communal spirit.

The oldest and the only undeveloped part of the hostel, was due to be handed over to the builders on February 28th, 1983, and by that date numbers had to be reduced from 100 to 60. This involved a two-fold strategy; the non-replacement of men who booked out and the rehousing by Camden Council of the older long stay residents. Preparations for this began in July 1982, when resettlement officers in Camden were contacted. They proved helpful and understanding in their assessment of applicants' needs and as a result ten men were rehoused in Camden or in G.L.C. properties. By the revised handover date of May 9th, 1983, the numbers were reduced to the required sixty.

A hostel is not just a building but a place where staff and voluntary helpers have established a constructive and caring environment, for the benefit of the many young people who stay or who pass through.

Perhaps the best acknowledgement for the work done is expressed by the mother of a former young resident . . .

"I am writing to say many thanks for your kindness to Thomas, who arrived home last night. He seemed delighted to be back home and at first a little ashamed. I took his running away to London without reason, clothes or address, as part of his growing up. I think it's a good kick he needs, but then I always check myself in difficult times and a new approach seems to be the way today. I am so grateful he was lucky enough to come to your hostel. Many thanks for all the care and kindness."

### **Housing for Elderly People.**

As a Housing Association we have been concerned for many years with the welfare of the elderly Irish people who have become homeless and live in hostels or sub-standard accommodation. Many of these people are in poor health and have lost contact with their families. During 1983 the Association came under some pressure from Irish groups in London and from the Borough of Camden, because of the impending closure of Arlington House, to provide appropriate accommodation for homeless elderly people.

After many years of trying to acquire a vacant site adjacent to the hostel, the owner is at last prepared to sell. A project on this site would give elderly people the independence of a private flat, while support would be close at hand in time of need.

Application for funding this project was made to the Housing Corporation during the financial years 1981/82 and 1982/83, but both applications were unsuccessful. An application for £582,000 to accommodate twenty-four people is currently with the Housing Corporation. In addition efforts are being made to seek funding from Camden and the G.L.C.

The scheme is considered a priority and probably the best the Association could develop. It is hoped by next year that more positive results will be evident.

### **Some Problems Presented.**

This year a large number of our young residents came from city areas. They appeared undisciplined, accustomed to staying out at night and getting up in time for lunch. Relationships with parents and the law became strained and many left home for a more liberated environment. The task of getting them to conform to rules was formidable and not always successful. While stating their preparedness to work, the wage they considered their right, at least £80 nett, put many outside the employable bracket. With little or no work experience their productivity value was low and industry is not prepared to carry passengers on its' roll. Some became discontented and returned home; those who were more positively motivated fared better.



## Fermanagh Association, London

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Most Rev. Dr. Duffy, Bishop of Clogher.

Most Rev. Dr. Francis McKiernan, Bishop of Kilmore.

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**Vice-Chairman:** Mr. John Connolly.

**Treasurer:** Mr. F. Corrigan.

**Secretary:** Mrs. Mary McCormack, 29 Platt Street, London NW1 1RP  
Tel. 01 387 8604

Our fund raising Dance on Friday 14th February, which took place at Our Lady of Lourdes Church Hall, Harrow Road was a great success and we thank all our friends and supporters who attended and helped to raise money for this worthy cause.

Congratulations, and well done to our Junior Quiz Team, who I am delighted to say, won the Trophy, and are the Champions for the 1985 Inter County Quiz. Our Senior team also did extremely well, and were just narrowly beaten. Congratulations to both teams.

We wish a speedy recovery to our Chairman, who is recuperating after an operation. We wish him all the best and hope to see him back in harness very soon.

### Diary Dates.

15th March — Council of Irish County Associations St. Patrick's Dinner Dance.

16th March — St. Patrick's Day Parade. Leaving from Horse Guards Parade. Concluding with Mass at Westminster Cathedral. Mass will be co-celebrated by Bishop Edward Daley.

18th October — Our 30th Annual Dinner Dance to be held in the McNamara Hall at the Irish Centre, Camden Town NW1

We wish everyone a very happy St. Patrick's Day. God Bless,  
Mary McCormack, Hon. Secretary.

Westmeath Ass. (Cont. from Page 7). \* \* \*

### Our Quiz Masters.

Westmeath were the masters of the recent quiz held in the Irish Centre, Camden Town. When they beat a strong Roscommon side which took them through to the semi-finals — highest scorer of the night was Ritchie Norton (Athlone) the Captain of our team. His team were: Steve Cunningham, Mrs. Rolfe, Mrs. Timms, Tommy McCormack (son of Pearce), Billy Attwell, Pearce and Mrs. McCormack, who travelled specially from Killulagh/Delvin for our Quiz and Supper dance.

### A Proud Son of Westmeath.

Pearce and Mrs. McCormack can be proud of their son Thomas, who through hard work, has received his Bachelor and Master degree from Oxford University, England. His grandparents Thomas and Marcell McCormack, were teachers in Coole village, for 45 years. The Westmeath Association in London would like to congratulate you on your success Thomas and send best wishes for the future.

We would like to extend a Very Happy St. Patrick's Day to all our relatives and friends at home and to our many supporters in London and the Home Counties.

Pat Looney — P.R.O.

## The Kildare Association London

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We know it is rather late to offer our sincere wishes to Mr. and Mrs. Smyth, but we would like to thank them for the help given to our Association over the past 18 months and wish them many years happiness in their new home.

Congratulations to our Chairman P.J., and Sandra on the birth of a baby daughter Roisin Siobhainn, also congratulations to Thomas and Marian Loughman on the arrival of a baby boy Adrian Thomas.

The A.G.M. of the Association was held on Sunday, 10th November at The Irish Centre, Camden Square. The Chairman welcomed the members present, and the meeting continued with lively discussion regarding the events of the past year. All the Officers and committee were returned unopposed. We would appeal to young people to come forward, and share in the work.

May 24th, 1986 was confirmed for our Annual Dinner, at The Irish Centre, and we sincerely hope that we have a full-house. Further details will be given in the next issue of the journal.

The next event will be the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Assemble at Horseguards Parade at 10.45 a.m. Mass at Westminster Cathedral at 12 midday.

Wishing you all a very Happy St. Patrick's Day.

R. Davis.

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