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YAW S'NHO! IZ TET

ROGER CASEMENT IRISH CENTRE



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**131 ST. JOHN'S WAY LONDON N19 MAD** 

Telephone: 01-281-3225/4973



## chairperson's introduction

A Chairde,

1986 was a very exciting year for all Irish people in the Borough of Greenwich. For the first time ever funding for two full time workers to serve the Irish in Greenwich Project was achieved.

Both workers, Sarah Kelleher from Cork and Mickey Kelly from Co. Down were new to London so for them it was no easy task trying to establish a foundation for the Project. But in over a year membership to the Project has risen from zero to over 250 and many things have been accomplished. This Annual Report will outline in detail these achievements but for me the highlights must have been the formation of the Irish Womens' Group and the Irish Pensioners' Group, the excellent music sessions and the very successful exhibition of Irish culture and artistic achievement which toured the Libraries in the Borough.

At last I feel we have made a breakthrough. No longer do people look in surprise when we say there are over 8,000 Irish people in the Borough and the Council is finally making some effort to make special provision for the Irish people with many of our events being sponsored by the Council's Leisure Services Dept.

But we still have a long way to go, eventually the Project would like to see an Irish Centre in the Borough, Irish history and culture reflected in our schools regular music, dancing, drama and poetry events but all of this depends on as many Irish people as possible becoming involved to show we care about our cultural heritage.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to thank our workers Sarah and Mickey for their dedication to the promotion of the Project since the beginning.

Is mise,

Helen O'Keeffe, Chairperson



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# the inish in greenwich project



**MICKEY KELLY from County Down** 



**SARAH KELLEHER from County Cork** 

## THE IRISH IN GREENWICH PROJECT — Where did it come from?

1984 was the Greater London Council's Anti-Racist Year and as a local initiative the Greenwich Anti-Racist Co-Ordinating Committee organised a public meeting entitled: 'A Day for the Irish in Greenwich' which aimed to highlight the problems Irish people in this country were facing. From this meeting several local Irish people formed a steering committee hoping to ensure that provision would be made for the social and cultural needs of the Irish community in Greenwich.

In 1985 this group succeeded in gaining funding from

the GLC to employ two workers and run an office. Then, with the abolition of the GLC, thankfully Greenwich Council picked up our funding.

The first Annual General Meeting of the Project was held in February '86 where members elected thirteen from their number to serve on the Management Committee. The Constitution of the Project was adopted at this AGM and clearly lays out the aims and objectives of the Project. The Workers are responsible to the Management Committee who meet regularly to discuss the progress and direction of the Project. This Committee will be re-elected annually at the Project's AGM.



# anti-inish racism An historical perspective

It is impossible to understand the position of Irish people in England without understanding the long historical relationship between Ireland and England which affects how Irish people are percieved in this country. The colonisation of Ireland, and suppression of the Irish culture and destruction of the Irish economy has led directly to anti-Irish racism and mass emigration to England.

#### **Anglo-Norman invasion**

The original Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland was sanctioned by the pope in order to bring civilisation to the Irish 'barbarians', despite the fact that Ireland was one of the major centres of learning in Europe. This 'civilised' invasion marked the beginning of the involvement of the English crown in Irish affairs. Although the Anglo-Norman lords gained control of large areas of Ireland, the power of the English

government was limited to a small area around Dublin known as the Pale (This is where the expression 'beyond the Pale' comes from). The Norman lords, though nominally subjects of the Crown, gradually became assimilated within Irish culture and traditions and in many parts of Ireland, notably Ulster, the Gaelic Chieftans continued to rule uninterrputed.



In 1399 the English government introduced a series of apartheid laws to try to prevent this assimilation; settlers were forbidden to use the Irish language, Irish dress or the Irish legal system. These laws were largely ignored and the Gaelic culture continued to flourish, indeed by 1500 the English administration in the Pale was paying tributes to Irish Chieftans in return for protection.

#### **Tudor Conquest**

The Tudors were the first English monarchs to attempt a systematic conquest of Ireland. After the break with the papacy, Henry the eighth declared himself king of Ireland and set about attempting to bring Ireland under English rule. The reformation of the English church had important consequences in Ireland as both the Gaelic Chieftans and Anglo-Norman lords (now known as the Old English) continued to adhere to catholicism. To the English government religion was more than a matter of personal belief, all catholics were regarded as disloyal, and Irish catholics doubly so. In other English colonies skin colour was the distinction used to separate natives from settlers but in Ireland, with the blurring of the differences between the Gaelic

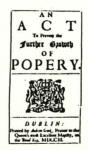
and Old English rulers, religion became the distinguishing factor.

During the reign of Elizabeth the first, more than half the money spent on foreign wars was spent on the conquest of Ireland, particularly to bring Ulster under English rule. The flight of the Ulster Chiefs in 1607 left the way open for a 'final solution' to Irish resistance in Ulster. The native Irish were forcibly cleared from the land and 'plantations' of loyal settlers introduced. The city and county of Derry were given to various London companies and renamed 'Londonderry'.

#### The curse of Cromwell

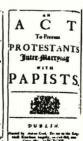
The English civil war allowed for a resurgence of the part of the native Irish, but Cromwell's victory over the monarchists in England enabled him to send a reorganised, battle hardened English Army to Ireland. Fueled by puritan zeal he set out to crush the native Irish unmercifully. In five years by a combination of war, famine, and transportation the population of Ireland was halved to just over 600,000. Over 100,000 Irish men, women and children were transported as slaves to the West Indies.

The 'Glorious revolution' of 1689 in England led the displaced King, James the second to attempt to use Ireland as a base to recover his crown from William of Orange. After several decisive defeats he fled Ireland for France and the Irish were left to face the consequences. A series of crippling laws were passed against the native Irish, known as the penal laws. The intention and effect of these laws was to remove all political and economic power from the native population. The English aristocracy were given huge tracts of land in Ireland and the vast majority of the Irish people became tenants at will beneath English landlords. Laws were also passed to prevent the development of Irish manufacturing industry or trade.









Despite continuing resistance on the part of peasant secret societies, and the abortive revolution of the United Irishmen in 1798, the wealth of Ireland was totally owned and controlled by the English government and English settlers in Ireland. The grinding poverty endured by the Irish people culminated in the Great famine of 1845-49 when one and a half million Irish people died of starvation and disease. Many Irish people fled the country packed like cattle on leaky coffin ships bound for the U.S.A. or England.

#### Mass emigration

This influx of cheap Irish labour into England made the Industrial revolution possible, just as cheap agricultural produce from Ireland could feed the new cities and raw materials from the other colonies supplied the factories. The largest export from Ireland became the Irish people.

The Irish arriving in Britain faced numberous difficulties; a lot of emigrants did not speak English, and virtually all arrived homeless and destitute. Most Irish emigrants were catholic and, in the wake of the Gordon riots catholics were unpopular in England. As if this were not enough, the Irish were held in contempt as an inferior race. Thomas Carlyle described the Irish in Britain as "... the sorest evil this country has to strive with." Even the great socialist Frederick Engles writing in his book 'Conditions of the English working classes." says of the Irish "The southern facile character of the Irishman, his crudity, which places him but little above the savage, his contempt for all humane enjoyments, in which his very crudeness makes him incapable of sharing, his filth and poverty all favour drunkeness." At the height of the British Empire all 'colonial' peoples were portraved as uncivilised savages, who, without Britannia's maternal concern would revert to utter degradation. The reality of ancient civilisations ruthlessly destroyed and countries drained of their wealth was ianored.

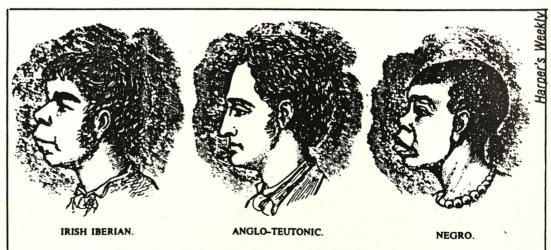
#### Anti-Irish racism

The modern face of this concept of racial superiority is still to be found in the Irish joke or Irish bull. These first became popular in England in the early eighteenth century and versions of "an Irish letter." or "a letter

from an Irish mother." which can still be found in many English shops, date from this time. The ongoing struggle for independence has also lead the Irish to be portrayed as violent and blood thirsty. These twin themes of anti-Irish racism still affect how Irish people are percieved in Britain today. A recent survey conducted in a multi-racial Nottingham school showed that of all racial groups the Irish, closely followed by Pakistanis, were attributed with the most negative stereotypes. In London the Irish live in poorer accommodation and are more dependent on private rental than an other ethnic group. In 1985 55,382 Irish people were stopped and questioned under the P.T.A. (Prevention of Terrorism Act) though only 15 were eventually charged. The experiences of the Birmingham six, the Maguire family and the Guildford four have led many Irish people to question the standard of justice which they might expect in a British court.

The reaction of many Irish people to this racism is to attempt to become invisible, if we keep our heads down maybe we'll be alright. The Irish people have played a major part in building this country, most of us have had little choice but to emigrate to earn a living and have continued to support the Irish economy by sending money home.

The Irish have much to be proud of and our culture and heritage can make a positive contribution to the cultural diversity of London today. One of the aims of the project is to promote racial harmony and we feel that this is best done not by ignoring problems or by pretending that all the different cultural and racial groups are the same, but by promoting mutual understanding and respect between Irish people and other groups in Greenwich.



The Iberians are believed to have been originally an African race, who thousands of years ago spread themselves through Spain over Western Europe. Their remains are found in the barrows, or burying places, in sundry parts of these countries. The skulls are of low, prognathous type. They came to Ireland, and mixed with the natives of the South and West, who themselves are supposed to have been of low type and descendants of savages of the Stone Age, who, in consequence of isolation from the rest of the world, had never been outcompeted in the healthy struggle of life, and thus made way, according to the laws of nature, for superior races.



THE IRISH FRANKENSTEIN.

1882

## social events

It may, at first sight, appear surprising that a Project whose main purpose is to tackle anti-Irish racism should, in the course of the past year, have put on such an extensive programme of social events.

This has not, as could be supposed, be the result of whimsy or a grand twiddling of the thumbs, but rather of a deliberate and co-ordinated policy of using such events to help focus attention on the Project and the issues it is tackling.

The fact is social events help bring people together — and at the very least our events have helped to bring together what is, in S.E. London, a fairly diffuse and isolated population of Irish people.



#### 1982

This is not to underestimate nor belie the value, in this respect, of the numerous events promoted by the local Catholic clubs. But however well these succeed in their purpose (and they do) they are still unable to cater for the whole range of interests that exist — especially in the context of the more traditional music and culture.

It is this very aspect that the Project believes is not only locally neglected but also is the very aspect that needs to be promoted and pursued. For it is through the continued use and enjoyment of this culture that our Irish identity is re-affirmed. Our history is understood, and the richness of our long heritage confirmed.

Such an understanding, we would contend, together with the motivating force of social gatherings and solid friendships, has the greatest potential for furthering



Session musicians in full swing at the Spanish Galleon pub

active involvement in the Project's activities and ambitions.

So, social events have been promoted and, on a number of occasions, simply supported. To get things off the ground, or to give a boost to morale or funds (as on occasions with the Irish women's group and the Greenwich Irish Pensioners Association); to develop potential and existing links (with the London Irish Arts Festival and the L.B.G. Leisure Services Department); to help overcome isolation and fear of minority sections of the Irish community (as with the event put on in conjuction with the Greenwich Lesbian and Gay Rights Group); to promote local talent (as in our now regular folk session evenings and our involvement of young local dancers in some of our past ceilis); and at times, but not least of all, simply to have a 'good crack'.

The nature of our events, and the venues, have been as varied as their more obvious purpose. The object has been to cater for as many interests as possible and to range the events throughout the borough, from the pub to the public hall. Thus there have been quiet sing songs in the 'snug' to crowded, lively folk sessions with what has appeared to be an unending stream of singers and players keen to continue into the late hours from the Ogham Gay Irish Theatre Group to the St. Colmeille's Ceili Band; from the Glen Dowan Ceili Dancers to an Irish women's theatre group, the Hairy Marys.

In the coming year we hope to continue and expand our efforts in this field and some of the events such as a music and dance festival in June are well onto the planning stages. With such a rich and varied culture to draw upon entertainment is an aspect of the Project which can only grow.

## irish women's group

For the first time ever 1986 saw the formation of an Irish Womens' Group in Greenwich. It began with a group of Irish women who got together hoping to promote social and cultural activities for Irish women in South East London who due to their geographical position alone are isolated from other Irish Womens' Groups in London.

At first is wasn't easy to decide which type of activity to promote as it was felt the needs of Irish born women and those of London born Irish women were very different. The former suffering mainly from isolation, loneliness and all the other traumas that emigration produces while London born Irish women needed to assert their identity and perhaps find support from other Irish women. Of course the basic common need was to have fun and enjoy ourselves as Irish women.

And so, the year began with this group organising fortnightly meetings in the Clockhouse Community Centre, Woolwich, both in the afternoons and in the evenings. It was hoped that the afteroon meetings could be for mothers and toddlers and the evenings may be suitable for working women but after several months

the lack of a consistant attendance by women meant that it became impossible to form a core group in this manner. We then decided that social events may attract more women.

The next couple of months saw a number of very successful events which varied from sing songs to Irish video shows to informal parties. One of the more interesting videos was on the Irish in Britain which was followed by a very informative discussion.

Irish women in Greenwich also took part in the Opportunities for Women Festival in Woolwich last May and is already planning events for this year's month long festival in May.

#### **LONDON IRISH WOMENS' CENTRE:**

The London Irish Womens' Centre opened early in 1986 and has acted as a support for all Irish Women throughout London. It is based in Stoke Newington Church St and already has organised several courses and classes including ceili dancing, music, literature and drama. It is also responsible for highlighting the needs and interests of Irish women in London. On a recent visit to Greenwich by the workers from the centre a very successful afternoon of films with cheese and wine was held. We are very grateful to the Centre for all the support and advice we have received throughout the past year.

## lopoop irish women's conference

A group of women from Greenwich attended the Second London Irish Women's Conference held in Islington in September 1985 where the main topic was Emigration. here for the first time Irish women from Greenwich realised just how active Irish women have been in London over the past few years. There was a variety of speakers and numerous workshops covering subjects such as: Irish in the media, Social services, the Church, Sport, music, Abortion, Housing, Lesbianism.

It is good to report that this year's Conference was held for the first time in South East London in the Albany Centre, Deptford on 14th February 87. Also for the first time Irish Women in Greenwich produced a report which was presented to the Conference by Sarah Kelleher who outlined the difficulties involved in setting up a women's group in S.E. London. One of the problems being that Greenwich is relatively isolated due to poor choice of transport and the natural barrier of the Thames which means Irish women in this areas are a long way from the more traditional 'Irish' area ie. Camden, Kilburn etc. The nearerst other Irish Women's group is the South London Irish Womens' Group which is based in Brixton.

It was also felt that Greenwich hadn't received the recent large influx of Irish immigrants and so was

lacking in enthusiastic young Irish born women who perhaps may have more need of an Irish womens' group than the longer established older women. But it was very comforting to find that most womens' groups who may have even better resources and were geogaphically well positioned were also having the same teething problems in setting up a group.

The evening entertainment was a welcome change with a variety of talent. Simply Now Theatre Group performed the one women play 'Only the Rivers Run Free'; the Sheelas — London's only all women Irish Ceili Band were of their usual high standard; Maebd KcKeown gave an excellent rendition on the harp; there was caberet singing from Jane Gilmore and blues singing from Johanne O'Brien. Perhaps in time to come Irish Women in Greenwich will be strong enough to organise a local Irish Womens' Conference where local issues can be dealt with in detail.

### eoucation

Education is a very broad term which could be said to cover much or even all the of the work the Project undertakes. Educating the Borough Council, Welfare Rights agencies and a variety of other bodies as to the needs of the Irish community; promoting Irish culture, literature and history and combating preducices against Irish people could all be seen in terms of education.

As many of these areas will be covered elsewhere in this Annual Report this section will look specifically at



Some of the many Irish books recently purchased by Greenwich Libraries

work undertaken by the Project in the field of formal education, that is to say with the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA), in schools and with Adult Education Institutes.

For the Project the priority is to ensure that elements of Irish culture and history are accessible to Irish people in Greenwich. As other groups such as Afro-Caribbeans and Asians are formally recognised by ILEA to be an ethnic minority, schools under ILEA's jurisdiction are obliged to include aspects of these cultures in their curriculum. As the Irish are not given the same recognition by ILEA there is currently no provision for our Irish children in schools in Greenwich. In an effort to redress this situation we lobbied the local ILEA members for support. Favourable responses were received from Mr. P. Willsman and Ms. K. Reilly from the Woolwich division and Mrs. D. Wood from the Greenwich division so hopefully the coming year may see this situation improve.

Together with Geoff Nutall, the multi-ethnic coordinator and Brian Keeney the author, the Project organised an in-service training course for teachers who might wish to look into aspects of Ireland in the classroom. It is hoped to follow up this with another course this year.

This year the Project worked closely with 'Fooled Again' Puppet Theatre in performing the Irish stories The Children of Lir and The Legend of Knock Manney Hill which was shown to various schools and youth groups in the Borough.

The Project was also involved in helping run a week of events in Manormead School, Plumstead last March. This was well received by both pupils and teachers and many aspects of Irish culture were explored including Irish dancing, singing and telling stories. We hope to visit other schools in the Borough also and to encourage them to actively promote Irish culture. A special thank-you to Ms. Mary McLoughlin for all her help in organising the events in Manormead.

In addition to this the Project supervised two pupils from Kidbrooke School who were on placement with the Project one day per week for three months last year. Also on placement was a student from the Youth and Community Work Certificate Course in Goldsmiths College who was interested in studying Irish culture and the Irish in Britain.

The Inner London Education Authority has a responsibility to ensure that the education they provide is relevant to all sections of the community. So far they have made some progress in providing provision for recognised ethinic minority groups within the school curriculum but despite the presence of hundreds of Irish parents and pupils in London's schools, little or nothing has been done to meet their needs. We will follow up the work which we have already carried out in this area next year and we will continue to press for an Irish perspective to be included in all fields of education.

### Libraries

Irish Exhibition at Greenwich Library

One of the objects of the Projects is to create a greater awareness of Irish culture, literature and history and public libraries are an obvious forum for this. In an effort to achieve this objective we felt it was necessary for Greenwich Libraries to improve their stock of Irish books. Through liaison with Paul Clarke the Readers' Advisor to the Public Libraries, the Project managed to influence the Libraries purchasing policy and Greenwich Libraries now stock a large and varied selection of new and old Irish books.

To publicise these new books an exhibition on various aspects of Ireland and Irish life was made. This exhibition together with books, records and tapes toured Woolwich, Plumstead, Greenwich and Charlton Libraries from October '86 to February '87. A booklet promoting both the Project and the exhibition was also produced.

The report from all the Libraries as to the success of this exhibition was excellent with most librarians saying the response from the public was outstanding. Hopefully this will encourage the libraries to regularly update and extend their stock of Irish books.

Throughout the past year the Project began it's own library based in the Office in Powis Street. To date we have purchased over one hundred books covering a variety of topics including fiction, history, music dancing, sport, language and children's books. These books are available for loan to all members and so far the response has been favourable. However, our limited resources cannot match those of the public library service and this will continue to be the main focus of our efforts. We encourage members to lobby their local

library if they are looking for particular books or records as it is their job to serve the needs of the Irish community as well as the greater community.

### írish pensioners' association

The Irish Pensioners' Association was formed in the Autumn of '85 and began with only half a dozen pensioners getting together with the aim of promoting Irish social and cultural activities for pensioners. Since then the group has been very active and it seems to be steadily growing week by week. No wonder when statistics show that the majority of Irish people in Greenwich are over the age of 45.

For several months now the group has been meeting in Charlton House, Charlton Village on the first and third Wednesday afternoon of the month from 2.00pm-4.00pm. There, a variety of games have been played from bingo to whist and a delicious selection of home-made baking is sampled. Very often a sing song is also held with music being played and those in the mood for dancing taking to the floor.

During the past year this group has organised several day trips, a memorable one being the day spent in Margate where everyone got very sunburnt. A very enjoyable trip to Tunbridge Wells was also held and several members attended afternoon tea parties in Camden Irish Centre. The trip of the year though must have been to the London Irish Festival held in July in Roundwood Park — it was so enjoyable no one wanted to go home!

The Group has also been involved with the London based Irish Pensioners' Action Group in trying to get free travel for Irish Pensioners when they visit Ireland.



Publicity poster made by the pensioners



A group of pensioners at the Christmas Ceili

Pensioners living in the Irish Republic already have free travel so IPAG are now campaigning to have this extended to Irish Pensioners living here. The campaign is still continuing and is at present lobbying the Irish Government to recognise the contribution Irish emigrants have made to the Irish economy throughout the years mainly through sending home money to relatives and the large amounts of money spent while holidaying in Ireland.

The first AGM of the I.P.A. was held on 4th February 1987 in Charlton House at 2.00pm. It proved to be very rewarding by the good attendance, the amount of business dealt with and the enjoyable social which followed. The meeting was chaired by Jackie Jolley from Lewisham Age Concern.

The meeting explained that the Irish Pensioners' Association and the Irish in Greenwich Project are two different groups with both having their own membership. It was decided to leave the Membership Fee to the IPA at  $\mathfrak{L}1.00$  for a year. The IPA agreed to affiliate to the Irish in Greenwich Project as a group thus entitling the group to information by post. This has cleared up some of the confusion regarding membership of the Pensioners' Association and the Project.

#### AIMS:

The aims of the I.P.A. were confirmed as follows: To bring together Irish Pensioners in S.E. London to promote the social and cultural awareness of Irish people who have become Pensioners. Irish people to mean: Irish by birth or by desent but any person sympathetic to the Irish dimension to be welcomed. The AGM elected their Committee of ten member which in turn elected its officers as follows:

Peter Quin	Chairperson		
Molly Fannon	Secretary		
Tom Power	Treasurer		
Brigid Whyte	Committee Member		
May Quin	"	"	
Mary Wilkin	"	"	
Eileen Gray	"	"	
Kathleen Foster	"	"	
Anne McDonagh	"	"	

### an pauchtán

Throughout the past year large quantities of publicity for a variety of events passed between the Project's office and the community. But it was felt and hoped that the newsletter, An Nuachtán would be the main voice of the Irish in Greenwich Project where opinions could be expressed, suggestions received and issues raised.

Both workers had limited experience in producing a newsletter and so immediately set about looking for advice in this area. With the help of Greenwich Resource Centre and one weeks visual arts training in Greenwich Mural Workshop both Mickey and Sarah began working on the first issue which was produced in time for Christmas '85.

Producing a newsletter can be a long drawn out process as initially articles have to be written, news items collated and events advertised. While a few members contributed a variety of articles from letters to poems it was mainly the workers who had the burden of compiling the articles and the actual printing of the newsletter. Having decided on the contents the next phase is to lay out a page in an attractive and comprehensible manner using artist's aids such as celtic designs or a variety of print to highlight headlines. This page is then transfered onto a stencil from which it is duplicated into the required number of copies. We usually produce approximately 400 copies per issue.



One of the first photographs to appear in An Nuachtán

Once all the pages have been laid out, stenciled and duplicated they then have to be gathered together to make up a completed newsletter, this can be done on a collator machine — the newsletter is then stapled and finally the first edition is ready. Nearly all our newsletters are posted out to members, community centres, libraries, community organisations and to other Irish groups in and around London. We also keep a small number for our Library in the Office.

The production of one issue of An Nuachtan would require both workers to work soley on the newsletter for at least a week but as there are also other items to be dealt with as well, the beginning to the end of the production line for one issue usually spans three to four weeks. It is hoped that in the coming year members may become involved with producing An Nauchtan as there

is always room for volunteers to help with either the writing of articles, printing, stapling and even sticking stamps on envelopes.

To date four issues of An Nuachtán have been produced all containing a wide variety of articles including poetry, songs, short stories, history pieces, music and of course the famed crossword. Both the Irish Pensioners' Group and the Womens' Group have regularly used the newsletter to advertised their activities. The Chrismas '86 edition saw photographs being printed for the first time with success, it is hoped with more advanced methods to improve the quality in future issues.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank those who have contributed in any way throughout the past year especially the workers in Greenwich Resource Centre for their continued help and advice in making the newsletter a success. We are sure An Nuachtan will be an even bigger voice for the Irish in Greenwich Project in 1987.

There was evidence to suggest that this measure was primarily directed towards Irish immigrants and Irish travellers. To highlight the situation the Project worked with the Social Security Advisory Forum and lodged a complaint with DHSS head office in Newcastle. Eventually after the annual summer increase of Irish immigrants rescinded the situation eased off but today the DHSS can still at a whim demand a passport for

accepted that Birth Certificates could be used as a

means of identification and immigrants found themsel-

ves unable to claim benefits until such time as thev

successfully applied and received an Irish passport or

had one sent over from Ireland. This often meant a wait

of up to and even over six weeks for benefit.

With the severe increase in emigration in Ireland the Project expects its welfare rights work to sharply increase in 1987 and it will continue to ensure that Irish people receive the benefits to which they are entitled.

## welfare rights work

The Project has provided an information giving, referral and advice service to Irish people in Greenwich who have come for help in the past year. Since the Project began it has become apparent that by far the biggest welfare problem is housing and the limited availability of accommodation either Local Authority or private.

While the Project does not advertise itself as an Advice Agency it does help any Irish person looking for help and where necesary will refer people to other Agencies which may be more suitably equipped to deal with specific issues.

During 1986 the Project dealt with the steady rise in the number of Irish emigrants arriving in S.E. London most of whom were looking for employment and accomodation and general information which would help them tackle the maze of DHSS rules and regulations.

Much work has been done establishing contacts with housing organisations including Greenwich Independent Housing Advice and Action Centre, H.Y.D.E. Housing Association, Thamesmead Housing Co-Op and the Housing Dept of the Council. Unfortunately the present shortage of London's housing stock has made the job of trying to help immigrants find a decent place in which to live a very difficult if not impossible task. We are painfully aware of the inadequacy of referring people to hostels throughout London.

Another issue which has highlighted especially in the summer of '86 was the DHSS' sudden decision to insist newly arrived immigrants be in possession of a valid passport as evidence of identity when registering to claim benefits. Previous to this it was generally

## our thanks to

identification.

London Borough of Greenwich and the now extinct Greater London Council for financial assistance.

The various Council officers and departments, particularly Community Affairs Section for all their help and advice.

Donal Dirrane of the Spanish Galleaon, Greenwich for his co-operation in helping us establish our music session, and also the musicians and singers who have given their free time to sing and play — Del, Fran, Kevin, Mark, Nick, Billy, Seamus, Eugene, Stéfán and others.

The Welfare Rights Unit, Greenwich Housing Rights and all other advice agencies who have guided us in the right direction on welfare issues.

Paul Clark from the Library Service; Larry Kavanagh who built shelves for our own library and Sean Kirby who helped us to purchase books and set up our library. Also Geoff Nutall for guidance in our educational pursuits.

The staff of Greenwich Council for Racial Equality, especially the receptionists.

The staffs of the Clockhouse, West Greenwich, Charlton and Glyndon Community Centres for their co-operation in helping us run our many socials and meetings.

The workers in Greenwich Mural Workshop and Greenwich Resource Centre for their encouragement in helping us to be creative with our publicity and also for their patience.

And finally our Management Committee for their dedication to the Project throughout the past year.



Just some of our session musicians

## management committee members

Chairperson	
Vice-Chairperson	
Treasurer	
Social Secretary	
Elected member	
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"	"
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## fanos ano finance

The Irish in Greenwich Project was first funded by the Greater London Council in August 1985 when a grant was received for two workers, capital expenditure and the running costs of an Office. This budget allowed the Management Committee to employ two workers and to purchase office furniture ie. desks, chairs, filing cabinet, typewriter, camera and taperecorder. The running costs covered the day to day expenditure of the organisation, such as telephone, rent of an office stationery etc.

Then as the abolition of the GLC in April '86 drew

nearer the future of the Project became very uncertain as Greenwich Council was not obliged to fund us. Eventually the Council did promise to fund us for another year, again for the salaries of two workers and running costs but not for any capital expenditure. We have to reapply for funding every year so we are never absolutely sure of the future of the Project.

In 1986 the Project applied for Urban Aid funding for £160,000 to purchase premises for an Irish Centre. Our application was selected by the Council's Community Affairs Sub-Committee to be one of ten applicants to go forward to the Department of the Environment for approval but unfortunately it was got turned down at this stage. Perhaps we will have better luck next time.

# irish in greenwich

## **INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT 1985/1986**

as audited by Borough Treasurers

	£	3
Income	2	20243.25
GLC Grant		2695.00
GLC Capital Grant LBG Anti Racist Year Video Grant		1076.50
Donations		25.50
Membership Fees		113.00
Wellbership rees	-	24155.25
	-	21100.20
Expenditure		
Salaries and Employers NIC		13694.11
Video Project		225.00
Rent, Telephone, Lighting		3190.00
Promotion		81.45
Postage		80.78
Travel		115.37
Audit Fee		15.00
Capital Equipment		800.25
Advertising		890.34
Events		
	662.00	
LESS INCOME	374.58	287.42
Stationary		74.85
Sundry		57.21
		19511.78
EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE		4643.47
Represented By:-		£
Cash at Bank of Ireland		2111.41
Cash ast T.S.B.		122.08
Cash on hand		67.50
GLC Capital Grant		2695.00
Overpaid Salaries		230.33
	٠.	5226.32
LESS UNDERPAID SALARIES		528.85
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#### aims and objectives

- (a) To promote the social and cultural awarenes of Irish people.
- (b) To combat discrimination, disadvantage and Anti-Irish racism.
- (c) To insure all policies and activities of the Project do not discriminate on the grounds of race, sex, sexual orientation, religion or disability.
- (d) To create a greater awareness of Irish culture, literature and history.
- (e) To carry out research into areas of need in the Greenwich Irish Community.
- (f) To work for a fair share of resources for the Irish in Greenwich.
- (g) To develop new resources and co-ordinate existing resources to meet the needs of the Irish community in Greenwich.
- (h) To establish or to secure the establishment of a Community Centre and to manage or co-ordinate with any appropriate statutory authority in maintenance and management of such a Centre for activities promoted by the Project and it's constituent bodies in furtherance of the objects of the Project.
- (i) The Project shall promote racial harmony and shall be non-party in politics and non-sectarian in religion.
- (j) The Project shall promote a policy of equal opportunities.

DO NOT REMOVE

ROGER CASEMENT TRISH CENTRE
131 ST. JOHN'S WAY
LC DON N19 3RQ
Te. phone: 01-281-3225/49/3