

íRISH

studies  centre

GUIDE TO THE CENTRE

AND ITS ACTIVITIES

FEBRUARY 1987

The Polytechnic
of North London



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studies centre

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EXECUTIVE BOARD

Michael Collins is Head of Student Affairs at PPL and a member of its Senior Management Team. A carpenter by trade, he has extensive experience in the building industry in Ireland and England. He embarked on a different career in 1978 taking a degree in Social Science and was elected President of South East Poly Students Union. He has worked in educational administration at many levels. His teaching experience is in Sociology, History and Trade Union Studies.

IRISH STUDIES CENTRE MANAGEMENT BOARD

This is made of the people whose biographical details are given on the following sheets. Executive Board Members, together with the workers, are responsible for the day to day running of the Centre: Additional members of the Management Board with overall responsibility are drawn from the staff of the Polytechnic and from representative members of the Irish Community.

John O'Connell is a senior lecturer in the Department of Sociology and Social Policy Studies. He was a founder member of the Harlequin Irish Association and the Irish Community Care Centre, as well as founding Chair of CARR, a housing charity for homeless and rootless Irish. He has chaired the committee Sub-Committee of the Federation of Irish Societies for the past three years, and is a member of DION, the Irish Government Advisory Board on the welfare needs of the Irish in Britain. He chaired the two G.I. conferences that generated the policies of that authority on Irish matters. He has campaigned actively for the repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, and for the rights of travelling people to be respected and honoured. In 1986, John O'Connell received the Irish Post Community Award for services to the community. He works as a Neighbourhood Officer for the London Borough of Hammersmith.

Diane Willcock is Director of Research and Development at PPL. Background in business studies, policy research and social development. In this latter area, a scholar of international research with a long list of publications. Her work has been supported by Duffry House, the Joseph Rowntree Memorial Trust, and others. Member of the Senior Management Team of the Polytechnic responsible for co-ordinating research and initiating new ventures, directed towards institutional goals. Her interest in Irish Studies derived from cultural, political and historical and response to extending educational opportunities to the whole country. Also Executive member of Association of Social Research Organisations member of Committee of Director's of Polytechnics, Research Institute.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Michael Collins is Head of Student Affairs at PNL, and a member of its Senior Management Team. A carpenter by trade, he has extensive experience in the Trade Union Movement both in Ireland and England. He embarked on a different career in 1978 taking a degree in Social Science, and was elected President of South Bank Poly Students Union. He has worked in educational administration at many levels. His teaching experience is in Sociology, History and Trade Union Studies. Michael is from Dublin and has lived in London for the past 11 years where he has been involved in many aspects of the Irish Community.

Gearoid O'Meachair is Consultant and Senior Research Fellow to the Centre. He is actively involved in Irish Community Affairs, especially on social policy issues. He was a founder member of the Haringey Irish Association and the Irish Community Care Centre, as well as founding Chair of CARA, a housing charity for homeless and rootless Irish. He has chaired the committee Sub-Committee of the Federation of Irish Societies for the past three years, and is a member of DION, the Irish Government Advisory Board on the welfare needs of the Irish in Britain. He chaired the two GLC conferences that pioneered the policies of that authority on Irish matters. He has campaigned actively for the repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, and for the rights of travelling people to be respected and honoured. In 1986, O'Meachair received the Irish Post Community Award for services to his community. He works as a Neighbourhood Officer for the London Borough of Islington.

Dianne Willcocks is Director of Research and Consultancy at PNL. Background in business studies, policy research and social gerontology - in this latter area, a scholar of international renown with a long list of publications. Her work has been supported by DHSS; Home Office; Joseph Rowntree Memorial Trust; and Guinness Trust. Member of the Senior Management Team of the Polytechnic; responsible for co-ordinating research and initiating new ventures, directed towards institutional goals. Her interest in Irish Studies derives from combined political and professional response to extending educational opportunities to the whole community. Also Executive member of Association Social Research Organisation; member of Committee of Director's of Polytechnics, Research Committee.

WORKERS AT THE IRISH STUDIES CENTRE

Dr. Alan Clinton is Research Fellow at the Centre. Born in Dublin, and educated there by Christian brothers, he graduated in modern history from Oxford University in 1965 and received a PhD from London University in 1973. He has published a number of works on trade union history including The Trade Union Rank and File (1977) and Post Office Workers: A Trade Union and Social History (1984). He has also published a number of reports and guides on library and information matters, including Printed Ephemera (1981). His recent research work topics have included health and safety at work which he did at Imperial College London and the London Hazards Centre. He has also worked at the Institute of Housing where he published a guide to housing statistics in 1986. He has taught history at London and Leeds Universities, and continues to do so for the Open University. He is active in numerous local bodies, including as governor of two schools, as a member of the Board of the Museum of London, and as Deputy Leader of the Council in the London Borough of Islington.

Mary J. Hickman is Researcher at the Centre. She was born in Liverpool of Irish parents, and is a graduate of Liverpool University. Having worked as a schoolteacher, she gained an MSc at the Polytechnic of the South Bank for a thesis on the presentation of Ireland in Britain school textbooks. She is currently completing a London University PhD thesis on the position and identity of the Irish in Britain with particular reference to Catholic education. She has written and lectured on these issues in Irish Studies in Britain, at Leicester conferences on Irish dimensions in British education, and elsewhere. She is involved in the construction and teaching of Irish studies courses at the Kilburn Polytechnic and other London colleges. Founder and manager of the Irish in Britain History Centre, and editor of its bibliography on the history of the Irish in Britain. A member of many other Irish organisations, she has also acted as advisor to the Greater London Council on the arts, and to the Inner London Education Authority on anti-racism in education.

MANAGEMENT BOARD MEMBERS FROM PNL (2)
MANAGEMENT BOARD MEMBERS FROM PNL (1)

Sandra Ashman, Acting Director of Access & Continuing Education (ACE) the PNL Centre responsible for opening up higher education opportunities to non-traditional students and promoting the Poly as an effective community resource. She helped to develop the Evening Degree Scheme, co-ordinated by ACE, which provides degree level study in a range of subjects for some 800 students from the North London community. She was instrumental in the setting up of the Women's Studies Unit, also in ACE, and in the development of Access and linked courses to PNL.

Dr. John Broad is a modern historian and archivist and Dean of the Faculty of Humanities of PNL. He has a particular interest in the application of new technology to methods of study and dissemination in the humanities.

Dr. Dick Bryant is principal lecturer in the Department of Geography, PNL, and has long-standing research interests in the landforms and recent geology of Ireland, particularly of Munster. He completed a doctoral thesis at the University of Reading on the glacial geology of Kerry and has published a number of papers on the subject. He has taken many student field parties to Ireland as well as supervising a number of student dissertations and research projects. He maintains close contact with the Geological Survey of Ireland and is a consultant referee to the National Board of Science and Technology in Dublin.

Kevin Fitzgerald joined the (former) North Western Polytechnic in 1969 and is now a Senior Lecturer in the Sociology Department of PNL. His areas of interest and teaching in the past have included Industrial sociology, Industrial Relations, Sociological Theory and the Philosophy of Social Sciences. In recent years he has taken an increasing interest in the topics of sport, leisure and recreation. Inner London Regional Secretary of the Lecturers' Union NATFHE, a member of its National Executive Committee and negotiator on the Burnham National Joint Committee.

MANAGEMENT BOARD MEMBERS FROM PNL (2)

Mike Hayes is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Sociology teaching courses on Trade Union Studies on both the full-time and part-time degrees in Sociology, Course Tutor for the part-time evening degree B.A Sociology, and Director of the Trade Union Studies Unit in the Faculty of Social Sciences. The unit has carried out research into trade unions in local government, women in SOGAT 82 and joint consultation in the T & GWU.

Dr. Paul Joyce is an industrial relations specialist who has taught in the Business School of the Polytechnic since 1977 where he has been involved in curriculum development aimed at more vocationally relevant courses. Has worked with colleagues at PNL at the Trade Union Research Unit and the Local Enterprise Research Unit. The primary focus of the last ten years of research has been on trade unionism, especially in the public sector. Working over the past three years with others on a study of industrial relations in the Irish Republic since 1945.

Dr. Alan O'Day a Senior Lecturer in History at PNL is American by origin and has lived in Britain for many years. A Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, he has held a number of teaching posts and research positions in Britain and West German universities, including Visiting Fellow at St. John's and Wolfson College, Oxford. Currently a member of the panel for the European Science Foundation study of ethnic minorities in modern Europe. Has done research in three areas of Irish Studies - nineteenth and twentieth century Irish nationalism; the Irish in Britain; and contemporary terrorism. Dr. O'Day's extensive publications include The English Face of Irish Nationalism (1977); Terrorism in Ireland (1984) and Parnell and the First Home Rule Episode (1986). He is recognised as one of the foremost experts on Irish affairs teaching in Britain.

MANAGEMENT BOARD MEMBERS

IRISH COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES (1)

Ms Ada Burns was born in Lisburn, County Antrim and educated there until attending the University of Kent where she obtained an Arts Degree. She has travelled widely in East Africa and South America and has been working in special needs housing since 1983. She is particularly concerned with the problems of the Irish single homeless, and is now Director of CARA, the Irish Homeless and Rootless project, whose headquarters are in Islington, not far from PNL. She has a special interest in the experience of migrants from Northern Ireland.

Ms Maria Duggan was born in Waterford in 1953 and joined the migration to Britain in 1959. Educated in London, she obtained various qualifications at the Polytechnics of the South Bank, North London and Middlesex. She began work for Social Services Department of the London Borough of Camden in 1980, and in 1984 was seconded to the Police Unit to research the problems of prostitution in the Kings Cross area. She is now Team Leader for the Social Services Team at the Arlington House Hotel in Camden Town. She has been active on a number of welfare-related issues as they effect the Irish community and chairs the Action Group for Irish Youth based at the Camden Irish Centre. She is currently working with other members of the Action Group to produce a book about the experience of migration. Maria has a daughter aged one year.

Sister Joan Kane was born in Castledermot, County Kildare and after education in Kildare and Carlow joined the Ursuline Order of nuns in 1958 in Sligo. She obtained a Bachelor of Science Degree at University College Dublin in 1969, and a postgraduate Diploma of Education in 1970. After working as a teacher in Ireland and in Kenya, she obtained a further qualification at Birmingham University in 1982, since when she has been involved in developing and running the Haringey Irish Community Care Centre. Amongst other activities on behalf of the Irish community, she is management secretary of CARA, a founder member of the Finsbury Park Community Trust and Secretary of the Haringey Travellers Support Group. She is also interested in cultural issues, and in the welfare of Irish women.

MANAGEMENT BOARD MEMBERS

IRISH COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES (2)

Mr Brendan MacLua was born in County Clare. He has been a journalist all his life and came to Britain in 1970 to be one of the founders and the first Editor of The Irish Post. He remains to this day Editor of the this widely-read and successful 'Voice of the Irish in Britain'.

Mr Paul Patrick was born in Belfast of a Catholic Mother and a Protestant Father. He migrated to Britain in 1957 and lived and attended schools in Leicester and Birmingham. He obtained qualifications in education from Balls Park College of Education in 1976 and from Pembroke College Cambridge in 1977. He has taught at schools in London since then and has been since 1986 Deputy Headteacher of St. Bernard's R.C. Secondary School in Wood Close London E2. He has been active in a number of Irish organisations including CARA, the Haringey Irish Association and the Federation of Irish Societies. He is particularly interested in the anti-racist and multi-cultural development of the school curriculum, with special reference to Irish identity, and in Adult Education provision. His activities in this field have included membership of ILEA's working group on education and the Irish community.

IRISH studies centre

IRISH STUDIES

ADULT EDUCATION COURSE

The Irish Studies Centre in conjunction with Islington Adult Education Institute has prepared an adult education course to commence in January, 1986.

The main aims of the course are to:

- establish and promote the teaching programme of the Irish Studies Centre
- establish institutional links between Islington A.E.I and the Irish Studies Centre
- inaugurate the specific provision that the Polytechnic in its contribution to community and access education provides for the Irish in North London
- provide that the theme of the course should be one that will be a significant component of the Centre's future teaching and research activities.

The course has been designed so that in its pedagogy, structure and content it is appropriate for a joint initiative between an adult education institute and an institution of higher education. It will therefore comprise two types of sessions:

- those that will feature the body of academic knowledge which exists on the subject; these sessions will more closely emulate the forms and procedures of teaching in higher education; however, the more participative form of adult education will be retained by the provision of substantial discussion time and of an open session at the end of the course
- those that will feature guest speakers who will speak about either their own research interests or areas of specialism in relation to Irish Community affairs; these sessions will be closer to the practices of community education courses.

Details of the arrangements for the course and the course outline are enclosed.

IRISH STUDIES AT THE POLYTECHNIC OF NORTH LONDON
AND ISLINGTON ADULT EDUCATION INSTITUTE

'IRISH MIGRATION TO BRITAIN'

The course will provide an overview of the history and contemporary experiences of Irish Migration to Britain. In particular it will examine the movement to and settlement of the Irish in London. A number of themes will run throughout the sessions: the relationship for migrants between where they come from and their experience in the country of destination; the economic, social and political contexts for the Irish in Britain; the issue of identity.

COURSE TUTOR: Mary J. Hickman,
Researcher,
Irish Studies Centre.

The course will run for 12 weeks, commencing on:

WEDNESDAY 7th January, 1987
at 7.00 p.m.

The Archway Branch of Islington A.E.I.
George Orwell School,
Holland Walk, (off Duncombe Road)
Elthorne Estate,
London N.19 3EU

Enrolment will take place on January 7th, 1987.

Course Fee: £1.00

Any other enquiries to:

Mary J. Hickman, Irish Studies Centre, Polytechnic of North London
Holloway Road, London N7 8DB.

TELEPHONE: 01-607-2789.

- WEEK 1. Enrolment and Reception to introduce the course.
- WEEK 2. Irish Migration to Britain in the nineteenth century - including settlement patterns and role within the labour force.
MARY J. HICKMAN.
- WEEK 3. Politics, Economics and Nationalism in nineteenth century Ireland
JIM O'HARA,
Lecturer, St. Mary's College, Strawberry Hill.
Vice-Chair, British Association for Irish Studies.
- WEEK 4. The Irish in Upper Holloway, 1850 - 1914.
PETER MURRAY,
Outreach Worker, Haringey Irish in Britain Representation Group.
- WEEK 5. The formation of Irish Communities in Britain.
MARY J. HICKMAN.
- WEEK 6. Irish womens experience of emigration.
MARY LENNON.
- WEEK 7. Developments in Ireland since 1921 - background to twentieth century migration.
ALAN CLINTON,
Research Fellow, Irish Studies Centre.
- WEEK 8. The sociology of Irish Communities since 1950's.
MARY J. HICKMAN.
- WEEK 9. The Irish and homelessness.
GEAROID O'MEACHAIR
Senior Research Fellow, Irish Studies Centre,
Chair, CARA, Irish Homeless and Rootless Project.
- WEEK 10. Education and the Irish Experience.
MARY J. HICKMAN.
- WEEK 11. Recent migration - the 1980's
FATHER BOBBY GILMORE
Irish Chaplaincy Scheme.
- WEEK 12. Open Session.

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EVENING DEGREE IN IRISH STUDIES

A degree course is planned to form part of the Polytechnic's unique Evening Degree Scheme.

EVENING DEGREE SCHEME:

Since 1979 the Polytechnic of North London has offered mature students the opportunity to study for a degree in the evenings over a period of five years.

The Evening Degree Scheme is an imaginative and adaptable approach to study. Its courses are designed to meet both the needs of Adult Students who wish to study for a degree, diploma or certificate, and of those who want to pursue their own interest in a subject at an advanced level, but without seeking qualifications.

The Polytechnic is one of few institutions in Britain which attempts to assess learning derived from prior experience. Students with appropriate experience and/or existing qualifications may be exempted from part of the course.

Students may choose from such subjects as English Studies, History, Geography, Applied Economics, Labour Studies, Classical Civilization, Law, Accounting, Sociology, European Literary Studies and Women's Studies.

IRISH STUDIES HALF DEGREE:

As a first step a half-degree in Irish Studies is being planned. It will form part of the combined studies programme of the Evening Degree Scheme. Students will be able to choose Irish Studies in combination with one of the subjects listed above.

Preparations are in progress for a 1988 start for the degree course. A proposal to plan the course has already received agreement in principle from the Evening Degree Committee of the Polytechnic. A cross-faculty working-party has been established to begin the task of course development.

The Irish Studies Centre's aims are to increase the understanding and appreciation of all aspects of Irish History and contemporary experience and of the unique relationship which exists between Britain and Ireland. In particular, the Centre aims to highlight the Irish contribution to all aspects of British economic, cultural, political and social life.

The degree course, which will be the first of its kind in Britain, represents a significant educational development towards realising these aims.

MARY J. HICKMAN
26th NOVEMBER, 1986.

Irish studies centre

RESEARCH

One of the basic functions of the Studies Centre will be to develop new knowledge of Irish issues, with special reference to the Irish community in Britain.

For many years the history and character of the Irish community in Britain was not thought to merit serious study. It was only in 1963 that J.A. Jackson's pioneering study of The Irish in Britain appeared, and for a long time this was alone in the field.

During the 1970's the Irish community began to take a proper interest in its history. It was left to the American scholar L.H. Lees to publish a number of studies including her book Exiles of Erin : Irish Migrants in Victorian London (1979). Since then however a proper effort has begun to look at the history of the Irish community. The Irish in Britain History Group was set up in 1980 and established a Centre in Kilburn in 1984. As a result archives are being collected, lectures organised and last year an excellent Bibliography was produced. Many further developments in the serious study of the history of Irish migration are indicated in the collection of papers published last year by Croom Helm in The Irish in Victorian London edited by Roger Swift and Sheridan Gilley.

However there are still many gaps in our knowledge and understanding of the history of Irish migration, of the community it has produced and of its role in Britain. We need to know much more about this history, most especially during the twentieth century. The Centre will aim to develop an interest in the issues through its teaching and other educational activities, and will hope to stimulate new research and publication.

The knowledge of the nature and structure of the contemporary Irish community has been even more limited. Since 1981 the invaluable journal Irish Studies in Britain now edited by Ivan Gibbons and Hilda McCafferty has stimulated interest. The Soar Valley Irish Studies Conferences since 1984 has developed the discussion. Examples of detailed work have begun to emerge. For example Michael Maguire at the Irish in Islington project has done some general analysis of housing and this was published as part of the Policy Report on the Irish Community produced by the Greater London Council in 1984. Noel Clarke at CARA is looking at homelessness. There is a great need to develop this work to look seriously at social problems and more generally further studies are needed on housing and employment patterns, education, cultural activities and many other topics. The Centre will aim to encourage research in these fields and is already examining the means of doing so through seminars, lectures and published papers.

Although the initial research specialisation of the Centre will be on the Irish community in Britain, it is hoped that as students begin to work on various associated courses they will look at all topics of Irish interest including the history, culture and social structure of Ireland itself, migration elsewhere in the world, and Irish achievement more generally.

ALAN CLINTON
26th NOVEMBER, 1986.

IRISH IN BRITAIN RESEARCH GROUP

This body has now been established following an inaugural meeting held at the Polytechnic of North London on 19th January 1987.

The meeting was attended by twenty people who expressed an interest in a wide range of issues in connection with the Irish community including migration patterns, education and the position of youth and women.

In an introductory paper, Dr Alan Clinton from the Irish Studies Centre set out a series of issues about the nature and development of the Irish community in Britain which he felt merited serious study. He said that patterns of migration were little known, especially for the twentieth century, and most particularly for the past thirty years. There was only limited knowledge about such matters as employment and demographic patterns, even though the data already existed for them to be studied. Although some work was being done on housing issues, on education and on problems faced by young people and by women, much of it was not widely enough known or even published. Religious and cultural issues also needed to be addressed. He hoped that the Research Group could help to develop knowledge and understanding of the Irish community in Britain, through seminars, publications, and other means.

The Group discussed a range of possible research topics, and the extent to which the work needed to be directed to policy aims. It was generally agreed that we should aim to serve the needs of the Irish community by providing a proper and objective study of its problems -and of its achievements. A preliminary series of papers and meetings were agreed as follows.

5 p.m. on Monday 16th February 1987

Chris Bennett on Housing of the London Irish Community

5 p.m. on Monday 16th March 1987

Noel Clarke on Homelessness and the Irish Community in London Boroughs

5p.m. on Monday 13th April 1987

Ethel Corduff on the Irish Born in Nursing

All of these meetings will be held in the Committee Room on the Third Floor of the Holloway Road Building of the Polytechnic of North London.

For Further details contact:

Dr Alan Clinton Research Fellow at the Irish Studies Centre, Polytechnic of North London (Room 01), Holloway Road, London N7 8DB, 01-607 2789.

A CHARTER FOR DEVELOPING IRISH STUDIES IN BRITAIN.

1. The Polytechnic of North London is committed to the introduction and implementation of equal opportunities policy. It aims to be a Polytechnic for the whole community. It thereby offers a powerful base for a study centre which is non-racist, non-sexist and non-sectarian - giving due recognition to different political and religious traditions in the Irish context.

2. The primary aim of the Irish Studies Centre is to increase knowledge and understanding of matters relating to Ireland, with special reference to the Irish community in Britain. This will be achieved by initiating and developing research and teaching in the field particularly by building links with the Irish Community. A further aim will be to develop a Resource Centre which can provide and make accessible information and expertise in pursuing Irish Studies.

3. The Irish Studies Centre recognises that any group which becomes involved with study of the Irish in Britain is operating in an area which is sensitive and easily open to mis-interpretation. As a result, teachers and researchers have traditionally been cautious in seeking to explore the potential of Irish Studies. We understand these difficulties. However, the Centre is committed to the development of an academic practice which protects the freedom and independence of the Centre, which enables it to operate effectively irrespective of external pressures.

4. The work of the Centre will be determined by a representative and responsible Management Board. The work of the Centre will be built around the spirit of enquiry and a rigorous approach to investigative procedures, leading to the production of scholarly publications. The centre will aim to provide a voice for Irish people in London, on cultural and socio-economic issues. This will act as a legitimising mechanism for a community which may not always achieve adequate representation in key policy arena. The Centre will vigorously defend those who pursue this Programme of activities - as workers in the Centre or as associates of the work. It will not be the task of the Centre to take any specific view on political, religious or other issues. On the contrary

this will be to begin some partial and short-term projects in association with community groups and others. Two possible examples might be a new look at information that can be derived from the 1981 census on general demographic trends and specific issues such as housing. Another may be to review recent migration studies in the light of their relevance to a study of the Irish community.

A further step in collaboration with these already working at the Polytechnic will be to work with those already interested in developing such research. The aim will be to involve the community and to pitch work at a number of different levels. Ultimately, it will be essential to think in terms of a major research project on the Irish in London. This and other longer pieces of work will require secure funding.

8. RESOURCE CENTRE:

As the research and teaching at the Centre begin to develop it will become possible to accumulate resources of value to those with interests in the field

- contacts will need to be made with significant people and institutions who will be able to help, such as the Irish in Britain History Centre;
- it will be vital to develop expertise within the ability to direct and to discuss information about Irish Studies and the Irish community;
- books, pamphlets, audio equipment and other relevant materials should be collected.

The role of the resource centre will be to address unmet information needs from different community groups and statutory authorities about the Irish community.

9. This programme has been designed to encourage regular structured links with appropriate external bodies through which the community relevance and scholarly excellence of the Irish Studies will be assured.