

THE COUNCIL OF THE IRISH CENTRE

51/52 CAMDEN SQUARE? LONDON. N.W. 1.

FOURTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT

For the year ending
31st December 1968

1968 saw the completion of the Douglas Hyde Lounge. With its completion another chapter was ended in the history of the Irish Centre. Our Social amenities have been greatly increased by the completion of this Lounge. This however, is only one side of the Irish Centre. As you are well aware, our Welfare facilities, especially our Hostels, could be improved, and as the years pass on will have to be improved, remodelled or rebuilt. This, the primary end of our work and efforts, will have to receive our consideration and attention in the immediate years.

1. HOSTELS (Numbers accommodated during the year)
- (a) MEN (1) at 51/52 Camden Square 570
(2) at 57 Tollington Park 290
Total 860 (768 in 1967)
- (b) GIRLS at 29/31 Hornsey Lane Gardens 382

TOTAL (both sexes) kept in 1968.... 1,242.

This brings the total numbers accommodated since 1955 to 17,527⁶
(9,261 boys and 8,366 girls).

2. SUMMARY OF THE YEAR REPORT

The Welfare office helped 2,010 applicants in 1968 as against 1,568 the previous year. This represents an overall increase of 27%.

The following is a break-down of figures:-

NEW EMIGRANTS	OTHERS	TOTAL
MALE 911	611	1,522.
FEMALE 290	95	385.
FAMILIES 19	18	37.
TOTAL 1,220	724	1,944.
	Other Nationalities	66.
	GRAND TOTAL	2,010.

The increase in numbers again testifies to the urgent need for more effective, preventative and/or preparatory policies in Ireland aimed at the potential emigrant. Too often, the Welfare Office finds itself dealing with newly arrived emigrants who have come to Britain totally unprepared and ill-equipped for the task of finding themselves either jobs or accommodation.

NOTES.

- (1) 73% of all the women interviewed were under 25.
71% of the men were under 25.
- (2) The figures for the - 45 and over age groups - are persistently rising. As more than half of these are married, it has to be assumed that their emigration has to some extent disrupted family life.
- (3) 37 families sought assistance during the year, 17 more than in the previous year. In nearly all cases young children are involved, and many show the ill-effects inevitably and unfortunately associated with the homeless.
- (4) The number of male psychiatric cases increased from 67 to 133.
- (5) Among the chief inquiries handled by the office during the year were:-

ACCOMODATION	-	1,594	FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	-	915
EMPLOYMENT	-	1,024	PSYCHIATRIC CASES	-	163
REPATRIATION	-	69	UNMARRIED MOTHERS	-	63

Our sincere thanks for the help and co-operation that the office of the Marian Employment Agency has offered to the Welfare Office.

We owe a debt of gratitude to the Welfare services of the London Borough of Camden, to the Irish Embassy, Ministry of Social Security, Ministry of Labour, Crusade of Rescue, Legion of Mary, the Irish Emigrant Chaplains and numerous other organisations for their willing and understanding help.

The Administrative Committee record their appreciation of the work done by Dr. L. Morton in the field of Welfare.

N.B. The figures given for the year do not include the cases dealt with by post and telephone, nor do they include those dealt with by the Chaplains.

3. IRISH CENTRE CLUB

A debt of gratitude is due to the Club Committee and their helpers for their devoted work during the year.

- (i) Parish Reunions organised by priests from Ireland continue to grow from success to success.
- (ii) Bacon and Cabbage Dinners still enjoy their popularity. A special word of thanks is due to Sr. Rita and her helpers for the success of these functions.
- (iii) Bingo still plays a very large part in helping to meet our everyday expenses. During the last year, it has been played on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays. A special word of thanks is due to our Bingo Committee for their perseverance and hard work in making our Bingo sessions so successful.
- (iv) Once again the Old Age Pensioners had a very pleasant Christmas Party.
- (v) The Garden Fete was held this year at The Irish Centre, and to the many associations, organisations, and individuals we express our gratitude for its success.
- (vi) At last we have found a fitting setting for the John F. Kennedy portrait kindly donated to the Centre by the Clare Association. The portrait was unveiled by the Most Rev. D. Harty, Bishop of Killaloe. Our thanks are due to the Clare Association for the John Vaughan trophy which has been donated to us to commemorate his work for the Irish Centre. This trophy will be presented annually to the Association achieving the greatest results for the Centre.
- (vii) The Boys Brass Band has made steady progress. During 1969, the fruits of this venture should be made manifest.

4. FINANCE

The Accounts show that our liabilities have increased by £12,514 to £67,506, whilst our fixed assets have increased by £20,094 to £113,746.

It should be pointed out that 'fixed assets' represent capital expenditure to date, less depreciation, and bear no relation to the aggregate current market values of our properties.

In reviewing the reliability of our sources of revenue it will be noted that the total received during the year from covenants, appeals, collections and donations exceeded the overall deficit in revenue by £9,426.

Covenants:

Arthur Guinness	£850
M.J. Gleeson	£100
Slattery Foundation	£200
Miscellaneous	£ 43

1195

Church Appeals:

During the year, Appeals were made in the following churches:-

Nunhead; Southgate; Percy Road; Upper Holloway;
Quex Road; and Hendon.

Our sincere thanks are due to our Patrons for permission to make these appeals and to the Parish Priests of the above Parishes.

County Associations:

The following County Associations gave donations to the Centre during the year:-

Fermanagh Assoc; Monaghan Assoc; Clare Assoc;
Cork Assoc; Mayo Assoc; Wexford Assoc; Westmeath
Assoc; and Cavan Assoc.

Boroughs:

The following Boroughs gave donations during the year:-

Camden
Islington
Kensington
Barnet

Individual Donations:-

Cardinal Heenan	£1,000
N. F. A.	£ 800
Swinford Town Hall	£ 300
Abbey Homesteads	£ 250
Dr. Croke Ir. Soc.	£ 154
Liverpool Ir. Soc.	£ 145
F. Fitzpatrick - Clare	£ 100
Portsmouth Ir. Soc.	£ 100
Lavery Festival	£ 50
Brent Ir. Soc.	£ 33
F. Gilmartin	£ 33
Bishop Russell	£ 25
Kilkenny G.A.A.	£ 25

CONCLUSION

The Committee express their sincere thanks to our Patrons and particularly to Cardinal Heenan and to the many priests who have been so cooperative. To our many friends, helpers and benefactors; to the Council of Irish Counties; to the Gaelic Athletic Association, and the other Irish organisations who help us from their resources. To our Hon. Accountant Mr. P.J. Keegan and our Auditors, Messrs. C.F. Burton & Co., represented by Mr. T. Brennan, for their continued generous assistance. To the Sisters of the Holy Family, a special word of thanks for their devoted work which is given freely, efficiently and unstintingly. Lastly, a word of thanks is due to all our staff for their hard work and loyal service.