

THE COUNCIL OF THE IRISH CENTRE

51/52 Camden Square, London N.W.1.

FIFTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT

For the year  
ending  
31st Dec.1969.

The year 1969 commenced with the official opening of The Douglas Hyde Lounge. This was performed by His Excellency The Irish Ambassador, Mr. John Molloy, and the Lounge was blessed by His Lordship Bishop Patrick Casey V.G. The new Lounge has meant an increase in the activities on the social side of our establishment, which have been no less than 'feverish' in consequence. The continued success of this social project - for which we pay tribute to all concerned - is very encouraging. While fulfilling a very definite need in it's own right, and also in accordance with the terms of our Constitution to "provide amenities for social recreation" - this wonderful work is enabling us to carry out in a better manner, the primary end of all our efforts, namely our Welfare work.

In our Fourteenth Annual Report (Dec. 1968), it is recorded that our Hostel at 51/52 Camden Square would have to be "-improved, remodelled or rebuilt". 1969 has been a year of very close negotiations with the owners of the property adjacent to our present site, with a view to acquiring the property for a new Hostel. Our hopes are high of bringing these negotiations to a fruitful conclusion.

I. HOSTELS

(Numbers accommodated during the year)

(a) <u>MEN</u> :	(i) at 51/52 Camden Square	534
	(ii) at 57 Tollington Park	<u>160</u>
	Total -	<u>694</u>

(It should be noted that the Hostel at Tollington Park closed on 5th July 1969)

(b) <u>GIRLS</u> :	at 29/31 Hornsey Lane Gardens	332
(c) <u>CHILDREN</u> :		<u>4</u>
		<u>336</u>

TOTAL: (both sexes) kept in 1969 ... 1,030

This brings the total numbers accommodated since 1955 to .... 18,557  
(9,955 Boys and 8,720 Girls)

II. SUMMARY OF WELFARE REPORT

The Welfare Office interviewed 2,299 applicants in 1969. The total number of "Items of service rendered" was 3,535 as against 4,906 in 1968. The following is a break-down of the figures:-

IRISH EMIGRANTS			TOTAL
	First Visits	Second Visits	
MALE	1,260	556	1,816
FEMALE	296	76	372
FAMILIES	43	7	50
TOTAL	1,599	639	2,238
OTHER NATIONALITIES			61
TOTAL NO. OF INTERVIEWS			2,299

NOTES:

- (1) The most notable feature from the Welfare Report was the fact that 11% of the 'first-time emigrants' coming to our Office



were under 18. The age-bracket of this 11% tended to be fourteen, fifteen and sixteen years of age.

- (ii) There was a 7% increase over last year in the number of women over 21 arriving in London for the second or third time.
- (iii) The number of men over 45 (returning) increased by 7%.
- (iv) A total of 13% of those interviewed continued to return at regular intervals to the Welfare Department.
- (v) 9 Families arriving for the first time sought assistance.
- (vi) Compared to 1968 the number of '1st-time mentally ill' arrivals was down. However an increase was noted in 'return visits' of women suffering from mental illness.

Total Services Rendered:-

ACCOMMODATION	-	1,134	ORPHANS	-	7
EMPLOYMENT	-	790	MARRIAGE PROBLEMS	-	39
FINANCE	-	631	MENTAL DISORDERS	-	127
REPATRIATION	-	99	GENERAL WELFARE	-	661
EX-OFFENDERS	-	47			

GRAND TOTAL - 3,535

Our sincere thanks to the Marian Employment Agency for the help and co-operation that their Office has rendered to the Welfare Office.

We acknowledge our 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 continued good work done by Dr. L. Morton in the field of Welfare.

In addition to the recorded Welfare figures, the Chaplains dealt with some 1,500 inquiries

### III. IRISH CENTRE CLUB

To our 1969 Club Committee and their helpers, we express our appreciation and gratitude for their devoted work during the year.

- (i) Parish Reunions organised by priests from Ireland have increased in number and continue to be successful.
- (ii) A special word of thanks to Sr. Rita and her helpers for the work they put into the Bacon & Cabbage Dinners which remain as popular as ever.
- (iii) The revenue from Bingo plays a big part in helping to meet our every-day expenses. A special word of thanks goes to our Bingo Committee for their loyalty in attending three nights per week to ensure the successful running of the sessions.
- (iv) The 1969 Old Age Pensioners Christmas Party, attended by His Worship the Mayor of Camden, was in keeping with the high standard set in previous years.
- (v) To the many associations, organisations and individuals who united to make our 1969 Garden Fete, held at The Regent Rooms, a success, we express our gratitude.

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- (vi) The 'John Vaughan Memorial Trophy' donated by the Clare Association, is being presented to The Cavan Association for their direct donations to The Irish Centre during 1969.
- (vii) Our Ballad Sessions on Monday evenings are known throughout London for their enjoyment and success. To all concerned we express our sincere thanks. Every other Wednesday evening, lovers of traditional Irish music enjoy the "Comhaltas Ceoltori Eireann" Sessions.
- (viii) The Irish Centre Boys Brass Band has made remarkable progress. In the year under review they were honoured by the Mayor of Camden who invited them to act as Guard of Honour at his Civic Reception for the Lord Mayor of London.
- (ix) We gladly note an increase in Club membership, especially as we now feel that we have something of value to offer to our members.

Our 1969 Charity Walk proved a profitable if gruelling enterprise. A special word of gratitude to the Walkers, their Sponsors, the Organisers and Voluntary Workers all of whom combined to make the Walk such a wonderful success.

#### IV. FINANCE

The Accounts show that our liabilities have decreased by £9,931 to £57,575 whilst our fixed assets have decreased by £1,146 to £112,600.

It should be pointed out that 'fixed assets' represent capital expenditure to date, less depreciation, and bear no relation to the aggregate current market value 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, collections and donations exceeded the overall deficit in revenue by £10,328.

##### Covenants:

Arthur Guinness	£850
M.J. Gleeson	£100
Miscellaneous	£ 48

##### County Associations:

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

Cavan, Clare, Kilkenny, Galway, Offally, Kerry and Carlow Associations. Also the many Associations who helped at the Garden Fete by way of Stalls and Donations.

##### Boroughs:

The following Boroughs gave donations during the year:-

Camden	1964
Islington	1750
Kensington	100
Barnet	100

(1970 March 2000)



Individual Donations:

His Eminence Cardinal Heenan	£1018
Swinford Town Hall	250
Dr. Harty - Killaloe	200
His Eminence Cardinal Conway	100
Dr. Birch, Ossory	100
Portsmouth Irish Society	100
Watney Mann Ltd.	100
Ind Coope Ltd.	100
Toureen Parish	100
P.T.A.A. Dance Proceeds	85
Inagh Parish	78
Rev. Ormond	55
The Irish Club - Proceeds of Wine & Cheese Party	54
Rev. D. Gilmartin	50
O.S.A. Chaplains - Hammersmith	50
St. Patrick's Day B/Orders	416

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CONCLUSION

The Committee express their sincere thanks to our Patrons and particularly to Cardinal Heenan and to the many priests who have been so co-operative. To our many friends, helpers and benefactors; to the Council of Irish Counties; to the Gaelic Athletic Association; and to all the other Irish Organisations who help us from their resources. To 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. We say a very sincere thanks to all our voluntary workers, especially to our voluntary receptionists for their unstinted dedication and good work. To Mr. P.J. Keegan, our Hon. Accountant, for his invaluable assistance and devotion. Lastly, a word of thanks is due to all our staff for their hard work and loyal service.

It is only fitting that our 1969 Annual Report should pay tribute to Fr. Patrick Hackett O.M.I. December 1969 brought him to the end of a very hardworking and fruitful three years as the Centre's Director. There are no criteria by which we can gauge to any accurate degree the fruits of his work - it is sufficient to say they are legion, and gratefully, still with us. His contribution to The Irish Centre will only be fully realised in the years to come. Words cannot express our gratitude to Fr. Hackett.

In the same vein, the Committee welcome Fr. Liam Fanning O.M.I., as Director. We wish him well and assure him of our whole-hearted co-operation.