



Federation of Irish Societies Newsletter

September 2008

FIS exists to represent and develop our members and the Irish Community

FIS Fringe Meeting at Labour Party Conference



2008 The Irish in Britain: progress made and lessons for other minority communities

FIS organised a successful fringe event at the Labour Party conference in Manchester. The event *2008 The Irish in Britain: progress made and lessons for other communities* was chaired by Conor McGinn, and addressed by Cllr Sally Mulready, Chair of the Labour Party Irish Society, and Dr Mary Tilki, Chair of the Federation of Irish Societies, as well as Murad Qureshi, Member of the Greater London Assembly.

Mr Qureshi opened by noting that the commonality of experiences which existed between minority communities was an issue which was not emphasised enough. He commented that the Irish experience in Britain was a very pertinent one for other communities, particularly the Muslim community, in today's climate. He stated that the Irish understood the prejudices which surrounded a community over the issue of terrorism and said that important lessons could be learned from this.

Addressing the issue of remittances, Mr Qureshi stated it was a concern of all migrant communities and called for greater exposure of the impact these monies had on migrants' home countries.

Mr Qureshi also offered his support and assistance to Irish community organisations in continuing the relationship established with the Labour party in London, most notably through the work of former Mayor, Ken Livingstone.

Dr Mary Tilki outlined both the positive and negative experiences of the Irish Community in Britain in the eleven years since the publication of the CRE report *Discrimination and the Irish Community in Britain* in 1997. She noted that, while there had been some improvements, significant problems remained.

Firstly, she said, there were still problems with census data because census statistics remained problematic as the figures for the Irish community are aggregated into the overall white population group and, therefore, not properly analysed.

Secondly, she stated, there were still a considerable number of Irish people in the lowest socio-economic groups and that homelessness was still a major factor for the Irish community.

She also highlighted that the health of the Irish population in Britain remained poor, particularly in the area of mental health.

In conclusion Dr Tilki commented that the main lessons other minority groups should learn from the experiences of the Irish community in Britain were that issues of inequity and inequalities must be addressed.

In her contribution Sally Mulready addressed some of the positive achievements of the Irish community in the UK.

She also paid tribute to the Irish government, most particularly their work in the past decade, and their recognition of the significant impact on the Irish economy of remittances sent home by emigrants.

Picture: Murad Qureshi AM speaking at the FIS meeting with Dr Mary Tilki and Conor McGinn.

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Quiz Night, London

COUNCIL OF IRISH COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS LONDON



ARE HOSTING A QUIZ NIGHT

on

THURSDAY, 16TH OCTOBER 2008

at

**LONDON IRISH CENTRE, MURRAY STREET,
LONDON NW1 9XB**



***THE ALTERNATIVE QUIZ!!!
BATTLE OF THE BRAINS!!!***

Teams to be made up of minimum of 4
and maximum of 6 people

Entry fee per team will be £10 (ten pounds)

The quiz will commence between
8:30pm / 8:45pm

Cash prize for the winning team

Licensed bar, meet old and make new
friends, 'be there for the craic'

*To book your place for this exciting
event contact the following people:*

Quizmaster B. Aulsberry:- 0208 889-6579

Secretary M. Fitzsimons:- 0208 886-3967

This event is being organised by the
Council of Irish County Associations London

Éirim Mná Community Engagement: Report Launch

The Éirim Mná Community Engagement Team and Chris Munday, Executive Director - Care & Support of Midland Heart, will celebrate the launch of the Éirim Mná Community Engagement Project Report, a piece of research focusing on the Mental Health needs of Irish Women in Birmingham.

At the Old Library, Gibb St, Gibb Square,
Birmingham, West Midlands, B9 4AA

On Friday, 3rd October 2008,
12.00p.m. until 4.30p.m.

If you would like to attend, please email
michelle.bhalroo@midlandheart.org.uk
or phoneon 0121 622 1833.



St Michael's Irish Centre: October Programme



St Michael's

Irish Centre

6 Boundary Lane, West Derby Road, Liverpool, L6 5JG Tel: 0151 263 1808

Reg Charity No 1089059

FRIDAY 3RD OCTOBER CHRIS O'MALLEY & SAM PROCTOR

Two of the hottest tickets on the Irish traditional scene at the moment, Chris and Sam make a welcome return to Liverpool. Having gained a reputation as dynamic and entertaining players, they are in constant demand on the festival circuit, both here and abroad. On this occasion they are joined by bodhran-ace Dan Griffin from London and all the way from Killarney, Co Kerry, the superb Mike Galvin on guitar (Mike currently plays with the Frankie Gavin Band). As a special treat for St Michael's Irish Centre, the line up is completed by the very talented Geraldine Flannery on vocals. Geraldine also hails from Co Kerry. Add to the mix a good measure of lively banter on stage and you have all the ingredients for the makings of a mighty night.

TICKETS £3 ON SALE NOW

8.30PM

FRIDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER

TRADITIONAL MUSIC SESSION

8PM START

ALL MUSICIANS, SINGERS WELCOME

THURSDAY 2ND OCTOBER

ICCM AFTERNOON TEA DANCE

1PM - 3.30PM

SUNDAY 12TH OCTOBER

FOLK NIGHT

COMING SOON
JOHNNY ROCKS CEILI BAND
FROM SCOTLAND
TONY STEVENS SHOWBAND
FROM CO. CORK

NUACHT

St Michael's Irish Centre issue a monthly bulletin that is available via email. If you would like to receive the bulletin please email mmorrison@stmichaelsirishcentre.org.

The Leeds Gathering 2008: *A Celebration of Irish Arts and Culture*

A twelve day citywide celebration of Irish arts and culture kicks off in Leeds from the 6th to the 17th of November. Dozens of events including music sessions, literary, film and theatrical events and talks are planned to take place at venues across Leeds, bringing Ireland's finest artists to the city.

Organized by the Irish Arts Foundation, based in Leeds, events are designed to appeal to both those of an Irish background and people from the wider community with an interest in music and the arts. Rowena Harris, Development Officer, explains, "The idea is to provide a unique opportunity for the Irish community in Leeds to showcase their rich and vibrant cultural traditions. This year also sees an exciting development of the Gathering's and indeed Irish Arts Foundation's national remit: we are working in partnership with our colleagues at Liverpool Irish Festival and the Return to Camden Festival in London where the IAF are hosting various events. It is through this shared expertise that we can really raise the profile of Irish Arts on a national level".



'a unique opportunity for the Irish community in Leeds to showcase their rich and vibrant cultural traditions'

In addition to the ongoing support from DION, we are delighted this year to have received citywide support from Leeds City Council Area Management Teams. This has enabled us to organise these events across the city and expose the vibrancy of Irish arts to a whole range of new audiences.

Now in its fourth year, The Leeds Gathering features some of the most dynamic local, national and international performers and artistes in the world of Irish Arts. This year's festival is to be headlined by Frankie Gavin with Mike Galvin, Mary Coughlan, Dick Gaughan and Grada. These names represent some of the most established acts on the Irish Music circuit and they are complimented by a plethora of local and national arts practitioners throughout the festival.



The Irish are one of largest and longest established minority groups in the country. Every year more and more people find out that they have some level of Irish heritage, The Leeds Gathering is a powerful example of Irish people showcasing their culture at it's best – make sure you're a part of it!



For further information and a full programme of events (available early October) email the Irish Arts Foundation at row@irisharts.org.uk or visit the website

Garforth Community College Ceili Band Project



Garforth is a town situated beside the new A1/M1 link road ten miles to the east of Leeds at the northern most point of the former Yorkshire coalfield – the chances are you may not have heard about it... however, every year Garforth hosts an incredible community arts festival in July, for the size of the town and its population, it has to be one of the most impressive festivals in the country.

This year the Irish Arts Foundation (IAF) have teamed up with Garforth Community College to create a Ceili band involving the young people of the area. Under the musical guidance of IAF outreach workers Roddy Johnson and Kate Badcock, and Garforth Arts Festival Director Dave Evans, fifteen students from Garforth Community College took part in an extensive introductory workshop programme on Irish music between March and July.

Despite having no previous experience of playing traditional Irish music prior to the project the students gave an outstanding debut performance as part of 2008 Garforth Arts Festival. The newly formed Garforth Community College Ceili Band played their first concert at the local Miners Welfare Hall to a capacity crowd, many of whom had never heard live Irish music before. At the request of the students, their families and the local community the project is to continue throughout the current academic year!

The IAF are always delighted to engage in new partnerships like the one above. The tutors were surprised to note how many of the audience members came up to the band at the end of the performance to mention that their father/mother or even grandparents were from Ireland. Of course, many Irish people emigrated to this area in the last two hundred years to work in the mines. Projects like this ensure that their memory is not entirely forgotten.



Job Vacancies



Irish Traveller Movement in Britain

2 x Community Capacity Building Development Officer

Both positions will be based in London and cover North London & the Midlands and South London & South East England respectively. You will be building the capacity of third sector organisations and communities to engage more effectively and promote opportunities for active citizenship. Project Management experience is essential.

The aim of these posts is to strengthen and offer capacity building to Traveller communities and service providers to develop appropriate service provision to Traveller Communities. The project will employ a variety of agreed techniques to deliver a high quality service. The focus will be to develop skills, facilitate and support the capacity development of Traveller, Gypsy and Roma organizations and groups across London, the Midlands and South East England to enable them to fully participate in service delivery, community and policy development processes that affect their welfare

This is a 3 year fixed term contract funded by Capacity Builders Improving Reach Programme

Partnerships Development Officer

Based in London you will work at a proactive strategic level with Local Authorities, the statutory and community sector and Traveller communities to increase participation of communities to participate in decision making and planning processes and wider BAME forums. Strategic partnership development experience is essential.

The aim of this post is to work at a strategic level creating opportunities for Traveller communities to participate in decision making and planning processes and work towards their inclusion in local authority strategies i.e. community strategy and LAA. It is also to promote the development of Traveller focused interagency partnerships at borough and regional level in London. To make sure that Travellers are included in this process in meaningful way.

This is a 4 year fixed term contract funded by London Councils.

Part- time Office Administrator

Based in London you will provide administration support and office systems management to the ITMB team. You will have overall responsibility for ensuring that office systems, policy and procedures are developed and maintained to a high professional standard.

This is a fixed term contract subject to renewal.

- **Extensive travel is required for the development posts and a full drivers licence is desirable.**
- **Salaries for all posts are under review and will be based on experience**
- **Deadline for receipt of applications is 5pm, Friday October 10th, 2008**
- **Applications are particularly welcome from Irish Travellers, Gypsies and Roma**

Job description and documents available from the ITMB website: www.irishtraveller.org.uk. If you do not have access to the internet, please telephone 020 7607 2002

Job Vacancies



Safe Start Foundation

Employment • Training • Accommodation • Housing Advice

Safe Start Foundation

Mortgage Debt Advisor

£25 - 27,000 pa Wembley

100 PEOPLE PER DAY ARE LOSING THEIR HOMES - CAN YOU HELP?

We are seeking an experienced individual to establish a new Housing Debt Advisory Service. The successful applicant will provide effective and efficient welfare benefits and debt casework to financially excluded clients, with particular attention to prevention of Home Repossessions. The Advisor will advocate for the client where necessary by calculating, negotiating, drafting or writing letters, telephoning and negotiating with third parties as appropriate.

Applicants should have at least one year's experience in money advice casework and a sound understanding of the processes involved in dealing with debt cases.

Foyer Manager (Job Share)

£30 - 35,000 pa pro rata Cricklewood

Safe Start Foyer is a 24 bed project in Cricklewood, NW2. The Foyer offers holistic provision for homeless young people encompassing safe and affordable accommodation, guidance and support, and access to learning and work opportunities.

The Foyer Manager will support and manage our team of Support Workers and Tenants, ensuring regular supervision and appraisal targets are met. The Manager will develop and promote the service to external agencies, establish partnerships and regularly review and monitor new opportunities.

You must have managed a similar project and/or have experience in the field of housing/training/education/ etc

Fundraiser / Development Manager

£27 - 30,000 pa Wembley

We require an experienced professional who can develop new and innovative solutions to promote our work with some of the most disadvantaged members of our Community. The applicant will seek new funding opportunities and marketing our own fundraising functions such as the Annual Gala Ball.

Pa To Chief Executive

£18 - 20k pa Wembley

The successful applicant will provide efficient and confidential administrative support as Personal Assistant to the Chief Executive. Support will extend to some central services functions, and for ad hoc project work. You will have 12 months minimum experience of secretarial/administrative work.

For more information call Neil Watson on 020 8900 0001
or send your CV with a covering letter to neil@safestart.org.uk

Safe Start Foundation is an equal opportunities employer.

Safe Start receives funding from London Boroughs of Barnet, Brent and Richmond, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, The Irish Government and The Milly Apthorp Trust.

London Irish Women's Centre Celebrate 25 years



London
Irish
women's
centre

1983
celebrating
25 years
2008

A celebration of the history,
creativity and tenacity of
Irish women in London

a Conversation with
Nell McCafferty and others
Poetry Book Launch
Exhibition

Music from Bridget Concoran and An Oige
Crafts



Saturday
25th October
10 - 3.30

Toynbee Hall
28 Commercial St
Spitalfields
London
E1 6LS
(nr Liverpool St Station)

For further information contact
London Irish Women's Centre
020 7249 7318
info@liwc.co.uk www.liwc.co.uk

Refreshments
Disabled access
Creche - please book in advance
All welcome

Bodhran player image by
kind permission of
Gertrude Degenhardt
www.gertrude-degenhardt.de



Companies House No 2287034 Registered Charity No 1080966

Ronnie I hardly knew ya!

The 'Bard of Armagh' Tommy Makem died last year; 'there's no show like a Joe Show' Joe Dolan died just after Christmas; and now 'The voice of Dublin' Ronnie Drew has gone to join them. They each came to the fore in the 1960s when Ireland and the UK were embarking on a traditional folk music revival and, of course, the dancehall days.



Ronnie Drew in New York

I would not claim to have known Ronnie Drew but I was in the same room, bar actually, with him twice in my life. I was the barman on each occasion.

The first time was in the early seventies. I served Ronnie (he had a black beard then!) and the legendary Luke Kelly large brandies in the resident's lounge of the Anner Hotel in Thurles, Co. Tipperary. They were in town for a concert; they were not famous then, but quickly getting there.

The next, and last, time I served Ronnie was in the VIP lounge of the 'infamous' Galtymore in London in 1998. It was water! on that occasion. Ronnie was over to receive an award. That night I came from behind the bar as Ronnie went on stage and sang 'McAlpines' Fusiliers' to a hushed audience - the lyrics and story resonated with the London Irish audience. What was particularly poignant was the reference in the song to the 'Crown in Cricklewood' just '4 doors down' the Broadway.

A tribute to Ronnie Drew by Gerry Molumby

There have been many wonderful tributes to Ronnie, and his funeral on the RTE website drew the best of Irish musicians and storytellers to celebrate his life. He is buried in Greystones Co. Wicklow next to his beloved wife Deirdre who was his life long friend and died last year.

So, some biographical details on Ronnie: RIP Ronnie Drew: A legendary Irish folk singer and musician, he founded the Ronnie Drew Group, later to be known as The Dubliners, with Luke Kelly, Barney McKenna and Ciaran Bourke, in 1962. He was a member of The Dubliners from 1962 to 1974 and from 1979 to 1995. From 1995 on, he pursued a solo career.

Ronnie Drew recorded with many great artists, including Christy Moore, The Pogues, and Eleanor Shanley amongst others. His distinctive voice has been compared to a cement mixer and the sound of coke bottles being crushed under a door. His most successful recordings include *Seven Drunken Nights*, (*The Dubliners*), and, of course, *The Irish Rover* (with the Pogues).

In 2006 he underwent treatment for throat cancer. Ronnie was an iconic figure in Irish music. 'Ronnie I hardly knew ya' was Ronnie's last one man show which he toured the USA and Ireland with. There were few appearances in the UK, a pity now. The picture above of Ronnie sporting his cigar was taken outside an Irish bar after a performance of his show - I think it is Ronnie at his best, even down to the detail of the shamrock on the stem of the cigar.

Ronnie, you have had many plaudits, some before you died, especially the RTE Late Late Show tribute. For me, I just want to say Thank You. Maybe I'll serve you a drink another day! In another residents lounge!

Since we reported in December, the Midlands' Advice Workers Forum has continued to meet on a regular basis, usually every couple of months. Forum members have been taking it in turns to host the meeting. This has given an opportunity to experience different situations and locations and given workers the chance to develop a more effective network. So far, we have visited affiliates premises in Leicester, Sandwell, Coventry, and several in Birmingham. This has been very interesting as several affiliates have moved into new premises over the last year e.g. The Birmingham Irish Forum, CARA and IWIC have all moved recently. Leicester have a brand new building and Sandwell Irish Community Association (a new affiliate) have taken on premises for the first time.

We usually have a main topic for each meeting followed by an information sharing session. Topics over the last year have been varied:

- Gypsy and Traveller Housing Support: Mick Quiggley talked about the new service being provided by CARA Gypsy and Traveller Housing Support Team based in Birmingham.
- Choice Based Lettings: Tim Brown from De Montford University gave an overview of the scheme and how it has been implemented differently by different housing agencies in different locations.
- Benefits : Colin Smith, from the Disability and Carers Service informed us about the Disability Living Allowances, Attendance Allowances, and Carers Allowances.
- Mental Health Research: Michelle Bhalloo, Midland Heart /Focus Futures gave an overview of the findings from the research into the mental health of the Irish community in Birmingham.
- Health Screening for the Irish Community: Juanita Williams talked about the model being used by Sandwell Irish Community Association

FIS Midlands' Advice Workers Forum: Still On Tour



Feedback we have received

Advice workers said they found the meetings very useful in the following ways:

- "the amount of information given"*
- "the information sharing"*
- "it was made up of workers like myself"*
- "presentations"*
- "networking"*
- "learning about what other organisations are doing"*

At the last meeting which focused on the Health Screening model in Sandwell we asked workers What will you do in future as a result of this meeting? They replied:

- "use the knowledge of the range of other groups"*
- "continue to make more links with other organisations"*
- "possibly organise a health screening in a community event"*
- "make more contacts"*
- "improve health outreach work in my area"*

The next meeting

A main speaker will be arranged for the next meeting which will be on 3rd November 2008. More detailed information will be available on the FIS website nearer the time.

Please contact Helen White or John Hudson at the FIS Birmingham office if you would like to attend or for more information.

Health Screening: A Presentation by Sandwell Irish Community Association

Speaker: Juanita Williams, Irish Health Development Worker

The FIS Midlands Advice Worker's Forum was pleased to welcome SICA representatives, Juanita Williams and Chris Flood, to give a presentation about SICA's health screening model. Juanita said the model consists of a package of tests, together with lifestyle and other health related information. The tests included blood pressure, cholesterol, raised blood sugar (diabetes), height and weight, Body Mass Index (BMI), liver function and arterial stiffness and also Haemochromatosis.

Juanita said screening/assessment targeting the Irish community had taken place on 6 September 2008 in Bearwood.

Juanita spoke about the different aspects of the screening that needed to be considered when planning an event:

- promotion
- who would do the tests
- venue
- results
- research
- follow-up
- budget
- information displays and advice

Juanita said that SICA would like to work on health screening with Irish Traveller groups, but recognised there would be issues that would need to be addressed first.

SICA would like to share their health screening model with other areas such as Birmingham, Leicester and Coventry. There was a general discussion about rolling this out across wider areas, perhaps with different groups coming together.

There was a general discussion on how best to reach Irish beneficiaries in other areas and suggestions included using community locations which already have a lot of Irish users and perhaps going to Irish housing schemes as a focal point. It was mentioned that another ethnic group had been able to get lists of people from GPs to invite for screening, as the GP collected ethnicity data - it may be possible to obtain the same for Irish people.



Signing in



Being tested



Health literature on display

The Legends: England V Ireland October 9



ENGLAND V IRELAND
CRAVEN COTTAGE, FULHAM
THURSDAY OCTOBER 9TH 2008 7.45PM

Confirmed teams
at time of going to
print:

Ireland

Irwin, Kelly
(D.), Kernaghan,
Kinsella,
McGoldrick

England

Robson, Sharpe,
Merson, Parlour,
Walker,
Winterburn, Walsh,
Hodge, Woods.

Tickets from
Fulham Box Office
0870 442 1234

Adults £14
Students £8
OAP £8
Kids-A-Quid!

COMING TO THE COTTAGE!

THE LEGENDS: ENGLAND V REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

THURS. OCT. 9 2008 KO 7.45PM - CRAVEN COTTAGE, FULHAM

TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE FULHAM FC BOX OFFICE ON

0870 442 1234 (OPTION 1) OR WWW.FULHAMFC.COM/TICKETS

ADULTS £14. STUDENTS/OAPS £8. KIDS £1



FOR THE LATEST LEGENDS NEWS AND CONFIRMED LINE-UPS VISIT LEGENDSFOOTBALL.TV

FIS exists to represent and develop our members and the Irish community

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