



CRC e-Bulletin

The Bogside Artists



*Nobel Laureate John Hume with two of the artists, Kevin and Tom, during the launch of their book *The People's Gallery* at the studio.*

Tom Kelly had been working in public art since 1984 with the Outreach Program of The Orchard Gallery. He was a pioneer in the field, seeing in mural painting a valid and effective means towards peace and reconciliation. Tom's life-long friend Kevin Hasson and later, his brother William, joined him in mural making in 1993 after Tom had left The Orchard Gallery. They completed their first joint mural in August 1994 to commemorate The Battle of The Bogside. This painting, called The Petrol Bomber, has become a world icon. William was then and is now a practicing artist who had exhibited his work throughout Ireland from Dublin to Limerick and Belfast. For him, it was a natural transition to join the group. He had an honours degree in Fine Art from the NCAD Dublin. Kevin Hasson had lived in Germany and in the USA. Tom had travelled extensively in Europe. William had lived in the South of Ireland for four years and in England. This broad experience enabled them to see the Troubles in a broader context which is plainly evident in their work. They sought to universalise the story of their community and so link it to similar tragedies in the world. That is one reason why the murals strike such a strong chord with visitors from all over the world.

The People's Gallery is first and foremost a human document. It belongs to the human experience of struggle and survival above all. That is why you do not see paramilitaries in their work or any kind of nationalist insignia or emblems. They told it as it was for, in their view, the historical facts were far more important in their own right than any possible interpretation they could bring to them.

February 2010

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The Bogside Artists continued

All three were profoundly disenchanted with the gallery circuit and how it was run. All three had grown up in the Bogside and had witnessed the worst of the troubles in Derry. They agreed that it was necessary for the Bogsiders to take back their own story from the milling machine of the British media and to tell it in a way that uplifted, instructed and informed. So was born the project that was to become The People's Gallery, 12 murals stretching along one street in the Bogside that together constitute the most graphic chronicle of a period of civil conflict to be seen anywhere in the world.

The Bogside Artists continue with their cross-community work in the heart of The Bogside at their new studio/gallery situated at the very gateway of the Bogside in William Street. They have been doing this work for years. They have gone without wages for the privilege and have experienced antipathy from many quarters, some of them political, others commercial. But they have survived throughout it all and will continue to survive because they believe fervently in what they are doing and are fully aware of the enormous contribution their work makes to their community.

Their gallery of murals brings much needed revenue into the city from the tourist and hospitality sectors. It has uplifted what was once an area of dereliction and has provided cathartic release for many in the community who still remember the Troubles. It was officially opened in 2008 by Bishop Daly a long standing supporter of the artists as is John Hume whose career they commemorated in the very last mural they completed in the series. Just recently the celebrated playwright Brian Friel paid homage to their work in a special birthday presentation at the gallery. "The Bogside Artists are a phenomenon," said he "and their work phenomenal." Praise indeed!

It is a mighty task to undo centuries of bigoted indoctrination on both sides but it necessary work and worthy of the support of any right thinking individual. You can find The Bogside Artists any day of the week at their studio in the heart of The Bogside. It is a popular venue for tourists and visitors alike. There they give talks about their work, conduct their workshops and greet the very many visitors who travel from all over the world to see the famous murals and chat with the three men who envisioned and painted them.

On the 18th of January this year the Bogside Artists were awarded The 2010 'Artists of Achievement' – Joseph Beuys Demarco European Art Foundation Fellowship "...in recognition of their outstanding contribution to their community, growing international profile, and also in furthering the cause of peace and community relations in Northern Ireland."

For further information contact:

The Bogside Artists' Studio
7 Meenan Square, Bogside
Derry
BT48 9EX
Phone/Fax: 028 7137 3842

Northern Ireland Youth Assembly

The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission supports MLAs in their work and encourages the public to be more involved in the work of the Assembly. Young people are a priority in this work and the Commission are committed to establishing a Northern Ireland Youth Assembly.

Over the last year officials have held discussions and workshops to plan for a youth assembly. The launch of proposals on 26th January marked the beginning of a youth led development process.

A Youth Panel is being recruited to work with the Commission to develop policy proposals for the youth assembly. With the support of the Commission the Youth Panel will listen to the views of people from across Northern Ireland. They will consider what they have heard and work to decide on the shape and functions of the youth assembly. The Commission hope that this experience will be fun and challenging. It will help young people to gain experience and develop skills for the future. It is an opportunity for young people to make a real difference and secure a stronger voice in issues that concern them.

The Youth Panel will meet on residentials and meetings around Northern Ireland over the next year. It is anticipated that the youth assembly will first meet in autumn of 2011.

If you are aged 16-18 and want to have a greater say in issues that affect you, you should nominate yourself for the Youth Panel. If you work with young people or know a young person who may wish to contribute tell them about this initiative.

You can find information on the project at www.facebook.com/niyouthassembly or email: info@niyouthassembly.com

You can also phone: 028 9052 1833, textphone: 028 9053 1209

Experiences of The Troubles

The *Experiences of the Troubles* programme is a three stage cross-border reconciliation programme aimed at women from Mid Ulster, Derry/Londonderry, Lifford, Raphoe and Inishowen and is funded by the International Fund for Ireland, Community Bridges Programme, the Dept of Foreign Affairs Reconciliation Fund and Derry City Council's Community Relations Programme. The programme is facilitated by Jacqui Rooney and Elaine Devlin. Jacqui is a founder member of Inishowen Women's Information Network since June 2000. She worked full time voluntary with the group until January 2005 and then, took up a paid position, as full time coordinator of a programme called "A Time for Me" funded by the Dormant Accounts Fund. She has been involved with cross border work since 2002. She started working with Mid Ulster Women's Network in 2003 and has also been involved with numerous groups across the border including Windsor Women's Centre in Belfast and Derry Wellwomen. Elaine has worked with Mid Ulster Women's Network since 2003. The Network has 22 member groups from Dungannon – Rasharkin, including Cookstown and Magherafelt. Jacqui and Elaine helped set up and are members of [Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network](#)

The women received a little funding to hold a meeting of women in Waterfoot in 2003; it was clear from this meeting that there were many women affected by the Troubles in their areas and little or no provision for them. Rural women were/are

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Compiled and edited by Patricia O'Neill and Ellana Tomasso

Experiences of the Troubles continued

particularly isolated. The feedback from these women provided the bones of a programme which was put together by Jacqui, Elaine and Barbara Gibson a facilitator, in full consultation with the women at every stage.

There was much praise from Jacqui and Elaine for the original group who took the programme forward. They included a German woman who worked with Elaine for a while. She asked a lot of questions – questions no-one else in the group would ask and that led to much debate and conversation. They thought it would take 4 weeks with each of the groups in Inishowen and Magherfelt to explore things unilaterally to prepare them for meeting each other but found after a very short time the women were ready, or as Elaine says they were "...open for anything..." From listening to the women on this project Jacqui comments what struck her was "The resilience of women through the Troubles".

As with other projects the women had to work hard to obtain funding to keep the project going. Over the years they have sourced money from Farset, Cooperation Ireland, IFI, Derry City Council, Department of Foreign Affairs and most recently have applied for funding from SEUPB.

The programme has three stages

Stage 1: Looking at the individuals experiences of the Troubles in Northern Ireland
 Stage 2: Impact on the wider community
 Stage 3: Facilitating community programmes

One part of the programme on identity is called Facing the Truth. In this exercise groups are given a scant background of 4 individuals. e.g.

*You have been given the following information to match the pictures of three people
 Take some time with your partner(s) and fill out some of the missing details of their lives – use your imagination. What age are they? What might their surnames be? What do they do? How do they socialise? What family do they have? Are they happy with their lives? How do they celebrate their culture and traditions? What are their political affiliations, if any? What else can you add to their story?*

*Peter is a Catholic from Belfast
 Mary is a Protestant from L/Derry
 David is from Inishowen*

Another group gets the same introduction but slightly different information

*Peter is a Protestant from Raphoe
 Mary is a Catholic from Portadown
 Marianne is from Derry*

Another 2 groups get the following information

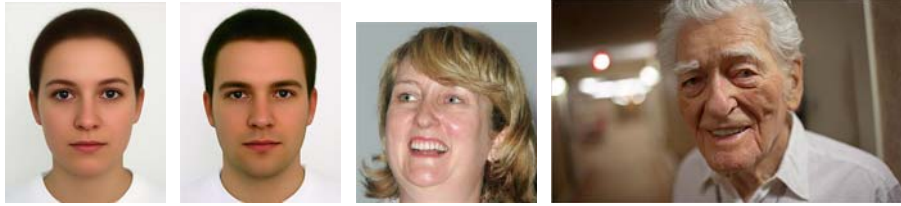
*Peter is a Catholic from Inishowen
 Mary is a Protestant from Portadown
 David is from Belfast*

*Peter is a Protestant from Inishowen
 Mary is a Catholic from Belfast
 Marianne is from Lifford*

If you would like to comment or submit an article for this bulletin or advertise a community relations event or publication, please contact Patricia at poneill@nicrc.org.uk or Ellana at info@nicrc.org.uk.

Experiences of the Troubles continued

They are also given 4 photographs



Because the groups are unaware they have been given different background information they are surprised by the feedback of the others.

In one session 2 out of 4 groups described Peter as a Catholic, 2 as a Protestant. All 4 described him as a retired professional of some kind in his 70s who played golf. All the groups had his surname as Doherty no matter where he came from.

As they explained, sectarianism hasn't gone away, in some areas it is worse. They are now concerned about the younger generation and how they are dealing with issues such as the marching season.

The *Experiences of the Troubles* is a very well structured comprehensive course which clearly takes into account the needs of the women it serves – this is part of its success but another part of that success comes from Jacqui and Elaine, the coordinators and facilitators of this programme with their commitment and good humour they provide a safe space for women to explore and learn from their own and others' experiences.

For more information and contact details about the programme visit www.womenworkingwelltogether.com

Patricia O'Neill, Communications Officer, CRC in conversation with Jacqui & Elaine.

Council Member Profile—Dr David Russell

David is Head of Communications and Education at the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and a Visiting Research Fellow at the School of Education, Queen's University Belfast. He has worked extensively in formulating and submitting to the Secretary of State, the Commission's advice on a Bill of Rights as mandated by the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement and most recently acted as an advisor to government on the working group tasked with reviewing the Department of Education, Community Relations Programme. He holds a BA and MA in Politics from Queen's University Belfast and a PhD from the University of York, Department of Politics, Post-War Reconstruction and Development Unit.

Community Relations Groups

We are currently updating our Community Relations Groups register – for groups already on the website could you check your details and let me know about any changes please? For those of you who would like to be included, contact me at poneill@nicrc.org.uk or phone Patricia O'Neill on 028 9022 7500.

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Policy Update—January 2010

During January Assembly members submitted a number of questions which were of particular relevance to community and good relations.

Below is an example of some of the issues raised:

OFMDFM

- Key issues raised in the recent consultation on the Victims and Survivors Service
- An update on the production of a single draft document for public consultation on Cohesion, Sharing and Integration strategy reactionary steps to budgetary pressures for 2010-2011
- An update on the distribution of funding for victims groups

DCAL

- The role of marching bands in promoting culture
A shared and better future and the role of loyalist bands
- What groups has the Department actively consulted in 2008 and 2009 in relation to the development of a strategy for the promotion of the Irish language
- To explain the delay in bringing forward a strategy to the Executive for enhancing and promoting the Irish language

DE

- Cost of sending literature in Irish to Protestant schools
- Why her Department sends emails written in Irish to Protestant schools
- Comparative figures for the last three academic years of pupils residing in the Shankill and New Lodge wards gaining 5 GCSEs at grades A-C
- An assessment of whether there is educational disadvantage among Protestant boys compared to the rest of the population

DHSSPS

- What assessment the Department has made of health inequalities in loyalist working class communities
- An update on the issues surrounding the removal from Enniskillen Fire Station of a picture commemorating the 1987 Remembrance Day bombing

DSD

- To detail the number of social housing new builds in (a) North Belfast; (b) West Belfast; and (c) Foyle in each of the last three years; (ii) to show these figures as a percentage of total new build social housing in NI; and (iii) for a breakdown of the people allocated these properties by religious denomination
- Religious background of the members of each Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership Board
- Does DSD have a strategy or policy framework for urban regeneration and community development; and if so, how the Minister intends to involve the community and voluntary sector in the implementation of this policy or strategy

Assembly Q & As can be view on the Assembly website www.niassembly.gov.uk

Hansard Debate

The following motion was debated on Monday 25th January 27, 2010
That this Assembly calls on the Minister for Employment and Learning to bring forward measures to ensure that more students from a Protestant background are encouraged to opt for universities in Northern Ireland as their first choice.

To access the debate follow the link below.

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/record/reports2009/100125.htm#6>

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Meeting between CRC and Committee for OFMDFM

On the 9th December 2009 the Chair of CRC Tony McCusker and Dr Duncan Morrow, CEO met with the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister.

To view the Hansard Report of the meeting follow the link below.

www.niassembly.gov.uk/record/committees2009/OFMDFM/091209_NICRC.htm

Consultation Hub

Welcome to CRC's Consultation Finder. This will help you find and participate in consultations that have community/good relations implications.

Open Consultations

*DSD – Housing Bill (Northern Ireland). **Comments due 26th February 2010.** For further information go to www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/consultations/consultation-housing-bill.htm

*NIO – A Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland – next steps. Comments due 1st March 2010.

For further information go to www.nio.gov.uk/consultation_paper_-_a_bill_of_rights_for_northern_ireland__next_steps.pdf

For response form

www.nio.gov.uk/

[consultation_response_form__a_bill_of_rights_for_northern_ireland__next_steps.doc](#)

News and Events

Why Do We Need Participatory Research?

Tuesday 16th March 2010, 10.00-16.00

National Children's Bureau, Albany House, 73-75 Great Victoria Street, Belfast, BT2 7AF

Key speaker: Dr Darren Sharpe: Practice Development Officer of the National Youth Agency and Director of the Young Researcher Network

Other speakers/organisers: Celine McStravick: Director NCB Northern Ireland

Gill Crouch: Participation Worker NCB Northern Ireland

Dirk Schubotz: YLT Director, ARK

NCB/ARK Young Researchers

After Darren's presentation, two parallel workshop sessions will be held which provide an opportunity to discuss the methodology and practice of working with young people as researchers. The workshops will be co-facilitated by young people who have worked as peer researchers themselves on recent ARK and NCB projects. The day will be concluded with a Panel Discussion of a Best Practice Guide on participatory research.

This **free** event (catering included!) is held within the *ESRC Festival of Social Science* week and is organised by ARK in conjunction with NCB Northern Ireland. It provides a good networking opportunity for people who have been involved in participatory research, but equally an ideal starting point for those who have an interest in such research and would like to learn more about participatory research practice and ethics of working with young people.

Places are limited! To book yours, please contact Dirk Schubotz at: (028) 9097 3947, or email: D.Schubotz@qub.ac.uk

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Events and News continued

Making the Link

Does your group find it difficult to raise issues of concern in your community with statutory agencies? Do you feel they do not listen? Are you worried that the Review of Public Administration (RPA) may make the situation worse?

Banbridge District Council are inviting representatives from your group to have your say at workshop entitled Making the Link at the Belmont Hotel on Thursday 18th February at 7.15pm.

To facilitate catering please can you contact Robert Stockley on 4066 0643 by Friday 12th February.

The Policing Programme at CAJ and The School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work, Queen's University Belfast

Seminar Programme - Spring Semester 2010
Contemporary Policing: Issues & Initiatives

2nd February

Policing the Rainbow: From Prohibition to Participation

9th February

In pursuit of Partnership: Policing, Communities and the North Belfast DPP

17th February

Policing and Working class Unionism

23rd February

Local Policing in South Belfast: Challenges and Opportunities

2nd March

Policing with the Community: A Police Perspective

9th March

Policing and the Experience of the Polish Community

16th March

Policing from a Republican Perspective

23rd March

Multiple Agency Policing in a University Setting

From 1.00pm-2.00pm—Admission if free and everyone is welcome.

The seminars will be held in the Queen's University, School of Sociology, Social Policy & Social Work, Seminar Room 1.037, First Floor, 6 College Park, Belfast

Further details can be obtained from Mick Beyers at CAJ: 9096 1122 or Michelle Butler, School of Sociology: 9097 3956

Silent Longing

Lithuanian art exhibition

11th February 2010 (Thursday)

- 27th February (Saturday)

Millenium Court Artas Centre,

William Street, Portadown,

BT62 3NX

If you would like to comment or submit an article for this bulletin or advertise a community relations event or publication, please contact Patricia at poneill@nicrc.org.uk or Ellana at info@nicrc.org.uk.

Events and News continued

For the first time in Portadown we are representing an art exhibition from Lithuanian's living and creating in Southern and Northern Ireland. This exhibition includes various art styles : oil painting, collage, experiments with paints, floristic compositions, felt and leather ware.

In all Lithuanian's artworks you can see reflections of their thoughts, experiences, meditations and empathies living far away from own country.

Open night - 11th February 7p.m. Entrance - free.

University of Ulster—Community Development

Would you like your Community Experience to lead to a University of Ulster Degree? If you have substantial experience in the community & voluntary sector, you could gain direct entry to the 2nd year of the part-time degree. As a first step, the University is offering experienced community sector practitioners and activists the opportunity to enrol on a short course:

Accreditation for Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) at Magee Campus.
Friday 29th January 2010 – 2nd April 2010: Cost £235 (Bursaries may be available).
This course provides you with:

1. The opportunity to convert community experience into University credits.
2. Guidance on building a portfolio of experience-based learning.
3. The prospect of direct entry into the second year of the degree programme*

*In September 2010 through successful completion of the course and submission of a portfolio (Portfolio support and accreditation costs £215).

For an application form and further details contact: Sharon Adams: 02890366680, email: sb.adams@ulster.ac.uk (Administrator) or Isy Hawthorne-Steele: 02890368546/02871375099, email: i.hawthorne@ulster.ac.uk or Rosemary Moreland: 02890368333, email: rj.moreland@ulster.ac.uk

Community Relations Week

Community Relations Week is taking place from 26 April to 1 May 2010.

As outlined in the previous issue of the E Bulletin (December/January 2009) this is an opportunity for voluntary and community groups and public sector bodies to showcase their good relations work and to highlight good practice or work in progress. While 'Good Relations and the Development of A Shared Society' remains the broad theme for Community Relations Week this year it is hoped to highlight in particular the need to engage young people, the next generation, in building a society free from segregation, sectarianism and racism. As part of the Week CRC will be holding a Policy Conference (details, including time and venue, to be announced later).

The Community Relations Council invites organisations in the voluntary and community sector and public sector institutions to organise an appropriate event or activity that might be included in the Community Relations Week Programme. An entry form is available from—http://www.community-relations.org.uk/fs/doc/ebulletin/Brochure_Form_Community_Relations_Week_2010.doc

This should be completed and returned to the PR contact cited in the entry form or to CRC by **1 MARCH** to enable inclusion in the printed programme.

Voluntary and community groups seeking grant support for a CR Week event should contact Paul Jordan at CRC or apply through the CR/CD Grant Scheme (available from CRC website www.nicrc.org.uk).

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Events and News Continued

Note that provisional event entries should be made by 1 March even though grant decisions cannot be made until after 1 April.

If you wish to discuss your ideas for a CR Week event contact Ray Mullan (rmullan@nicrc.org.uk) or for funding enquiries Paul Jordan (pjordan@nicrc.org.uk), Judith Hamilton (jhamilton@nicrc.org.uk) or Roisin Montague (rmontague@nicrc.org.uk)

Lenten Day of Reflection

Date: Feb 20th 2010
Time: 2.00 – 6.00pm
Title: OUTRAGEOUS HOPE
Facilitator: Rev Ruth Patterson

All Welcome
This event is free – please contact Restoration House
office@restorationministries.co.uk
02890621867.

Launch of 'The Lost Glove' Project

The Lost Glove is a creative project involving nine members from the WAVE Centre in Ballymoney and was launched recently by Commissioner Michael Nesbitt. The aim of this project was to help individuals to identify the advantages of storytelling using the medium of a glove and at the same time creating a safe environment, in order for them to share their own personal stories of trauma and bereavement.

The storytelling process can be a very powerful therapeutic tool in enabling individuals to work through their past and can give confidence and a sense of acknowledgement of the different traumas individuals have faced.

The reason for choosing the glove was significant because our hands are the part of us that reach out to the people we love, drawing them close to us. Our hands are what we use to carry out our everyday work to provide for our families. And our hands need to embrace the past and find ways to create a new future.

We all aspire to a brighter future, and WAVE has a strong role to play in providing support to those who have suffered so much during the 'Troubles' from all sides of our community.

We are privileged that individuals have chosen to share their story with us and we hope this publication will serve as a lasting acknowledgement of their journey as we all work towards greater understanding and a shared future.

For further information please contact

Wave Trauma Centre
13 Castlecroft
Main Street
Ballymoney
Co Antrim

If you would like to comment or submit an article for this bulletin or advertise a community relations event or publication, please contact Patricia at poneill@nicrc.org.uk or Ellana at info@nicrc.org.uk.

Events and News continued

Victims and Survivors Forum

Victims and Survivors Forum meeting will take place in Belfast on Thursday 25 February—this is a closed meeting. For more information on the Forum click the link www.cvsni.org

Childhood in Transition: Experiencing marginalisation and conflict in Northern Ireland

This report, based on the voices of children and young people, offers a stark alternative to the notion that Northern Ireland is a post-conflict society which safeguards children's rights.

High levels of poverty and the legacy of the conflict in six communities across [Northern Ireland](#) have been highlighted in a study by the Childhood, Transition and Social Justice Initiative at Queen's, in partnership with Save the Children and The Prince's Trust.

The voices of the children, young people and community representatives who took part in the study provide a stark alternative to over-optimistic claims about living in a 'post-conflict' society that safeguards children's rights.

In their families, schools and wider communities, children and young people are still dealing with the effects of trauma, bereavement, parental imprisonment and community-based punishments.

To download the report visit www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/docs/Childhood_in_Transition.pdf

Foundation Training in Mediation

Aim

This course introduces a basic mediation process for use in disputes between two people. Through discussion, teaching and skills practice, participants develop their ability to facilitate mediation effectively and to understand basic factors which impact on the mediation process. It is suitable for community workers, individuals with HR responsibilities, teachers, social workers, development workers, supervisors, those who interface with the public, line managers in the workplace, clergy and church workers. This course is offered to those who have completed Handling Life's Conflicts or equivalent.

Course Outline

- * What mediation is/how it differs from other approaches to managing or resolving conflicts
- * The types and functions of mediation
- * The formal mediation process and the skills required in using this method
- * Conflict analysis tools

Accreditation

- * Northern Ireland Open College Network Level 2 (6 credits)
- * Mediation Northern Ireland Certificate in Mediation

Duration

This course is available over six days. To receive OCN accreditation at Level Two, participants will engage in skills practice and complete a learning portfolio.

Open Access 2010

Dates & Locations

February 10th, 11th, 18th, 25th & March 4th, 11th

Belfast (Groundwork NI)

Price: £795 (including course materials, accreditation, lunch and refreshments)

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Events and News continued

For further information contact:

Rob Colwell
Mediation Northern Ireland
83 University Street
Belfast
BT7 1HP

Tel: 028 9043 8614
email: robert@mediationnorthernireland.org
website: www.mediationnorthernireland.org

CRC Annual Review

The Community Relations Council's Annual Review for 2008-09 was launched on 14 December and is available in printed form from CRC on request (tel 029 9022 7500 or info@nicrc.org.uk). It can also be downloaded from the CRC website www.nicrc.org.uk

The Review contains a Chairman's Introduction, Chief Executive's article 'Beyond The Crossroads- six lessons in a time for action', an overview of CRC's operational activity in 2008-09 and some Lessons for the Future.

The Struggle for Shared Schools in Northern Ireland: The history of All Children Together

by Jonathan Bardon

published by Ulster Historical Foundation

available from Ulster Historical Foundation (tel 90-661988) or order from bookshops (price £13.99).

Free Youth Leadership Training

Cross Border Connections in cooperation with the Foyle Multicultural Forum are delivering a free OCN accredited level 2 training in the Youth Leadership. The training is targeting the minority ethnic individuals and a wider community and will be delivered on the 12 and 19 February in the One World Centre, 7-15 Foyle Street, L'Derry. For more information please contact julie.mcgrory@donegalyouthservice.ie or foylemf@gmail.com.

Chinese New Year

14 February
St. George's Market, Belfast
Entertainment will include Chinese performers, acrobats, jugglers, martial arts experts and the Lion Dance. A great day out for the whole family to celebrate the Chinese New Year – the Year of the Tiger.

Holi – Indian Festival of Colours

28 February
St. George's Market, Belfast

If you would like to comment or submit an article for this bulletin or advertise a community relations event or publication, please contact Patricia at poneill@nicrc.org.uk or Ellana at info@nicrc.org.uk.

Events and News Continued

Belfast will experience a taste of culture when 'Holi – The Festival of Colours', one of the most colourful and vibrant festivals in India, is celebrated in St. George's Market on Sunday 28th February from 1pm-6pm

Known as the Festival of Colours, 'Holi' signifies the spirit of brotherhood and unity and welcomes everyone from all sectors of the community, regardless of race or religion, to come together. The festival uses colour to symbolise equality, wherein people drenched in different colours, lose their identity to become one.

The festival, organised by ArtsEkta, is a great family day out and although traditionally an Indian festival, visitors will participate, learn and experience the vibrancy of all cultures living in Belfast. There will be lots of international entertainment including one of the UK's most popular Bhangra groups 'Gabhru Punjab' and an exciting performance from Indian folk dance group ". There will be a showcase of local artistic talent, a spectacular world food market, crafts and a mini fun fair. Visitors will also receive a traditional free Indian milk punch called 'Lassi.'

Nisha Tandon, Project Manager for ArtsEkta, commented on the festival saying, "The Holi festival brings all cultures together in a high-spirited event that highlights the value of cultural exchange as a medium to promote communication and harmony. ArtsEkta proudly showcased this event for the first time ever in Northern Ireland last year and was overwhelmed by its popularity. We are looking forward to an even larger and more exciting event this year."

The main purpose of this event is for the community to participate, learn and experience the rich traditions of the different cultures living together. Organisers are looking forward to the event and are certain that people will have a memorable experience when they engage in the fun and family atmosphere of this very different festival.

Why not come along a join in the 'craic' and remember don't wear your Sunday best, we'll supply the colours, you the rest.

Good Relations Associates Research

The Community Relations Council is currently supporting Good Relations Associates to carry out research into the priorities and strategic direction of Community Relations in Northern Ireland. This will involve: reviewing all Community Relations and Cultural Diversity funding/grant-aid programmes and their fitness for purpose; identifying the current needs of CR and Cultural Diversity Sectors; detailing the extent to which needs are being met and a gap analysis; identifying areas of strategic priority for CR and cultural diversity sectors of the next 3-5 years. Please complete the www.uniteagainsthate.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/CRC-Questionnaire.doc and return to Good Relations Associates.

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Email: info@nicrc.org.uk

Promoting a peaceful and fair society based on reconciliation and mutual trust

WWW.NICRC.ORG.UK



Posters available from CRC phone 90227500 and ask for Patricia O'Neill or Ellana Tomasso or email info@nicrc.org.uk

Events and News Continued

Unite against Hate at the Exchange Mechanism

Over eight weeks, Belfast Exposed will operate as an alternative political space, where visitors encounter set works, complicated by 'disruptions'. Simultaneously functioning as a debating chamber, an installation of esoteric and popular media and an archive display, Exchange Mechanism seeks to challenge the abstraction of spontaneous public, political and artistic encounters from everyday life.

On the 5th March Unite against Hate will take over the gallery with the BIG OTT PC WEDDING. So, get your glad rags on, buy a new hat and celebrate diversity - this is going to be a wedding like no other!

For further information visit Belfast Exposed website www.belfastexposed.org

NICEM Human Rights and Equality Conference

12 February
Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast

NICEM's annual conference will explore a range of issues including the proposed Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland, how the economic downturn is impacting on economic and social rights and Equality and Immigration law updates. To view the full programme visit NICEM website www.nicem.org.uk

Coming from the Silence—Quaker Peacebuilding Initiatives in NI 1969-2007

Ed. Le Mare, Ann & McCartney, Felicity Published by Sessions of York

Members of the Religious Society of Friends, commonly known as Quakers, have had a long history of involvement in peace and relief work in many parts of the world. During the Troubles in NI Quakers were involved in a series of projects. 'Coming from the Silence' describes the work of four major projects and a number of smaller initiatives taking place between 1969-2007. It sets the work in a wider Quaker context and analyses it from an international development perspective. The four major projects described are: Quaker House, a conciliation project based in Belfast; the Ulster Quaker Service Committee, a family support service working initially at Maze/Long Kesh prison; the Centre for Neighbourhood Development, a Belfast based community development agency; and the Quaker Peace Education Project, a Derry based initiative working mainly with children and young people.

Quaker meetings are traditionally periods of silent worship. From this silence came a range of Quaker action in NI. This book illustrates the rich variety of action Quakers have been involved in over the last 40 years.

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