



The ICPO Penfriend Scheme

The ICPO Penfriend Scheme involves over 80 volunteers throughout Ireland corresponding on a regular basis with ICPO clients. In June 2013 the ICPO hosted a lunch to acknowledge the valuable contribution made by those who take part in this scheme. These volunteers demonstrate incredible commitment to supporting Irish prisoners overseas and make an essential contribution to the work of the ICPO. Bernie Martin describes this event and examines what it means to be a volunteer penfriend.

I always feel older people have a unique spirituality when I photograph them. Here were three ladies, sat side by side on the couch, and each wore a lilac cardigan which contrasted beautifully with their white hair. Their eyes retained the memory of every sight they had seen. Their hands, folded in their

laps, remembered a thousand touches and millions of gestures. Sitting together on the couch they exuded an air of serenity that draws the photographer and makes them feel honoured to be allowed in. The hands now resting in their laps have written millions of words, thousands of letters and this is the reason why these three ladies were sitting pretty on a couch in a hotel in the centre of Dublin.

These ladies and 36 more ladies and gentlemen were in the Camden Court Hotel as guests of the ICPO. The purpose of the lunch was to thank them for their services to ICPO and, above all, their dedication in writing to their penfriends in prisons around the world. The lunch guests came from many different walks of life, from many different generations and from places as far flung as Cork and Belfast. ICPO staff members were there to welcome

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Joan O'Cléirigh and Sr Maria McGuinness enjoying a cup of tea.



Geoff Power, Sr Anne Sheehy, Barbara Bergin and Joanna Joyce chatting on the day.

The ICPO

It is estimated that at any one time there are up to 1,000 Irish people in prison overseas. The ICPO has contact with Irish people in prisons in more than twenty countries, the majority of whom are in the UK with many more detained throughout the US, Australia, Europe, South and Central America and the Far East.

The Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas (ICPO) was established by the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference in 1985 in response to serious concerns regarding the number of Irish men and women in UK prisons. These deeply held concerns related to their trials and subsequent imprisonment.

In recent years the ICPO has been able to offer a more comprehensive service to prisoners and to expand our existing services to prisoners' families. Currently the ICPO works for all Irish prisoners wherever they are. It makes no distinction in terms of religious faith, the nature of the prison conviction, or of a prisoner's status.

The objectives of the ICPO are to:

- Identify and respond to the needs of Irish prisoners abroad, and their families;
- Research and provide relevant information to prisoners on issues such as deportation, repatriation and transfer;
- Focus public attention on issues affecting Irish prisoners (ill-treatment, racist abuse, etc);
- Engage in practical work in aid of justice and human rights for Irish migrants, refugees and prisoners at an international level;
- Visit Irish prisoners abroad where possible both in the UK and elsewhere.

STAFF

Maynooth

Joanna Joyce, Brian Hanley and Catherine Jackson.

London

Fr. Gerry McFlynn, Liz Power, Breda Power and Russel Harland.

Volunteers

Maynooth: Sr. Agnes Hunt, Eileen Boyle, Joan O'Cléirigh and Sr. Anne Sheehy.

London: Sr. Maureen McNally, Sr Agnes Miller, Sara Thompson and Kathleen Walsh.

Interns

London: Ellena Costello.

ICPO is a registered charity with covenanted tax status under its parent body the IECE. UK: 280742 Ireland: 8503

Views expressed in 'ICPO News' are the author's own and not necessarily those of the ICPO

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The ICPO is greatly indebted to its funders for their generous support.



A Note From the Editor

Greetings from all at the ICPO. Since the last newsletter we have enjoyed one of the best Irish summers in recent years and are now trying to readjust to our 'normal' weather of wind and rain!

In June the ICPO hosted a lunch to acknowledge the essential contribution made by those who take part in the ICPO Penfriend Scheme. It was a wonderful day and we were delighted to meet these volunteers who show such incredible dedication to ICPO clients. In this edition of the newsletter, Bernie Martin from the ICPO Maynooth office provides a wonderful account of the event.

This edition also contains an interesting piece by Sr Mary Whyte about the importance of living in the moment, while Joan O'Cléirigh describes the last ICPO Family Information Day which was held on the 5th of June.

Congratulations to Martin Fullerton and Patrick Joseph Ryan, winners of the Short Story and Poetry Writing in Prison Overseas competitions at Listowel Writers' Week 2013. The standard was very high this year and thanks to all those who entered. Applications for next year's competition will be sent out with our Christmas supplement.

Thanks also to everyone who contributed to our letters page. As always, we are delighted to hear from you so please keep your contributions coming in.

I would also like to thank the regular contributors to ICPO News- Eoin O'Mahony, author of the sports update, and Caitriona ní Bhaoill, author of 'Smídín Gaeilge'. We are very grateful to them for their hard work.

Finally, I would like to thank the ICPO staff and volunteers for their hard work in putting this newsletter together.

Joanna Joyce
Coordinator

The ICPO Penfriend Scheme

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and introduce themselves to the guests and there was a great buzz as staff matched familiar names to faces and some people met others they had known in a former life and excitedly tried to catch up on decades of experiences and living. As the tea and coffee were being served I walked through the room, taking photographs of small groups and individuals, looking for artistic shots and probably getting on people's nerves a little bit!

Joanna Joyce, Coordinator of the ICPO in Maynooth, welcomed everyone to the lunch including the three speakers for the day- Sr Maria McGuinness, Barbara Bergin and Geoff Power. A PowerPoint presentation played in the background, showing images of flowers from the gardens in Maynooth College, with comments from ICPO clients about how important penfriends and their letters are to them.

The main course was served and there was quiet as everyone ate heartily, it had been a long morning of travel and people were good and hungry. There was a great buzz of conversation at my table where three ladies were talking about writing to their penfriends, about the length of the letters they write and how they sometimes send cards because they know their penfriends like to put them on the wall. What came across most for me throughout the conversation was the great pleasure these ladies get when they receive a letter from their penfriend. One lady said it makes her day when she sees that familiar envelope arrive.

Desserts were served with tea and coffee and Joanna introduced Sr. Maria McGuinness who was involved in developing the Penfriend Scheme. Sr Maria spoke of her work and how her journey through life had led her to work for ICPO. Sadly, there were other areas where her expertise was required and she left ICPO some years ago. Sr Maria spoke with great warmth about the people she met, both prisoners and family members, while working with ICPO.

Barbara Bergin, a writer and actress who has worked creatively in prisons in Ireland and the USA, spoke about her work in the Separation Unit in Mountjoy Prison. She described how something happens when you sit down to write a letter- it is a conscious act and is very personal. You buy a stamp, post your letter, wait for a reply- it is indeed a precious exchange.

Geoff Power is a playwright who teaches creative writing in the Midlands Prison in Portlaoise. Geoff spoke about the inside of the prison, how there is nothing inside to inspire prisoners; everything is grey and drab. He added that letters can be transformative for prisoners and in a lot of cases prisoners don't want family to visit so the written word and letters are very important. Geoff has met a lot of talented men in prison. He spoke warmly of his pupils and read out some of their poems and an excerpt from a play which was written by one of his students and won a prize in the Dublin Fringe Festival.

Joanna ended the lunch by thanking the speakers and everyone involved in putting the event together, but most importantly the volunteers who are so dedicated to writing to their penfriends.

After lunch our three Lilac Ladies lingered for a short time, talking to staff and to the speakers. They said how much they had enjoyed their lunch and meeting and talking to everyone. They donned their coats and hung their handbags on their forearms and walked off into the hotel lobby, eyes full of new memories and hands and heart aching to get pen to paper.

Bernie Martin
ICPO Maynooth

Tariff Expired Removal Scheme (TERS)

The ICPO has received a number of recent queries regarding the Tariff Expired Removal Scheme (TERS) in the UK. Since 2007 Irish prisoners in the UK have been exempted from deportation due to the close historical, community and political ties between the UK and Ireland. This arrangement was reached after much advocacy work by the ICPO, which sought to highlight how the majority of Irish prisoners in the UK have lived there for most of their lives and have all social and family ties in the UK.

In some exceptional circumstances an Irish prisoner may be referred to the UK Border Agency (UKBA) for a decision on whether he/she should be deported. These exceptional circumstances include where an offence involves national security matters or crimes that pose a serious risk to the safety of the public. Despite the existence of these exceptional circumstances no Irish prisoner has been deported since 2007.

TERS was introduced by the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012. This scheme provides for the removal of foreign national prisoners serving indeterminate sentences upon or after the expiry of their tariff. At present Irish prisoners are not considered eligible for TERS.

The ICPO acknowledges that while the present arrangement regarding deportation benefits the vast majority of Irish prisoners in the UK, it does create difficulties and hardship for those prisoners whose primary ties are in Ireland and would like to avail of TERS.

Given the different needs of our clients, it is necessary for the ICPO to take a measured approach in relation to this important issue and we must ensure that we do not prejudice the interests of the vast majority of Irish prisoners in the UK who do not wish to be deported. Please contact us at ICPO, Columba Centre, Maynooth, Co Kildare, Ireland or ICPO, 50-52 Camden Square, London NW1 9XB if you require assistance or if you would like further information on this or any other issue.

What Do You Want to Read About?

We want to know what our clients are interested in reading about so if there are any topics or issues that you would like to see covered in *ICPO News* please contact our Maynooth office.

BEING "IN THE ZONE"

"Most people live lives of quiet desperation" according to Henry David Thoreau. But it does not have to be like that. Even if one is in prison, it is possible to find ways to make each day more bearable by learning to be "in the zone".

Being in the zone is about being totally focused on what you are doing, so that you are unaware of your surroundings, and do not feel the time passing. Great athletes talk about being "in the zone" after a fantastic performance. It's that magical moment when everything seems effortless, everything clicks. Having watched a wonderful Hurling Final between Cork and Clare, it is obvious that all the players were in the zone, totally focused on the task, paying no attention to the crowds, the cheering, the flags waving. They were inspired and inspiring.

How do you get into the zone? Children go into the zone all the time when they are at play. We all had this ability once, but many of us lost it around the age of five, when we became self-conscious, and began to judge ourselves through the eyes of the people around us.

When we are in the zone, focused on just what we are doing now, we return to that pleasant state where what we are experiencing becomes much more interesting than what other people might be thinking.

The magic word to get us in is "NOW!" It is a question of welcoming the here and now, and enjoying the precious present moment. Despair is always five minutes ahead, never now. Have a clear future goal, but live fully and passionately in the now with all your heart and soul and with all your might, and you will hit the zone.

Of course it is easier to do that if you are doing something you really enjoy, like sport or a hobby, but even mundane repetitive tasks can be transformed if we set ourselves a task

or goal in relation to it. I'm reminded of the woman who worked in a crisp factory, and whose job it was to pick out any burnt crisps as they moved past her on a conveyor belt. Her boring job was totally transformed when she focused on looking for crisps which bore a resemblance to human or animal shapes.

Living with the intention of "being fully present" and "performing with energy, enthusiasm and excitement, as if it's the most important thing in the world" can turn washing the dishes or sweeping the floor into the most enjoyable activity. The next time you eat a piece of fruit, focus totally on the touch, taste and smell, and see what you have been missing all along!

Pat Henry, the personal trainer to stars such as Julia Roberts and Michael Flatley, will not let people in his gym watch television or listen to music when they are working out. When one is working on a muscle with all one's attention, there is a totally different response from that muscle than when the person is distracted with their attention elsewhere.

Where attention goes, energy flows.

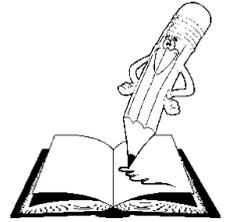
It helps to get fit. Tiredness makes cowards of us all. When you're tired, your problems seem bigger. Every happy person does at least one thing that stretches them. Do it now, and let joy flow from deep within you. When you are in the zone, you are unstoppable.



Sr Mary Whyte

(Based on an article by Declan Coyle with kind permission)

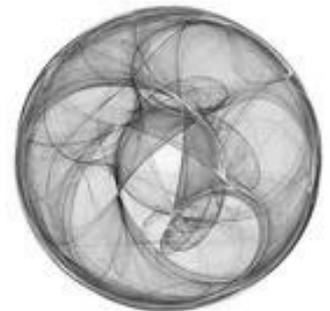
Winner of Listowel Writers' Week Competition 2013



WINNER: Poetry
Writing in Prisons Overseas

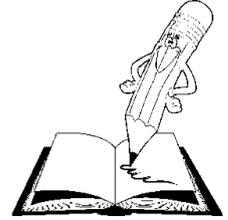
People like us

Where angels fear to tread
I walk alone seeking
Redemption for my soul
All my life is filled with
Misfits and promises of
It will be alright. Then I see
The light. It seems brighter than
The sun above. Words of
Wisdom like rays of the rainbow
Are written down by a Buddhist
Monk the four noble truths.
Put the outside world in a
Cradle and rock it to the
Sound of the universe. Time
Is sure to pass away forming
Tomorrow to become yesterday.
And reason becomes our facts
Of life. It's about simplicity
And the quickest way. But
We have only a short time
On it. As I walk and sit down
In the shadows of death I find
The ultimate truths each of
Us are born innocent. Life
Becomes our burden as we alone
Must live it. The way it is
Always going to be. No matter
what way we think we choose
in it. It will be as it will
Be. If we call it fate it's just
A world that we are born on
To be like God we are already
From one to all people like
Us.



Patrick Joseph Ryan

Winner of Listowel Writers' Week Competition 2013



★ WINNER: Short Story
Writing in Prisons Overseas

The Wistful Wanderer

Ahh...finally, silence...peace and quiet. I close my eyes and take a long deep breath and hold for a second and as I exhale, I slowly open my eyes to this magical paradise. The rugged beauty of this wind-swept coast is simply majestic. It's a place apart, unlike anywhere I've ever seen before. The cliffs seem to take on a personality of their own, where cavities in the rock form a ghoulish face with deep-set eyes and a growling mouth.

I take my time and try to take it all in ... the waves crashing against the rock leaving a white foam, as white as any lily. Alone I stand with only the whispering zephyrs and the soothing sound of the beguiling sea to wash my troubles away. Nothing in the world could trouble me at this moment in time. Ireland has a way of doing that, it just lets you forget about everything. All of life's stresses, as you bask in the breathtaking beauty of this mystical island. No matter where I roam on this intoxicating island, the awe-inspiring scenery never fails to impress. I've had so many magical and intimate experiences.

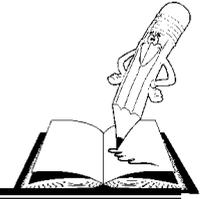
I've been travelling this land now for the past 926 days. I've been to all 32 counties; from the hills of Connemara to the ancient walls of Derry city. I've been to Eyre Square and Baile na Bláth, I've even kissed the Blarney stone and stood on the steps of the famous GPO. Oh how I do love this enchanting place, the people, the craic and of course, the Guinness.

But to travel all of this land in such a short space of time is beyond the realm of possibility as every bit of it is so captivating you simply don't want to leave every place you visit... I could easily amble this land for an eternity and never tire of it.

I've been gone from my home place in South Armagh for quite some time now. It seems like only yesterday I was planning this trip ... the excitement, expectation and slight trepidation ... and not forgetting the 'mean machine', that clapped out rust bucket of a van that I converted into a camper van. Jeez, I can't believe it's still going! It was the worst looking heap of scrap imaginable in the yard that day, I still can't believe I bought her, though she's done me proud (most of the time!).

I've got her all kitted out; gas-cooker, mini-fridge, even got a double bed in her too. Everybody said I was mad and that I'd be back in a week, if the mean machine lasted that long ... But they underestimated me and the mean machine for we're still going

Winner of Listowel Writers' Week Competition 2013



 **WINNER: Short Story**
Writing in Prisons Overseas

The Wistful Wanderer (continued)

strong, still lots to see ... we'll see this thing through. We've been to every county so far, we plan to carry on until we've had a pint in every pub in every town, in every county, in every province ... and if I'm lucky I'll get a kiss from a girl in every town too. Here's hoping!

I hope to return to my home place in November and I'll meet for the first time my new little nephew and Godson ... but for the time being I must complete my travels. Only 293 days left to go.

For me, nowhere has the lure proved stronger than in that neat little town they call Belfast, where every street, house and building has a story to tell. I love nothing more than going for a stroll around the waterworks and then ripping into the hole-in-the-wall for a cheeky pint - which usually ends up being 12 or 13.

Somedays I'll dander up the Falls Road where I never fail to get a warm welcome, every passer-by seems to have a warm smile and a kind word for this wandering stranger. I'll take a slow walk sometimes up as far as Ballymurphy and Turf Lodge and on up to the Glen road taking in the sights and sounds, no more are the days of frequent gun-fire or the sound of distant explosions.

For me Belfast holds a certain mystique, almost fabled ... as I stop to view one mural of the dead volunteers of the past who gave their lives for their country and their people, it's their uncompromising ideology and altruism that I admire most in them ... I'm happy that their memories are being kept alive, it evokes in me a myriad of emotions ... I can almost

hear the voices of ancient times as I pass the Falls and on up to Milltown Cemetery as I stop and say a prayer for Ireland's sons and daughters that are no longer with us.

On my way back down I drop into the Felon's Club and get talking to a few old heads ... Story after story they have to tell me, I tell ya, I never want to leave there once I get settled, enthralled in the stories. Captivated by the ebullience of the story-tellers, stories so gripping you forget where you are.

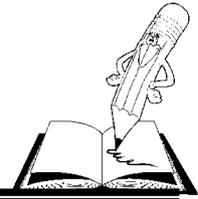
As the night wears on, we turn to singing rebel tunes and my thoughts soon turn to my next destination. Caesar's Palace in Bunclody. Christy's playing tomorrow night. Christy always puts on a good show. I'll need to head off early in the morning though, it's time to head back to Tommy's to get my auld head down.

I'll just say a quick prayer before I hit the scratcher, ask God to keep me safe on my travels. I'm nearly nodding off already ... 'sé do bheatha a mhuire, atá lán de ghrásta, Tá an Tiarna leat zzz ... zzz ... zzz ... zzz ... zzz (beep!) - (beep!) - (beep!) - alarm clock.

Ah bloody alarm! I slowly get up, still half asleep, scrambling for the alarm clock. Finally I hit the snooze button, just 10 minutes more then I'll get up. As I lie back down, my mind casts back to last night ... ah yes, strolling down the Falls Rd, it was a beautiful day ... I see it, so vivid, so real ... I lie there for a minute with a wry smile on my face ... then suddenly it hits me ... it's just another dream ... I slowly open my eyes and take a look around, just those four cold grey walls staring back at

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ICPO Entries for Listowel Writers'Week Competition 2013



★ WINNER: Short Story
Writing in Prisons Overseas

The Wistful Wanderer (continued)

me with that big impregnable steel door in the middle ... it's as if it's almost towering over me staring at me in defiance ... just like it has been every morning for the past two and a half years.

I slowly get up and take my first tentative steps of the day on that cold and unforgiving concrete floor and reach for the light ... another day of the doldrums for me ... back to the reality of my monotonous daily routine. Open the curtains and windows ... Let some air in. Then my daily ablutions. Have a drink of water with some creatine for good measure ... then I'm ready for my morning work-out ... 10 minutes shadow boxing to warm up, then press-ups, sit-ups, dips etc.

8am - fill my big beaker three-quarters full, half milk/half water, add 250 grams porridge oats and sink her in one. That's me ready for another day.

... If only I were wandering the land I love all this time but it's not to be. For the past two and a half years I've been doing penal servitude, languishing in an English gaol, far from the land I love, far from the people, the craic and of course ... the Guinness.

... but maybe not so far, for though I'm lying in this cold forgotten place, in this strange land across the Irish sea, my heart is in Ireland and tonight when the big steel door is shut tight and silence descends, I'll close my eyes and it's off to her again I'll fly.

... for the spirit cannot be shackled
Though they chain our feet and hands

Martin Fullerton

What?

It's August?
What happened to July?
No wait
This is September
so ...
what happened to August?

Today's only Tuesday?
I thought it was Wednesday.

I've been in prison
For three
and
one
half
years?

Doesn't seem like it.

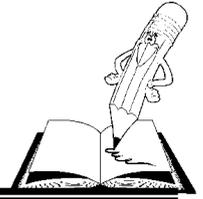
But it does.

Feels like a life time,
and
no time at all

The
next
5
should
be
easy?

Michael Collins

ICPO Entries for Listowel Writers' Week Competition 2013



A Trip to South Clare

It all started one day
On a trip to South Clare.
The sun had just dawned
And the weather was fair
Our two lads were all ready
Prepared was each one
To cycle the coast
Guaranteed was great fun

One last check of the tyres
One last lube of the chain
They set off to Clare
And prayed for no rain.
With the sun to their left
The wind at their back
Their spirits were lifted
As they enjoyed the good craic

Their first stop at Kinvara
A town by the bay
They soon heard the rumours
'a storm's brewing this way'
No second thoughts
On their way, they kept going
The sun was still out
The breeze was still blowing
At Ballyvaughan
But not very long
The two glimpsed to the west
And guessed they were wrong
Dark clouds they were forming
Out over North Sound

Where once there was sunshine
Not a ray could be found
The idea was folly
To proceed to Black Head
So they chose a quick detour
Through the Burren instead

Now a turn for the worse

Does the story now take
For one had brought Poteen
(what a horrendous mistake!)
For to drink and to ride
Is not very wise
Let alone through the Burren
Being tailed by black skies

To themselves they did think
'We're young and we're brave!'
And off they did pedal
From that one Ailwee Cave
The trail it was rocky
The hills were quite steep
But they zigged and they zagged
As if they were sheep

It was just man against nature
An unthinkable race
For the storm was upon them
In that rocky dark place

With the drink in their heads
And eyes all aglaze
Their bodies were numb
From that soft poteen haze
It was just at that time
Just a moment too late
The second man realized
Of the first one's ill fate
Whether a rock or a hole
They flew over the bars
Bouncing and smacking
And rolling quite far

60 meters they say
More like 20 I'd guess
The truth can get stretched
When it's told in the west
Regardless of which

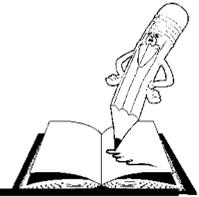
They laid there awhile
'Til one finally stood
With a cocky drunk smile
He slobbered and spit
Wiped some blood from his face
'Let's pick up our bike-o's
And finish this race'

Tyres are blown
And their rims they were bent
Their strength it was fading
Beer muscles long spent
Slowly and surely
Walking bikes through the rain
Each knowing the truth
This won't happen again
Said one to the other
'This race we can't win
But you'll know when we've finished
When we get to
Doolin'

The two never made it
To South Clare on that day
'Why? It was boring'
Is all that they'll say
So heed some advice and
You'll surely go far
Don't drink when you pedal
From not bottle
Nor jar.

Paul Ross

ICPO Entries for Listowel Writers' Week Competition 2013



Guilt

One night, me and my best friend Jason, his nickname was Swifty, decided we were going to go steal a car, go joy-riding and also steal car radios to earn some quick, easy money.

We walked around for about an hour until we spotted an Astra GTE, an easy fast car to steal. We used to have bets who could do the door, snap the steering and finally wire it up the fastest. Swifty was quick but I was usually quicker although he did beat me on occasion. Anyway, we sped off in our shiny new car to go on a mini crimewave. We drove through our town of Salford and headed towards Eccles, Irlam. We broke into car after car, targeting car radios but if anything caught the eye that was taken too. We had at least 15 stereos in the boot of the car, a good night's work we thought. The time was around 1.30am when we saw one of our mates, Jama, screeching around in another stolen Vauxhall.

Our cars came side to side on the Long Eccles New Road. As we raced each other, seeing who was the fastest, adrenalin pumping, speeds went to 80mph on a 30mph zone. Out of the corner of my eye I saw a police dog unit parked up as we raced past. I looked in the rear view mirror and sure enough, he turned his blue lights on and came after us. Jama was in front of me and I flashed him to try make him aware of the police. Up ahead was an articulated lorry. We both had to go on the opposite side of the road to over-take it. Swifty had been mostly quiet up until this point when he said to me, 'Sharkey, pull over and let me out then you can drive off again if you have to.' I said 'don't be soft lad, it's only a stupid dog unit, it'll never catch us. We drove faster and out of the blue Jama who was still ahead of me braked hard to take a

corner. I reacted but not quick enough and the front of our car clipped his back end. Our car swerved from side to side, I fought to control it. I thought for a split second I had it back under control. I wasn't to be, the back end went too far and the car slid for what seemed minutes but was maybe more like 5 seconds or less. Swifty shouted 'Sharkeyyy' and the inevitable happened. We smashed into 5 taxis that were all in a line outside the firm's office. Everything went black, I was unconscious.

I woke up groggy in hospital. I was confused, my mother, father and brothers were at my bedside. My Dad said to me 'He's gone Mark' 'What?' 'The doctor said it was instantaneous, he never suffered pain'.

I could not get my head around it, I tried sitting up and noticed my left arm was cuffed to the bed. I also noticed I couldn't move my legs. They had been smashed to pieces. A police officer came into the room and said 'I'm arresting you for causing death by dangerous driving, you don't have to say anything.' I could not believe what was going on. One minute me and my pal were buzzin', the next thing he's dead and now I'm being arrested for his death.

After a court case, myself and Jama pleaded guilty, we were sent to youth custody.

If only I would have stopped when Swifty asked me to, he would still be here. Lives would be different. His family were devastated. I will carry this tragedy with me for the rest of my life, sorry I will carry this GUILT with me and it is a heavy cross to bear.

Mark Moir

FAMILY ISSUES



This section is for families who have a loved one in prison.
Do you have useful information that may be helpful to other families?
Have you a question you would like to see answered on this page in the future?

Financial Support for Prison Visits – Applying for an Exceptional Needs Payment

If you are in receipt of benefits, such as jobseeker's allowance, the one parent family payment or the state pension, you might be entitled to a grant towards the cost of a visit to your family member in prison.

In a previous edition of the newsletter we looked at the Assisted Prison Visits Scheme which is available to people living in the UK and Northern Ireland and provides for frequent grant payments to those wishing to visit their loved one.

In Ireland, there is no specific scheme for prison visits; instead, people must apply for an Exceptional Needs Payment.

An Exceptional Needs Payment is a single payment to meet essential, once-off, exceptional expenditure, which a person could not reasonably be expected to meet out of their weekly income. Department of Social Protection guidelines include visiting relatives in prison as an example of the type of situation where such payments might be appropriate.

You may be eligible for an Exceptional Needs Payment if:

- You are living in the state;
- You satisfy a means test;
- You have applied for any other benefit/allowance you may be entitled to;
- You have registered to work with FÁS (if you are of working age).

You won't normally be eligible if you are:

- In full-time work (more than 30 hours a week) or
- In full-time education.

You should contact the Department of Social Protection's representative (formerly known as the Community Welfare Officer (CWO)) at your local health centre to enquire as to your eligibility.

To apply for a payment you will need:

Personal Public Service (PPS) numbers for yourself, your spouse/civil partner/cohabitant and your children (Child Benefit books or birth certificates if you don't have PPS numbers for the children);

Evidence of any income or social welfare assistance you are getting.

Importantly, ICPO can provide you with a letter to take to your CWO informing them of the importance of prison visits and confirming that your family member is currently in prison overseas.

Payments under this scheme are discretionary. Whilst some CWOs are very supportive and will look to help a couple of times each year, others may refuse such applications. If you are refused a payment, you should ask for the reasons for this refusal in writing.

ICPO may, in exceptional circumstances, be able to assist with the cost of a prison visit but will usually require an application to have been made to a CWO first.

Please contact ICPO if you would like advice and assistance regarding prison visits.

FAMILY ISSUES



This section is for families who have a loved one in prison.
Do you have useful information that may be helpful to other families?
Have you a question you would like to see answered on this page in the future?

Family Information Day June 2013

15 families were represented at the last ICPO Family Information Day held in the Camden Court Hotel in Dublin on 5th June 2013.

Joanna Joyce, Coordinator of the ICPO in Maynooth, opened the day by welcoming everybody and thanking them for coming. She outlined the programme and thanked the speakers for giving their time to attend. Joanna also said she hoped that people could take away some comfort in knowing that there is help out there despite feelings of helplessness and despair when a loved one is incarcerated.

Sheila Connolly, Manager of the Cork Alliance Centre, outlined the difficulties prisoners encounter on release and gave examples of her experience assisting people to get back on their feet. Sheila was accompanied by a volunteer who willingly shared her story of rehabilitation and reintegration into society, of how she had overcome her past, returned to education and is now in stable employment. Hearing others' stories helps to alleviate the huge burden people feel and gives them hope at the end of a dark tunnel.

Oliver Phelan and Gemma Culleton from the Portlaoise Citizens Information Centre gave

excellent advice on the support that is available for those being released from prison. Oliver spoke of his experience working with prisoners in the art department in Portlaoise prison and of the many hidden talents prisoners discover.

Breda Power, Caseworker from the ICPO London office, explained the difficulties some people encounter when trying to plan prison visits and outlined the proper procedures to follow to prevent disappointment. If you have not planned your visit according to these procedures you may be at the loss of a lot of money, time and effort and in particular the disappointment of not been able to see your family member.

Joanna Joyce gave a Policy update and then opened the floor for questions. It was heart warming to see the ease with which family members were able to talk and share their stories and indeed pass on their experiences and advice.

Feedback on the day was very positive with many families asking that we run such Information Days on a more regular basis.

Joan O'Cléirigh
ICPO Volunteer

Help for Families

We are continually trying to develop and improve the services we provide to families. If you think there is something we could be doing that would be of help to others, please let us know.

If you need information, advice or someone to talk to please contact the ICPO on 01-5053156.

Update from London ICPO Office

It seems no time since our last Letter and here we are again in Autumn after one of the best summers in recent times in terms of weather. In fact, you have to go back to 2006 to find a summer as warm as the one we've just had!

Staff members in the London office have been busy keeping pace with the volume of letters, phone calls, and casework resulting from prison visits. **Breda Power** visits all the male London prisons and attends to the follow-up casework while **Liz Power**, our main caseworker, deals with the follow-up casework resulting from visits nationwide. **Declan Ganly**, in addition to keeping the IT working efficiently, also helps out with casework. **Russ Harland**, who works one day a week in the office, also helps with the volume of casework. Finally, I visit prisons throughout the country and help with the ICPO's public profile by attending meetings, conferences, etc. On a sad note, we have lost **Ellena Costello** who did such Trojan work for us for two years as an intern. We miss her bright smile and cheerful personality.

Our prison visitors' team of **Kathy Walsh** (Holloway), **Sr Agnes Miller** (Downview), **Sara Thompson** (Send), and regionally **Sr Maureen McNally** (South), **Sally Murphy** (Merseyside) and **Jayne O'Connor** (South-West) continue to visit prisons in their respective areas and send back notes for follow-up casework. In addition, **Noeleen Curran** from the Irish Embassy also visits prisoners throughout the country and liaises with us in respect of follow-up casework. Some idea of the volume of our work here can be gleaned from the following statistics: between January and the end of August 2013, **87 prison visits** were made and a total of **583 prisoners** seen and some **1,290 letters** dealt with. However, because we have such a small team of workers and volunteers, answering letters and taking phonecalls, to say nothing about the casework, can be very time-consuming. Again, we would ask you to be patient with us and not to expect an immediate response to letters, etc.

A highlight of the summer was the **Sponsored Walk in Co Mayo** (from Mulranny to Newport) undertaken by some 25 staff members and volunteers. For the third year in a row, the weather on the day was good and we were delighted to have **Joanna Joyce** and **Bernie Martin** from the Maynooth office join us

along with **Archbishop Charles Brown**, the Papal Nuncio (the Pope's representative in Ireland), **Bishop John Kirby** (Chair of the Irish Bishops' Council for Emigrants) and **Éamon Ó Cuív**, TD for East Galway.

And now for news about some important issues. **Repatriation** continues to move at a slow pace. The criteria are still the same: strong family ties (parents, spouses, children) resident in Ireland. If you don't meet these criteria, you have a very slim chance of even being considered for repatriation. As for **Transfers** to prisons in Northern Ireland, the picture is just as gloomy. Due to the recent spate of troubles, the three prisons there, Maghaberry, Magilligan and Hydebank (Female and YOI), are all full and unlikely to have spaces for some considerable time.

On the **TERS** (Tariff Expired Removal Scheme) and **IPP** (Indeterminate Public Protection) issues, you can read the updates on these elsewhere in the newsletter. The bottom line on the TERS issue is that Irish nationals **CANNOT BE DEPORTED** because of a **POLITICAL** agreement between the British and Irish governments dating back to February 2007. No Irish national has been deported since that date.

Joanna Joyce and I continue to monitor developments on IPP's in relation to repatriation to Ireland. Forthcoming newsletters will keep you informed. Suffice it to say here that there is considerable confusion and misunderstanding about these issues and we hope that what you find here will help clarify them somewhat.

An important conference organised by the PPMI (Progressing Prisoners Maintaining Innocence) Group is being held on Saturday, 16 November, just before the start of Prisoners' Week, on the theme Learning About Prisoners. ICPO is heavily involved in the organisation of the day and will have a stall at its market place.

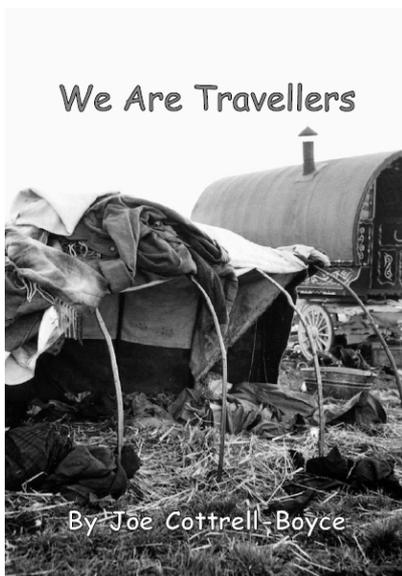
Finally, on a personal note, I was saddened to learn of the death in August of my university teacher, **Seamus Heaney**. More than anyone else, he taught me about the beauty of language and why words matter, and how poetry can be a form of prayer. May he rest in peace.

Fr. Gerry McFlynn
ICPO Project Manager

Traveller Reading Books Launched



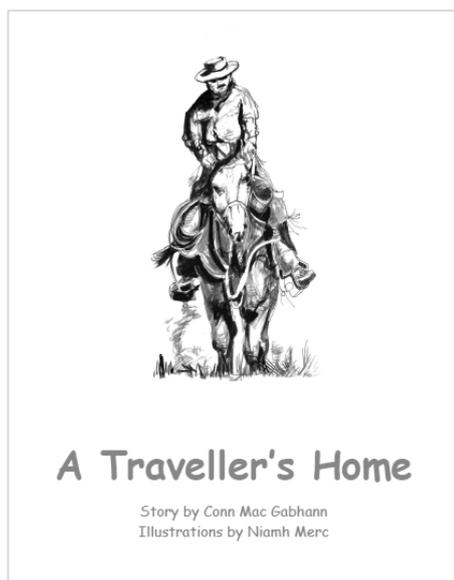
The Irish Chaplaincy in Britain has produced a series providing interesting reading material for Gypsy and Traveller adult learners. The first book, 'A Travellers Home' was written by Conn MacGabhann and beautifully illustrated by Dublin artist Niamh Merc. It tells the story of John; a Dublin Traveller and wannabe cowboy. The second book 'We Are Travellers' was written by Joe Cottrell-Boyce, and is a factual introduction to the history and culture of English Gypsies and Irish Travellers.



The Irish Chaplaincy recently launched the third book in the series, 'The Fight'. This tells the story of two Traveller men as they journey from their site in London up to the Appleby Fair. The book is written by Conn Mac Gabhann and illustrated by Niamh Merc.

These free books are proving very popular with prisoners across England, Scotland and Wales. In particular, there has been a huge demand from Gypsy and Traveller prisoners progressing with the Shannon Trust reading programme.

If you are interested in receiving a copy of these books or in having them made available in your prison library please contact the Traveller Equality Project, Irish Chaplaincy in Britain at 50-52 Camden Square, London, NW1 9XB or on 020 74825528.



A Traveller's Home

Story by Conn Mac Gabhann
Illustrations by Niamh Merc



The Fight

Story by Conn Mac Gabhann
Illustrations by Niamh Merc



Your Letters



Letter from New York

I am currently in a federal pre-trial facility in Manhattan which houses both male and female inmates. The females are housed on one floor whilst the men are spread out over many floors.

This building is like an office block and I can look out of my window and see the people who work in the court opposite and everyday life going on just about 20 feet below.

If anyone is familiar with Regent Street in London, it's like being in jail right on that road!

Enough about the outside, inside is like a derelict hospital. The daily routine is so mundane, it is hardly worth telling. There are limited spaces for a G.E.D. Class which is a General Education Diploma. This is about the highest qualification you can earn and it's the equivalent of a High School Diploma. Not many people take advantage of the education available, they would rather watch Jerry Springer. There is a lot of time out of the cell. Breakfast is 6.30-7.00am then the cleaners work. (\$16 a month). At 10.00am we come out of the cell until 3.30pm. Lunch is at 11.30 which is served on trays and usually consists of rice and beans. Lock in and roll count from 3.30-5.00pm. Then dinner at 5pm and out until 9.30pm. Compared to Wandsworth and Holloway there is a lot of freedom, but there is nothing to do apart from play cards, read, write or check e-mails. The best part of American jail is the e-mail facility. We have 6 computers which are not Internet connected, but we can input a personal e-mail address and a request is then sent to that person with conditions that you understand it is a federal jail and all incoming and outgoing electronic mail will be monitored.

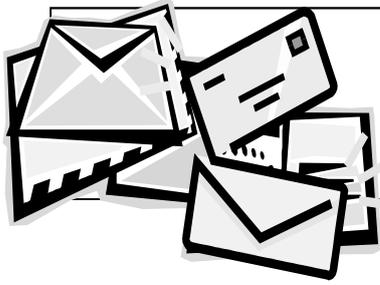
We can go on the computer once an hour. There is a function to buy 'units' which we use to send e-mails. The units are used depending on the length of the message and time spent typing it so the only thing that's a rush in an otherwise drag of a day is typing.

Those in England are no doubt reading this and thinking, 'Wow, how great to have a computer to use rather than pen and paper'. The hope is that you will contact your co-defendants or loved ones and tell them things about your case which will be used against you in court. The first thing your lawyer will tell you is 'do not write about your crime on a computer or speak about it on the telephone'. Your word, your cell-mates word or anybody's word can and will be used against you over here. Jailhouse snitches are rife! They will tell if you have an extra apple in your room or if you defrauded millions of dollars. Anything to earn them brownie points with staff here or the prosecutor's office. And that's male or female.

In a group of people arrested, at least 2 or 3 will be approached to 'co-operate' against the rest and most of the time it's the big fish telling on the little fish. Co-operating, plea bargains and copping-out (taking a deal) is the way the justice system works here. Hardly anybody goes to trial.

I know in the UK if you have a criminal record or are accused of a crime you are not allowed to be used as a witness. This is not the case in the U.S. You have to see it to believe it, but hopefully this will serve as a warning and you won't have to see it for yourself.

Also, there are groups that stick together. The people are not as integrated as they are in the U.K. Over here, it's whites, blacks, Spanish, Asians and then others. A lot of black women I speak to have never had a conversation with or seen a white woman in their area before. I was so shocked that a multi-cultural city like New York would still be so segregated. I feel there is still a lot of anger over past situations, dating back to slavery days. It's a shame because it's mostly gangs in America and a lot of crime is caused by these gangs and I strongly feel that if races connected together more over here there would be less crime and hatred and there



Your Letters



Letter from New York (continued)

would be a better standard of living for those in poorer areas. The people I've met cannot believe that in London I have Jamaican friends, Arabs, Pakistanis, Indians and we all hang around together. I feel sad for these New Yorkers, but proud to be British/Irish because we have also come a long way and it takes a trip here to realise how lucky we are.

There is a no-smoking policy and tobacco is classed as contraband and can earn you up to 90 days in the Segregation Unit, plus up to two years loss of privileges. Any Incident Report you get will be reviewed by a D.H.O (disciplinary hearing officer) and harsh sanctions are often meted out. I don't think any jail in the world is easy. Some people will

think they have it cushy, while others will be in Thailand or a third world country living in hell.

One thing we all have in common is that we have lost our right to freedom temporarily. As far as living conditions go, New York is not too bad, I could be somewhere much worse. But being in jail abroad, away from your family and friends is like an added punishment. I actually dream of HMP Holloway and what I wouldn't give to be there now. And THAT is something I never thought I'd hear myself say.

M.B., USA

A UK prisoner wrote in a letter to Sr Agnes recently:

It has just started to get really hot but there is quite a haze with the land having been so wet in the early part of the year. Perhaps the highlight of the last couple of weeks has been the discovery of a nest of pied wagtails right outside our wing door in a raised flower bed. So we have been watching the parents try to conduct their lives around our coming and going. Throughout this, the mother has been constant and undeterred—what does that say about mothers—while the dad has been a real scaredy cat, not bringing food in until the coast was completely clear.



Anyway, we have had the delight of seeing five birds fledged and on Friday they skipped their nest and have been waddling around, experimenting with flight and scattering, some outside our fences and some within. Parents, of course, sit on the fences and listen to their offspring calling from where they have finished up. Fortunately, no cats just a blind hedgehog in the garden's poly tunnels and the friend they added later to give him the right sort of company. Buzzards, rooks and crows do pose a threat but with us milling around are unlikely to get one except while we are locked up.

I saw a red legged Partridge dead on the field a fortnight back. I suspect it died from lead poisoning as it hadn't been plucked or dismembered. There are some shooting estates not far away and sometimes we hear the guns.

Our borders are burgeoning. Most things 2 1/2 months late but with the sun everything has shot up. Cow Parsley, 8 foot high. Flowers and shrubs are a riot of colour while the grass is still green

A.P., UK



Your Letters



Keeping in Touch with Ireland by Listening to RTÉ Radio

There must be over a dozen Irish prisoners here but I know of only one other chap who like me has purchased an additional radio with long wave so that we can each listen to RTÉ 1 on LW252.

I've got to say, I love listening to RTÉ Radio every day, it reinforces my feelings of being Irish and my sense of Irish identity.

My 'Irish Day' begins at 7am when I tune in to the first half hour of 'Morning Ireland'. It gives me a good sense of what's going on in the country over the previous 24 hours. It's a cliché to say it helps me to stay in touch with the 'aul sod', but I love hearing the morning headlines followed by an interview of 'what it says in the (Irish) papers'. The occasional abrasive interview with a TD or Minister and the almost daily contributions from RTÉ's excellent crime reporter, Paul Reynolds. Such is the state of the nation!

To hear what is exercising the minds of the ordinary people of Ireland on a daily basis, forget your weekly Irish newspaper and tune in to the Joe Duffy Show (aka Liveline) directly after the lunchtime news - the phone-in programme from around the country - and listen to what the plain people of Ireland are complaining about. Lads, it's not pretty but it's reality, the harsh realities of life for some people! It puts your own prison problems in perspective.

I should name check the Pat Kenny Show, still running every weekday morning from 10, after all these years*. Marian Finucane is now down to one morning radio show at the weekend and I haven't even mentioned the Live GAA and Rugby matches every weekend afternoon at 2pm. Imagine yourself listening to the GAA All-Ireland final!

Lads, a few words of advice before I close. Even if you have a top range stereo music system with DAB/FM/AM radio, it will be useless in receiving LW broadcasts and you can't get RTÉ in the UK. It's as simple as that!

It's better to buy a battery operated small radio so you can place it by the window of your cell for best reception. There's likely to be sheets of metal within the cell walls for reasons of security and this is likely to affect radio reception so keep it by the window for optimal sound.

My top recommendation, the one I bought myself, is the Roberts radio available through the Argos catalogue. It's very small, half the size of a paperback novel but has a very impressive sound for speech radio and required only 2 AA batteries. It has all the old-fashioned analog wavelengths including LW. RTÉ says it has no plans to discontinue it's long-wave service, unlike the BBC.

If you already have a stereo music system check with your prison to see if they will permit you a second radio in your cell. Some do, some don't! It would be no good at all if your prison took away your stereo system just to allow you a small transistor radio or placed one or the other in your stored property.

Lads, make some enquiries and argue that as a foreign national prisoner in the UK, you should be able to listen to your country's radio at your own expense without sacrificing your music system.

M.P., UK

*(*Note from Editor- Pat Kenny recently left RTÉ after working for the national broadcaster for 41 years. He now presents a morning show on Newstalk)*



Your Letters



Repatriated to Mountjoy Prison

Hello Readers, my name is Michael. I'm a prisoner here in Mountjoy Prison. I'm doing a life sentence. I've been here 13 months, I was repatriated from England last year - I spent 5 years over there. Anyway, life in Mountjoy is no easy task.

There are four wings A, B, C, D. B Wing and C Wing are new wings, single cells. A wing is nearly open, D Wing is still open and in use. There are fights here on a daily basis, sometimes there are serious stabbings. There are lots of young lads here who don't seem to get on well with each other. They like a fight to say the least.

We are banged up 18 hours a day. We get 3 fall out times for about 2 hours. You can go to school, yard, gym, workshops. The whole jail is busy at these times. The visits are not great - 2 visits a week for 30 minutes but officers can give you longer if it's not busy. As a lifer I get a box visit every 2 months. It's in the grounds of the jail, it's for 2 hours, they are a bit of a blessing. The food is ok. We get 3 meals a day, mostly 2 hot meals and cereal for breakfast. The tuck shop is not so good. They only seem to have sweets. They have some good things but not all 'wats!!' but the good thing is you can use it every day twice some days, not like England where you spend so much a week. You could spend €1,000 at one time, it's up to you. We have Sunday Mass at 10 am for about half an hour. There are no other religious activities.

Mountjoy has gone under serious rebuilding. There are 2 new wings with all singles. I'm on C Wing. It's very good, brand new showers, new bedding, new quilts, pillows, kettles. Very well run wing. No trouble. I've been here for 13 months, not one fight yet. They have spent millions on Mountjoy and you can see it.

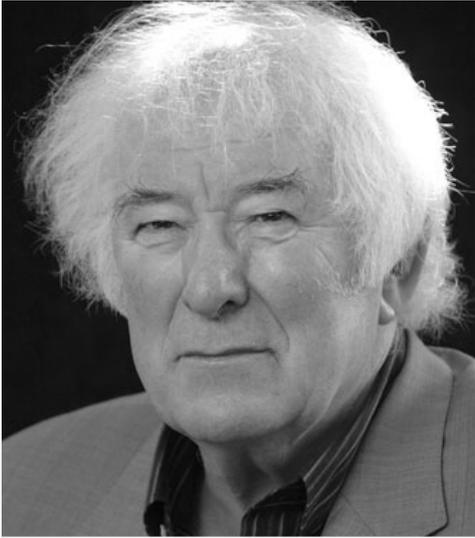
Mountjoy has a fierce reputation but it's improving by a mile. In the next 3 years it will be a new jail, all singles, less trouble, more than half the inmates gone. They are building new workshops, big improvements all over the jail. The visits are being improved more child friendly, tots play area, maybe even longer visits.

There are still a lot of bad things about Mountjoy. There is a massive overcrowding problem, 3 men to a cell with only 2 beds, one will sleep on the floor. There are no toilets in cell, only a chamber pot to each man. It's not nice, in fact, it is a disgrace. I think that is why there are so many fights among the men. Can you imagine 3 men in a cell, one has an upset tummy. He needs the toilet but is forced to use the pot that he can't flush away. That pot stays there til morning, stinking out the cell. It's not nice and it seems inhumane.

The Officers try their best to maintain the jail. They give about 10 men cleaning jobs, that's a lot for just one landing. The cleaners do their best, mopping and sweeping all day long, but parts of Mountjoy you just can't keep clean. D Wing is very bad. I spent time on it. 6 showers for 300 men, 4 flushing toilets, 4 sinks. While four have a shave or brushing your teeth, some person is having a crap next to you, it's not nice at all and that has been going on for decades but the time has come and big changes are happening and Mountjoy will be a great jail in the next few years. The change can't come fast enough.

Hope you enjoyed this insight. Take care.

M.L., Ireland



Ireland mourned the loss of one of its greatest poets in August following the death of Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney.

Heaney was born in April 1939 on a small farm in Co Derry and was the eldest of nine children.

He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1995. The following year he was made a Commandeur de L'Ordre des Arts et Lettres by the French ministry of culture.

In addition to being a poet he was a playwright and a professor, holding prestigious posts at Oxford University and Harvard during his long career. He was also an honorary fellow at Trinity College Dublin.

One of Heaney's best loved poems is 'Mid-Term Break' which he wrote as a reflection on the death of his infant brother, Christopher, who died in a car accident in 1953.

Mid-Term Break

I sat all morning in the college sick bay
Counting bells knelling classes to a close.
At two o'clock our neighbours drove me home.

In the porch I met my father crying--
He had always taken funerals in his stride--
And Big Jim Evans saying it was a hard blow.

The baby cooed and laughed and rocked the pram
When I came in, and I was embarrassed
By old men standing up to shake my hand

And tell me they were "sorry for my trouble,"
Whispers informed strangers I was the eldest,
Away at school, as my mother held my hand

In hers and coughed out angry tearless sighs.
At ten o'clock the ambulance arrived
With the corpse, stanced and bandaged by the
nurses.

Next morning I went up into the room. Snowdrops
And candles soothed the bedside, I saw him
For the first time in six weeks. Paler now,

Wearing a poppy bruise on his left temple,
He lay in the four foot box as in his cot.
No gaudy scars, the bumper knocked him clear.

A four foot box, a foot for every year.

Seamus Heaney



Sports

By Eoin O'Mahony

Gaelic Games

After a scorcher of a summer, the championship season is almost over and what an epic season it has been. With Kilkenny out in the hurling and Kerry beaten at the semis in the football, there is a new ascendancy rising in the men's game. Camogie too has seen some changing of the guard with Galway winning an All-Ireland Senior title, beating Kilkenny 1-9 to 7 points in mid-September.

Clare and Cork pulled off an epic final in the first of the month's deciders. Davy Fitzgerald's tenacious and skilful charges matched the trainer's sideline passion to draw with a younger Cork team managed by the legend Jimmy Barry Murphy. Clare got to Croke Park for the final through Limerick, beating them 1-22 to 18 points. Cork had to overcome a resurgent Dublin team and beat them 1-24 to 1-19 in a thrilling match which saw the Rebels and the Blues play the kind of hurling that dreams are made of. Cork's younger players might have the skill and the speed but Clare has the guile and in Fitzgerald, a dynamo of passion and professionalism. The final was played on Sunday September the 8th over almost 73 minutes of like for like scores with neither team seemingly on top at half time. Cork seemed to pull away by putting three goals past Clare early on but the Banner kept putting the *sliotar* over the bar and in a frenetic final 10 minute period, they traded points right until the end. The score ended with Clare scoring 25 points and Cork a cool 3-16, a draw. The sides meet again under floodlights for the first time on Saturday, September 28th.

In football, both Mayo and Dublin are fine teams, worthy of a final place but by no means the same kinds of teams. Dublin's back line are not the strongest but you can always rely on their half forwards to place the ball well between the posts. Mayo are determined to put a decades long search for Sam behind them. Their skill in the middle of the park is well catalogued at this stage. We can expect a flowing and intense game of football when the final comes. I might be caught out for this but I suspect the Sam Maguire cup is back in Dublin's hands this year.

Soccer

With only a handful of games to go and the Cup competitions drawing near to their end, St Patrick's Athletic are leading their league well all summer long. Dundalk and Sligo Rovers have kept up the pressure throughout but with less than half a dozen games to go, St Pat's might well have the guile to extend their slim lead over the Louth men. Aside from these three teams, the league has thrown up some surprises this season. Derry and The Shams rallied early but there has been a worrying lack of consistency in Tallaght. Tallaght are still in line for Cup glory though. Bohs and Shelbourne are languishing and look likely to be relegated in about three weeks' time.

In the EA Sports Cup however, the Shams are up against Drogheda United on the 21st of September in what promises to be a decent game of football with both teams fighting for some silverware after inconsistent seasons. Drogheda United inexplicably sacked their manager in recent weeks but it is not clear how this might affect their chances of winning this second cup. In the FAI Cup however, we are still at the semi final stages: the draw puts Sligo Rovers against Shamrock Rovers in what promises to be a sellout affair. Meanwhile, Drogheda or Finn Harps will play Dundalk for a place against either of the Rovers. There is a distinct non-Dublin tinge to this year's competitions.

Internationally, the Republic of Ireland team has all but failed to qualify for Brazil 2014. Two matches sealed the Boys in Green's fate. Sweden came to the Aviva stadium and outclassed a limited Ireland to beat them two goals to one in September. A few days later, the Republic of Ireland travelled to Austria where their limitations in the midfield were exposed to be beaten one nil. Trapattoni and the FAI parted company the following day with the septuagenarian leaving on a jetplane and with a six figure pay off. It was hardly surprising: while the statistics tell their own story, the style of play was unimaginative and you never got the sense that he inspired the team to play consistently decent football on the ground. Still, some players did emerge after 5 years of Trap's reign. He brought some good players through the system and gave a large contingent of these players experience at the highest levels.

Smídín Gaeilge



All Ireland Final Cluiche Ceannais na hÉireann



Peil	Pel	Football
Tománaíocht	Um-awn-ee-ockt	Hurling
Camógaíocht	Cam-oh-gee-ockt	Camogie
Ath-imirt	Ah-imurt	Replay
Comhscór	Koh-score	Draw
Maor Líne	Mware leena	Linesman
Feall	Fyall	Foul
Imreoir gortaithe	Imr-roar gur-ti-ha	Injured player
Laoch na himeartha	Lake na him-her-ha	Man of the Match
An Réiteoir	Ray-tore	Referee
Lár na páirce	Lawr nu Paw-rca	Centre of the pitch
Bainsteoir	Ban-ish-tore	Manager
Liathróid	Lee-road	Ball
Sliotar	Shlit-ur	Hard leather ball used in hurling.

Phrases used in a match:

Ádh Mór	Aw-more	Good Luck
Mí-ádh	Mee-aw	Hard Luck
An-phass	On-fass	Great Pass
Magadh atá tú!	Mag-a ataw too	You must be joking!
Réiteoir, bhfuil tú dáiríre?	Ray-tore, will too daw-rira	Are you serious Referee?
Ciceáil amach go tapaidh é	Kick-awl amock gu top-ey ay	Kick it out quickly
Comhghairdeas!	Co-cor-dis	Congratulations!
Bhí an bua tuillte agaibh	V on bua til-ta agwiv	You deserved the win

Seamus Heaney

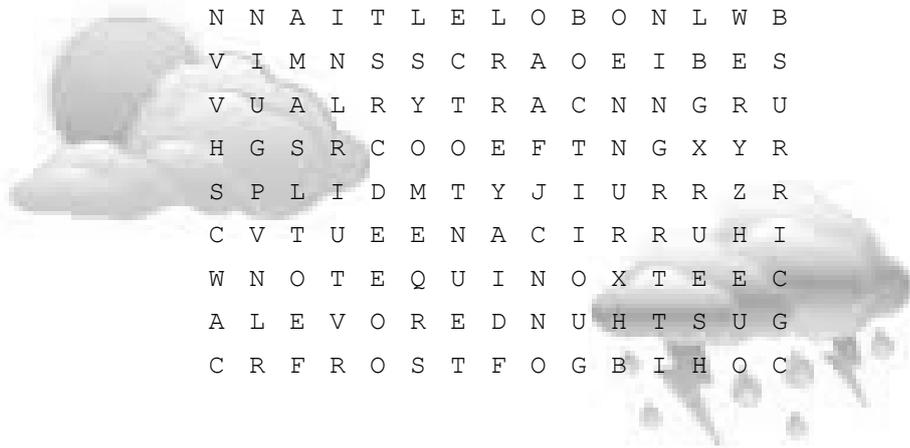
<i>Fuair Séamus Heaney bás ar an 30 Lúnasa, aois 74.</i>	<i>Foor Séamus Heaney baws air on 30 Loon asa, eesh 74.</i>	<i>Séamus Heaney died on the 30th August, aged 74.</i>
<i>File Cálúla a bhí ann ó Chontae Doire.</i>	<i>Fila Caw-loola a vi ow-n oh Cun-day Dira.</i>	<i>A famous poet from County Derry.</i>
<i>Scríobh sé 'Midterm Break'.</i>	<i>Screev shay 'Midterm Break'.</i>	<i>He wrote 'Midterm Break'.</i>
<i>Ar dheis Dé go raibh a Anam.</i>	<i>Air yesh Day gu rav a anum.</i>	<i>May he rest in peace.</i>

What is the weather like?



- Anticyclone
- Barometer
- Blizzard
- Cirrus
- Cloud
- Equinox
- Fog
- Frost
- Gale
- Gust
- Humidity
- Hurricane
- Jet Stream
- Lightening
- Monsoon
- Rain
- Sleet
- Snow
- Sunny Spells
- Showery
- Squalls
- Storm
- Thunder
- Tornado
- Temperature
- Wind

C O R D V C Y M S Y G L D W S
 S U N N Y S P E L L S I R O T
 M I T G M E L Y A Q C G A N O
 W A A E S O T E U J E H Z S R
 O L E Z M I N A E N V T Z H M
 E D A R D P L S O T H E I O B
 N N A I T L E L O B O N L W B
 V I M N S S C R A O E I B E S
 V U A L R Y T R A C N N G R U
 H G S R C O O E F T N G X Y R
 S P L I D M T Y J I U R R Z R
 C V T U E E N A C I R R U H I
 W N O T E Q U I N O X T E E C
 A L E V O R E D N U H T S U G
 C R F R O S T F O G B I H O C



Spot the Difference

Can you spot 12 differences between these two pictures?



Sudoku

	8	3		5	
5	1				3
		8	5	4	
				9	2 3
	8			7	
3	4	7			
	2		9	7	
3					6 1
	6		1		5

Each Sudoku grid has a unique solution that can be reached logically without guessing. Enter digits from 1 to 9 into the blank spaces. Every row must contain one of each digit. So must every column, as must ever 3x3 square.

Answers to Spot the Difference

1. Carpenter's side pocket is missing; 2. Light bulb in lamp is missing; 3. Drawer handle is missing; 4. Chest pocket is coloured in; 5. Top of hat is coloured in; 6. Elbow on lamp arm is coloured in; 7. Pant cuff is coloured in; 8. Hole in board has moved down; 9. Tall jar has moved; 10. Screwdrivers have moved; 11. Bottom drawer is narrower; 12. Carpenter's square is longer.



The Gathering Ireland 2013

The Gathering Ireland is a year-long celebration of Ireland and its people. It is the biggest tourism initiative ever staged in this country and invites anyone who has a link to Ireland to travel here for a series of events throughout 2013.



Riverdance World Record

More than 1,600 people from 163 dance schools in 44 countries gathered along the banks of the River Liffey to set a world record for the most number of dancers performing Riverdance at the one time. The dancers lined the North and South Quays while also crossing the Samuel Beckett Bridge.



FlightFest 2013

Over 100,000 people were estimated to have taken to the streets of Dublin on the 15th of September as 30 aircraft flew low over the River Liffey

