



Repatriation Figures 2012

There has been a noticeable increase in the number of applications for repatriation being approved over the last few years, although the number of people repatriated to Irish prisons remains low. In April, the Minister for Justice and Equality released a report showing the number of repatriation applications received and approved in 2012.

In 2012 three prisoners were transferred to serve the remainder of their sentence in Ireland. This is compared to one prisoner in 2011, while there were no transfers in 2010 and two prisoners were transferred in 2009.

Ireland has been a party to the Council of Europe Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons since 1995. The Minister's report states that it has

been long established Government policy that, whenever possible, prisoners should be permitted to serve their sentences close to their families and 145 prisoners have been transferred into this jurisdiction since 1995.

Fourteen new applications for repatriation were received in 2012. Of these applications, six were from the UK, two were from Spain, two were from

Continued on Page 3

Pope Francis

In March Pope Francis was elected 266th Pope of the Catholic Church

"I am a sinner, but as this office has been given to me, I accept". These are reported to be the words of Cardinal Bergoglio when he was asked if he would accept the papacy. He then announced that he would take the name Francis. Cardinals and Vatican staff were lined up to greet the new Pope but he didn't want to delay because there were 100,000 people in St. Peter's Square standing in the rain and he did not want to keep them waiting any longer. Pope Francis has become the 'Pope of the people', champion of the poor, the marginalized and those in prison.



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. Cecelia Snape, Rev Stephen McKenna, Sr Agnes Miller and Kathleen Walsh.

Interns

London: Ellena Jade Costello and Sara Thompson.

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

How we may be contacted:

ICPO, Columba Centre

Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Ireland
Tel: 01-505-3156 Fax: 01-629-2363
Email: icpo@iecon.ie

ICPO, 50-52 Camden Square

London NW1 9XB, England
Tel: 0207-482-4148 Fax: 0207-482-4815
Email: prisoners@irishchaplaincy.org.uk

Material on these pages are copyright © the Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas or reproduced with permission from the copyright owner. It is not permitted to reproduce, republish, redistribute or resell, in all or in part, any material from this newsletter without the written permission of the editor.

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



IRISH CATHOLIC
BISHOPS' CONFERENCE



Society of St Vincent de Paul



AN ROINN GNÓTHAÍ EACHTRACHA
Department of Foreign Affairs

A Note From the Editor

Greetings from all in the ICPO.

Repatriation is an important issue for many ICPO clients and in this edition of the newsletter we highlight a report released by the Minister for Justice and Equality in April which shows that, while the number of prisoners transferred to Ireland remains low, there has been an increase in the number of repatriation applications being approved over the last few years.

Mairin Higgins, Programme Director of the Safe-Home Programme, provides an interesting account of the history of Irish emigration and the essential support provided by Safe-Home to older Irish emigrants who want to return home.

ICPO Caseworker Catherine Jackson examines how to transfer a licence from the UK to Ireland, a process that can be quite complicated and requires the agreement of the UK National Probation Service and the Irish Probation Service.

This edition also includes several pieces from ICPO clients describing their experience of prison overseas. I would like to thank these clients for sharing their personal experiences with us and to thank everyone who contributed to our poetry page. We are delighted to hear from you so please keep your contributions coming in.

I would like to extend special thanks to Eoin O'Mahony, author of the sports update, and to Caitriona ní Bhaoill, author of *Smídín Gaeilge*. We are very grateful to them for their contributions.

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

Joanna Joyce
ICPO Coordinator

Repatriation Figures 2012

Continued from Front Page

Northern Ireland and there was one each from Belgium, Estonia, Scotland and Sweden. Three prisoners were transferred into this jurisdiction from the UK and one application was refused. There were 24 applications active at the end of 2012.

Inward Transfers - Work Processed in 2012

Number of Applications Received in 2012	14
Number of Applications from previous years active at start of 2012	29
Number Transferred in 2012	3
Number Refused	1
Number Withdrawn	0
Number Deemed Closed	11
Number released	4
Number of applications active at end of 2012	24

Reproduced from the Report by the Minister for Justice and Equality, Alan Shatter T.D., for the period 01 January, 2012 - 31 December, 2012

When repatriated a prisoner will generally be expected to serve at least the minimum sentence imposed in the foreign country, receiving credit for time served and any remission earned based on the rate prescribed in the country in which he/she made the application. Once the prisoner is returned to Ireland, the Irish rate of remission will apply, which currently stands at one quarter.

It currently takes on average 18 months to two years for an application to be processed, but this will depend on the individual case. If you are applying for repatriation be sure to supply accurate, up-to-date information to the Department of Justice and Equality. If inaccurate or inadequate information is supplied it may cause unnecessary delays in processing the application.

The ICPO is grateful to the Department of Justice and Equality for allowing us to monitor repatriation applications on behalf of our clients.

Repatriation of Prisoners Serving IPP Sentences

Many of our clients will be aware that the Department of Justice and Equality is not accepting repatriation applications from prisoners serving IPP sentences in the UK as there is no equivalent sentence under Irish law. The ICPO is engaging with the Department of Justice to try and resolve this important issue. If you are serving an IPP sentence in the UK and are interested in applying for repatriation to Ireland please contact us at ICPO, Columba Centre, Maynooth, Co Kildare, Ireland or ICPO, 50-52 Camden Square, London NW1 9XB, England. If you are serving an IPP sentence in the UK and have been refused repatriation we would be grateful if you could send us copies of any documents you received from the UK Ministry of Justice or the Irish Department of Justice.

Joanna Joyce
ICPO Coordinator

UK Licence Transfer

A particular feature of sentences in the UK is release on licence. When a prisoner is released on licence, they remain under the supervision of the UK National Probation Service. This means that a prisoner is released but expected to obey certain conditions of release or face a return to prison. There are six standard conditions for release on licence: (1) obey the law and not commit further offences; (2) maintain contact with the assigned probation officer; (3) live at an approved address and inform their probation officer if they are not going to be at that address even if only for a night; (4) allow their probation officer to visit them at their home; (5) only do work (either paid or unpaid) that has been approved by their probation officer; and (6) the probationer cannot travel outside the UK (permission to travel outside of the UK will only be granted very rarely in certain circumstances). These are only the standard conditions for prisoners serving determinate sentences. Additional conditions may be imposed which could include a curfew or participation in a designated treatment programme among other conditions.

Many ICPO clients contact ICPO London and ICPO Maynooth about transferring their licence. Currently this is not a simple process. The process is voluntary on all sides. This means that the ICPO client, the UK National Probation Service and the Irish Probation Service all have to agree to the transfer of probation to Ireland.

Sometimes ICPO clients are under the impression that as Irish citizens the Irish Probation Service must agree to supervise their licence. **The Irish Probation Service is under no obligation to agree to supervise the licence of Irish citizens who are subject to a licence in the UK.**

An ICPO client interested in having a UK licence transferred to Ireland should begin the process early by informing their probation officer/offender manager of their interest in this. ICPO should also be contacted at an early stage so that we can provide the probation officer/offender manager with a letter including contact details for the appropriate person in Irish probation.

When making the decision as to whether or not the supervision of someone under licence will be transferred to Ireland both the National Probation Service and the Irish Probation Service will be looking for indicators that the prisoner is willing to do what is required by probation. This is best demonstrated by doing the required courses in prison (although this may be difficult since many required courses have long waiting lists) and establishing a good relationship with the probation officer/offender manager. Also, it is helpful if family in Ireland are supportive of the request for licence transfer. **Generally speaking ICPO clients on licence should expect to serve some portion of their licence in the UK before the National Probation Service will agree to a transfer of licence to Ireland.**

If the Irish Probation Service agrees to supervise someone on a UK licence, the parolee is expected to continue to abide by the conditions of their licence. If they do not comply with the conditions of their licence, the Irish Probation Service will immediately inform the National Probation Service in the UK who will then immediately apply for a warrant.

The EU has taken steps to make it easier for EU citizens convicted in one EU country to transfer their probation supervision back to their own country. The Council Framework Decision of 27 November 2008 provides that probation can be served in a different country than the country where an EU citizen was sentenced. The Framework Decision, when it is ultimately enacted into Irish law, lays out a process for transferring a licence which can be followed by the Irish Government.

Life licences are imposed when someone is paroled from a life sentence in the UK. Currently, until the Framework Decision is enacted into Irish law, it is not possible to transfer a life licence to Ireland.

The transfer of licences from the UK to Ireland is not a straightforward process. On that basis ICPO clients who wish to transfer their licence from the UK to Ireland should involve the ICPO at an early stage of the process in order for us to most effectively assist them.

Catherine Jackson
ICPO Caseworker

St. Patrick's Day Celebration in HMP Brixton



Left to Right: Eugene Dugan, Director of the Irish Chaplaincy in Britain, Cheryl Johnson, Head of Equalities at HMP Brixton, Breda Power, ICPO Caseworker, Ryan Bleach, Lord of the Dance, Noeleen Curran, Embassy of Ireland, London, and Gerry McFlynn, ICPO Project Manager.

The ICPO London office arranged a St. Patrick's Day celebration in Brixton prison on Thursday, 21st March. While unfortunately prisoners were not able to attend this event, it allowed ICPO to share our culture and purpose with prison staff, including Governor Mr Ed Tullett.

Everyone who attended the event said they thoroughly enjoyed the day and will be bringing their colleagues next year!



This lovely caravan was made by Anthony Cawley for the ICPO London office.

Update from London ICPO Office

It's hard to believe that summer is almost upon us although you certainly wouldn't think so judging by the weather! And talking about 'summer' weather reminds me of what the poet, Lord Byron, once said about the British winter: that it ends in July and begins in August!

Life in the London office is busy as usual with a steady supply of letters and phonecalls ably dealt with by Liz Power, Declan Ganly and Russ Harland along with our volunteers Ellena Costello and Sara Thompson. Breda Power looks after the London male prisons while Sr Agnes Miller and Kathy Walsh visit the London female prisons. Sr Maureen McNally and Jayne O'Connor between them take care of the prisons in the south west of the country, while Sally Murphy visits prisons in the Merseyside area. We receive a large number of letters and phone calls on a daily basis from prisoners all over the country and unfortunately we cannot reply to them as promptly as we would like—please continue to be patient with us.

You may have heard recently about the proposed changes to **the criminal justice system** which are expected to come into force in October. These changes will have serious implications for prisoners in England and Wales, especially in relation to legal aid. Government policy would appear to be more concerned about punishment than rehabilitation. The changes to the Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP) schemes from November will include: a longer working day for prisoners; a ban on films with an 18 certificate; extra gym time being dependent on active engagement with rehabilitation; restricted privileges, including access to private cash, for prisoners in the first two weeks of their sentence; having to wear prison uniform at entry level and then being put on either basic or standard "IEP level" depending on how they "co-operate with the regime or engage in rehabilitation". Prisons will also have strengthened powers to recover money from inmates who damage their property. When the new system is introduced, existing prisoners will not lose the privileges they already have unless their status is reviewed.

Reforms to the **probation service** are also a concern. The probation service is to be broken up with almost 70% of its work going to private firms like SERCO and GS4 which will be contracted to deal with prisoners for the first twelve months after release. In practice this will mean that the supervision of offenders on community penalties and post-prison supervision will be opened up to competition on a "payment by results basis." Companies like SERCO, GS4 and even TESCO and haulage firms like Eddie Stobarts will be making bids for the contracts!

Even more alarming are the proposed changes to **legal aid**. Under the new proposals client choice will be removed and prisoners will be allocated legal representation from a government agency. The Government's plans in a consultation paper called "Transforming Legal Aid" will include the following: almost all cases other than parole hearings and adjudications before an independent judge will no longer get legal aid; legal aid will not be available for cases relating to getting access to courses, all categorisation cases (including cat A reviews, getting to open conditions and challenging removals from open conditions), resettlement and licence conditions cases and all adjudications (including appeals) where there is no possibility of

Update from London ICPO Office

added days. There are no exemptions for children or mentally ill or disabled prisoners. Firms and organisations that specialise in prison law but do not do general crime work will no longer be able to do this work. Massive cuts to legal aid fees for prison law work including judicial review applications will mean that prisoners will probably only ever be represented by inexperienced clerks and that lawyers with a lot of expertise will quickly disappear from the scene.

What this means in practice is that if you have the misfortune to be given a bad solicitor there will be nothing you can do about it. Quality will become uneconomic and there won't be much incentive for a solicitor to do a decent job. As usual, the real victims will be prisoners and their families. Some legal firms estimate that the reforms will reduce the number of people who qualify for legal aid by as much as 75%. They amount to nothing less than the destruction of the criminal justice system as we have known it. Even the Ministry of Justice accepts that quality will be seriously compromised by these proposals. It all amounts to justice by price competitive tendering.

The **PPMI** (Progressing Prisoners Maintaining Innocence) Group has been meeting regularly to find ways of highlighting the plight of those maintaining innocence. We recently held a meeting at the House of Lords where we discussed matters with the former Chief Inspector of Prisons, Sir David Ramsbotham. He has agreed to act as our link person with the prisons Minister and to place our concerns before him at a forthcoming meeting.

The **ICPO Prisoner Handbook** is now available and can be obtained from the office here. This booklet is designed to help prisoners understand prison life and hopefully make their time inside that much more bearable/tolerable. Please feel free to let us know what you think of it and whether or not it meets your needs. After all, it's meant to help you!

Prison visiting is becoming even more problematic in the sense that prisons are now conducting their own security clearance checks and what works for one prison doesn't necessarily work for another! The impact is severe on our plan to enlist volunteer prison visitors in the regions. Privately run prisons - which are on the increase - are the most difficult to visit with each prison conducting its own security checks! In all my time with the ICPO I have never known it to be so difficult to get into prisons for visits! So please be patient with us when it comes to arranging a visit.

All in all, the future is anything but bright. The Prison Service is changing fast with more prisons being put out to tender upon review and the influence of the private sector growing at an alarming rate. The Prison Service is now an industry - one of the few growth industries left in the country! Sadly, the impact is being felt most by prisoners and their families with the cutbacks in education programmes, prison workshops, rehabilitation programmes, and the changes to the criminal justice system including probation and legal aid. As the Chinese proverb has it, we live in interesting times and I fear they are about to get even more interesting!

Fr. Gerry McFlynn
ICPO Project Manager

The Safe-Home Programme

Ireland's emigration story is remarkable. Of three million Irish citizens living abroad, almost 1.2 million are Irish-born, which is around a quarter of the current population of Ireland. The last census in the United States showed 34 million people claiming Irish ancestry. Throughout the world more than 100 million people claim Irish descent. It has been estimated that between 1949 and 1989, more than 800,000 people were forced to leave Ireland, approximately one-fifth of the current population of the Irish State. The nadir was reached in 1955 when 55,000 young people left our shores due mainly to difficult economic and social conditions in Ireland. That migration included many tens of thousands of young men (as they were then) who went to work on construction sites abroad. Why did they leave? Some sought adventure while others saw emigration as a welcome escape from the drab, conservative country that was Ireland. However, for the overwhelming majority emigration was a painful experience. TD Martin Ferris (Sinn Féin) who grew up in County Kerry recalls the 1950s when emigration was happening on a daily basis. "Across entire stretches of countryside, there was not one family that was not affected - working class people, small farming communities and fishing communities". He explains that every county has a small bridge which became known as a 'bridge of tears', where people said goodbye to their loved ones before they emigrated, knowing full well that, in most instances, they would not return. Many were forced to emigrate because the family farm could not support them or because there was no employment in their locality or in the big towns and cities.

Young men and women left an Ireland where there was widespread poverty, no running water, showers, toilets or electricity and where the diet was extremely limited. Meat was seldom on many tables and tuberculosis was rampant. Emmet Stagg TD (Labour Party) speaks of his childhood as one where there was a savage school regime and unaffordable fees if one was to go on to secondary school level, and where the only work available was with larger farmers, as shop assistants or as skivvies in the houses of the 'gombeenmen' or the remnants of the gentry, where they were paid slave wages and in some cases none. One was lucky to earn one's 'keep', so what other option was there for a family of fourteen children but emigration in order to survive?

Many emigrants had left school early (often as young as 12 years of age) and their youth and lack of worldly experience as well as poor education often made them vulnerable abroad. With little formal education they spent their lives in hard labour. To the families these boys and girls left behind there

was the empty chair, the faded photograph, the heartbreak and tears, and (in the case of emigration to the US) memory of the going away 'do' (the American wake) for a son or daughter, brother or sister, who might be gone forever. A hole created in a family and a community. A lack of government interest in what became of our emigrants meant they were, to a large extent, a 'vanished people'. But those who left Ireland remembered us and remembered their homeland.

Between 1939 and 1969 the sum of approximately \$4 billion was remitted by our emigrants and it played a crucial role in sustaining families and communities at a time of dire poverty in Ireland.

Between 1939 and 1969 the sum of £3.5 billion (approximately \$4 billion) was remitted by our emigrants and it played a crucial role in sustaining families and communities at a time of dire poverty in Ireland. Indeed, in many ways they laid the foundation stone for Ireland's prosperity of the Celtic Tiger years in that it made possible the well educated workforce when the foreign multinational companies looked to expand into the EU market. According to the annual State returns from the 1940s to the 1970s, under the heading "Emigrants' Remittances", our emigrants contributed between 2% and 3% of GDP. Of course, records of "emigrant remittances" take account only of cheques, money orders and bank transfers. They do not account for all the pounds and dollars 'shoved in envelopes' and posted home on pay day. Ireland benefitted to a much greater extent from the remittances sent home by her emigrants than from grant aid the country got from the European Union structural and social development funds

Once settled in their country of destination our emigrants made an enormous contribution to the development of the societies they joined. Now the majority are well integrated, living productive and happy lives abroad and contributing greatly to their adopted countries. They have children and grandchildren around them and enjoy frequent contact with them. Their children have had educational opportunities undreamt of by the young man or woman who first stepped off the ship, plane or train that brought them to Sydney, Boston, London etc in the 1940s, 50s and 60s. The 'many young men of twenty' (lauded in John B Keane's compelling drama about emigration) who left Ireland in poorer times are now the somewhat fewer older men (and women) of 60, 70 and 80 years.

They have friends and neighbours, workmates and business contacts whose presence all goes towards making life enjoyable. Many have been successful and can afford to travel to Ireland for holidays to visit family and friends and the distance no longer seems that great. Often they play host to visiting relatives from Ireland. Many of our emigrants

now live in comfortable homes, they shop in stores that cater to their taste, eat, drink and socialize and, largely, enjoy the town or city that they have grown comfortable in. Some emigrants have been extremely successful and they and their off-spring, as part of the much lauded Diaspora, are offering help to Ireland in its current difficulties.

Of course not all of those who emigrated have done so well for themselves. Often factors such as lack of education, poor health, inadequately developed social skills, and possibly life style choices or just bad luck militated against them. Some of our emigrants struggled to make ends meet despite working hard all their lives while others stumbled and fell under the pressure of being far from home and, perhaps, were unable to 'get on their feet' at all.

Throughout their time away our emigrants (on the whole) have maintained their Irishness and wear their Irish identity with pride. There are Irish County Associations and Irish Centres in many major cities and, in many ways, the culture we find abroad is Irish culture in its purest form, in that unlike in Ireland where American and British influences abound, our emigrants have maintained within their community the music, songs and dance they brought with them from home and have passed this on to their children. Those emigrants who can be thoroughly integrated into the host society (while still retaining and celebrating their Irishness) are in the vast majority but there are a small number who (for a variety of reasons) seek to return to their homeland in their twilight years. The Safe-Home Programme was set up in January 2000 by GP Dr Jerry Cowley as a pilot scheme to test the level of interest among older Irish emigrants to return to their homeland for permanent settlement. A surprisingly large number of older emigrants indicated that if it were possible they would come home. Thus in July 2001 Safe-Home became a programme in its own right and was designated by the then Tánaiste, Mary Harney TD, as the National Repatriation Programme for Ireland. In order to offer applicants a realistic chance of returning to Ireland we successfully negotiated access to Housing Association units and it is to these that our older emigrants return.

In December 2001 the Department of Foreign Affairs set up a Task Force to address the special needs of those Irish emigrants abroad who are particularly marginalized or are at greatest risk of exclusion. Members of the Task Force travelled to Britain, the USA and Australia to meet representatives of Irish societies and community groups prior to completing their report which the then Minister, Brian Cowen TD, published in August 2002. The significance of the Task Force was that Government gave recognition to our emigrants. Late in the day, the recognition that the Irish Government has a responsibility for those hundreds of thousands who were forced to emigrate and a willingness to put funding into organizations involved with their welfare was welcomed. Among the recommendations of the Task Force was that support that would enable older Irish emigrants

**Throughout their time away
our emigrants have
maintained their Irishness
and wear their Irish
identity with pride.**

seeking to return to Ireland but unable to provide accommodation for themselves would be made available through Safe-Home.

Since mid 2001 Safe-Home has been able to secure accommodation for its applicants throughout the State and, through a relationship developed with providers in the North of Ireland, has been able to assist those seeking to return to the northern counties with details of Housing Associations there that are supportive of returning emigrants. Most of the applications to Safe-Home come from Britain but a substantial number come from the USA. We also have applicants from Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Zimbabwe as well as from a number of mainland European countries. A national organization in Ireland, Safe-Home has become an international organization outside of Ireland.

Our client group are those older Irish born emigrants (close to or over 60 years) who left Ireland in the 1940s, 50s, and 60s and want to return to their homeland. Applicants must be living in rented accommodation or accommodation they can show is not owned by them and be unable to provide housing for themselves (in Ireland) from their own means. Applicants must be seeking to return to their County of origin or a County they have strong verifiable links with and their intention must be to move back to Ireland permanently. In order to concentrate our efforts on those we can help, Safe-Home discourages applications from those outside of the criteria although we are willing to give information about returning to Ireland to anyone who wants to receive it regardless of age or circumstance.

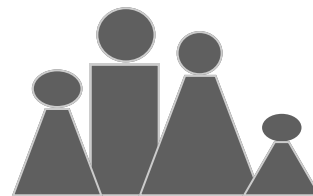
While we are keen to ensure that details of the Safe-Home Programme are known about by those likely to benefit (either from application or receiving information about returning to Ireland) we do not canvass for applicants. Coming home is not for everyone and, indeed, we counsel over 50% of those who do apply against coming. We will not tell anyone that they cannot return to their homeland. We just keep reinforcing the message that Ireland has changed and so have they so that an individual, weighing up all of the pros and cons, can make the decision that is right for them. Ireland of the 21st Century is a very different place to the Ireland that many of our emigrants left.

The experience of those we have assisted to return has on the whole been positive. Returnees finance their journey home bringing with them their 'foreign' State pensions, sometimes a work or private pension and their small savings. Spending what money they have locally, they are a benefit to the communities they join here.

In 2008 we produced the book "Coming Home" which records the stories of a number of those emigrants who returned to Ireland after many years abroad. In the past decade 1,359 older emigrants have been assisted to return to Ireland with 141 of those returning in 2010 and 147 during 2011. During 2011 we carried out 79 home visits in England (a requirement



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?

If so, please contact Brian Hanley, Caseworker, ICPO Maynooth.

Family Information Day November 2012

We held a Family Information Day in The Camden Court Hotel, Camden Street, Dublin on 27th November 2012. 23 family members, representing 14 families, attended.

Joanna Joyce, ICPO Coordinator in Maynooth, opened the day by welcoming everybody and thanking them for coming, and acknowledged that some had travelled long distances. She outlined the programme and thanked the speakers for giving of their time to attend.

Sr. Brega Whelan spoke on the importance of Maintaining Good Health and Relationships and asked for a volunteer to demonstrate ways of relieving tension through massage. She had two takers who appeared to be quiet happy to accept the offer and indeed said they had felt much better after a few minutes.

John Taaffe, National Coordinator of the Irish Bishops' Drugs Initiative, gave valuable advice on 'Supporting a Loved One with Addiction Issues.' There was lots of interaction by the families who were delighted to hear that Family Support Networks were to be set up in all major towns in the country. Some people expressed an interest in becoming involved in these networks.

The lunch break gave people a break and an opportunity to speak with other families in the same situation as they had found themselves. Indeed some discovered that other situations were worse than theirs.

Michelle Martyn, Irish Penal Reform Trust, started off the afternoon with a presentation of an IPRT Report. She spoke on 'Picking Up the Pieces: The Rights and Needs of Children and Families Affected by Imprisonment'. These topics touched the hearts of all present as we are all aware that families are victims also.

David Ormond, Department of Foreign Affairs, imparted very important information on 'Providing Consular Assistance to Irish Prisoners Overseas'. David was excellent and answered question at length and indeed spoke to anyone who had a problem or wished to meet with him on

a one to one basis. He also provided hand-outs with contact information for families.

The UK update is always a popular part of the day and Breda Power, ICPO London Caseworker, was on hand to answer any questions.

Catherine Jackson and Brian Hanley, Caseworkers with ICPO Maynooth, were available also and were delighted at the opportunity to meet and speak with people.



John Taaffe speaking about supporting a loved one with addictions

The Day ended with a lively **Open Forum**. Questions from the floor were addressed by all speakers and families found this extremely helpful. Factsheets, booklets and informational brochures were available for people to take away.

Feedback from the day was very positive. A mother told us how, for her, the day was calming and how she got lots of valuable information from the speakers. "It was good to meet people in exactly the same situation we found ourselves in. The more we met gave us comfort that we weren't alone. Thanks for all the valuable information", said the brother of a prisoner in South America. "I found John Taaffe's talk from the Drugs Initiative very informative. Well done and thank you", commented the father of a prisoner in the UK.

Joan O'Cléirigh
ICPO Maynooth

Negativity



Is there a cure for negativity?

There is. It's all about making a choice. We can very easily live in a pool of NATS - Negative Automatic Thoughts which can thwart any possibility of us achieving our true potential.

What pollution is on the outside negativity is on the inside. It weakens and pollutes performance. We can be so immersed and surrounded by negativity that we're not even aware of it. There are two kinds of negative energy, internal, what we tell ourselves, and external, what others tell us.

The negative *internal* voice insists:

"You're not good enough!"

"You'll never make it!"

Then there are the toxic *external* negative voices which keep knocking you. You know the people: whinging, whining, moaning, complaining and blaming. They suck energy from you like a vacuum cleaner. They are best avoided if at all possible.

It's not as easy to get away from the *inner* negative voice. Our inner Energy Vampire starts early in the morning.

"It's a dreadful day! I'm not going out running in that!" What's really dreadful is the toxic little negative story you've told yourself in your head. The day has its own energy. As Billy Connolly said, "There's no such thing as bad weather, there is only inappropriate clothing."

Watch how, even in our everyday greetings, we condition ourselves to be negative:

"How are you doing?"

"Not so bad!" **Bad!**

"Hanging in there!" **Hanging?**

"Can't complain!" **Complain!**

How often do you hear people saying,

"Great!"

"Wonderful!"

"Fantastic!"

You cannot say "Great!" with emotion and feel bad.



So if you are going to work, or for a run, or to the gym, go with positive uplifting people. You are the average of the five people you hang out with. Make a list of your five

friends. Are they positive or negative? Put a plus or a minus beside each name. If you have five minuses you need a new set of friends.



The one sure way to cure negativity is to focus on gratitude. Gratitude and negativity cannot co-exist. You cannot be truly thankful and negative at the same time.

The following story illustrates the point.

There once was a bunch of tiny frogs who arranged a running competition. The goal was to reach the top of a very high tower. A big crowd had gathered around the tower to see the race and cheer on the contestants...

The race began...

Honestly, no one in crowd really believed that the tiny frogs would reach the top of the tower. You heard statements such as:

"Oh, WAY too difficult!!!"

"They will NEVER make it to the top. The tower is too high!"

The tiny frogs began collapsing one by one...

... Except for those who in a fresh tempo were climbing higher and higher...

The crowd continued to yell.

"It is too difficult!!! No one will make it!"

More tiny frogs got tired and gave up...

...But ONE continued higher and higher and higher...

This one wouldn't give up!

At the end, everyone else had given up climbing the tower except for the one tiny frog who, after a big effort, was the only one who reached the top!

The other tiny frogs naturally wanted to know how this one frog managed to do it.

A contestant asked the tiny frog who succeeded how he had found the strength to reach the goal. It turned out that the winner was deaf.

He never heard a word from the Energy Vampires!

Sr Mary Whyte

(Adapted from an article by Declan Coyle with kind permission)

The Safe-Home Programme

Continued from Page 9

of Housing Associations here) and met with Irish Welfare and Advice workers in the cities we travelled to. Supporting our older returnees is an important part of our work and to this end we made 182 support visits to where our applicants returned throughout the State. The programme is funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs (Irish Abroad Unit) (€255,000 in each of the past two years) and the Department of the Environment, Community and local Government (€14,875 in 2010 and €13,420 in 2011)

At his inauguration on the 11th November 2011, Uachtarán na hÉireann, Michael D. Higgins, told us of his wish to be a President for all of the Irish at home and abroad and spoke of us as having been a Diasporic people for a great part of our history. "The circumstances that have impelled - and that continue to impel - many citizens to seek employment and a better life elsewhere, are not ordained by some mysterious hand of fate. They challenge our capacity to create a sustainable and prosperous economy and an inspiring model of the good society. We, in our time, must address the real circumstances that generate involuntary emigration, and resolve that in the years ahead we will strive with all our energy and intellect, with mind and heart to create an Ireland which our young people do not feel they have to leave and to which our emigrants, or their children, may wish, in time, to return to work and live in dignity and prosperity".

Despite the current recession Safe-Home continues as a beacon of light for those older emigrants seeking to walk the lanes of their childhood - home at last.

Mairin Higgins
Programme Director

The Role of Irish Embassies and Consulates

One of the most important functions of Irish Embassies and Consulates is to ensure that the rights of Irish citizens who are arrested or imprisoned abroad are fully respected. If you have been detained overseas you can ask the local authorities to contact the Irish Embassy. It is important to be aware of what Embassies can and cannot do to assist you in these circumstances.

The Embassy **can**:

- Visit you or arrange for you to be visited by an Honorary Consul or by a representative of an Embassy or Consulate of one of our EU partners;
- If necessary, provide you with a list of local English-speaking lawyers;
- Advise you about the prison system and about your entitlement to visits, mail and other facilities;
- Bring details of any medical condition you may have to the attention of prison officials;
- Pursue with the prison authorities on your behalf complaints about ill-treatment or discrimination;
- Pass messages to and from your family.

However, the Embassy **cannot**:

- Secure better treatment for Irish citizens than local or other nationals receive;
- Give nor pay for legal advice;
- Interfere with or influence the local judicial system;
- Provide any financial assistance while you are in prison.

From the website of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade: www.dfa.ie



The Bulldozer

Into this world we are born we have no say about where and when.
As we grow we learn to talk, we learn to run, we learn to walk.
We go to school to read and write, we learn to play, we learn to fight.
When you're young you don't care about the big bad world out there.
You never think about being old not always doing what you're told.
For many years you play with friends you never think these times will end.
When things go wrong well it's ok tomorrow's just a day away.
You think about the friends you've had when times were good, never bad.
Long hot summers in the sun, always happy, always fun.
No big dramas, no big fears, if only we could turn back the years.

Then one day the time has come to leave our friends and ones we love.
We charge through life not really knowing what we do or where we're going.
We make mistakes along the way but live to fight another day.
Looking for the perfect life, cosy home and loving wife.
You find these treasures, life could not be rosier,
then comes the big bulldozer.

All these things we held so dear, life's bulldozer begins to clear.
The bulldozer, it clears away all the dreams we hoped would stay.
When it's done you look around, what happened to the dreams I found
Here today, gone tomorrow, life's bulldozer so full of sorrow.
It has no heart, it doesn't care about the mess we must bear.
Life goes on without a blink, it doesn't care, it doesn't think.

T.M., Thailand

What I Say

It couldn't be said of a sudden, of course,
though still you could see, as I too, the branches
emptying with the stir beneath us.
Yet, again, we gave in to that end.

Things spared us for a length, like starch
and the such - only sticky and not enough
to make the whole without the rest.
At least we were, that's what I say - I suppose.

An Autumn Glance

It wasn't the withering leaves slowly
at their long awaited task of self-sacrifice,
nor the mossening wetness of cobbled walkways
where all days grow thin to touch,
not even the fast-passing faces
in their cold-coat covers
with no time to still and share you.
It was, all along, the softness - the knowing
something has left us - that was all.

N.B., UK

Something?

Do you know when you're in the shower
and the warmth of other trickles softly
down the lime of the once shine of tiles
and all else empties itself outwardly
letting what is, is,
and in that moment all moments simply are?
I felt that today.



Your Letters



LETTER FROM SPAIN

I'm sitting here in my little cell in Spain, nearing my release date. Although Spain's penitentiary legislation is the same throughout the state apart from Catalonia, each prison has its own set of interior regulations. Unfortunately, I can't talk about the Spanish prison system without making some reference to the whole judicial system here in Spain, from police to judges, politicians, prison officers etc.

The Spanish have a great law but often don't apply these laws and international treaties. Judges often send men and women to prison for possibly committing a crime, saying if you are innocent you'll get out after the court hearing. Legal aid is generally very bad but private solicitors mostly tell the accused you'll be released if you pay and then you'll be told you need to pay more. The translators either don't speak good English or their Spanish is bad. I'm lucky, I speak both. Once in prison you should be prepared to stay for your sentence. Once you're in prison it's harder to prove innocence.

During my time in Spain's prisons I've met many people (men and women) on remand for months, even years, who were later released without charge or compensation, just the €420 per month that ex-prisoners are entitled to.

Most of the Spanish prison buildings are relatively modern, nearly all have a shower in the cell. The cells are mostly shared by two inmates, though legally everyone is entitled to their own cell. Prisoners don't have to wear uniforms and if you need clothes, the prison will supply you 'rags'. The other prisoners will help out with clothes. On every wing there's a shop selling coffee, sweets and toiletries and depending on the prison you can

buy from the local supermarket once a month or every week. In general the prison food is 'bad' - that's putting it nicely and tap water is dangerous, bottled water is a must.

The prison day starts at 7.45 when the officer does a cell count, you must nod or wave normally, (certain wings you must stand), then the doors to the cells open at 8.30ish, depending on the *funcionarios* (prison officer), when after mopping your cell you make your way down to the *comidor* (dinnerhall). You'll be served a warm liquid that resembles very sweet coffee and a bread roll with jam (sometimes). Most prison shops will be open in the morning so if you've got money on your card, you can buy a proper coffee etc.

At 9.00 or 10.00 prison activities start. We're in Spain where to be punctual is wrong, anyway you most likely won't have any job or activity to do. Getting a paid job is down to luck like most things. Then you'll hear the call to lunch at 13.00 approximately. Potatoes and dirty water or lentils or dirty water and potatoes or rice in tomato, all of these 'lovely' half meals come with lettuce and grubs. Then back to your cell before 14.00 when most prisons do a cell count (depends on the day), lock up until 16.30 in winter, 17.00 in summer, then back downstairs until around 19.00, more potatoes and back up to your cell until the next day, of course another cell count at anytime between 20.30 - 21.30.

Then the same again the next day. Now this is not so bad and you get used to the routine, until you want to do a course or have a visit. The prison timetable and buildings are generally good but we must take a look at the treatment and other conditions in Spain's prisons.



Your Letters



LETTER FROM SPAIN

In Spain, prisoners are allowed to phone their family once they authorize the number, this can be very difficult especially if your family live outside Spain. I'd recommend contacting the Embassy or the Department of Foreign Affairs to help with the paperwork. There are also visits 'Vis a Vis' (a visit in a closed room with bed and shower). These visits are great as they normally last one and a half hours and you are alone with your visitor. Although the law states that inmates are entitled to these visits with friends and family, in reality they try not to allow friends in on visits, one must generally appeal to the Prison Surveillance Court/Judge. There are weekly *crista*/visits (behind glass). For these visits you must authorize the names and DNI or passport numbers of those who might visit. The person or persons that want to visit must book by phone beforehand and present an hour before the visit.

Poverty is a big problem here and unless you work or have financial help life is tough and being Spain, it's very hard to get work in prison.

Temporary release is another lottery, although lately more TRs are being given, I believe. The Prison Administration have sent a bulletin to prison directors recommending they concede these more often to first time offenders and those with short sentences (less than three years). Northern European prisoners and foreigners in general are being asked to take Conditional Freedom in their home Country. The process takes about six months and non-EU prisoners must complete half their sentence. EU treaties make transfers easier as of this year.

To get anything done you often need an *abogado* (solicitor/lawyer). Free legal aid to prisoners has

stopped leaving prisoners in the hands of prison staff unless fortunate enough to have private assistance. Don't expect *permiso* if you plan on living in Spain or going home.

With my father in hospital, I wanted to make a phone call. The phone was broken so I was unable to call for a week even though the prison had a copy of my father's medical prognosis. After asking that my calls be put on the other phone on the wing many times, each answered 'I'll see what can be done, I understand your situation' and then did nothing. I filled a request form saying I would start a hunger strike, within two minutes I was taken to make my call in reception. Every request must be formulated in writing and the prisoner copy stamped (insist) otherwise nothing gets done. If a certain prison officer is helpful, it is often better to wait for his turn before doing anything. The respect system is lies in Spain. The only benefit is hygiene and less noise but there are more rules and unpaid work.

The best you can do is stay out of prison, if not keep occupied, study, read and do some sports. And although television has its place, don't be afraid to turn it off once in a while and read, talk.

N.D., Spain



Your Letters



MARY MAGDALENE

For many, Mary Magdalene is thought of as a sinner, even a prostitute, though she is not described thus anywhere in the Bible.

We must look to sources other than the Bible for information on Mary Magdalene. There are a number of incontrovertible facts known about Mary. She is the most profound and mysterious female in history, whose legacy has endured, and only Mary, the mother of Jesus is more venerated than her. The name of Mary Magdalene has endured in literature, art and sculpture for close to two thousand years.

So what are the known facts? She is mentioned seven or eight times in the Bible. Most experts accept that she was the sister of Martha and Lazarus of Bethany. She is widely believed to have been about ten years younger than Jesus, born of Syrian aristocratic parents whose ancestors were descendants of the Maccabees. She was almost certainly born into a wealthy household, so no wonder she is said to have supported Jesus and his apostles financially. Most likely she had black hair, brown eyes and pale, sallown skin. Mary Magdalene is the saint most associated with beauty and mystery.

One reason so many women of all ages relate so easily to Mary Magdalene is because at a time when women were treated as second-class citizens, she was ahead of her time, having wealth, beauty, intelligence, confidence, and above all the trust of Jesus and the apostles. She was well known and respected.

Another reason she is so endearing is the fact that she is a reformed sinner. She is described, among other things, as 'the New Testament Eve' and 'the Earth Mother'. Some even claim that she is a meteorite! She is the ideal woman, and the perfect example of how a sinful woman can find redemption.

The story of the seven demons who were said to have been cast out of Mary is allegorical. It refers to the seven stages of observance a young girl had to pass through at that time. She was said to have cast out the seventh demon when she passed the seventh stage of observance.

Mary Magdalene was one of the bravest women of all time. She could have been crucified because of her association with Jesus. Because of this danger, she is said to have sailed to France from Israel. The gospel tells us that Mary was from Magdala, or Magadan. Dan Brown, author of 'The Da Vinci Code', has created a new fan base for Mary Magdalene, especially in France. She is believed to have arrived there around 44 A.D. with the Holy Grail.

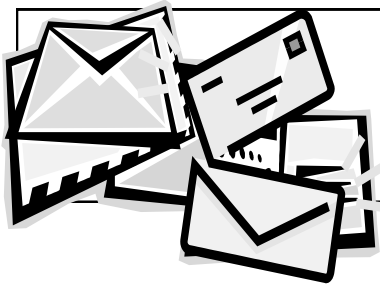
There are many emblems and icons associated with Mary, the most important being the Holy Grail Chalice. There are many hundreds of titles, honours, patronages and dedications to Mary Magdalene. For example, she is the Mother protectress of pregnant women and women in childbirth.

There are 187 Church dedications to Mary Magdalene in England alone. She has a huge following also in Central and South America and in many other countries. It is hard to surpass Mary Magdalene's fame, so what a pity there is so little factual evidence with which to compare her to other great women.

Mary Magdalene died in 63 AD in Aquae Sextiae, and was buried at the Church of St. Maximus at Sainte Baume. Her relics were in the care of the Cassianite monks prior to being given to the Dominicans, but were moved many times. We can never be sure that the remains being venerated today are those of Mary Magdalene.

Mary Magdalene was the most popular of the classical figures in the world of art, especially during the Renaissance period. The Church of St. Mary Magdalene in Jerusalem houses the picture of Mary with the red eggs in the presence of Tiberius. Many of Leonardo da Vinci's works included Mary Magdalene, as did Fra Angelico, Carlo Dolci, Giovanni Bellini, Jan Van Eyck, among others.

C.K, UK



Your Letters



'WHERE WAS GOD IN ALL THIS AND WHY DIDN'T HE STOP IT?'

Dear Friends,

I hope this letter will find you all well today. Hard to believe that Spring has sprung and the new life is all around the prison in the flowers, birds and even the grass which was buried under the snow for so long. Sadly, with all the beauty came the darkness of the Boston Marathon, which was bombed leaving three people dead and almost 200 wounded, some of whom were left without legs, arms and other horrible injuries that men, women and children will be scarred with for the rest of their lives.

I was going to write all about what I felt about the attack which took place; however, I found it better to share a story with you all about two questions I was asked the day after everything happened. Next month, we'll have our yearly Cursillo (Retreat) and it seems like every year when I say 'I don't think I'll sponsor any of the men this year', 'because I just feel like working the team will be enough, in other words, making excuses to do as little as I can get away with. Well anyway I always end up with someone, this year it will be three someones.

One of the men I spoke with from Charlestown which is right beside Boston, was really pissed off and said 'Where was God in all this and why didn't he stop it?' Sadly this has been a question that has been asked a lot around the U.S. but especially in the New England area. No so long ago we had 20 children shot dead in their school along with six adults in the State of Connecticut which is not far from this State. This is not an easy question for many of us behind the walls because there are those who see us no differently as those who committed the bombing, thus they may feel that we speak a lot of lies. My answer is:

'I know you might think that God was nowhere to be seen and I can understand because that's how I feel at times but when you take a look at all the people who stopped dead in their tracks and ran into the areas where the bombs exploded, not knowing if there were more explosives, well, I can see God right there among them. I saw a doctor from one of the hospitals in Boston, who ran the marathon, crossed the finish line and kept on going until he reached where he worked and began saving lives. I believe God could only give him strength to do such a thing.'

It's sad to think that it takes such disasters to bring the type of unity we're witnessing all over the state of Massachusetts and the whole of the U.S. for that matter, but this is what we do. We forget too easily about horrible things that happen in our lifetime and move forward until we're shocked by another act against mankind, that is man's will not God's. 'And why didn't he stop it?' All I could say is what I believe, which is, God gave us the gift of free will and if we believe as Catholic Christians that he has given us such a gift, then we are the ones who control what we do or don't do. In our Catechism of The Catholic Church, I was reading something today that I was looking for, for one of the guys who is preparing for confirmation. It's under the piece explaining Man/Woman's freedom, Article 3, 1730 and it says:

'God created man a rational being, conferring on him the dignity of a person who can initiate and control his/her own actions. God willed that man should be left in the hand of his/her own actions. God willed that man should be left in the hand of his/her own counsel so that he/she might of his own accord seek his/her creator and freely attain his/her full and blessed perfection by cleaving to him.'

It also goes on to say: 'Man is rational and therefore like God; he is created with free will and is master over his/her own acts.'

It's a sad thing to say that it would seem that hate is coming at a younger and younger age so I ask myself - is it because we live in a world where we can kill at will, be learning how to build bombs on the internet, or play video games at home that put kids in control of games such as 'Grand Theft Auto', where it is cool to earn points by carjacking, murdering and worse? Buying guns is like buying candy and that's not from the streets, children are lost and need so much help.

The good thing is my friend will go to the Cursillo and will hopefully leave with the answer to 'where was God in all this and why didn't he stop it?' My prayer tonight is, I hope we don't forget too easily how much pain is in our world, I pray that we will try God's will and not ours and that we never stop asking 'what would Jesus do?'

In closing, I wish you and your loved ones peace and I hope you all have a good summer.

Peter Groome, US



Your Letters



LIFE IN A BOLIVIAN PRISON

Ring, ring. It's 6.10 and it is time to get up for roll call at 6.30. So I'm up, prayers, toilet and wash. Miss roll call and it is a two peso fine. If you don't pay it is *botte*, that's lock up. If you are not up and about at 9.00, it is a bucket of water, 918 litres, all over you.

I live in what is called a pavilion with 45 rooms, each with two to six people. There are 15 toilets, nine showers, one urinal, a kitchen, TV room and yard for hanging out clothes. About 30 people sleep in the TV room and about the same in the yard so there are 150 - 180 prisoners. Then there are wives, girlfriends, kids, brothers, sisters, mum and dad, granddad all staying with the prisoners.

There is a library, three different churches and every type of shop, cottage pharmacy and hospital. There are no guards or locks on the door just DISCIPLINA. There is also a phone room at the front but most people have a mobile phone smuggled in. Roll call is run by the police who are here from 5.30 to 10.30 and then from 19.30 'til 22.00.

To get a room it costs \$100 per month. There are 33 pavilions and each one has ten or 20 dealers for the local coca leaf as well as for coke, pills and *watcha* (the local poitin). Watcha comes for 5, 10, 25, 35, 50 or 70 pesos.

12.00: Get in line for lunch, could be left waiting for 2 hours before it arrives. There are 30 people ahead of me even though I got here first. So to my right there are the football team and the cleaners and then 30 more behind me. I have a big pot for rice and a bowl for soup which is supposed to have some beef. I haven't seen a cow around here ever and you never see the same horse twice either!! So the food arrives, out goes your plate, bowl, pot, pan, bucket, basin, whatever you can manage to get for your food. Served not with pepper or sauce but with flies in abundance.

Cleaning: you can't leave the room till it's finished or it's a fine of 1kg of washing powder or 25 pesos or else lock up. Watch TV in Spanish, don't have a clue what it says, only speak English and Irish but I watch it anyway.

14.30: That's strange. Total lockdown in pavilion. Disciplina have called all prisoners to TV Room, names are called and asked to go with 2 Disciplina to the front office of the prison. I'm called but when I get there, the No 1, 2 and 3 of the pavilion are already there. The No 2 tells me I'm ok and to go back to pavilion. Every person who owes money to the pavilion is there but I get my money on Friday and pay what I owe then. When I get back to pavilion there are only six prisoners there, the rest are up front. I couldn't believe it, the people with the best rooms, best clothes and the best food are all up front. They all owe money. Everybody is told if what you owe is not paid by Sunday, you go to the Botte for two months. Thank God I'm so lucky to have the ICPO helping me out.

18.00: Tea time. Bowl of chicken soup, chicken heads with eyes and chicken feet. The people here love it. Watch more TV or read a book brought to me by the Dominican Sisters who come on Fridays.

19.30: Roll call, back to the book or TV. The pavilions are closed from midnight until 06.00 but you can stay in other pavilions with a friend but you pay 2 packets of washing powder. I'm again lucky there are 4 other people and myself who put our money together, buy food and cook it so we have three meals a day. We don't eat what they give here and sometimes we have some food left we don't cook but keep for tomorrow.

So that's it - another day in Palmasola Resort.

T.B., Bolivia



Brush up on your Irish with Caitriona ní Bhaoill

Smídín Gaeilge

Some Basic Irish Phrases

Is ea	Sha	Yes
Ní hea	Knee Haa	No
Más é do thoil é	Maw shay do hull ay	Please
Go raibh maith agat	Gu rav mah agut	Thank you
Tá fáilte romhat	Taw Fawlcha roat	You're welcome
Gabh mo leithscéal	Gu mo lesh-kayl	Excuse me
Tá brón orm	Taw brone orm	I'm sorry
Maidin Mhaith	Modge-in wah	Good morning
Oíche mhaith	Ee ha wah	Good night

An labhraíonn tú Gaeilge?	On lour-een too Gaeilge?	Do you speak Irish?
Níl agam ach beagáinín Gaeilge	Neel agum ock bug-aw-neen Gaeilge	I only speak a little Irish
Cad is ainm duit?	Cod is anum ditch	What is your name?
Is mise Katie	Iss mishe Katie	My name is Katie
Conas atá tú	Cun-ass ataw too	How are you?
Tá mé go maith, go raibh maith agat	Taw may gu mah gu rav mah agut	I'm fine, thank you
Tá an-athás orm bualadh leat	Taw on awhus urm boo-la lat	I am very glad to meet you
Ní thuigim	Knee hig-im	I don't understand
Cad a dúirt tú?	Cod a doort too	What did you say?
An Cuma leat labhairt níos moille?	On Cuma lat lou-rt neece mwila	Do you mind speaking slowly?
Bíodh lá maith agat!	Bee-ock law jas agut	Have a nice day!

Cúpla Bláthanna an tSamhraidh

coo-pla blaw-hanna on tow-ree

Summer Flowers



Fuschia
Deora Dé
jaw-ra Day
Tears of God



Lilac
Blath Liathchorcra
blaw Lee-a-Cur-cra
Grey-Purple Flower

Slán tamall (slawn tom-ul), goodbye for now



Sports

By Eoin O'Mahony

Gaelic Games

It is almost mid-summer so the new Championship season is with us. The League competition in the first three months of the year provided some pointers but with summer, the big prize awaits in mid-September.

One of the bigger shocks of this footballing season so far is London's narrow beating of Sligo in the Connacht championship. While Sligo are not as good as the team fielded a few years ago, the London team goes from strength to strength, building on



recent results. Sligo were pushed hard throughout by London who now must emerge from the province with a renewed sense of purpose. In Leinster, we are already at quarter final stage with Offaly battling Kildare and Dublin against Westmeath early on. The other half of the draw will separate the wheat from the chaff. Expect Dublin, Kildare and maybe Meath to do well. In Munster, Kerry will probably beat Waterford although Kerry have their own problems under new management. Donegal are looking like the champions so far with a dismissal of Tyrone which emphasises their ascent.

In hurling, there's an air of predictability about some of the early contenders. Cork and Tipperary will probably emerge from Munster with the ease of a knife through butter. Don't expect the Dublin hurling 'revolution' to continue though: there's a sense in Dublin hurling of the energy being drawn back into football. Galway cannot be written off with recent gains being consolidated. By September there is every chance we will see a new name on both the Liam McCarthy and Sam Maguire trophies.

Ladies football and camogie will also add to a

championship season that will lift the spirits at a time when many thought the GAA would suffer in the economic downturn. Ticket sales are down but the Association is determined to continue to draw families and communities together.

Soccer

The Airtricity League Premier Divisions competition is well underway again. St Patrick's Athletic are leading an Inchicore revival of their long tradition by leading Sligo Rovers in a five point lead but with a game in hand. We are about 15 matches into the league season and it is clear already that Shamrock Rovers (some might say the 'real Rovers') are not at the races. Their weak defence and poor scoring record is not aided by a team which is stuck mid table. Cork City saw an early assault on the league but what is evident is that the League is more geographically dispersed now more than in recent years. The Dublin dominance of the league may be broken with Bohemians and Shelbourne languishing at the foot of the table. The Shels in particular are drowning in footballing despair with only 6 points. In England, Manchester United's record 20th League win came just as their legendary manager was



retiring. Alex Ferguson stood down as manager a few games before the end of the season and Everton's David Moyes has already been installed as the new manager. Ferguson won 38 trophies since 1986 with the club and his time there was marked by great happiness as well as some controversy. He guided many young talents to the game he loved and they now populate other teams in Britain and abroad. Ferguson always found a welcome in Ireland not least for his love of horse racing. Manchester City could



Sports

By Eoin O'Mahony

not manage to seal the title this year in the way they did so dramatically last season. They occupy the second spot and alongside Chelsea and Arsenal secured Champions League places for 2013/14. Their management woe continue with a new manager looking to put his stamp on a team with potentially unlimited financial wealth. At the other end, Wigan, Reading and QPR will play in the Championship next year. Under Brendan Rogers, Liverpool might be about to launch an attempt on the title with a consolidation of local talent, moving away from superstars for their own sake.

Internationally, the Republic of Ireland team is continuing its transition with Trapattoni determined to blood new players on the field, with mixed results. Trap's style of management is unknowable to many fans but all that may be of naught if he can guide this team to the World Cup

in Brazil next year. All of that might be academic though if the group fourth spot they currently occupy cannot be shed soon. Germany lead the group with 16 points after 6 games with their neighbours Austria looking good on 8 points and 5 games. Like Ireland, Sweden has 8 points but has played one game less than the Boys in Green. A recent International friendly in Wembley saw Ireland draw with rivals England, one goal a piece. The goals came from Tipperary born Shane Long with a wonderful strike to the top left corner and from Frank Lampard who sneaked one past David Forde between the sticks. Optimism in Wembley however cannot belie the fact that qualification for Brazil is looking unlikely.

Historic Friendly



The captains of the Republic of Ireland and English teams shake hands before kick-off in Wembley Stadium. It is the first time the two teams have faced each other in 18 years. In a highly competitive encounter, with chances for both teams, the match finished in a 1-1 draw.



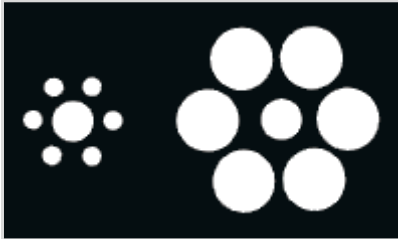
The British & Irish Lions Tour to Australia 2013

During June 2013 the British and Irish Lions will tour Australia. The tour starts in Hong Kong with a match against the Barbarians before moving on to Australia for the main tour featuring 6 provincial matches and three tests.

Ireland is well represented with 10 players included in the Lions squad.

challenge yourself!

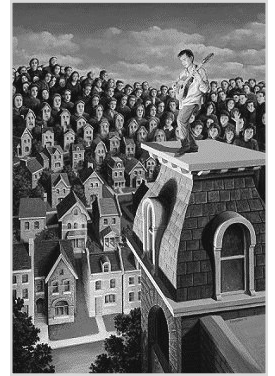
Illusions!!



Which of the MIDDLE circles looks bigger, the one on the left, or the one on the right? Wait, look again!



Old lady or young girl?
Turn page upside down to find out!



Faces or Places?

Can you spot 12 differences between these two pictures?



1. Hair on right is missing. 2. Snow on mountain is missing. 3. Backpack pocket detail is missing. 4. Top of nut is missing. 5. Stripe on pocket is missing. 6. Tree knothole is coloured in. 7. Toe on boot is coloured in. 8. Stick is coloured in. 9. Stump knothole is upside down. 10. Backpack flap is longer.

"When you come to the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on"

~ Franklin D. Roosevelt

challenge yourself!

European Capital Cities

Ankara	Kiev	Reykjavik	B	X	Q	B	O	D	A	T	K	C	P	V	H	V	P
Athens	Lisbon	Riga	E	H	H	L	U	I	R	I	O	F	A	Q	G	E	R
Belgrade	London	Rome	R	O	S	B	S	D	V	P	R	F	R	H	R	I	A
Berlin	Luxembourg	Sofia	L	O	L	O	I	A	E	M	I	I	I	N	U	K	G
Brussels	Madrid	Stockholm	I	I	C	R	J	N	X	W	G	D	S	O	B	B	U
Bucharest	Monaco	Tblisi	N	I	D	K	H	A	N	K	A	R	A	D	N	E	E
Cardiff	Moscow	Vienna	N	A	Y	A	A	O	T	F	X	A	J	N	I	L	H
Copenhagen	Nicosia	Warsaw	M	E	G	A	I	F	O	S	X	C	I	O	D	G	B
Dublin	Oslo		R	E	G	R	U	O	B	M	E	X	U	L	E	R	A
Edinburgh	Paris		N	M	O	N	A	C	O	A	M	R	R	A	U	A	N
Helsinki	Prague		I	S	I	L	B	T	X	O	T	O	A	S	D	D	N
			S	T	O	C	K	H	O	L	M	H	S	H	K	E	E
			N	O	B	S	I	L	L	E	B	E	E	C	C	P	I
			W	A	R	S	A	W	J	T	L	V	F	N	O	U	V
			A	S	N	I	K	N	I	S	L	E	H	W	S	W	B

Quotations to Ponder

T.S. Eliot

The end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started.

Popeye the Sailor

I ain't no physicist but I knows what matters.

Galileo Galilei

The Sun, with all the planets revolving around it, and depending on it, can still ripen a bunch of grapes as though it had nothing else in the Universe to do.

Albert Einstein

Things should be made as simple as possible but not simpler.

Sudoku

	3					9		5
			2		3		6	
4	2			5				1
3			5		9			
	7	2				5	8	
			8		2			4
7				8			4	2
	1		3		7			
9		4					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 every 3x3 square.



RECENT EVENTS IN IRELAND

Swimming Companions

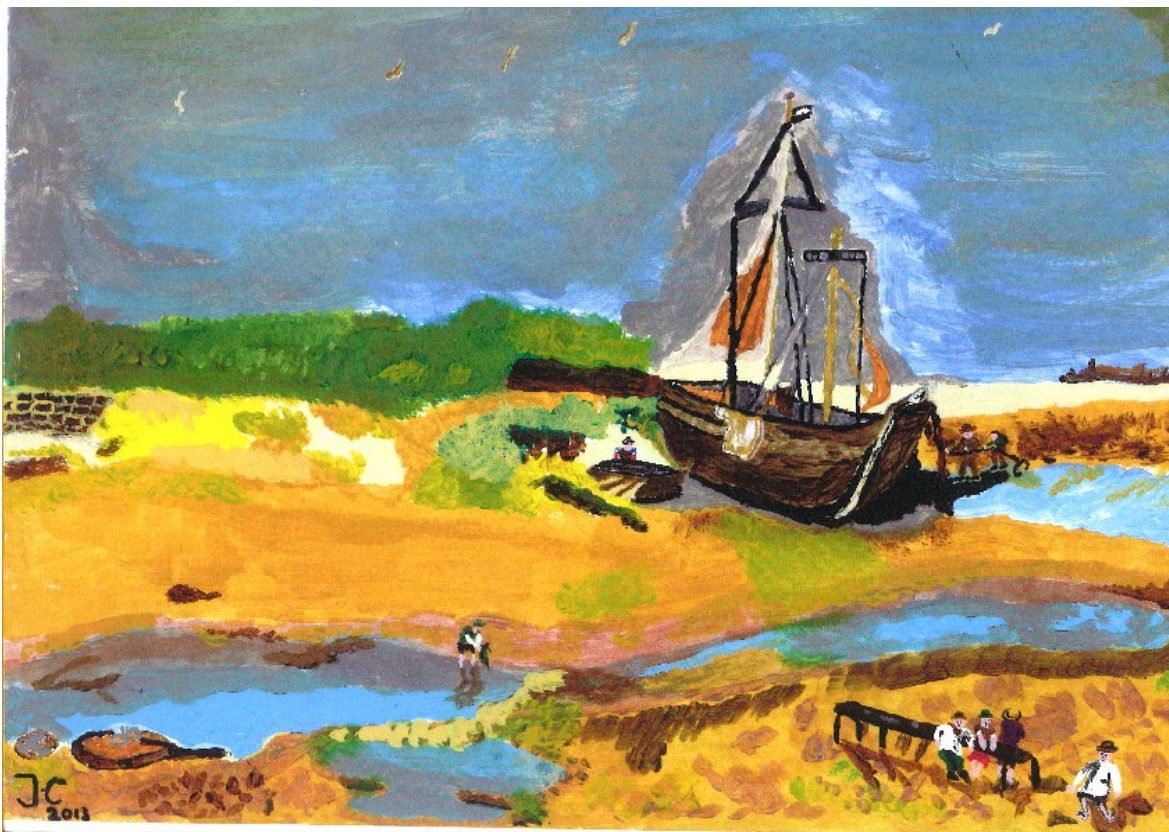


Labrador and Dolphin play together in
Tory Island harbour, Co. Donegal

Leap of Faith



Sr Patricia Wall, (75) from Co Tipperary, undertook a skydive to raise funds for Aware, a voluntary organisation assisting people who suffer with depression.



'Boat Ashore' by Jamie Coates