



**Croí na Gaillimhe**  
Society of St Vincent de Paul



***Newsletter Archives***  
**2011 - 2018**



# Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre



Society of St Vincent de Paul

Issue I: Summer 2011

Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre  
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## Official Opening of Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre



The President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, and her husband, Dr Martin McAleese in Galway to officially open the Resource Centre with staff of the Centre. Seated in the front Loretta Needham, Manager and in the back Anna Maria Maguire, Social Club Coordinator and Maria Flaherty, Reception/Administrator



## Editorial

Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre's first newsletter. The Resource Centre opened in April 2009 but was officially opened in January 2011 by the President of Ireland Mary McAleese.

The thinking around the need for a city based Resource Centre began in 2006 with the identification of the need for more supports for older and younger people in Galway City. A feasibility study commissioned in 2007 (which involved consultations with a wide range of local stakeholders) concluded that there was a need for a city centre based resource to meet the needs of older people, Adults and Young people. Armed with findings emerging from this feasibility study a proposal was developed and submitted to The Maureen O'Connell Bequest for support to re-develop the Mill Street building as a Resource Centre. This application was ultimately successful and the building was re-developed and furnished with a full-time Centre Manager appointed in March 2009. A three year plan was subsequently devised. We worked in 2009 and 2010 with a range of service users to provide a dinner and social club, high quality training programmes and intergenerational projects.

We provide an intergenerational place of welcome, offering a range of holistic educational and social supports complementing current provision in Galway City. The Resource Centre wishes to promote positive change in favour of those who would benefit most in the community, promote inclusion and equality in the community, resource the local community and we work on the basis of the principles of community development.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of St James Conference, St Vincent de Paul volunteers. I would like to thank the Maureen O'Connell Bequest of the Society of St Vincent de Paul who assisted in the funding of Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre.

I would also like to thank all our volunteers who have contributed to the centre and thank them for their contribution. We do not underestimate the power of touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, or the smallest act of caring, all of which has the potential to turn life around.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all concerned with this newsletter for their creative ideas, lively debates, brainstorming, humour, patience, persistence and efforts in producing our first newsletter.

Loretta Needham  
Centre Manager

### Right to Reply

In fairness to our readers and given that this newsletter is not insured against libel, damages or costs, we undertake the following: In case of error of fact we will publish corrections when we become aware of such. In cases of unfairly impugning the reputation of any person we hereby offer that person or their representative the right to reply in the next issue of this newsletter subject only to reasonable length, the law of libel and our right to respond to such a reply.

This project is assisted by the Maureen O'Connell Trust of the Society of St Vincent de Paul.



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## Introduction to Newsletter and Committee

On behalf of the Newsletter committee I would like to welcome you to the first edition of our Newsletter. We hope that this edition will give you a taste of all the fantastic activities that take place here in Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre. From computer classes and creative writing to tea dances and the social club there is something to appeal to everyone! As you can see from our cover The President of Ireland, Mary McAleese recently officially opened the centre and it certainly is an exciting time to be involved with Croí na Gaillimhe.

Our newsletter team consists of Terry Crowe, Elaina Solon, Maria Joyce and Philip Timlin.

We hope you enjoy this first edition.

Maria Joyce

More drama from our 'Living Scenes' participants in our next issue!





## St. James Conference at the Official Opening of Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre by President of Ireland, Mary McAleese



**Back row, left to right: Michael Begley (Treasurer), Sr. Nora Lally, Gerry Joyce, Harry Kenny (Secretary), Tony Hall. Front row, left to right: Jim Harrington (President) President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, Dr Martin McAleese. Absent from photo Ailish Farrelly.**

At 10.30am on Tuesday the 11<sup>th</sup> of January, 2011, President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, officially opened the new Resource Centre called Croí na Gaillimhe which is under the auspices of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Galway. When welcoming President Mary McAleese, Jim Harrington, President of St James

Conference, St Vincent de Paul Society gave some background to the development of the centre.

Consultation with several voluntary and statutory bodies in Galway highlighted the need for a city centre facility catering to the needs of older people and providing a number of supports for young people. Thanks to the generous bequest of the late Maureen O'Connell, the Society's building in Mill Street which was in very poor condition was transformed to a welcoming facility ideally suited to its present use.

Speaking at the launch Loretta Needham, Centre Manager, said *"We are delighted the President of Ireland Mary McAleese officially opened our centre today and her words of encouragement were much appreciated."*

*Loneliness and isolation are highlighted in numerous reports as key issues for older people and for society in general. This issue is of concern to us all, no matter what walk of life we are from. The Croí na Gaillimhe resource centre facilitates integration of people across all cultural, social and economic divides. We offer a dinner and social club to older people and educational and development supports for youth and adult education programmes. We seek improvements in the provision of services for older people, adults and children. Having a resource centre for St Vincent de Paul in Galway provides the foundation from which the integration of all communities can develop".*

As well as the Social Club there is a range of activities taking place in the centre such as computer training, drawing classes, movement and relaxation, line dancing, creative writing, knitting club, tea dances, Training for Transformation, Looking at the economy through women's eyes, Life Skills Training and Living Scenes Intergenerational Programme. NUI Galway, Galway Community College, Moneenageisha and Croí na Gaillimhe are engaged with older clients on an intergenerational learning programme called



## Woman of Courage

An exchange with Tanzania took place in Croí na Gaillimhe on Monday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009. There was a delegation of women from Tanzania and Galway County present at this event. Maimuna Kanyamala participated and inputted into this event in Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre and we are proud to say that she recently received the “Tanzanian Woman of Courage” award in recognition of her efforts to fight gender-based violence and promote women’s rights in Tanzania from the U.S. Ambassador to Tanzania Alfonso E. Lenhardt.



The Thematic Focus of the workshop in Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre was on Empowering Women’s Voices. There is a need to tap the potential of all women by incorporating the value of diversity and experience into the development of interventions, which enable women’s voices to be heard and increase the participation of women in the social, cultural, political and economic development of the communities.

Presentations were given on specific themes namely:

- ✦ Overview of issues concerning Tanzanian Women by Maimuna Kanyamala
- ✦ Violence against women presented by Helen Mortimer
- ✦ (Rural Women) Stories from Our Mothers by Loretta Needham and Sarah Oates





The Vision Fora was facilitated by the Loretta Needham and Sarah Oates. The central focus of each forum was to examine what Irish and Tanzanian women can learn from each other. Through the discussion recommendations were suggested by each of the vision fora on how women can raise their voices in respect to each of the above themes including:

**Where do women need to raise their voices to participate?**

**What are the barriers to their voices being heard?**

**What enables their voices to be heard?**

**What do policy makers (economic, voluntary, cultural organisations and governments etc.) need to do to empower women's voices)?**

*A full report of the exchange is available from Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre.*



Maimuna Kanyamala (left) the Executive Director and founder of Kivulini Women's Rights Organization in Mwanza with Anne Kilango Malecela, Member of Parliament for Same East Constituency at the U.S. Embassy in Dar es Salaam on April 20, 2011. The U.S. Embassy honoured Ms. Kanyamala with the 2011 Tanzania Woman of Courage Award for her efforts to fight gender-based violence and promote women's rights in Tanzania. Ms. Malecela received this award in 2009 for challenging the leadership of her party to confront the question of corruption.



U.S. Ambassador to Tanzania Alfonso E. Lenhardt with Maimuna Kanyamala as she receives the 'Woman of Courage Award' on 20th April, 2011



Ananilea Nkya (Executive Director of the Tanzania Media Women Association), Maimuna Kanyamala (Executive Director and founder of Kivulini Women's Rights Organization), Alfonso E. Lenhardt (U.S. Ambassador to Tanzania), Anne Kilango Malecela (Member of Parliament for Same East Constituency)

**(Photos courtesy of the American Embassy)**



## Dance the Afternoon Away!

Croí na Gaillimhe held our 7th successful monthly 'Tea Dance' on Friday 1st April. We were delighted to welcome the return of popular accordion player John Fallon along with the wonderfully talented Bill Heaney and Eamonn Carrick from the Claddagh Music Society and our newest recruit Tony O'Connell who played a variety of music and kept our audience dancing all afternoon! We are now looking forward to our next Tea Dance. There is no admission fee, but a small contribution to tea / coffee and some delicious cakes! Don't miss out - even if you don't feel like dancing, come along and see the fun!!





## Croí na Gaillimhe Dinner and Social Club



*"It was nearly a year ago I heard about the social club from Sr. Nora. I wasn't going outside the house and she begged me to come down here and to give it a try. It got me out of the house for a few hours. I love it and I love everything they do in it and I love everyone that's in it."*

One of the main activities of Croí na Gaillimhe is the successful dinner and social clubs that are run in the centre every Monday and Wednesday afternoon. The idea came about in 2009 when the work plan for the centre was being put together. Sr. Nora Lally worked with the residents of Madeira Court (next door to the centre) and had started a small group with them.

When the work plan for the centre was finalised in June 2009 one of the main targets in the plan was to start a social club. It

was also hoped that a dinner club would be started. The Centre Manager got in touch with COPE and AGE ACTION a 'Get Up and Go' day was held and this proved to be very successful. On the back of this COPE agreed to deliver the meals to the centre and our dinner club was born.

The social club started on a Wednesday and initially it was just people linked to St. Vincent de Paul and Madeira Court who were involved. It was then decided that it should be widened out to the whole community and particularly to those people who were isolated and at home and who for whatever reason had no social outlet. A social club coordinator, Anna-Marie, was hired and she in turn increased the numbers so it was decided to hold the club on two days – Mondays and Wednesdays. From there the social club has grown and grown.

*"...the socialising would be my favourite thing; no matter what else you do we're meeting each other. That's very important."*

*"I was here from the start and I'll keep coming to it for sure."*

Soon the numbers coming for dinner on a Wednesday had grown to over 20! Those who attend the social club generally come in for 1pm when the dinner is served. After the dinner there are a round of games

including bingo, the parachute game and boccia (a sort of indoor bowls which seems to be one of



*"The bingo and the dancing would be my favourite things. When you are a widow and you don't drink you don't actually get asked out."*

the most popular elements of the club according to many of the participants). After the games there is tea, coffee and biscuits available and it all finishes up around 4pm. On the first Friday of every month there is a tea dance held with musicians, dancing and some food and tea and coffee.

The social club has proved to be one of the most successful ventures for the centre so far and when one visits the club it is easy to see why. An atmosphere of happiness and friendliness permeates the room and all those involved clearly thoroughly

enjoy themselves. Those who attend the social club range from people who have just been coming for the few weeks to those who have attended from the very start. Yet they all have one thing in common – they love the social club and intend on coming for as long as they can. We all hope that will be for a very long time to come.

*"Oh I love here I really do. I love playing the ball (boccia). I like here I like coming here every Monday and Wednesday. We have our dinner and after our dinner we play bingo and then after bingo we play the ball game here on the floor. Then we go home around 4."*





## Training for Transformation (TFT)

Training for Transformation is based on the work of Paulo Freire. He believed that in school we are taught to adapt to our world as it is presented to us. His approach was to get people to recognise that together they have the power to be active in creating positive change in their community. Training for Transformation is for anyone interested in their community and its issues, and for those who work or volunteer with community groups and organisations. The course is usually completed in five or six weekends over a several months.



The training covers Human Relations Skills, Organisation Development, Social Analysis, The Principles and Methods of Paulo Freire and Concepts of Transformation. As no two groups of people are the same, the workshops are designed to suit each individual group of people participating. The focus is very much on experiential learning, learning by doing and by giving, and receiving constructive feedback. This is done using a combination role playing, games and tasks and one to one and group discussion.

The course usually starts with looking at ourselves as individuals and where we are on our journey. Then it progresses to how we interact with others and behave in group situations. There is a huge emphasis on listening and communication skills. How often do we listen to someone talking and put our own spin on it, or only hear what stands out for us in the other person's story. How often do we feel that our story is not being heard? Training for Transformation shows in many ways the value of taking time to listen and to ask the question 'have I got it right, is this what you are saying?' in a non-judgmental way.

Time is given to working in different group situations and exploring how each person is in a group, what motivates us and how we react to and resolve conflict. Leadership skills and styles are looked at and participants take time to find out what kind of leader they are and how they can build on their talents and skills.

The wider community and society is looked at and why it is the way it is. Time is taken to explore what needs to be changed, how that change can happen and how to identify opportunities to create that change.

Participants then need to look at their own community or locality and what issues exist there and how best to address them.

Training for Transformation challenges us to look, listen, hear and see what is going on within ourselves, in our local community, in our country and globally. It helps us to identify the real issues and see how things can change and how we can be the catalyst for that change.





## AONTAS Adult Learning Festival

We have just held our second 'AONTAS Adult Learning Festival'. The Festival is a national event and was run throughout the country from the 21st - 25th February 2011. The aim of our Adult Learning Festival is to celebrate all the different aspects of learning that take place at Croí na Gaillimhe, from bingo and sports games such as 'boccia' to Internet Workshops and line dancing classes!



Our 'Learning Tree' was officially unveiled on Wednesday 23rd February by members of the Estonian ANDRAS organisation in Ireland as part of the Gruntvig exchange. ANDRAS is the non-profit organisation of Estonian Adult

Educators and has worked in partnership with the Irish organisation AONTAS.

As our very honoured guests, the group from Estonia helped to launch our Festival by unveiling our magnificent Learning Tree. Adult Learners at Croí na Gaillimhe decorated the tree with reflections and thoughts on their experience of learning at the Centre.

Here is just a small sample of their wonderful comments: From a participant of Movement and Relaxation Class: "Attending the centre is an amazing experience of peace and tranquillity and gives a great sense of well being and connectedness". "It is good to be active" said an older person who takes a line dancing



class.

The 'Learning Tree' will be displayed at Croí na Gaillimhe throughout Spring. After the unveiling, a brief presentation was made to the ANDRAS group to say Thank you from the staff, volunteers and learners at the Centre.

Several of our enthusiastic learners gave a brief account of their learning experiences at Croí na Gaillimhe. They all spoke of the joy and the fun they experienced in learning, and most of all, they mentioned the friendships they had

made - or in many cases, renewed!

Also on the afternoon music was provided by our gifted musicians John Fallon, Padraic Keane and Sean Hughes. They gave a brief demonstration of traditional Irish music and instruments such as the uilleann pipes and fiddle before playing a variety of songs and encouraging all the participants to dance.

While enjoying the display of Irish dancing - and showing great ability - our guests agreed to demonstrate a traditional Estonian dance. The dance proved hugely popular with everyone present and an encore was required!

An unforgettable afternoon full of fun and laughter led to a fantastic celebration - and one we will not forget in a hurry. Let's look forward to the next Adult Learning Festival and in the meantime enjoying all the classes and clubs that are still to come!



## Computer Classes



A total of twenty-seven eight weeks have been held between July 2009 and May 2011. The average class size is about eight, which with a tutor and two volunteers allows individuals undertaking the course access to a lot of individual support. The participants on these courses have generally been older. Feedback from computer course participants has generally been very positive. Some participants have struggled with the eight week commitment while

others have are interested in accessing particular skills. In response to this, in 2010 the Centre started to organise technology/computer orientated workshops such as 'Skype'. These have generally been well received and the Centre plans to continue to organise them. February 2011 saw the organisation of a workshop on using a

mobile phone.

*It was the first certificate I ever got, I am so pleased with myself.'*

Computers for Beginners' courses were run three times a week; Monday evening, Wednesday and Thursday mornings. There is always a tea

break. The topics covered on the courses include: Introduction to using a mouse and keyboard, desktop, Internet, email and Skype.

*'I did the computer class to be able to Skype my granddaughter. I love it I'm learning a lot.'*



## Art (Drawing/Painting, Crafts, Cards and Pottery) and Photography

A total of 13 eight week art related classes have been held between July 2009 and May 2011.

### Digital Photography

2011 saw the organisation of the first evening course on digital photography. This course was specifically targeted at men and was held in the evening. It successfully managed to attract 12 men, the majority of whom are over fifty. Feedback from the participants on this course was very positive.

### Movement and Relaxation

A total of eight, eight-week movement and relaxation classes have been held at the Centre since it was established. The average class size is approximately eight people.

### Creative Writing

Seven creative writing classes have been organised at the Centre. These classes are attended by a core group of eight individuals plus individuals who attend a particular eight-week class. Again these classes have been well received.

### Training for Women

A course targeting women was run at the Centre in 2010. The course entitled "Looking at the Economy through Women's Eyes" was organised with the support of Banúlacht. The course explored women's role in the economy: seeing the contribution of women's unpaid work as the "care economy". Feedback from this course was very positive.



## Living Scenes

This year the programme participants have completed an art, creative writing and drama module aspects of which will be performed at a national showcase held in NUI Galway on May 25<sup>th</sup> 2011. The drama module, which is based on the history of the Croí na Gaillimhe building, is the central theme on the night. Living Scenes are currently putting the finishing touches to a publication on this exciting piece of research on the centre's historical building.



Maria Moore, the school based co-ordinator of this model and Hedy Gibbons, the writing facilitator, have created a wonderful active learning environment which has transformed the experience of the classroom for all involved. This is an ideal opportunity to congratulate everybody involved in Living Scenes Croí na Gaillimhe. As the programme progressed and developed this year it has been an unmitigated success, and has established itself as an integral part of the Croí na Gaillimhe ethos and the University's outreach programme in



community education. The older participants of the community education programme are linked to the centre in either a voluntary or clientele capacity. The transition year students are based in Galway Community College. The school should be highly commended for its support and dedication to the programme. The transition year students commute to the centre every Tuesday for the duration of the course. Finally we are greatly indebted to 'Le Cheile' in sharing their transport with us.

Loretta Needham and her staff have created a warm and welcoming atmosphere in the centre, which is tantamount to the enriching experience of Living Scenes Croí na Gaillimhe.

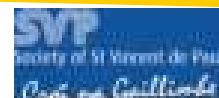
Personally I am delighted with the success of the programme without the support and vision of St. James's conference in ensuring the visionary legacy of Miss Maureen O'Connell this work would not happen.

Comhghairdeas  
Dr. Mary Surlis  
Programme Director  
NUI Galway.





# Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre Timetable



## **Come and visit Croí na Gaillimhe relax in the beautiful surroundings.**

*Learn how to use and send email or use Skype at our computer classes.*

*Uncover your inner artist at one of our painting or drawing classes .*

*Try your hand at creative writing.*

Cost:  
€20 for unwaged/public pension.  
€50 waged / private pension

Courses are of 8 weeks duration unless otherwise stated.

The Knitting Club, Tea Dance, Dinner Club and Social Club are ongoing. There is no cost for the Knitting Club, Social Club and Tea Dance, just a small contribution to tea and biscuits if possible. Timetable is subject to change without notification.

### Social Club for Older People

Join us for a cup of tea and a friendly chat. Our activities include card games, board games, films, indoor bowling, bingo and much more! Monday and Wednesday afternoons at 2pm

### Dinner Club for Older People

Tired of cooking all of the time? Well why not join us every Monday and Wednesday at 1pm for a delicious dinner and a dessert for only €6. Please book in advance

### Knitting Club

Join our Knitting Club every Tuesday from 2.30 to 4pm.

### Tea Dance

Our popular Tea Dance takes place on the 1st Friday of every month.

### Basic, Fun Photography for Men

Our photography course for men running for 6 weeks from 7.30pm to 9pm.

### Computer Classes

Monday:  
Beginner Computers  
7pm—9pm

Wednesday:  
Beginner Computers  
10.30am—12.30pm

Thursday:  
Beginner Computers  
10.30am—12.30pm

### Drawing Classes

Tuesday: Beginners Drawing  
11am - 1pm

Wednesday: Beginners Drawing  
11am - 1pm

Thursday: Improvers Drawing  
11am - 1pm

### Movement & Relaxation for Older People

Join us for gentle exercises and relaxation techniques on Wednesday morning at 10.30am

### Line Dancing

These boots are made for walking!! Don't miss our Line Dancing classes every Thursday morning at 10am (Beginners) and 11am (Improvers).

### Creative Writing

Advanced course in creative writing for older people on Friday mornings at 10.30am

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# Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre



Society of St Vincent de Paul

1 Mill Street, Galway.  
Tel. 091 — 895203

Issue II: Christmas 2011



We would like to extend to you all, a very warm welcome to Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre's Christmas magazine! We hope you will find it interesting, entertaining and informative. This past year has been a very exciting and eventful year here at Croí na Gaillimhe and with your help, we look forward to another great year ahead. I suppose it's almost customary at this time of the year, to look back at what has gone, while at the same time, looking forward to the future. From an economic point of view, this year and indeed, the previous year, have been certainly challenging, to say the least! Due to the worldwide recession, our country and, many of our citizens, have faced severe hardships and challenges in adjusting to the evolving economic situation. Thousands of people throughout the country are having great difficulty paying their mortgages or simply struggling to survive on ever reducing incomes. In particular, people living on pensions or social welfare payments are finding it increasingly difficult to make ends meet. On a more positive note however, I believe this recession is reminding us all about something which cannot be valued in monetary terms. I refer to the growing realisation amongst many people, of the importance of one basic human concept; **concern for one another.**

As a result of the ever changing economic scenario that continues to unfold, more and more people are beginning to understand and, more importantly, appreciate who and what is really important in life. Many people are beginning to realize that positive human attributes, such as kindness, caring and love are qualities that cannot be destroyed by economic recession or market share collapse. Therefore, as we approach this Christmas season, let it be a time where we are especially mindful of and grateful for, the many blessings and gifts of real value that we have in our lives, particularly our families, our true friends and our local communities.

Also, as New Year fast approaches, where we generally make our New Year Resolutions, perhaps this year, more than any other year, we should bear in mind the wise words, once spoken by the famous Greek Philosopher Plato, when he said:

**"Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle".**

**Seán Connolly.**





## Editor's Note

*As Manager of Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to Christmas edition of our magazine. It's hard to believe that it is now just over two years since Croí na Gaillimhe first opened its doors to the public. During that time the centre has made great strides in becoming what we hope is a valuable service to the community in general. Apart from the various activities which we are running, I think it is also fair to say that many strong and long lasting friendships have been formed since we first opened. One of our main objectives is to have a welcoming and open environment to all who use our Centre and I believe that, between both the staff and volunteers, this objective has been achieved in our first two years. With this in mind, I would like to sincerely thank all the staff and volunteers for their efforts and also the members of St James Conference for their invaluable contribution to the development of the Centre. We are also very mindful of and grateful for the enormous assistance and contribution of the Maureen O'Connell Bequest in the establishment and support of Croí na Gaillimhe. It is our fervent hope that as we progress into the future, the Centre will evolve and develop and become more and more inclusive for all of the citizens of Galway. With your continued support and participation, I am very confident that we can achieve this objective.*

*It only remains for me, on my own behalf and on behalf of all of us here at Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre, to wish you and all your families and friends, both at home and abroad, a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year!*

*I look forward to meeting all of our friends and neighbours once again at the Resource Centre, in the year ahead!*

*Loretta Needham*

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- **The Story of Silent Night**
- **"Is there a Santa Claus?"**
- ...and much, much more!**

### Production Team

Managing Editor	Loretta Needham
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Contributors	Hedy Gibbons

### Right to Reply

***In fairness to our readers and given that this newsletter is not insured against libel, damages or costs, we undertake the following: In case of error of fact we will publish corrections when we become aware of such. In cases of unfairly impugning the reputation of any person we hereby offer that person or their representative the right to reply in the next issue of this newsletter subject only to reasonable length, the law of libel and our right to respond to such a reply.***

**This project is assisted by the Maureen O'Connell Trust of the Society of St Vincent de Paul.**

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Uachtarán na hÉireann  
PRESIDENT OF IRELAND

Christmas Message from the President of Ireland

Ba mhaith liom an deis seo a ghlacadh le Nollaig Shona agus Beannachtaí na hAthbhliana a ghul ar gach duine atá ag obair le Croí na Gaillimhe.

I am delighted to have this opportunity to wish all at Croí na Gaillimhe a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful and Healthy New Year.

Since it first opened its doors just over two years ago, Croí na Gaillimhe has become a very important element of community life in Galway city. In a very short period of time, it has achieved enormous results in helping to develop the integration of people of all ages, religions and cultures within the city. In fact, in its very name itself, the use of the word "Croí", or "at the heart of", speaks volumes about the aims and objectives of Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre. I have no doubt but that the Centre will continue to develop and expand its role and importance in the community life of the "City of the Tribes" in the coming years.

Personally, I have very pleasant memories of my visit to the Centre on 31st May last, when I had the honour of launching your wonderful in-house production of the creative writing and artwork book "A Rising Tide". The warmth of the reception that I received on that occasion is a memory that I will always treasure.

Given the particularly challenging times that we as a nation are currently experiencing, my greatest wish for all of you and indeed, for all of the citizens of our country, is that this Christmas, more so than ever before, you may fully experience the true meaning, peacefulness and joy of Christmas in your hearts and minds.

I am confident that in time, with courage, self-belief and determination, we will not only overcome our present difficulties, emerge as a wiser, more experienced and caring nation, a stronger people, as a result of the challenges we are now facing and that we will realise the rich possibilities of ourselves and our communities.

Go bhfaighe sibh go léir mianta bhuir geroithe an Nollaig seo agus gach rath omáibh sa Bhliain Nua

Michael D. Higgins  
Uachtarán na hÉireann  
President of Ireland



# Halloween Party at Croí na Gaillimhe.

Anyone who happened to be in the vicinity of Mill Street on Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> October last, could well be forgiven for thinking that they had arrived at a magical get together; in fact, what was actually happening was Croí na Gaillimhe's annual Halloween Party! The event, which was part of "Social Inclusion Week", in conjunction with Westside C.D.P., began with lunch which was provided by COPE Galway Community Catering and served by a number of the Resource Centre's volunteers.



The room was beautifully decorated with Halloween images for the event and staff members, Maria, Anna Marie, and volunteers Kevin and Niamh kept a watchful eye on proceedings. Most of the guests in attendance were suitably attired for the occasion, with many dressed as witches and ghouls of all descriptions! The energy and enthusiasm of all concerned was very much in evidence judging by the efforts made at both decorating and indeed, the costumes.



Following the delicious lunch the room was swiftly transformed into a ballroom area, as tables and chairs were removed by staff and volunteers. Musicians John Fallon, Michael Farragher, Kieran Connolly and Clíona Ball provided the excellent music for the afternoon as guests took to the floor in true "round the house and mind the dresser" style! Indeed, as the dancing continued many of the couples on the floor would have looked very much at home as participants in Strictly Come Dancing!



As the proceedings came to a close everyone present was in complete agreement that it had been an excellent afternoon's entertainment. At that point the only thing remaining to be done was to hang up their witches' hats and brooms for another year and begin making preparations for the Christmas Party; the next big event on their social calendar!





*Father Michael Griffin*

## The Story of Father Michael Griffin

**During the very turbulent and troubled times in Ireland in the early 1920's, the continuing struggle for freedom raged with often brutal and bitter fighting between the I.R.A. and the British reservists, known as the Black and Tans.**

One of the most infamous events of Galway's history at this time was the murder of Father Michael Griffin who was a curate in Saint Joseph's Church. It all began in October 1920 when an IRA volunteer, working in the post office in Galway, intercepted three letters addressed to Sir Hammer Greenwood, the British Home Secretary in Dublin Castle. The letters were signed by a P. W.

Joyce, Barna. The IRA suspected that the Joyce involved was the local schoolteacher, who was a Peace Commissioner at the time, and the Headmaster in Barna National School. The story is often told, that in order to check the authorship of the letters, a blind man called one day to the school and asked Joyce to help him write a letter. The letter Joyce wrote for the blind man was taken to the IRA in Galway and the handwriting was compared with the letters to Dublin Castle. On the night of October 15th 1920, Joyce was taken from his house in Barna and questioned in the fields. Later that night he was shot as a spy and buried in the bogs behind Spiddal.

When the Black and Tans realised that Joyce had been kidnapped, and presumably killed, they began a fierce recrimination in the area generally. Someone told the Black and Tans that the murderer had admitted in confessional to the killing of Joyce, to local curate, Father Michael Griffin. In their efforts to find the killer they lured the priest out of his house on Montpellier Terrace on the pretence of a sick call. They then brought him to Lenaboy Castle, where they first tortured him before eventually killing him. His body was dumped that night, in a bog in Barna, where it was discovered by a passerby a few days later. His funeral was to receive huge international publicity, not just because of the brutality of the murder, but because of the fact that Fr. Griffin had refused to break the "seal of the confession". In a subsequent series of vengeful reprisals the elected Sinn Féin member of the Urban Council Michéal Breathnach, owner of the Old Malte Bar in High Street, was taken down to the Spanish Arch and shot at nearby Long Walk.

P. W. Joyce's remains lay buried in the bog near Spiddal until they were discovered in July 1998 by someone out walking. Because of the fact that the body had been buried in a bog the condition of the body was preserved in a very good state. Personal items on the body, including reading glasses and a fountain pen in Joyce's jacket, helped to identify the remains. Thus ended the mystery of where the body of P.W. Joyce had lain for almost eighty years. This finally brought to a conclusion the sad story of the killing of Father Michael Griffin.



The  
Curiosity  
Shop

Society of  
St. Vincent de Paul

We require good  
quality useable

clothing, household items, bric-a-brac,  
books, paper carrier bags & items of  
furniture you no longer need

Unfortunately for Health & Safety reasons  
we cannot accept electrical items, beds, damaged  
baby equipment or carpets.

Goods, that are saleable can be left into:

*The Curiosity Shop*  
Merchant Road  
Galway  
Tues – Sat. 9am – 5pm

*Or collected  
Please  
Call 363233  
(Within 10 miles)*





*World premiere of the Miller's House*

# A Recipe for Living Scenes:

## Ingredients:

- 1 x Miller's house
- 1 x Large, warm room
- 8 x Senior citizens
- 8 x Transition-year students
- 1 x Inspired programme director
- 15 x Tuesday mornings
- 1 x Imaginative Art teacher
- 1 x Creative-writing facilitator
- 2 x Volunteer IT students
- 3 x Supportive staff
- Tea and scones

## Method:

Put all ingredients in the warm, welcoming space overlooking the water behind Croí na Gaillimhe. Add generous helpings of skill, commitment, enthusiasm, tea and scones. Combine age-groups, cultures and languages. Sprinkle with art and writing projects. Mix all thoroughly, for two hours each Tuesday morning.

**Cooking:** The blend of voices, ages and interests swells over time as ingredients meld together. Shared goals develop. Friendships form. Paintings and poetry, masks and short stories, clay models and memoir are produced. Hats are tried on for size. New characters appear in this mix of Transition Year students and older adults, with their unique life experiences and skills. A project is born that will produce a book and a play showcasing the many paintings, writings and other activities undertaken by the group.



*Michael D. Higgins, Mary McCarthy and Sabina Higgins at the launch of 'A Rising Tide'*

Mrs. Mitchell, the original owner, and her family, join us on Tuesday mornings as the group researches the origin of the miller's house. The Galway city of two hundred years ago, and the life of the woman who built the ancient flour mill that is Croí na Gaillimhe is brought alive by the group's writing, acting and painting abilities – abilities most participants



*President Mary McAleese officially opens Croí na Gaillimhe & is greeted by Living Scenes participants*

never realised they had – when the Living Scenes participants begin to write a play! Curiosity about how water-mills work is slaked with a visit to the working water-mill at the Bridge Mills. Along the way participants, with first languages ranging through Polish, German, Russian, Greek, Dutch and Cant as well as Irish and English, explore what the city library has to offer. There are some surprises in finding books and digital media in several of those languages, as well as



accessible poetry and music, and books for teenagers.

Exhausting rehearsals, much re-drafting, and learning of each others' languages follows, as members try their hands- and voices – at enacting it. Finally (complete with wonderful costumes provided by Moneenagisha Community College's Co-ordinator), Mrs. Miller, her sons and some of her friends strut their stuff when *The Miller's House* has its world *première* in Croí na Gaillimhe before a packed audience!



*Maria Moore - facilitator, Hedy Gibbons - facilitator, Dr. Mary Surlis - Director of Living Scenes, NUIG, Michael D. Higgins & Loretta Needham - Manager of Croí na Gaillimhe*

At the end of year gathering of Living Scenes participants from all over Ireland, in NUIG's Bailey Allen Hall they do it again. Admitting no bias, they are easily the best performers! Along the way the group was honoured with a visit from the then President of Ireland, Mary McAleese and her husband. The *grand finale*- the launch of their book of poetry, paintings and short prose pieces - came when Michael D. Higgins, the new President of Ireland and his wife, came to their 'wrap party' and Mr. Higgins launched *A Rising Tide*. Two presidents in one year? Not a bad beginning!



*Different characters come out to play at Living Scenes*

The stated purpose of the Living Scenes programme is to 'encourage, support and accommodate active experiential learning among participants'. Developed and directed by Dr. Mary Surlis of NUIG's Adult and Education Outreach Initiative, the Living Scenes Programme has been running for over ten years in various secondary schools around the country. Its intention is to bring about a sociable meeting and working space where school-goers and older adults can discover their similarities as well as their differences, and can get to know and learn from each other by fostering mutual respect, appreciation, and understanding between the generations.

The Croí na Gaillimhe programme was the first time the programme was attempted in a setting outside of school. Judging by the enthusiasm this group brought to its Tuesday mornings, the programme achieved its objectives in spades!

Blend all the above with openness, support and willingness to participate. Cook for 15 weeks, checking at intervals to assess progress, and adjusting temperature and timing to suit.

**Result:** Art montages; a book of poetry and short prose; a play; dissolved barriers, new friendships, greater understanding, communication, and participation.



*Final day of the 2010-2011 Living Scenes Programme 31st May 2011*



## The Work of Frederic Ozanam....

In today's recessionary times we hear much talk about people struggling with financial matters. Since 1833 the St. Vincent de Paul Society has been helping many people who have found themselves in this situation, so Croí na Gaillimhe decided to take a look at its' origin...

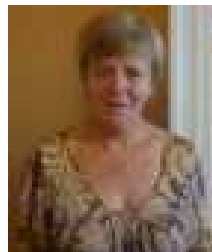


On 23rd April 1833, twenty-three year old student Frederic Ozanam and a few friends began the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Paris. It was a time when the Catholic Church in France was the object of bitter hostility following the French Revolution of 1830. Favouring a practical and more direct approach to dealing with poverty, they worked to alleviate the suffering and poverty of others. Frederic Ozanam and his friends believed that Christian help and friendship were the best means of achieving social justice. This is the same philosophy followed today by the members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Ireland as they work for social justice. The aim of the St. Vincent de Paul Society is to tackle poverty in all its forms, through the provision of practical assistance to those in need. The concept of need is broader than just financial hardship however; so visiting the sick, the lonely and the imprisoned also forms a large proportion of the Society's work. The Society operates in small groups, called "Conferences", mostly based on local parishes. However over the years the Vincent de Paul Society has responded to social changes and now provides a range of additional services such as shops, resource centres, accommodation to vulnerable people and various holiday schemes for those in need.

If you would like to contact the Galway branch of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, you can do so at: **Ozanam House, Augustine Street, Galway. Phone: 091-563233, Fax: 091 567591**

## Volunteer Profiles

We are delighted to introduce two of our fantastic volunteers from our Social Club and Dancing Class; Yvonne Dillon and Maureen Monaghan. In this profile, they talk about some of their favourite aspects of volunteering at Croí na Gaillimhe.



"When I retired I was looking to give something back to the community and I heard about the Social Club through the Volunteer Centre. I'd previously volunteered with the SVP through

visitation. I'd really enjoyed it and wanted to use my skills in another volunteering role. When I heard about the role it immediately appealed to me and I love getting to meet new people. There's always a great atmosphere at the club and everyone gets along. We have lots of games and celebrations - we never miss a birthday!!"

**Yvonne Dillon**

I started to learn to dance with Ethel in 2003 & after developing my passion for dancing, I agreed to give a class at Croí na Gaillimhe. I'd describe the experience of teaching here as a "wonderful" as I enjoy spending time with "brilliant people". I plan each class and am not afraid to use technology for our benefit; Latin dancing is my particular inspiration and I find new sources of creativity on YouTube. I purchase the music and learn my new routine. The classes are very much up to date using routines and music that is barely 2 weeks old!!

**Maureen Monaghan**



Maureen (centre) & the class in action!!



# *The Story of “Silent Night”*



For many years the origin of the famous Christmas hymn, “Silent Night” was unknown. However in 1994 a manuscript written by a Father Joseph Mohr was discovered by chance. It detailed the background to the writing of this now well-known hymn. Long regarded as one of the most popular Christmas hymns “Silent Night” (or “Stille Nacht” as it is known in its original language) was written by Joseph Mohr in 1818. Mohr was a Catholic priest in the Austrian village of Oberndorf. After he wrote the lyrics of the hymn his long time friend musician Franz Gruber composed a melody to accompany the lyrics. The hymn was first sung on Christmas Eve in 1818. The hymn grew in popularity through the efforts of travelling folk singers and was originally commonly referred to as the “Tyrolean Folk Song”. The story of its origin is as follows.....

On a cold winter’s night in 1818 plans for Christmas church music were disrupted due to a broken organ in the new church in the village of Oberndorf, Austria. The midnight service had been planned with carefully selected music as part of the celebration but the broken organ meant this was now impossible. Mohr was troubled because the congregation would now be unable to sing in celebration of Christ’s birth. Suddenly, it occurred to him that he could attempt to write something that did not require an organ to accompany it. And so, on that night, December 24, 1818 a humble hymn was written to be accompanied by the equally humble instrument, the guitar.

However, that song, sung on that fateful night was not to be silenced by the repair of the organ. When Karl Mauracher came to Oberndorf to repair the organ, he was told about the new hymn and he immediately requested a copy of the song. He carried the song with him throughout Austria and spread the story of the “Tyrolean Folk Song”.

Almost a decade later the song’s success was assured when the Strasser children began singing it. They were a talented singing family who would stand in front of their parents’ glove-making business and sing in order to attract customers. Soon “Stille Nacht” became one of their most popular performances. As a result, its fame grew and eventually even attracted the attention of the King and Queen who, on hearing reports about the hymn, requested a performance.

Soon, German-speaking congregations in the United States began to use the hymn. In 1863 it was translated into English and was included in a collection of Sunday school songs. Now, over a century later the simple hymn written in a small Austrian village is still one of the most popular and famous Christmas hymns ever written.



## God's Gentle Breeze

I find it hard to recognise,  
The man I see today.  
He walks a lot more slowly now,  
His hair is turning grey.

When I was young, I thought he  
knew,  
The answer – to all cares.  
It's only in the recent past,  
He told me of his fears.

It seems it took, till now to see,  
That he was learning too.  
And though I felt – he was so wise,  
For him – it was all new.

But now that I am of an age,  
Where children look to me.  
I hope I can inspire in them,  
And help them also see...

That in this life, we do our best,  
Just like he did for me.  
To pass on gifts of love and truth,  
Respect – and honesty.

And now God's gentle breeze is here,  
To help him on his way.  
His boat moves from the painful pier,  
Of life – to sail away.

But let us not feel anguish now,  
This voyage has been planned.  
Our life is but a port of call,  
To reach the Promised Land.

And as he sails the ocean wide,  
His welcome fleet appears...  
With cargoes full, of love and peace,  
Then land – with no more tears.

Seán Connolly ©

Photograph by Anne Burgess

*And they call it "Puppy Love..."*



The reaction of most people looking at this photograph would be to go "ahhhh"!

Such a reaction is quite understandable given the "cuteness" of puppies. At this time of year many people, well-intentioned as they are, give presents such as young puppies to children. Parents are frequently persuaded, with promises to look after and care for the pets, to concede to such pleas. Very often though what transpires in the end is a very different story.

Sometimes by the end of January (if not sooner!) such promises are long forgotten and the animal is left to fend for itself. Countless times such animals are found on the streets, homeless and in search of food. On an annual basis, the ISPCA advise about the risks involved in giving an animal as a Christmas present.

This Christmas please remember that small cuddly animals grow up very quickly into bigger, and sometimes, less cuddly ones.

If you are tempted to give an animal as a present, particularly to a child, please be absolutely sure that the animal will be well-cared for. Not just in the few weeks following Christmas but for its lifetime.

*"I am not alone at all", I thought! "I was never alone at all. And that, of course, is the message of Christmas. We are never alone. Not when the night is darkest, the wind coldest, the world seemingly most indifferent. For this is still the time God chooses."*

*Taylor Caldwell.*



# *“Is there a Santa Claus?”*



That was the headline that appeared on a New York Sun editorial on 21 September 1897. The editorial was written by Francis Church and his response to this question, sent in by an 8 year old girl, has become a part of Christmas Folklore. Indeed, such is its fame at this stage that “Yes Virginia” has become a well-known phrase when answering a question, whatever the question may be! The following is the seasonal story about the answer to that famous question... “Is there a Santa Clause?”

“Dear Editor,  
I am 8 years old. Some of my friends say there is no Santa Claus. Papa says ‘If you see it in The Sun, it’s so!’ Please tell me the truth; is there a Santa Claus?  
Virginia O’Hanlon,  
115 West Ninety-Fifth Street.”

*Dear Virginia,  
Your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the scepticism of a sceptical age. They do not believe except what they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men’s or children’s, are little. In this great universe of ours, man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence*

*capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge.*

*Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! How dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus. It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.*

*Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if they did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that’s no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.*

*You may tear apart the baby’s rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived could tear apart. Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in this entire world there is nothing else real and abiding.*

*No Santa Claus! Thank God! He lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.*

*Happy Christmas Virginia!*



## Croí na Gaillimhe Timetable

### Monday:

<b>Movement &amp; Relaxation:</b>	10.30am
<b>Dinner for Older People:</b>	1.00pm
<b>Social Club:</b>	2.00pm
<b>Computers for Beginners:</b>	7.00pm

### Tuesday:

<b>Beginners Drawing:</b>	11.00am
<b>Living Scenes:</b>	10.30am
<b>Knitting Club:</b>	2.30pm

### Wednesday:

<b>Painting:</b>	10.00am
<b>Beginner Computers:</b>	10.30am
<b>Dinner for Older People:</b>	1.00pm
<b>Social Club:</b>	2.00pm

### Thursday:

<b>Dancing for Older People:</b>	
Beginners at	10.00am
Improvers at	11.00am
<b>Beginner Computers:</b>	10.30am
<b>Social Club for Men:</b>	3.00pm

### Friday:

<b>Creative Writing:</b>	10.30am
<b>Tea Dance:</b>	2.00pm
(1st Friday each month)	

**Training for Transformation** (TFT) is a Community Leadership programme that seeks to provide skills for community activists to achieve their goals.

**Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre,**  
1 Mill Street, Galway.

Tel. 091—895203

[www.croinagaillimhe.blogspot.com](http://www.croinagaillimhe.blogspot.com)

[www.croi-na-gaillimhe.org](http://www.croi-na-gaillimhe.org)



## *Women's Christmas*

*Little Christmas, or Nollaig Beag as it is called in the Irish language, is one of the traditional names for January 6, more widely known to the rest of the world as the Epiphany. It is so called because, until the adoption of the Gregorian calendar, this was the day on which Christmas Day was originally celebrated. Today, it is the traditional end of the Christmas season and the last day of the Christmas holidays for most people.*

*It is also known as Nollaig na mBan (Woman's Christmas) so called because of the (now almost extinct!) tradition of Irish men taking on all the household duties on that day and giving their wives a day off! However, even today many women hold parties or go out to celebrate the day with their female friends. Traditionally children buy presents for their mothers on this day.*

## Useful Numbers:

Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre 091 895203  
SVP (Ozanam House, Galway) 091 563233

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Age Action	091 527831
Bus Éireann	091 562000
Care & Repair (local)	1890 369369
Citizens Advice Bureau	091 563344
Community Garda	091 538079
Community Welfare	091 548315
COPE (Meals on Wheels)	091 700800
Fás	091 534400
Fire Services	091 585555
Galway City Council	091 536400
Galway Hospice	091 770868
Galway Rape Crisis Centre	091 583149
Garda – Mill Street	091 538000
Garda – Salthill	091 514720
Iarnród Éireann	091 537700
Legal Aid	091 561650
MABS	091 569349
Mervue Health Centre	091 753887
Office of the Ombudsman	1890223030
Public Health Nurse	091 546365
Revenue Commissioners	091 536300
Road Safety Authority	091 774800
Samaritans	091 561222
UCG Hospital	091 544544
WestDoc	1850 365000
Westside Age Inclusion	091 589861



# Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre



Society of St Vincent de Paul

1 Mill Street, Galway

Tel. 091 - 895203

Issue III: Christmas 2012



This year we are missing the key member of our newsletter team Sean Connolly who passed away. Sean was a valued member of our team and he is sadly missed here at Croí na Gaillimhe. Ar dheis Dé go raibh sé. In his book of reflections "Angels over Claddagh" Sean suggested *"One of the greatest achievements in life, is to simply be yourself"*. There is a poem from his collection of poetry "Angels over the Claddagh" on Page 8.

In Sean's cover article for last year's newsletter he asked us *"As New Year fast approaches, where we generally make our New Year Resolutions, perhaps this year, more than any year, we should bear in mind the wise words, once spoken by the famous Greek Philosopher Plato, when he said: "Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle"*.

The mission of Croí na Gaillimhe is "To provide an intergenerational and intercultural place of welcome in the heart of Galway offering a broad range of social and learning supports, especially to people in need. To do so in a way that is participant-centred, is rooted in equality, complements other services in Galway, and acts as a model of inclusive interaction for others".

The centre focuses on building the individuals self-esteem and confidence and providing a welcoming and open environment to all who use our Centre and I believe that, between both staff and volunteers, this objective has being achieved in our first three years.

It is our fervent hope that as we progress into the future, the Centre will evolve and develop and become more and more inclusive for all of the citizens of Galway. With your continued support and participation, I am very confident that we can achieve this objective.

*Louise Keenan*





## Editor's Note

**Loretta Needham, Manager**

It's a pleasure for me to welcome you to our newsletter. I can't believe another year has passed so quickly. I hope you enjoy reading about the activities in Croí na Gaillimhe. If you come into the centre on any given day there will be older adults enjoying a dinner and social club, migrants taking part in English conversation classes, young parents engaging in group activities, school children working alongside older people on the intergenerational programme and various classes and clubs in progress.

I would like to sincerely thank staff and volunteers for their efforts and also the members of St James Conference for their invaluable contribution to the development of the Centre. I would like to take this opportunity to say goodbye to two of our valuable staff members Maria Flaherty and Anna Marie Maguire. I would like to thank them for their contributions to Croí na Gaillimhe and also welcome the new staff members to the centre. The centre is very mindful of and grateful for the contribution of the Maureen O'Connell Bequest in the establishment and support of Croí na Gaillimhe. In addition the contribution of the Area Council of the St Vincent de Paul and all the people that have supported our fundraising efforts particularly the Knitting Club. I would like to thank the people of Galway for their continued support and participation.

On my own behalf and on behalf of all of us here at Croí na Gaillimhe Centre, we would like to wish you all and your families and friends, both at home and abroad, a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year!

I look forward to meeting all our friends and neighbours once again at the Resource Centre, in the year ahead!

*Loretta Needham*

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### **Production Team**

**Managing Editor:** Loretta Needham

**Editors:** Deirdre Maher and  
Catherine Corcoran

#### **Production/Technical:**

Andrew McCallion, Maria McHugh,  
Deirdre Maher and Catherine Corcoran

**Contributors:** Sr. Nora Lally, Hedy Gibbons

### Right to Reply

In fairness to our readers and given that this newsletter is not insured against libel, damages or costs, we undertake the following: In case of error of facts we will publish corrections when we become aware of such. In cases of unfairly impugning the reputation of any person we hereby offer that person or their representative the right to reply in the next issue of this newsletter subject only to reasonable length, the law of libel and our right to respond to such a reply.

This project is assisted by the Maureen O' Connell Trust of the Society of St Vincent de Paul.

**Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre,  
1 Mill Street, Galway. Tel. 091-895203  
[www.croinagaillimhe.blogspot.com](http://www.croinagaillimhe.blogspot.com)**



## Board of Croí na Gaillimhe



**L to R Jim Harrington, President, Harry Kenney, Secretary, Margaret Ayo Lagara and Michael Begley, Treasurer and Lorraine McIlrath**

We would like to say goodbye to two members of the Board of Croí na Gaillimhe Sr Nora Lally and Gerard Joyce. We would like to thank them for their commitment to the work of project since its inception. We would like to welcome two new Board members Margaret Ayo Lagara and Lorraine McIlrath on to the Board.

### New Staff Profiles

**Left to right: Janet Kehelly, Aisling Bell and Loyola King.**

**Project Worker-Janet Kehelly**

I've been living in Galway since 2004 with my partner and two sons. My background is in adult and community education and I've worked in the community sector for a number of years. I joined Croí na Gaillimhe in October, working with the Parents Network. We meet weekly and are busy organising events around parenting as well as events that are just about "me time". The network is open to all parents so if you know anyone who would enjoy a social chat and meeting other parents please spread the word. To find out what events we're planning, have a look at the blogspot ([www.croinagaillimhe.blogspot.com](http://www.croinagaillimhe.blogspot.com)) or call the centre on 091 895203



### Administrator / Receptionist- Aisling Bell

I am a Galway native who has spent the last six years living and working in Dublin as a practice manager for a GP service and am delighted to have just recently moved home to Galway with my husband and son. I joined Croí Na Gaillimhe at the end of October covering all the administration and day to day running of the office. I am thoroughly enjoying getting to know all the wonderful participants and volunteers that make Croí na Gaillimhe such a special place to work.

### Activities Coordinator-Loyola King

It's been my pleasure to work here in Croí na Gaillimhe where else would a Galwegian want to be but in the 'heart of Galway'! As the Activities Coordinator my role involves organising the lunch and social club on Monday and Wednesdays, as well as many of the classes and programmes we have on offer at the center. What a great year we've had in our social club from enjoying sumptuous lunches to learning new skills in origami and drumming workshops. Our bingo games are legendary we really do have the best prizes! There is always a lot on offer, but best of all is the welcome and genuine sense of friendship felt by all our older users. If you feel it is something you would like to try please do contact the centre on (091) 895203 Monday-Friday 9-5pm and I will be happy to show you around and explore how best we could suit your interests.

### Community Employment Scheme Worker

**Receptionist- Gerardine Gibney**

I am from Galway and now live in Barna, with my husband. I have two grown up children. I joined Croí na Gaillimhe in August 2011. I work part time on reception and administration. My job as receptionist means I get to meet and chat to all the centre's visitors, volunteers and class participants. I really enjoy this aspect of my job and have met some wonderful people in my time here.



## ACTIVITIES FOR PARENTS AND ADULT COURSES

### The Parents Network

The Parents Network is a new group for parents which started in October 2012. It's open to all parents interested in meeting other parents for a chat and social activities. The type of activities we've organised so far are First Aid for Parents and a Christmas Decoration Making workshop. We plan to organise more events in the new year which will be publicised on our blogspot. Parents are welcome to bring their children along, depending on the activity.

Feel free to come along any Monday morning (10-11am) or if you'd like more information please phone Janet on 895203.

### First Aid for Parents Workshop

The Parents Network hosted a First aid for Parents workshop on 26 November. The workshop was facilitated by Rosaleen Quinn Community Health Nurse and attended by 14 parents. The topics covered included burns and scalds, cuts, poisoning, choking and early symptoms. It was a very informative workshop with lots of questions and answers and the overall feeling was that there was a lot of practical advice as well as affirming that many parents have a good understanding of first aid.



We plan to run the workshop again in the spring and will advertise it on our blogspot.

### Personal Budgeting

We're running a "More Money in Your Pocket" course, for six weeks, starting on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2013. This course is for people who would like to get practical advice and tips and suggestions on making their weekly income stretch that bit further.

The topics to be covered include:

- Attitudes to money
- Developing a spending diary
- Control of money
- Budgeting and budgeting tools
- Budgeting strategies and management techniques
- Paying and prioritising bills
- Record Keeping
- Savings – the why and the how
- Shopping and cooking healthily on a budget



The course will run weekly from 10-12.30pm in Croí and Gaillimhe. For more information or to book a place, please phone 091 895203



## Positive Ageing Week at Croí na Gaillimhe 2012

Ireland's older population is growing. Right now, over half a million Irish people are over 65 and that is projected to grow to over a million by 2040.

Positive Ageing Week is a festival which highlights the positive aspects of ageing and celebrates the contribution older people have made and continue to make to their communities.

The central aim of positive ageing week is dispel the many negative perceptions that surround ageing and to transform attitudes towards the elderly. We need to celebrate the fact that ageing is not a burden but instead, an opportunity. On Wednesday, the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 2012, Croí na Gaillimhe played host to a wonderful afternoon of flower arranging, facilitated by florist, Eileen Walsh as part of Positive Ageing Week.



## The Forge Project

On October 8<sup>th</sup> last, Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre in association with The Forge Clay Studio came together to collaborate on a month long programme called 'The Forge Project'. The idea was to work together on clay pieces, prints and collages with the idea of 'shared memories' in mind. Some truly wonderful work was produced and it was clearly a project that both groups thoroughly enjoyed. A display of all the work produced during the project was exhibited in the Galway City Museum before Christmas and officially opened by Galway City Council who funded the project and Croí na Gaillimhe through the Maureen O'Connell Fund of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Some photos of the Forge Project in action:





## Croí na Gaillimhe Dinner and Social Club

One of the many activities at Croí na Gaillimhe is the ever popular 'Dinner and Social Club' which takes place every Monday and Wednesday afternoon.

The social club began initially with the primary aim of targeting those involved with St Vincent de Paul and Madeira Court (next door to the centre) but it was soon decided that it should be widened out to the whole community and particularly to those who were isolated, at home and for whatever reason, had no social outlet to meet others in the same situation. From that point, it really took off and numbers increased every week.

Those who attend the social club generally arrive at 1pm for dinner, organised and delivered to the centre thanks to COPE, followed by games such as bingo, boccia and bowling which everyone thoroughly enjoys.

We are extremely lucky to have such wonderful volunteers who come each week to help serve dinner and get involved with the after dinner games and activities. Tea, coffee and biscuits are served afterwards and this gives everyone the opportunity to mingle, catch up on the week's gossip and just have a good old chat with one another. The social club has proven to be an extremely successful venture for the centre so far and when you visit us here, it's easy to see why.



Our Tea Dance takes place here at Croí na Gaillimhe on the first Friday of every month from 2-4pm. Great fun and all are very welcome.



***Christmas Wonder***

*Sr. Nora Lally*

I love Christmas! This is a truth not questioned for nearly eighty years. It is marvellous how the wonder of it bubbles up each recurring year. This is no external or superficial experience. It comes from the reservoir deep within my being; while I regard it as a sacred emotion, its origin is not from anything holy, like Advent, Midnight Mass, cribs or carols. No, the source is from something very simple and innocent.



This great wonder of Christmas began in 1934 when I was six years old. At that time my family lived in Tourmakeady, Co. Mayo. On that memorable morning, I woke up just after dawn. All the family except myself and two younger brothers who were still sleeping, had gone to an early mass.

Making my way to the kitchen, my cold bare feet felt icy on the colder flag stones of the kitchen floor. Instinctively, I decided to make a fire. Taking the tongs, I began to rake out the hot coals in the ashes of the hearth. While reaching for a sod of turf on the hob, my eye caught sight of something in the chimney. Dropping the tongs, I stared. There, hanging from the cross bar a little way up the chimney was a huge bag. The moment of wonder, Santa had come.

This was an exceptional experience of truth in the heart of a child. For me, it was a truth that had to be shared or I might burst. Forgetting the cold feet and fire, I dressed quickly, then out the door and over the road to meet them coming from mass. Luckily for me, I spied them coming before I had reached the graveyard. They saw me coming and began to run towards me, wondering what had brought me out or was I sleepwalking? On meeting, they probably asked 'What's wrong?' Breathless from running, the words came out slowly, 'Santa had come, he left a big, big bag in the chimney'. Me being small, down near the road, could not see the expression on their faces, no doubt relief at first and then amusement. Like the shepherds, they re-acted promptly, saying 'We must hurry and see this great wonder that has come to pass'.

On reaching the house, the bag was brought down and the contents emptied out onto the kitchen table. There was a parcel for each of us with our names printed large. The noise and excitement brought Miceal and Peadar from their beds to join in the Christmas spirit. Receiving our parcel we found a space on the cold floor to explore the wonder and magic. Tearing away the paper, most likely 'The Mayo News'-as Hamlet put it 'A rose by any other name would smell just as sweet'.

**Computer Classes receiving their certificates in Croí na Gaillimhe**





## *Labels*

*Please don't try to force me,  
To be the one you want.  
Please don't give me labels,  
Because no matter what, I cant..  
Become the type of person,  
You feel I ought to be.  
You've got to understand  
somehow,  
I'm on the road as me.  
The flowers I see, along the way,  
Are coloured for my eyes.  
The tears that fall upon my  
face,  
Are laughter, in disguise.  
So, when we see things  
differently,  
And the colours seem unclear...  
  
Remember, when you Label me,  
It's our difference that you fear.*

*Seán Connolly ©*

Photograph by Anne Burgess

## **MEN'S GROUP**

The primary objective of the Men's Group is to provide a safe environment, within which the men can communicate and engage in activities, with a view towards achieving beneficial change to their lives.

Alliances with the Nationwide Men's Development Network, and with other organisations in Galway, that are working towards the improvement of Men's lives, have been created. These organisations include The Galway Simon Community, Cope Galway, and The St. Vincent de Paul.

The format of proceedings runs along the lines of:

- Group discussion of events, relevant to the men, which occurred within the previous week.
- Based on the consensus of the group, the group discussion is enabled to continue. If this opportunity does not present, the group engage in activities such as quiz events, and working with modelling clay.
- The option of watching an informative DVD is availed of, should the group consent to this. Subject matter is primarily historical (Local and International), BBC Earth Documentaries, or Comedy.

### **CE Scheme - Caretaker**

#### **Men's Worker -Edward Feeney**

My name is Eddie, and I'm from Ballyglunin, Tuam. I work here in the Croí Resource Centre as a Caretaker. I also work as a facilitator for the Men's Social Club which we hold on Thursday afternoons. The work is interesting and varied at all times to keep in tune with the ethos of the centre. I have previously worked as site engineer on construction projects, and as a volunteer with the annual Galway Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes.



## Fáilte Isteach English Language classes

New to Croí na Gaillimhe is our Fáilte Isteach programme. Fáilte Isteach offers conversational English classes for those whose English is not their first language. It is a great opportunity to get new migrants involved in the community and to assist those who would benefit from learning English for use in their daily lives.

Fáilte Isteach works at breaking down barriers that migrants and communities face by extending the hands of friendship and goodwill through the practical, welcoming and inclusive manner in which the programme is delivered. Fáilte Isteach provides more than the transfer of skills and knowledge. It is making a positive difference to everyone involved.



There is no beginning or end date and students are free to join any week, catering for beginners, intermediate and advanced levels. Fáilte Isteach meets every Tuesday from 2pm to 4pm in the Social Club Room in Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre.

Details on this programme can be found on the Croí na Gaillimhe blog: [www.croinagaillimhe.blogspot.com](http://www.croinagaillimhe.blogspot.com)

Or alternatively you can call into us at 1 Mill Street Galway. (091) 895203.

You can also find us on Facebook and Twitter.

**NUI Galway Community Development Work Placement Assistant-Catherine Corcoran**

I am originally from a small village in Co. Mayo called Belcarra. I completed my honours degree in Applied Social Studies in Sligo Institute of Technology. I continued my studies in The National University of Ireland Galway and am currently undertaking a 2 year Masters programme in Community Development. Part of this course is having the opportunity to work in Croí na Gaillimhe as part of a 14 week work placement. I help facilitate and co-ordinate clubs such as the Fáilte Isteach Programme, the Parents Network Club and I volunteer with the Dinner Club, Social Club and the Living Scenes Programme. I began in the beginning of September and I have enjoyed every aspect of working with the people who work here, the volunteers and participants at Croí na Gaillimhe resource centre.



## Living Scenes Programme

The Living Scenes Programme is being run in Croí na Gaillimhe for another year. Designed and implemented by Dr. Mary Surlis of NUIG, this educational initiative which brings together people of different generations has been run in several second level schools around the country for over a decade.

2010 saw the first use of the Living Scenes Programme outside a school setting: Transition Year students came from Galway Community College to Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre, and began to collaborate with senior citizens in the first community



model of intergenerational learning. Keeping in mind the need for building communication and trust in local communities, relationships between older and younger generations in Galway City are enhanced through active learning in a social environment.

Participants meet every Tuesday morning in the Resource Centre where a structured curriculum is carried out over a 30-week period. Participants meet every Tuesday morning in the Resource Centre where a structured curriculum is carried out over a 30-week period.



The classes are fun and enjoyable. This year's theme is based around 'Reflection'. Here we learn to develop our creative abilities, and to think about ourselves and others in a positive and respectful manner.

The programme aims to positively impact the lives of all participants by empowering self-development and relationship building in a learning environment intended to foster self-esteem and greater understanding between generations and cultures. To date we have learnt quite a lot about one another, our likes, dislikes, and the variety to be found between generations and cultural backgrounds. The participants of "Living Scenes Programmed staged a concert in Galway Community College for the Christmas and they hope to organise "an issue based" drama for the spring.



## Fundraising at Croí na Gaillimhe

This is a new venture for the centre but with the help of all the staff and volunteers here; we've managed to organise some fantastic events, raise vital funds and have a lot of fun in the process! In June, we held a hugely successful Table Quiz in Lohan's Bar and Restaurant in Salthill, we had a very enjoyable Gala Bingo afternoon in July, a Jumble Sale in October and very recently- the Knitting Club here hosted a 'Celebration of Crafts' fair which was a massive success.

### Dee Maher, Fundraiser on Work Placement

Although from Athlone originally, I've been living in Galway for about six years and I

have to say-it really feels like home. I did my degree in Journalism and Media Communications at Griffith College Dublin and then moved to Galway to teach English for a summer- like so many, I fell in love with the city and never left! It's been my pleasure to be involved with Croí na Gaillimhe since May when I took on the role of fundraiser on a work placement for 9 months which will finish in January 2013. Fundraising is a new venture for the centre but with the help of everyone here; we've managed to organise some great events, raise some funds and a lot of fun was had in the process! In June we had a very successful Table Quiz in Lohan's bar in Salthill, we've had Gala Bingos, Jumble Sales and Craft Fair.



## Volunteer Profiles

We are delighted to introduce two of our volunteers – Breda and Julianne. In this profile, they talk about some of their favourites aspects of volunteering at Croí na Gaillimhe.

"I just love the whole experience of it here, getting to know everyone, the interaction between everyone as they have dinner and chat amongst themselves. It really is a great atmosphere. I heard about Croí na Gaillimhe through a friend of mine and thought-that's something I'd really love to be involved with. I've been volunteering with the dinner club every week for the last two years now and it's definitely something I see myself doing for a long time. It's such a rewarding feeling."

**Breda-** Dinner and Social Club assistant.

"I wanted to volunteer as I love to paint and I also love the company of older people. I teach art in my own studio in Moycullen and recently set up a new project "The Galway School of Fashion and Art". I think Croí na Gaillimhe is a great organisation that helps a lot of people. I would really encourage others to volunteer at the centre.

**Left: Julianne-** Painting Tutor.





## Croí na Gaillimhe Timetable

### Monday:

**Parents Network:** 11am – 12.00pm.

**Dinner for Older People:** 1pm Price: €7

**Social Club:** 2pm Social activities include card / board games, movies, boccia, bingo

### Tuesday:

**Beginners Drawing:** 11am – 1pm

**Living Scenes - 'Intergenerational Project**

**Knitting Club:** 2.30pm – 4pm

**Fáilte Isteach (Conversational English for Migrants):**  
1.30pm – 4.00pm

### Wednesday:

**Teen Parent Programme:** 10.00am – 11.30am

**Beginner Computers:** 10.30am – 12.30pm

**Painting:** 10.30am – 12.00am

**Dinner for Older People:** 1pm Price: €7

**Social Club:** 2pm Social activities include card/ board Games, movies, boccia and bingo

### Thursday:

**Dancing for Older people:**

*Beginners:* 10.30am

*Improvers:* 11.30am

**Beginner Computers:** 10.30am – 12.30pm

**Social Club for Men:** 3.00pm – 5.00pm

### Friday:

**Creative Writing:** 10.30am – 12.30pm

**Tea Dance:** 2pm – 4pm -1<sup>st</sup> Friday of every month

Tel: (091) 895203

[www.croinagaillimhe.blogspot.com](http://www.croinagaillimhe.blogspot.com)





Society of  
St. Vincent de Paul

The  
Curiosity  
Shop

**We require good  
quality useable**

*clothing, household items, bric-a-brac,  
books, paper carrier bags & items of  
furniture you no longer need*

Unfortunately for Health & Safety reasons  
we cannot accept electrical items, beds, damaged  
baby equipment or carpets.

**Goods, that are saleable can be left into:**

*The Curiosity Shop  
Merchants Road  
Galway  
Tues – Sat 9am – 5pm*

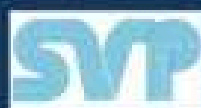
*Or collected  
Please  
Call 563233  
(Within 10 miles)*

## Useful Numbers:

Croí na Gaillimhe	091 895203
SVP (Ozanam House, Galway)	091 563233
Age Action	091 527831
Bus Éireann	091 562000
Care & Repair (local)	1890 369 369
Citizens Advice Bureau	091 563344
Community Garda	091538079
Community Welfare	091 548315
COPE (Meals on Wheels)	091 700800
Fás	091 534400
Fire Services	091 585555
Galway City Council	091 536400
Galway Hospice	091 770868
Galway Rape Crisis Centre	091 770868
Garda – Mill Street	091 538000
Garda – Salthill	091 514720
Iarnród Éireann	091 537700
Legal Aid	091 561650
MABS	091 569349
Mervue Health Centre	091 753887
Office of the Ombudsman (Local)	1890223030
Public Health Nurse	091 546365
Revenue Commissioners (Hibernian House)	091 536300
Road Safety Authority	091 774800
Samaritans	091561222
UCG Hospital	091 544544
West Doc	1850365000
Westside Age Inclusion	091 589861
Emergency Number	999 / 112
Galway University Hospital	091 524222
Merlin Park University Hospital	091 52422



# *Croí na Gaillimhe – The Resource Centre*



Society of St Vincent de Paul

Maureen O'Connell House

1 Mill Street, Galway

Tel. 091 - 895203

Issue 4 2013







## *Greetings From*

***Loretta Needham,  
Manager***

As Manager of Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to our newsletter for 2013. It's now four years since Croí na Gaillimhe opened its doors to the public. During that time the centre has made great strides in becoming what we hope is a valuable service to the community in general. It is our fervent hope that as we progress into the future, the Centre will evolve, develop and become more and more inclusive for all the citizens of Galway. With your continued support and participation I am very confident that we can achieve this objective.

Croí na Gaillimhe is operated by a small team of skilled and dedicated staff, board and volunteers. The centre provides a social network for people living in the City or County of Galway where they can attend classes, clubs and groups, meet up with old friends or meet new friends, take part in activities which are enjoyable and fun, sometimes educational or creative as well as accessing useful information and supports. I would sincerely like to thank all the staff and volunteers for their efforts in creating a welcoming and open environment and St. James Conference for their invaluable contribution to the development of the Centre. We are also mindful of and grateful for the contribution of the Maureen O'Connell Bequest in the establishment and support of Croí na Gaillimhe. In addition I would like to thank the contribution of the area council of the St Vincent de Paul and all the people that have supported our fund raising efforts, particularly the Croí na Gaillimhe knitting club and "Young Hearts" Intergenerational Project.

It only remains for me on my own behalf and on behalf of all of us here at Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre, to wish you and all your families and friends, both at home and abroad, a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas and a Healthy New Year!

I look forward to meeting all of our friends and neighbours once again at the Resource Centre in 2014.

*Loretta Needham*

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### **Production Team**

**Editors:** Maria McHugh and Aisling Bell

**Production/Technical:** Aisling Bell

**Contributor:** Honza Konvalinka

### **Right to Reply**

In fairness to our readers and given that this newsletter is not insured against libel, damages or costs, we undertake the following: In case of error of facts we will publish corrections when we become aware of such. In cases of unfairly impugning the reputation of any person we hereby offer that person or their representative the right to reply in the next issue of this newsletter subject only to reasonable length, the law of libel and our right to respond to such a reply. (This project is assisted by the Maureen O'Connell Trust and the area council of the society of St. Vincent de Paul.)

**Croí na Gaillimhe, Resource Centre,  
Maureen O'Connell House,**

**1 Mill Street, Galway .**

**[www.croinagaillimhe.blogspot.com](http://www.croinagaillimhe.blogspot.com)**

**[www.croinagaillimhe.ie](http://www.croinagaillimhe.ie)**



**Like us on Facebook**



### ***LUNCH AND SOCIAL CLUB ACTIVITIES.***

#### **Community Safety Week Talk by the Community Gardai.**

*Community Gardai Nora Brady and Alan Regan talked to the lunch and social club about safety in the community and personal safety issues.*

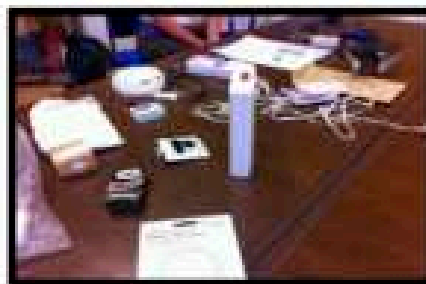
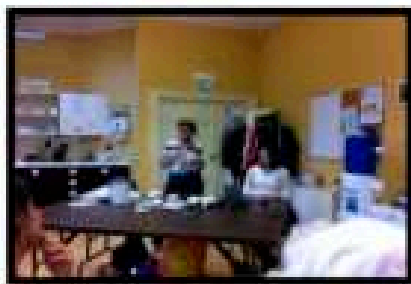


#### **Art project in conjunction with the Forge Studio**



#### ***Deaf Hear awareness raising about hearing Loss***

Edel outlined the many valuable services available to hard of hearing people and their families, including information on all aspects of deafness, specialist services and advocates to improve general health. She also brought with her a number of assisted devices that support people with hearing loss.



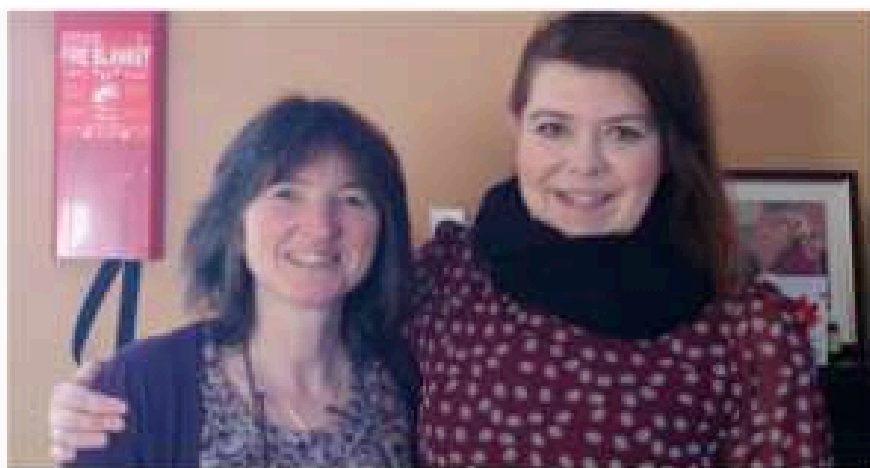
Social Club meet every Monday and Wednesday 2pm-4pm. Other events hosted by the Social Club included; Fall prevention, movement and relaxation, trips to the Country Museum, Art project and the monthly Tea Dance (that is held on the second Wednesday of each month) from 2.15pm to 4pm. Lunch Club 1pm -2pm and Social Club 2pm-4pm. Come along and join in the fun. Lunch Club 1pm -2pm and Social Club 2pm-4pm, Come along and join the fun.







Meet some of the wonderful people that volunteer at Croí na Gaillimhe



Jean and Laura, very talented Painting Class Tutors.



John the Creative Writing Facilitator.



Eugene Computer Class Tutor.



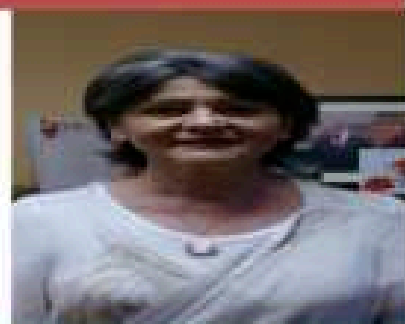
Fáilte Isteach Tutors



Monica volunteers in CNG office.

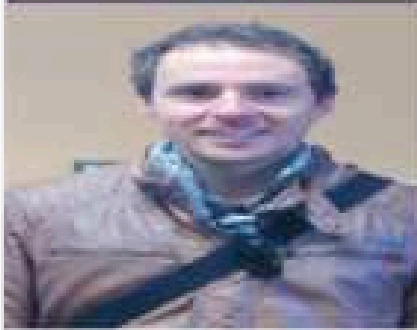


Johnny, John and Ciaran the very talented Tea Dance Musicians.

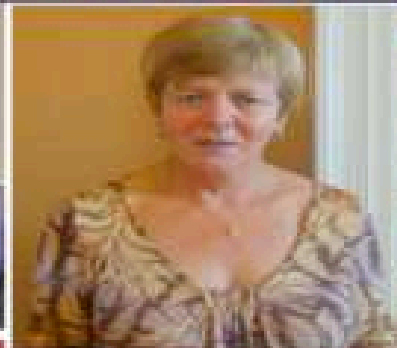


Bridget Tea Dance Volunteer.





Honza Men's Group Volunteer



Yvonne Social Club Volunteer



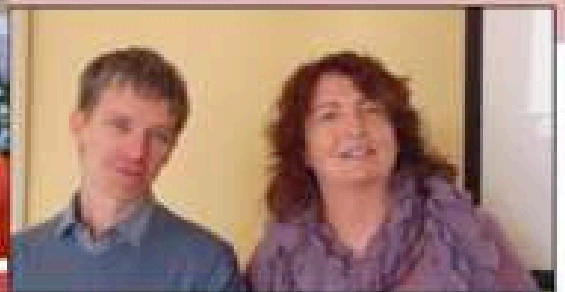
Julie, Margaret and Jean Social Club



Anne Drawing Class Tutor



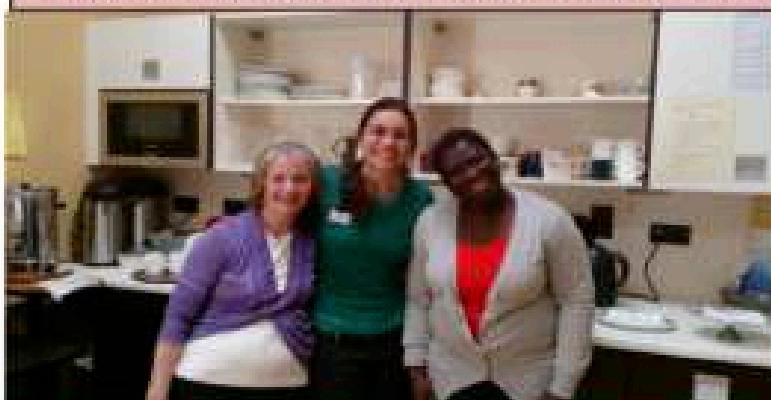
Maureen the Dance Class Tutor.



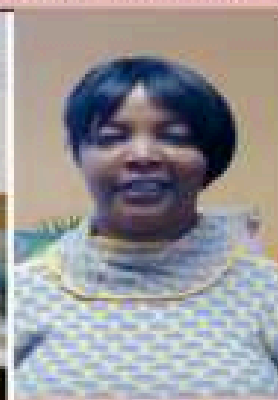
Paul and Majella Computer Class Tutors.



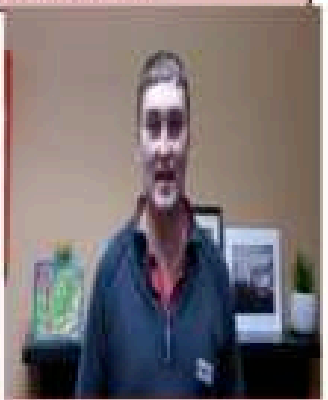
Njoya , Natalie , Melat , Claire and Margaret Lunch Club Wednesday Lunch Club Volunteers



Breda, Natalie and Angela Lunch Club Volunteers



Pacific Social Club Volunteer



Barry Social Club Volunteer

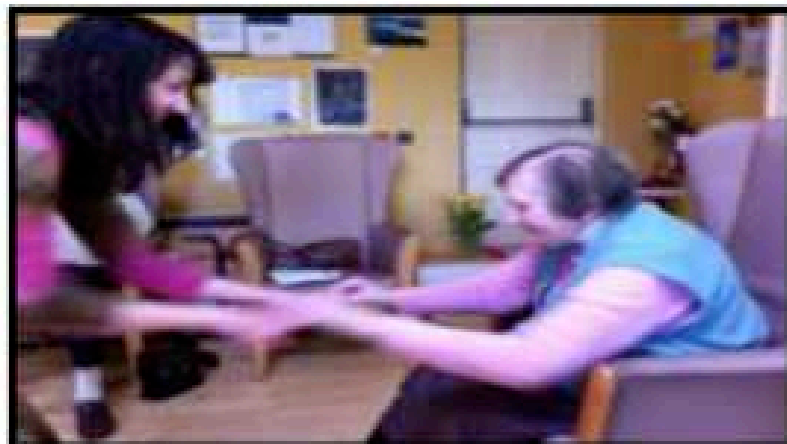


## BEALTAINE at Croí na Gaillimhe – A Celebration of Creativity

### Weaving worlds - Workshop based on the writings of the late John O'Donohue

This workshop was a wonderful introduction for those unfamiliar to the works of John O'Donohue, and a lovely gentle reflection for those already well acquainted with his works. It began with gentle movement and warm up, and continued with an introduction to working with imagery through the body and voice.

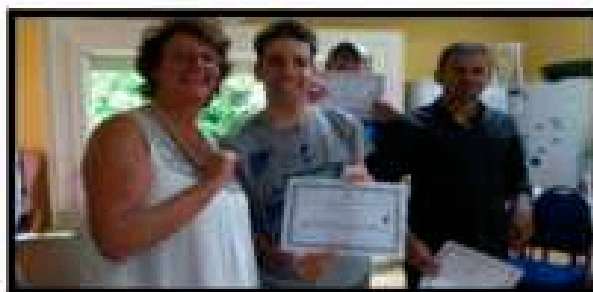
We then looked specifically at John Donohue's writings; Elaine read from selected material and invited participants to become aware of their own individual response while also offering a collective response to the works. This was the final event in our Bealtaine celebrations.



### Fáilte Isteach – Conversational English Language Class and their Graduation



The students and tutors of Fáilte Isteach attended a very special celebration. It was the graduation of the all the students who attended our first year of the conversational English. We celebrated with food, music and the presentation of certificates by Loretta Needham (Manager Croí na Gaillimhe) and Stephen Cadwell (tutor). The class is suitable for beginners and improvers. For more details contact 091-895203.







## Men's Social Group – Walk the Hill of Uisneach

Sunday, the 16th of June 2013, was the day that marked the final day of Men's Health Week 2013. This week-long initiative took place in collaboration between Health Service Executive (HSE), Men's Health Forum Ireland (MHFI) and Man Matters (MM). This year's theme was **'Action Men – Turning Words into Actions'**. It was not about TV heroes but about real men taking real actions.



This day was also Father's Day. To honour this special day John Cantwell of Slí an Chroí based in Dublin, organised a nationwide gathering of men. Honza, a volunteer facilitator with Croí na Gaillimhe, invited members of our men's group to take part in this gathering, and men from other groups. With the kind help of the employees at Croí na Gaillimhe he promoted and organised the travel from Galway to the Hill. It was Croí na Gaillimhe that so thoughtfully sponsored the much needed minibus to make our trip as comfortable as possible.

At 1pm the elders of the gathering began in silence gracefully leading the way up the Hill.

The speed of the slowest walking man became the speed of the entire movement. Some men in the group have availed of the opportunity to be driven 2/3 of the way up. With this approach all of the men were fresh to participate in the final stretch of the walk. The minibus slowly followed the walking men up the Hill.





## **The Fabulous Dancing Class**



## **Beginners Computer Classes receive their certificates**



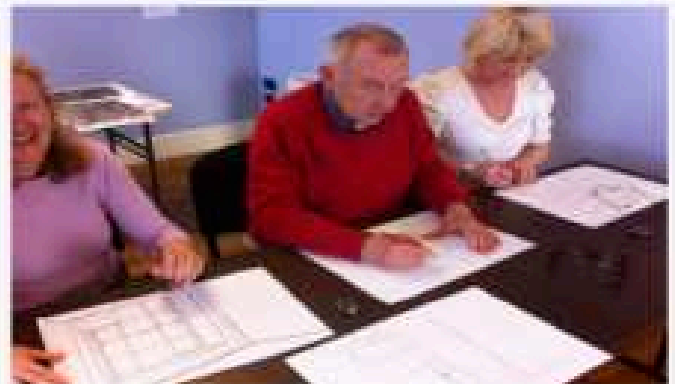
## **Young Hearts Intergenerational Programme**



## **Teen Parent Group**



## **The Drawing Class**







The Creative Writing class will be publishing a selection of their work in the new year.



The Drawing class taking inspiration from the wonderful surroundings.



The Knitting Group here at Croi na Gaillimhe who have helped the centre by fundraising and selling their wonderful handmade knitted goods.



Students and volunteers from the Thursday Fáilte Isteach Class



Participants in the Monday Morning Painting Class



## **Money & Budgeting Workshop - managing your weekly budget**

The Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre of the Society of St Vincent de Paul completed another successful programme called 'More Money in your Pocket'. The programme ran in January and September this year. The programme covered a range of topics including; attitudes to money, developing a spending diary, control of money, budgeting and budgeting tools, budgeting strategies and management techniques, paying and prioritising bills, record keeping, savings – the why and the how and shopping healthily on a budget. It was delivered one morning a week over six weeks.

### **Over 12 participants received certificates**



Ciara Coy, Tutor with the VEC, said "It was wonderful to see the group grow in knowledge and confidence, gain practical skills and develop connections and warm friendships from participating in the More Money in your Pocket Course".

**A collective comment from the learners: "an informative, eye opening, empowering and fun course"**

Loretta Needham, Manager of Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre, explained that "If you are trying to make your weekly incomes go that bit further then this is the course for you. The course looks at effective ways to manage your money and plan your budget, shopping tips, on a tight budget and lots more. It's useful for anyone who wants to make their weekly income stretch that bit further".

## **'A Stitch in Time' Sewing and dressmaking workshop hosted by the Parents Network**

The Parents Network meet every Monday morning from 10am to 11am for tea/coffee and chat. They run regular workshops so come along and bring a friend.

The Parents from the Parents Network really enjoyed the dressmaking workshop where they made their own skirts, you can see the finished skirts modelled below.





## Intergenerational Programme – Living Scenes 2012

### Graduation Day

Lorraine McIlrath, Director of Community Knowledge Institute, NUI Galway and Board Member of St. James Conference, Croí na Gaillimhe presented certificates to the "Living Scenes" participants at the Graduation Ceremony held in Croí na Gaillimhe.



**(2012 Living Scenes participants with their Certificates)**

Alá (Forum Theatre), Croí Na Gaillimhe and Galway Community College worked together to draw out issues between generations. The unique approach and skills-sets of Forum Theatre Company we believe enhanced the experiential and participant led aspects of the programme. Alá ensured the participation of the older and younger person by using authentic grass root level democracy techniques. The result was two drama pieces that were built around these issues and acted out in front of a large audience (of older and younger people) in Galway Community College and the exciting part was that the audience reaction to suggestions changes the drama to resolve the issues were very real for the audience as well.



**Participants from Living Scenes, Croí na Gaillimhe, Galway Community College and Alá (Forum Theatre) in action**



## Croí na Gaillimhe Timetable

### Monday:

**Parents Network:** 10am – 11am

**Painting Class:** 10am -12pm.

**Dinner for Older People:** 1pm Price: €7

**Social Club:** 2pm Social activities include card / board games, movies, bocchia, bingo

### Tuesday:

**Beginners Drawing:** 11am – 1pm

**Intergenerational Project** 10.30am-1pm

**Knitting Club:** 2.30pm – 4pm

**Fáilte Isteach (Conversational English for Migrants):** 2.00pm – 4.00pm

### Wednesday:

**Teen Parent Programme:** 10.30am – 12.00pm

**Beginner Computers:** 10.30am – 12.30pm

**Dinner for Older People:** 1pm Price: €7

**Social Club:** 2pm Social activities include card/ board Games, movies, bocchia and bingo

### Thursday:

**Fáilte Isteach(Conversational English for Migrants):** 9.30am -11am

**Dancing for Older people:** 11.30-1pm

**Social Club for Men:** 3.00pm – 5.00pm

### Friday:

**Creative Writing:** 10.30am – 12.30pm

**Movement & Relaxation:** 2pm -3pm

**Workshops running throughout the year**  
check our website and blogspot for details

**www.croinagaillimhe.ie**

**www.croinagaillimhe.blogspot.com**

**Tel 091 895203**



Society of  
St. Vincent de Paul

The  
Curiosity  
Shop

**We require good  
quality useable**

*clothing, household items, bric-a-brac,  
books, paper carrier bags & items of  
furniture you no longer need*

*Unfortunately for Health & Safety reasons  
we cannot accept electrical items, beds, damaged  
baby equipment or carpets*

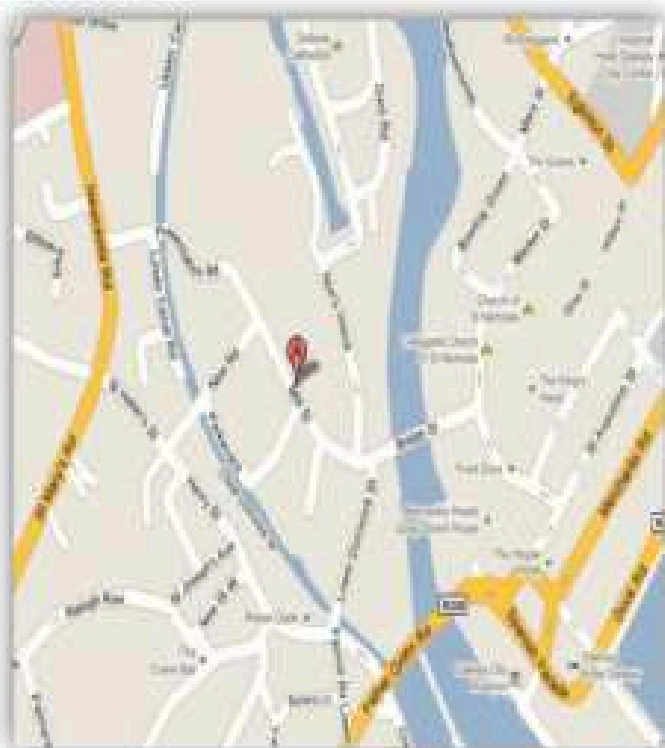
**Goods, that are saleable can be left into:**

*The Curiosity Shop  
Merchants Road  
Galway  
Tues – Sat 9am – 5pm*

*Or collected  
Please  
Call 363211  
(Within 10 miles)*

## **Useful Numbers:**

Croí na Gaillimhe	091 895203
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Westside Age Inclusion	091 589861
Emergency Number	999 / 112
Galway University Hospital	091 524222
Merlin Park University Hospital	091 524222
Homelessness (COPE)	091 525259





# 2014 Newsletter



**Croí na Gaillimhe**  
Society of St Vincent de Paul



**SVP**

Society of St Vincent de Paul

*December 2014*





*Greetings From*

*Loretta Needham  
Manager*

As another year comes to a close I would like to take stock and reflect on what has been a challenging year for Croí na Gaillimhe. The Maureen O'Connell Bequest is coming to an end and CNG are now seeking new ways to fund the Resource Centre. However, much effort is being made within our own organisation (St Vincent de Paul), as well as working with partners such as Health Service Executive, Mayo Intercultural Action. Through funding these organisations have received from Genio and the European Refugee Fund, we continue to work in a collaborative way to ensure that people in Galway are getting the service that they need at this point in time.

You will see as you work your way through the newsletter the fruits of our labour, even in terms of the volunteers who have helped develop this year's Newsletter. The Young Hearts, Intergenerational Group (Transition Year Students from Galway Community College and older Adults), as a result of the impact of the programme on their personal development, contributed to running a fundraising Christmas Fair in conjunction with the Knitting Club. You will read about the wide diversity of courses and clubs that we run. We ran 3 new collaborative programmes: Outreach Homework Club, SOLAS (Support Orientation and Learning for Asylum Seekers) and the Community Connector Programme. Our door in CNG is always open and I would encourage people to come in and find out more about our activities.

CNG actively pursue ways to keep you informed about our activities. This newsletter is one and the other is social media, such as

facebook, blogspot, website and twitter.

We have 100 active volunteers currently involved in the centre and we rely on the passion, talent and energy that they bring to the people of Galway, Ireland and countries all around the world. On my own behalf and on behalf of the staff of CNG, we wish all your families and friends, both at home and abroad, a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas and a Healthy New Year! I look forward to meeting all our friends and neighbours once again at the Resource Centre in 2015.

*Loretta Needham*

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Keeping Warm this Winter

#### Right to Reply

In fairness to our readers and given that this newsletter is not insured against libel, damages or costs, we undertake the following: In case of error of facts we will publish corrections when we become aware of such. In cases of unfairly impugning the reputation of any person we hereby offer that person or their representative the right to reply in the next issue of this newsletter subject only to reasonable length, the law of libel and our right to respond to such a reply. (This project is assisted by the Maureen O'Connell Trust and the Area Council of the society of St. Vincent de Paul.)



### Three EXCITING New Programmes Launched at Croí na Gaillimhe in 2014

*We at Croí na Gaillimhe are very excited to welcome three new programmes to the centre for 2014 all programmes although very different, Homework Club, SOLAS (Support, Orientation & Learning for Asylum Seekers), and Community Connector all have huge impact on our communities*

## ***The Homework Club at the Eglinton Hostel***

The Eglinton Homework Club started on the 8<sup>th</sup> September 2014 with 28 children in attendance. It provides homework support to children living in the direct provision centre, Eglinton Hostel, Salthill. It has two part time staff and 20 volunteers working with the children. The project is funded by the Maureen O'Connell Bequest. The Club runs from 2.45pm to 7pm Monday to Thursday. The majority of the children who come to the club attend primary school ranging from senior infants to sixth class as well as five secondary school students.

The Eglinton management and staff have painted, decorated and provided some of the materials necessary towards making the space for the homework club a lovely place to work in for everyone.

Our volunteers are dedicated and come with a wide range of skills and expertise and have contributed greatly to the success of the club so far.

### **What the Children Say :**

*'I like the homework club because I get my homework done quickly and I make new friends and then I get time to play' (aged 8)*

*'I like the homework club, I love it and I love all the stuff and all the homework I love all the great things here and I love all the people that help me with my homework' (aged 9)*

*'It is really helpful especially for asylum seekers who are in their exam years and really struggling' (aged 15)*



*Just some of the volunteer tutors and staff that give their time to the homework club every week. If you would like to volunteer for this project or make a donation please contact the office @091-895203*



## *Community Connector for Galway*

My name is John Curran and I am the Community Connector for Galway. The project is funded by Genio and has been running since the end of April 2014. I work closely with Leo Larkin (Manager of Merlin Training Centre) and Angela Doran (Manager of Bredagh house). The aim of the project as the title suggests is get the group to establish and have a meaningful connection within our Community.

We have 10 people engaged with the service that runs from Monday to Wednesday.

During the last few months I have been working closely with the group getting to know them, identify their strengths and weaknesses and help identify their goals. We have used personal centred planning tools to help identify these goals and to put into action the steps to achieve them. I work on a one to one basis with these Service Users on developing their self-esteem, and attaining their personal goals. Some of the group have started a College/ training course. Some have taken up volunteering work, to gain some valuable work experience along with helping a good cause e.g. Madra. I assist with Fitness, weight management and developing Independent living skills with a number of the Group. We have a cooking workshop every Monday where a small group of three receive guidance and supervision in menu planning, budgeting, and cooking of a healthy nutritional meal.

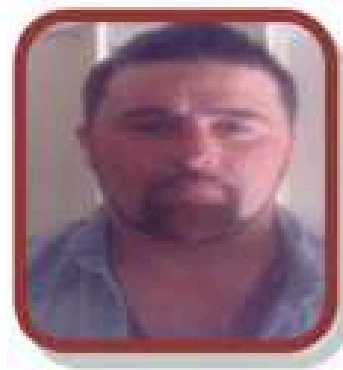
We meet every Tuesday for peer support in Croí na Gallimhe. It is here, in a safe confidential environment the group can talk, listen and give and seek advice on various issues relating to their mental wellbeing. As a group I have seen friendships develop and each individual grow over this time.

Together we plan what activities, programmes they wish to pursue.

To date we had a 5 week Nutrition course run by Glenville Nutrition, which was very interesting and informative. We took part in an eight week Kayaking Course with Corrib Canoeing which was good fun. A few of the group passed their first Kayaking Assessment. We had a two day workshop with Shine "Taking Control" which was informative and interesting. We are presently attending a 5 week Music Therapy workshop with Ronan de Burca. The group are using a variety of musical instruments to learn how to listen and communicate in a new way along with exploring the positive effects and influence music has on our lives and wellbeing. In the new year we will taking part in a number of workshops on Meditation and Mindfulness by Midie Corcoran of Éiru healing centre, Shop Street, Tuam. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for all their efforts and support over the last few months. Also thanks to Laragh and staff from Stadun of Spiddal, Connemara Coast Road, Co. Galway, for supporting one of the members in her new business venture by stocking and selling her crochet products.

With Christmas almost upon us, we are presently looking into where we will go for our Christmas Party. I would also like this opportunity to wish all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

*John Curran*





## SOLAS Support, Orientation & Learning for Asylum Seekers

*A regional partnership project between Mayo Intercultural Action (MIA) and Croí na Gaillimhe, A Resource Centre of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.*

### Project Work

- *Training for people in the asylum process*
- *Information and Referral Clinic*
- *Social & Cultural Orientation*
- *Training for Service Providers*
- *Seminar to share learning and facilitate*

**Training:** One example of training was the NALA blended learning courses we ran in the Eglinton Hostel in Salthill and in Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre. 14 students from the Eglinton Hostel and Great Western Hostel participated in the programme that ran from June to October. More than learning English students improved their computer skills as well as Maths and study skills.

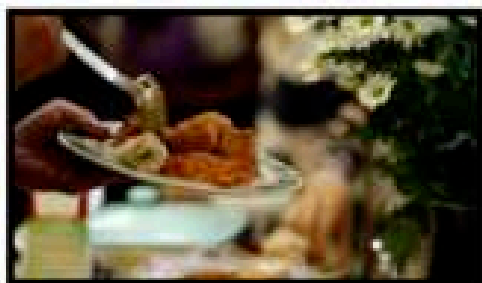
### Information and Referral Clinic

We had over 200 interactions with Clients looking for one to one support with various issues from accessing social welfare to preparation for subsidiary protection.

SOLAS made a submission to a round table discussion with the Minister for Justice on the issues facing people in the Asylum Process.

### Social and Cultural Orientation

To celebrate Social Inclusion Week SOLAS in partnership with Croí na Gaillimhe and their NALA students hosted a cultural feast with delicious dishes from countries including but not limited to Ethiopia, Bolivia, Nigeria South Africa, UK. There was music, a coffee ceremony and lots of fun!



*Come Dine with Us event for Social Inclusion Week included food from all over the world and the magical Ethiopian Coffee Ceremony performed by Nigete and Melot*

SOLAS has also joined forces with Titans Basketball Club to run sessions for both men and women.

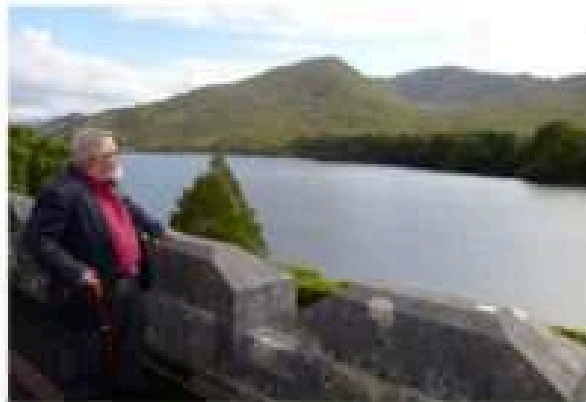
Things to watch out for : Seminar Jan 12<sup>th</sup> -

Details of all upcoming events will be available on the Croí na Gaillimhe Website, Facebook and Blog Spot



## Men's Social Group - Trip to Connemara

The members of our Men's Group and Social Club have returned from a superb day-trip across the rugged landscape of Connemara. They took a comfortable bus and have visited many sites along the way. The weather was great, the food delicious and the laughter constant or so we heard.



**Brendan Connolly, Volunteer Co-Facilitator, Men's Group**

Do you know a man that's free on Thursday afternoon?

If so, do tell him about our men's group!

091 895203 or

[info@croinagaillimhe.org](mailto:info@croinagaillimhe.org)



I have been volunteering with various organisations for the past six years, It all started when I lost my full time position as a yard supervisor back in 2008. I found volunteering a good experience, I have volunteered with various organisations from cancer care to mental health. You can get a lot from volunteering, you pick up new skills that you never thought you had. I have a diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy that I completed back in 2012, Volunteering gave me the incentive to return to education, I am very proud of that. Its great to give back something to society and it's not taking up all of your time. It's a great feeling to be able to help out other people that just need a little help to get along. Croi na Gaillimhe are one of those organisations that help out and cater for a lot of groups. I am very lucky to be a Volunteer Co-Facilitator with the Men's Social Club on Thursday's from 3pm to 5pm, we all decide on what to do for the two hours, It can be playing darts, dominoes, watching a DVD or even a documentary and maybe a discussion. We do our best to cater for the members that come along. We are always open to suggestions from the participants. We go on outings when the weather permits and visit local places of interest such as Ross Errily Friary in Headford, Cong and Connemara. So if you're interested in joining us you're always welcome.





## Perspectives from the Young Hearts Intergenerational Program

Some observations from the older adults in the Young Hearts Programme

"The young people have said to me that they get a lot off this program. There are a lot of foreign students here who feel welcomed as they take part in the program as they get to meet older Irish people. They also get to find that older Irish people are often overgrown teenagers themselves, they are not all cranky or biased."

"Also because of this interaction the young people leave with a different attitude, that influences their future decisions such as whether to go to college. That's why I keep coming back. I learn new skills and have fun doing different activities and maybe make a small but important difference in the lives of young people, they know that they fit in and that people care".

"I would definitely recommend it to both young and old alike. It would be good for everyone, the social side is fantastic, and there is something different going on every week. I feel that the young people are so friendly. Even when I meet them on the streets sometimes they remember me and say hello, it's been a lovely experience."



Just some of the thoughts of from the transition year students attending the Young Hearts Programme

"Since we started Young Hearts I have become a much more confident person. I think it has helped me a lot with my communication skills. I find it easier to talk in public now. I look forward to going to Young Hearts every week because I enjoy talking to the older people.....I find that talking with the other people is really inspiring because they talk about their life experiences."

"I really enjoy the Young Hearts sessions, it's great fun. Every week I learn new skills and discover new ways of spending my free time. Working with adults is inspiring for me, it's a great way to learn from their experiences. Also, the way they work is different from the way I work or my friends. Working with the adults is great fun, the atmosphere is always great."

"Young Hearts is a huge experience for me. I really enjoy working out of school, the atmosphere and the activities. I especially enjoy working with adults because I wasn't close to older adults before."

"Young Hearts is very good for me as it shows me what older people are like, which helps me understand more. It is fun working with adults because it helps me communicate better. It lets me know what they what they did when they were younger and what they went through and I can ask their advice"

Our Young Hearts Programme offers a space to learn new skills and make friends across the generations, and give back to the community. It is run in partnership with Galway Community College.



## FAILTE ISTEACH

### Conversational English Classes

"This is my third year volunteering with the programme and I have had a truly positive experience. As the title suggests this programme extends the greeting "Failte Isteach" (translated from Irish: welcome in) to recently arrived immigrants to our city. I, as a tutor also experience the concept of "welcome" in my interaction with the students.

I have had the privilege of being welcomed to share a little of the life experiences of a diverse group of people as they share personal perspectives on the complexity and devastating impact of political and economic strife in their home nation. We also discuss day to day life and cultural differences and similarities." Anne, a tutor on this programme.



"I like English Language class a lot. The teachers are outgoing with experience; they have clever ideas about topics. I meet new friends, some I keep in touch in different countries. I improve English, especially speaking but I hope to improve reading and writing this year.

The atmosphere is good, everyone knows everyone, it is very friendly especially the last year. After class we continue the conversation in a coffee shop for two hours and more. People who never meet before now help families, especially a girl I met from Spain. A Japanese girl visits my house for 6 or 7 times. We share culture food and knowledge of history, sharing photos on facebook, all in English. English class is also social club!" Vesya, a participant from Bulgaria.

TO ENQUIRE, PHONE 091 895203 OR EMAIL [info@croinagaillimhe.org](mailto:info@croinagaillimhe.org)





# CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR

On the 29<sup>th</sup> of November Croí na Gaillimhe was the site of a Christmas Fair hosted by its very own Knitting Club with assistance from the Young Hearts Intergenerational Program and other members of groups that meet there including the Fáilte Isteach program (conversational English). A variety of unique handcrafted items were sold to raise funds for the centre. These included beautiful hand knitted goods, handmade ceramic Christmas Decorations, and a selection of breads, scones and cakes all lovingly crafted by those who attend this centre and its programme of activities.

The Mayor of the City of Galway, Cllr. Donal Lyons was in attendance and James Harrold, Galway's Arts Officer officially opened the event. There was a lovely atmosphere on the day, with a mix of people present enjoying the atmosphere of the centre, young and old, native Galwegians and new arrivals, all mixing together, enjoying refreshments and socialising, whilst stocking up on handmade gifts for Christmas.

Croí na Gaillimhe would like to thank all those who came to support this fundraising event, in particular the Knitting Club who organised the event and devoted so much of their time creating lovely products to sell, the Young Hearts Program who created such lovely handmade gifts under the guidance of Maria Moore of Galway Community College and the Artistic guidance from Ramona and Anu. We thank all those who donated baked goods and gave their time into making this event such a success. We would like to thank all the students from Galway Community College and volunteers involved in Croí na Gaillimhe Knitting Club for helping out on the day.

The Knitting Club meets in Croí na Gaillimhe on a Tuesday afternoon at 2.30p.m. and Young Hearts meet on a Tuesday morning. Fáilte Isteach which is a conversational English class meet on Tuesday afternoons and Thursday mornings. For more details on courses contact 091 895203 and/or [www.croinagaillimhe.ie](http://www.croinagaillimhe.ie)







# Lunch & Social Club for Older People

Croí na Gaillimhe is an ideal venue for the Social Club For Older People. The warm and welcoming room with tranquil views of a private waterway plays host to the twice weekly Lunch and social group. A nutritious meal is provided by COPE and this is followed up by a round of Bingo and other fun activities facilitated by the lively volunteers who help out.

*"For seven euro I can eat a hot meal in company and participate in group activities for hours, otherwise I would be reading and eating by myself at home. Its good to be in company".*

There are prizes to be won at the bingo as well. "Sometimes one person can have a very lucky day and they seem to go home with a good few prizes" say's Loyola, the coordinator of the group. This definitely adds to the atmosphere of the group. As one group member says "winning a pot of jam, sweets or some bubble bath adds a spring to your step".

The social club also hosts a number of seasonal events such as a Halloween Party,



For Fun Activities, For New  
Friendships,

Come To Our Social Club on Monday &  
Wednesday Afternoons 1pm-4pm

Contact Loyola

091 895203



# Creative Writing



Every Friday morning from 10.30-12.30am, Croi na Gaillimhe comes alive with the thoughts and views from a creative writing group. Consisting of 7-10 people, their ages, are wide-ranging. Led by a very learned facilitator, John McGinty, the group share their observations on life, personally or not, as it scurries around them. It's where we have a great laugh on funny things people do or say and frank discussions on things that matter, socially, and historical facts.

Each member feels protected from the outside world, safe in a cocoon for two hours.

Though daunting to read ones material at first, it soon becomes a second nature to share.

After all, there is a book, waiting to be written, in all of us.

New members always welcome.

- Maria McHugh

This year the creative writers published two books one by the group called "Reflections by the River" the other was a memoir by Sr Nora Lally called "Smaointé Luachmhara"

## Tips for Keeping Healthy This Winter

Ensure you are prepared for winter with our handy tips to look after your health and keep you warm this winter

**Have a Flu jab every year** – If you are over 65 or have certain health conditions you can get the jab for free. The vaccine takes up to ten days to take effect, so have it early on in the winter.

**Check you have had a 'pneumo' jab** – This is a one-off jab that helps protect you against pneumonia, meningitis and septicaemia. If you are over 65 and haven't had one, ask your GP about it.

**Wash your hands** – Good hand hygiene is a simple way to prevent the spread of flu. Wash your hands regularly,

**Get Active** – Staying active is not only essential for your wellbeing and fitness, it also generates heat and helps to keep you warm. When you are indoors, try not to sit still for more than an hour.

**Be Prepared** – Order repeat prescriptions in plenty of time, especially if bad weather is forecast and ask your local pharmacy if they offer a prescription pick-up and delivery service.

**Keep in touch with people** – It is not unusual to feel a bit down in winter, if you are finding it difficult to get out and see friends make sure you phone them for a chat.

**Keeping Warm** - Keep the rooms you spend most of your time in warm, wear several layers of light clothes instead of one thick layer. Wear clothes made from wool, cotton or fleecy synthetic fibres, Wear thermal underwear during the winter. Keep your head, hands and feet warm and cosy. In very cold weather put extra blankets or duvets on your bed, wear warm pyjamas or night dress, wear bed socks and a night cap, keep a flask with a hot drink by your bed.





## Croi na Gaillimhe Timetable

### Monday:

Painting and Drawing: 10am – 12pm  
 Grow Mental Health & Anxiety Support: 11am -1pm.  
 Dinner for Older People: 1pm Price: €7  
 Social Club: 2pm Social activities include card / board games, movies, boccia, bingo  
 Grow Mental Health & Anxiety Support Programme 7.30pm - 9.30pm

### Tuesday:

Intergenerational Project 10.30am-1pm  
 Knitting Club: 2.30pm – 4pm  
 Community Connector: 2pm-3pm  
 Fáilte Isteach (Conversational English for Migrants): 2.00pm – 4.00pm  
 Grow Mental Health & Anxiety Support (18 yrs-30yrs) 7.30pm-9.30pm

### Wednesday:

Movement & Relaxation: 10.30am – 12.00pm  
 Beginner Computers: 10.30am – 12.30pm  
 Dinner for Older People: 1pm Price: €7  
 Social Club: 2pm Social activities include card/ board Games, movies, boccia and bingo

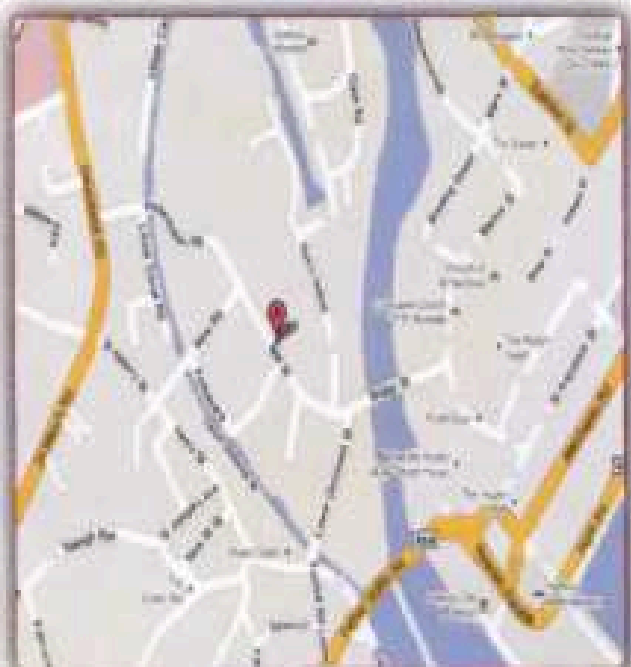
### Thursday:

Fáilte Isteach (Conversational English for Migrants): 9.30am -11am  
 Dancing for Older people: 11.30-1pm  
 Social Club for Men: 3.00pm – 5.00pm

### Friday:

Creative Writing: 10.30am – 12.30pm

Workshops running throughout the year  
 check our website and blogspot for details  
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[www.croinagaillimhe.blogspot.com](http://www.croinagaillimhe.blogspot.com)  
 Tel 091 895203





**SVP**  
Society of Voluntary People

The  
Curiosity  
Shop

**We require good quality useable**

*clothing, household items, bric-a-brac, books, paper carrier bags & items of furniture you no longer need*

Unfortunately for reasons of safety reasons we cannot accept electrical items, beds, damaged items, appliances or carpets.

*Goods, that are saleable can be left into:*

*The Curiosity Shop*  
*200-202 Main Street*  
*Galway*  
*Phone: 091 895 203*

*Or call in*  
*Phone: 091 895 203*  
*100-102 Main Street*  
*Galway*

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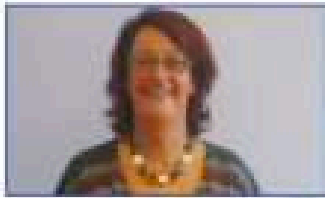


# 2015 Newsletter



**Croí na Gaillimhe**  
Society of St Vincent de Paul





*Greetings From  
Loretta Needham,  
Manager*

Hello and welcome to this edition of the Newsletter. If you didn't get to make it to any of our events, clubs, classes or workshops during the year, this issue of the newsletter will give you a taste of what you missed. The newsletter shares stories and experiences from participants, volunteers and our team, as well as letting you know about our weekly activities and up-coming events.

Despite uncertain times and the bad weather this summer, the activities in Croí na Gaillimhe are going stronger than ever with increased numbers using the centre. Thomas F. Woodlock, a former editor with the Wall Street Journal once said "Times of stress and difficulty are seasons of opportunity when the seeds of progress are sown". The staff and volunteers were busy sowing seeds of progress in the classes, clubs and workshops in the centre. There were creative approaches used to encourage informal learning skills in our programmes: Fáilte Isteach (Conversational English) and Young Hearts (Intergenerational Programme) and our classes for older people. We had members of the Lions Club who responded to the particular learning needs of a diverse group of adults from a Direct Provision Hostel by providing a "Prepare for Work Course". We provided upskilling computer courses for the Terrified, whilst also catering for knitting enthusiasts. Training was provided for St Vincent de Paul Visitation Conference members on "Money Advice and Budgeting" and "Active Listening Skills". Our Lunch

and Social Clubs, activities and classes for older people are our greatest treasure and pride. We have participants with us since 2009 and they are our family now. We haven't forgotten our Men's Group which gave us great entertainment throughout the year. We have even taken up singing this year and have choir every Thursday evening.

The Homework Club operates in the Eglinton Direct Provision Hostel in Salthill servicing a large number of children. The number of queries received by Croí na Gaillimhe regarding support for Asylum Seekers in preparing for interviews or appeal for Refugee Status or Subsidiary Protection rose dramatically this year and this was amply serviced by our wonderful Volunteers from the "Asylum Seekers Working Group".

We have 100 active volunteers currently involved in the centres work and outreach service. On my own behalf and on behalf of St James Conference and staff of CNG, we wish all your families and friends, both at home and abroad, a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas and a Healthy New Year! I look forward to meeting all our friends and neighbours once again at the Resource Centre in 2016

#### Right to Reply

In fairness to our readers and given that this newsletter is not insured against libel, damages or costs, we undertake the following: In case of error of facts we will publish corrections when we become aware of such. In cases of unfairly impugning the reputation of any person we hereby offer that person or their representative the right to reply in the next issue of this newsletter subject only to reasonable length, the law of libel and our right to respond to such a reply. (This project is assisted by the Maureen O' Connell Trust and the Galway Area Council of the society of St. Vincent de Paul.)



**EXCITING New Programmes Launched at Croí na Gaillimhe in 2015 include the following; Basketball Training for Women, Choir, Asylum Seeker Volunteer Working Group, Prepare for Work, and St. Vincent de Paul Member Training.**

## **OWL's (One World Ladies) Basketball Training Sessions**

### **Celebrating Interculturalism**

Every Friday morning in Westside Community Centre a group of women come together for a basketball training session. These sessions are particularly unique as the participants are women from new communities and Irish women – different ages, different nationalities, different levels of fitness and skills but different together!

The sessions are supported by Titans Basketball Club who provide equipment and coaching expertise and the use of the Westside Centre at a reasonable fee. Croí na Gaillimhe support staff play alongside participants and it provides an opportunity to discuss and plan for the needs of new communities in particular.

Participants have spoken about the impact these sessions have on them, including:

**Relieving stress especially for the women living in direct provision centres and those who have transitioned recently to the community.**

**Increased fitness and awareness of health and wellbeing, and increased coping and resilience mechanisms due to improved physical and mental wellbeing.**

*"I look forward to coming, I forget everything when I'm playing...it's just about getting the ball, playing as a team...all the worries are gone for that time".*

Above all, the participants both those from new communities and the Irish women talk about the social aspect of the sessions. For the most part these women did not previously know one another nor have the opportunity to interact with one another prior to the development of these sessions.



*"The fun is great... we get to know each other in a way you don't in a more formal setting".*

The development of this special approach to Interculturalism was initially made possible by the SOLAS (2013 – 2015) Project funded under the European Refugee Fund which sought to develop supports for people in the asylum process in Galway and Mayo. Croí na Gaillimhe in partnership with Titans Basketball Club have continued the successful approach established under the SOLAS Project and are planning ways of enhancing the process for the women involved based on the outcomes of the evaluation in December 2015.

**If you would like to join these fun fitness sessions, please contact: Loretta 091-895203**





## CHOIR

A Choir group meet every Thursday evening from 6.00pm to 7.00pm to sing at Croi na Gaillimhe, the group learn songs from around the world as well as loved and known tunes. The Choir is for people living in the Asylum Process and people from the local community. **All voices are welcome.**

Group singing has been proven to have a positive effect on all!

*Proven to lower stress,*

*Relieves anxiety,*

*Elevates endorphins (happiness hormones),*

*Improves breathing and helps relaxation ,*

*Good for your heart .*

**"Group singing is cheaper than therapy, healthier than drinking and more fun than working out"**

Contact: Loretta Needham, Croi na Gaillimhe 091-895203



## Asylum Seeker Volunteer Working Group

We are a group of volunteers working with **Croi Na Gaillimhe**, who support Asylum Seekers in preparing for their interview or appeal for Refugee Status or Subsidiary Protection. We are not solicitors nor do we provide any legal advice.

Our goal is to enable the protection applicant to give a clear, coherent and complete account of their experience. We explain the interview or appeals process and will help the applicant to:

- Prepare a timeline and personal statement prior to interview for Refugee Status.
- Provide Country of Origin information and/or case law relevant to the case.
- Email relevant documents to the solicitor of the applicant, who decides if it is useful to submit them to the Department of Justice.

**Working Group Members:** Cathriona Naughton, Cristabelle Metcalfe, Manon Jubert and Marian Merrick.

**If any Asylum Seeker would like to avail of this service, please contact Croi na Gaillimhe to set up an appointment at 091-895203**





# Prepare for Work

The programme is designed for a group of asylum seekers who have been in the direct provision system for between 3 months and up to ten years. The objective of the programme is to prepare the attendees for work experience which in turn should improve their prospects of getting work when they are finally authorised to work in Ireland.

The programme is run in a classroom setting and is highly participative. It is divided into 4 modules:-

1. Getting the attendees to list out all of their skills and competencies in preparation for the CV stage of the programme.
2. Using this list of skills and competencies to assist the participants in preparing a CV which includes their education and work experience to date. All CV's are put on a USB key and can be readily modified based on vacancies course attendees may wish to apply for.
3. Assisting the participants in writing a covering letter which as well as addressing any position they choose to apply for gives a brief outline of their experience of direct provision to address the fact that they have not been allowed work during their time in the direct provision process. The letter is intended to allay any fears of employers concerning a long period of unemployment and to convey the high level of motivation of each attendee on this programme.
4. Each attendee then goes through one or more mock interviews to improve their interview technique. This is critical as attendees often have low confidence levels if they have been in the direct provision process for long. The interview and the programme in general also helps the interviewees to develop their ability to communicate effectively in English. This is particularly relevant to those whose spoken English is weak and who may not have the vocabulary to present themselves to best effect.

After the classroom part of the programme the tutors will write to designated employers where they have personal contacts to ask them to provide work experience to the course attendees that the tutors are willing to recommend.

The Prepare for Work Programme is a collaboration between the Lions Club and Croi na Gaillimhe, St Vincent de Paul and is facilitated by Colman Collins and Geraldine O'Grady.

If you require further information on this programme please contact ;  
Loretta Needham @ 091-895203





## TRAINING FOR ST VINCENT DE PAUL VISITATION CONFERENCE MEMBERS

### Listening Skills Workshops

Listening Skills workshops are currently organised by Croí na Gaillimhe in conjunction with the St Vincent de Paul Visitation Committee and Galway Area Council for the Visitation Conference Members.

The St Vincent de Paul Conferences recognises the importance of conversing empathically with clients who call upon the Conference for help. The training builds on the experience of the members while introducing them to the skills of relating with clients, particularly those clients who may be suffering from stress due to life circumstances. The aim is to enrich the relationship of support given by members to clients.

The workshops are facilitated by Anne McCarthy, an external trainer. The training includes active listening skills, fostering understanding and empathy and the art of skillfully and respectfully encouraging and engaging in conversation with clients as a listening ear. In the words of one member who attended

*"it was an enjoyable workshop and gave them an appreciation for the importance of active listening".*



*"The evening goes by quickly as the workshops are full of energy and very interactive."*

More than 25 members have already attended this workshop delivered at Croí na Gaillimhe.

### Money Advice and Budgeting Training for Members.

Following requests from members and agreement at Galway Area Council, Croí na Gaillimhe organised two training workshops on Money Management which aims to increase members understanding of indebtedness and how to deal with it. The workshops are facilitated by Caitriona Ni Charra, MABS Fo-oifig Chonamara, an employee of MABS. The workshops enables SVP Members to have a better understanding of the causes and effects of being in debt, designing a budget, dealing with a crisis and information on what services/agencies can help. The next workshop is due in early 2016.



## ***The Croí na Gaillimhe Homework Club at the Eglinton Hostel***

The Croí na Gaillimhe Homework Club in the Eglinton Direct Provision Centre started on the 8<sup>th</sup> September 2014. It provides homework support for up to 31 children living in the centre, in Salthill. It has two part time staff and approximately 20 volunteers working with the children. The project is funded by the Maureen O'Connell bequest and supported by a Steering Committee, Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre and Christ the King, St. Vincent de Paul Conference. The Club runs from 2.30pm to 6.30pm Monday to Thursday. The majority of the children who come to the club attend primary school ranging from senior infants to sixth class as well as four secondary school students.



Our volunteers are very dedicated and come with a wide range of skills and expertise and have contributed greatly to the success of the club so far.

We are very well assisted by four transition year students from Salerno Secondary School Galway, some of whom are included in accompanying photos.

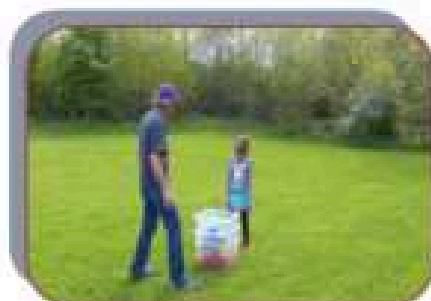
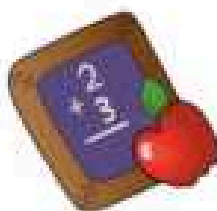
Daria Michalik, Aoife Gallivan, Niamh Kavanagh and Ciara Quinn.

Recently, the club held two very successful workshops with external facilitators: an anti-bullying workshop on 16th November and a Careers Guidance Workshop on 10th of November. All pupils attended the former while the latter was focussed on secondary students. We expect to follow up on these valuable additions in due course.



## **End of School Year Celebration in St Brigit's Garden**

To celebrate the end of the school year the Croí na Gaillimhe Homework Club went on a fun day out to St. Brigit's Garden, where they got to learn all about the fun aspects of nature and had great fun playing "Nature Detective".

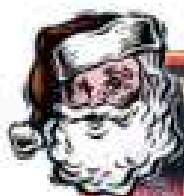




## Young Hearts Intergenerational Programme



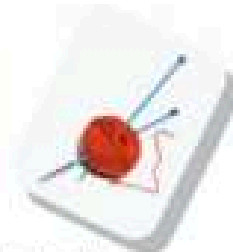
**Fundraising** for the last two years the Young Heart programme which consists of Transition Year Students from Galway Community College coordinated by Maria Moore and the older adults from Croi na Gaillimhe come together and make Christmas decorations and cards along with other seasonal crafts and goodies for the craft fair. They also braved the cold and wet streets of Galway in December to raise much needed funds for Croi na Gaillimhe. As you can see its not all hard work there is plenty of fun and games involved too. We want to take this opportunity to thank all involved for all their efforts and dedication in raising money for Croi na Gaillimhe.







## The Knitting Group at Croí na Gaillimhe

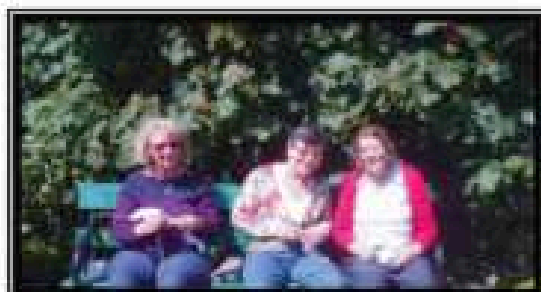


### KNIT 'N' NATTER

It's no secret that Knitting groups have become extremely popular over the last number of years with hundreds of them now dotted around the country. Crafters of all abilities, now come together to share skills, ideas and work on really imaginative projects. Croí na Gaillimhe knitting club is happy to be connected to this tradition. We meet every Tuesday 2:30pm-4:00pm.

Why not come along, whether you learned to knit a long time ago and would like to re-awaken that Knitting Guru in you or you want to start your first project, you will find support and ideas with us. We are not an exclusive group, we are always happy to welcome new members.

Enjoy a cuppa tea/coffee, and a Yarn or two!!



The Knitting Club have been busy in the last few months in preparation for our Craft Fair here at Croí na Gaillimhe. They produced wonderful handmade knitted and crocheted goods such as hats, headbands, scarves, gloves and also delicious baked goods, chutneys and jams all of which are sold at the Craft Fair to help raise much needed funds for Croí na Gaillimhe.



Meet new friends and  
learn or share your  
knitting and crochet  
skills every Tuesday  
2.30pm to 4pm.



## Dance your blues away .....

### Why more older people should give dancing a whirl

"There's quite a lot of research that show that the social dimension is almost as important as the physical dimension. Engagement with others in the community has as many health benefits in terms of mental wellbeing as the physical benefits of keeping moving in later life."

Here at Croi na Gaillimhe we are lucky to have one of the best dance tutors in the west. Maureen has been volunteering her time as our dance tutor since 2009 and is loved by staff and class members equally always smiling and full of energy. Maureen is one of the reasons that this fun and friendly class on Thursday morning is so popular. Best of all new research shows how beneficial dancing is for your mental and physical health.

And this is what some of our dancers have to say about dancing on Thursday morning at Croi na Gaillimhe.

*"I enjoy it, lovely relaxed atmosphere. It keeps my osteopenia in check, the dancing is great"*

*"Great fun,  
great friends,  
great exercise,  
wonderful music,  
great building surrounded by water very spiritual.  
Maureen makes dancing very easy to learn.  
She takes it nice and slow,  
I love coming every week,  
I miss it when its not on its a great social event. Lots of chat"*



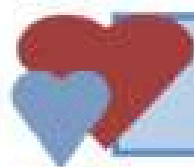
*"Why I come to dancing? It keeps me in touch with people and I love to dance. I have made great friends in Croi na Gaillimhe"*

So come on down on Thursday mornings from 11.45am to 1pm and join in the fun. The class is open to both men and women over the age of 55 years.

For more information on our dancing class contact Aisling 091-895203







## Classes at Croí na Gaillimhe

### Computer Class

Laptops, Tablets and Smartphones are all catered for in our computer class, especially for beginners. Our classes are fun and friendly. They run for eight weeks and cover many different areas from Email, Skype, Online Shopping and Paying Bills, Booking Flights to Facebook and Twitter and so much more. For more information contact Aisling @091-895203.

Wednesday morning 10.30am-12.30pm

Do you like to write and draw characters and plots or perhaps it is poetry that gets your creative juices flowing.....



..... either way our **Creative Writing Class** on Friday mornings is just what you have been looking for. The classes run from September to end of January and from February to June. You can join at anytime, the class is tutored by John Mc Ginty. It is a warm and welcoming group and is set in the beautiful and inspirational surroundings of Croí na Gaillimhe.

Friday morning 10.30.am to 12.30pm

### Art Class



One of Croí na Gaillimhe's most popular courses. The Monday morning Art Class is led by Tutor Anne O'Byrne joined recently by Irene Naughton.

In a relaxed and supportive environment the course explores the many facets of drawing and painting. Exercises include colour mixing, paint application, Landscapes, Seascapes, Still Life and Portraiture.

The medium of choice tends to be Acrylics but it is by no means limited to any one medium, Anne and Irene are happy to give direction in all, developing participant's skills and techniques. The class usually begins with instruction and discussion but the majority of time is spent on the participants own work with individual guidance.

The Art Courses are run over eight week cycles. All abilities are welcome but keep a keen eye for registration day as places are limited.

**Monday Morning 10am to 12pm**

### De-stress with Movement and Relaxation

Learn how to clear your mind and focus with various techniques such as deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, meditation and visualisation. This can help concentration, relaxation, sleep disturbances and stress relief and return the body, mind and spirit to a state of balance and harmony.

This is an 8 week course.

**Movement and Relaxation Wednesday mornings 10.30am to 12pm.**



# Lunch and Social Club for Older People

Croí na Gaillimhe is an ideal venue for the Social Club for Older People. The warm and welcoming room with tranquil views of a private waterway plays host to the weekly Lunch and Social group. A nutritious meal is provided by COPE Galway and this is followed up by a round of Bingo and other fun activities facilitated by the lively volunteers.

*"For seven euro I can eat a hot meal in company and participate in group activities for hours, otherwise I would be reading and eating by myself at home. Its good to be in company".*

There are prizes to be won at the bingo as well. *"Sometimes one person can have a very lucky day and they seem to go home with a good few prizes"* says Loyola, the coordinator of the group. This definitely adds to the atmosphere of the group. As one group member says *"winning a pot of jam, sweets or some bubble bath adds a spring to your step"*.

The Social Club also hosts a number of seasonal events such as a Halloween Party, Tea Dances and the upcoming Christmas Party!!

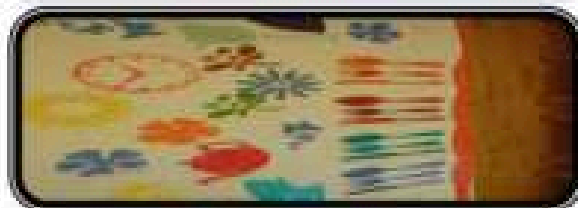
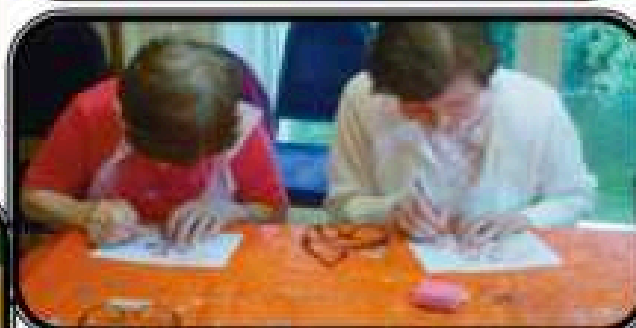
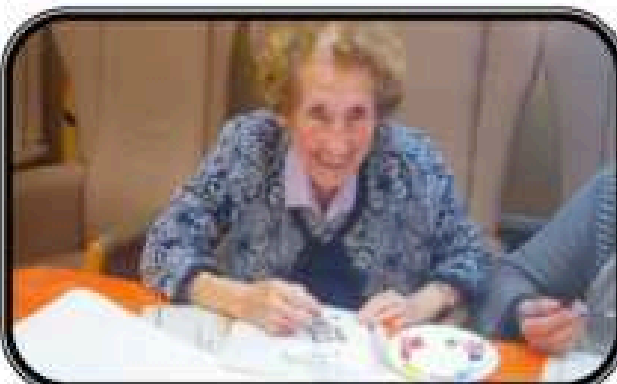
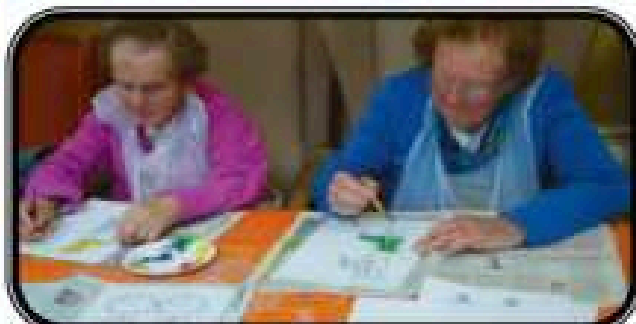
**All are Welcome.**



**A few of the Social Club activities so far...**



## Burning Bright - Art at the Social Club



The ladies and gentlemen from the Lunch and Social Club are crafting wallpaper as part of the 2016 Burning Bright Programme, the completed piece will be on show in the Galway Art Centre.





## **"Céad Míle Fáilte" to English conversation class**

**Over 60 students from countries as diverse as Bangladesh, Azerbaijan, Peru, Turkey and Poland have taken part in the St Vincent de Paul's Croí na Gaillimhe English language classes.**



Fáilte Isteach is a national language programme set up to help people to improve their English when they arrive in Ireland. It also offers a social outlet where students can meet others going through the difficult task of getting used to living in a new country.

***"It's not the usual lesson where you have to listen to the teacher. You could ask any questions and find out things. It's social, I made friends, learned about Irish culture and other cultures too." Galina from Belarus.***

There are over 50 similar projects throughout the country and this is the fourth year that Croí na Gaillimhe has hosted Fáilte Isteach, which is run in collaboration with Third Age. The tutors are all volunteers from all walks of life. The setting is relaxed, where students can learn the language in a fun and engaging manner. The class topics are varied but it is usually the practical everyday things which people want to focus on, such as shopping, going to the doctor, finding a job etc. Janet Kehelly, project worker, adds that "students are also interested in finding out about Galway and all aspects related to settling in Ireland. It's not all classroom based with a walking tour of Galway and a relaxation session adding variety". The relaxation session was facilitated by one of the Polish students and Janet is keen to point out "that the group have a whole range of skills and talents which they've shared throughout the year".

Fáilte Isteach is a great example of how we can all learn from each other.

**For more information contact Janet 091-895203**



## FOND FAREWELLS 2015



Sadly in 2015 we lost some valued members and supporters of Croí na Gaillimhe.

We remember **Maureen Parslow**, late of Woodquay, who died in May. Maureen was an old Galwegian and a valued member of our lunch and social club. All her friends in Croí na Gaillimhe miss her presence and remember her fondly.

In August **John Fallon**, late of College Green, died. John a talented accordion player livened up many a tea dance and festive occasion. Croí na Gaillimhe celebrations will be the poorer for his absence.

**Kevin White**, late of Ballinasloe, died in October. Kevin a member of St. Augustine's Conference, provided us with outstanding Irish musicians and dancers from time to time. He was a keen supporter of Croí na Gaillimhe and in the true spirit of community development consistently promoted the project.

**Emmie Lloyd**, late of lower Salthill, died in November, a talented volunteer facilitator with the Knitting Club and an active participant in our Intergenerational Programme.

It was our pleasure and privilege to have known all of them. To their friends and loved ones we offer sincere condolences. **MAY THEY REST IN PEACE.**

### Men's Social Club - Every Thursday 3pm to 5pm

**The men's social group** meet every Thursday between 3pm and 5pm. Standard activities include discussion, movies, music, stories, poetry and games. Tea and cakes are provided for the duration of the evening. No two sessions are the same.



Digital Photography for Men.

**All men are welcome, call in for a cup of tea and a chat every Thursday 3pm-5pm.**



## Croí na Gaillimhe Timetable

### Monday

**Painting and Drawing Class:** 10am -12pm.

**Grow; Mental Health and Anxiety Support Programme:** 11am -1pm

**Homework Club (Eglinton Hostel):** 2.30pm to 6.30pm

**Grow;Mental Health and Anxiety Support Programme:** 7.30pm -9.30pm

### Tuesday:

**Intergenerational Project Young Hearts :**10.30am-1pm

**Prepare for Work:** 2pm to 5pm

**Knitting Club:** 2.30pm – 4pm

**Homework Club (Eglinton Hostel):** 2.30pm to 6.30pm

**Grow;Mental Health and Anxiety Support Programme:** 7.30pm

-9.30pm

### Wednesday:

**Volunteer Working Group for Asylum Seekers:** 9am-5pm

**Movement and Relaxation:** 10.30am – 12.00pm

**Beginner Computers:** 10.30am – 12.30pm

**Dinner for Older People:** 1pm Price: €7

**Social Club:** 2pm Social activities include cards/ board games, movies, bocchia and bingo

**Homework Club (Eglinton Hostel):** 2.30pm to 6.30pm

### Thursday:

**Fáilte isteach(.Conversational English for Migrants):**

9.30am -11.45am

**Dancing for Older people:** 11.30-1pm

**Social Club for Men:** 3.00pm – 5.00pm

**Homework Club (Eglinton Hostel):** 2.30pm to 6.30pm

**Choir:** 6pm to 7.00pm

### Friday:

**Creative Writing:** 10.30am – 12.30pm

**Ladies Basketball** 10am -11.am

**Workshops running throughout the year**  
**check our website and blogspot for details**

**[www.croinagaillimhe.ie](http://www.croinagaillimhe.ie)**

**[www.croinagaillimhe.blogspot.com](http://www.croinagaillimhe.blogspot.com)**

**Phone: 091-895203/895204**





Branch of  
St. Vincent de Paul

The  
Curiosity  
Shop

**We require good  
quality useable**

*clothing, household items, bric-a-brac,  
books, paper carrier bags & items of  
furniture you no longer need*

Unfortunately for Health & Safety reasons  
we cannot accept electrical items, tools, damaged  
beds, equipment or carpets.

**Goods, that are saleable can be left later:**

The Curiosity Shop  
Adrian House Road  
Galway  
Tues – Sat 10am – 5pm

On-callward  
Phone:  
Call 161288  
1990000 1st mobile

## Useful Numbers:

<b>Croí na Gaillimhe</b>	<b>091 895203</b>
<b>SVP (Ozanam House, Galway)</b>	<b>091 563233</b>
<b>Age Action</b>	<b>091 527831</b>
<b>AWARE</b>	<b>1890303302</b>
<b>Care and Repair (local)</b>	<b>091 527831</b>
<b>Citizens Advice Bureau</b>	<b>091 563344</b>
<b>Community Garda</b>	<b>091538079</b>
<b>Community Welfare</b>	<b>091 536700</b>
<b>COPE (Meals on Wheels)</b>	<b>091 700800</b>
<b>COPE (Homeless Service)</b>	<b>091 525259</b>
<b>Employment Services (FAS)</b>	<b>091 534400</b>
<b>Fire Services</b>	<b>091 570900</b>
<b>Galway City Council</b>	<b>091 536546</b>
<b>Galway County Council</b>	<b>091 509000</b>
<b>Galway Hospice</b>	<b>091 770868</b>
<b>Galway Rape Crisis Centre(local)</b>	<b>1800355355</b>
<b>Garda – Mill Street</b>	<b>091 538000</b>
<b>Galway Simon</b>	<b>091 381828</b>
<b>Garda – Salthill</b>	<b>091 521333</b>
<b>Legal Aid</b>	<b>091 561650</b>
<b>MABS</b>	<b>091 569478</b>
<b>Merlin Park University Hospital</b>	<b>091 751131</b>
<b>Mervue Health Centre</b>	<b>091 753887</b>
<b>Newcastle HSE Clinic</b>	<b>091 520340</b>
<b>Office of the Ombudsman (Local)</b>	<b>1890223030</b>
<b>Public Health Nurse</b>	<b>091 546365</b>
<b>Emergency Public Health Nurse</b>	<b>0876504456</b>
<b>Road Safety Authority</b>	<b>189040604</b>
<b>Samaritans</b>	<b>091 561222</b>
<b>Shantalla HSE Clinic</b>	<b>091 523122</b>
<b>Peta House West</b>	<b>093-25586</b>
<b>Waterside House</b>	<b>091 565985</b>
<b>West Doc</b>	<b>1850365000</b>
<b>Westside Age Inclusion</b>	<b>091 589861</b>
<b>Emergency Number</b>	<b>999 / 112</b>
<b>Galway University Hospital</b>	<b>091 524222</b>



# 2016 Newsletter







*Loretta Needham,  
Manager*

Croí na Gaillimhe has served the community of Galway for the last seven years and this newsletter provides residents, clients and members of the Society of St Vincent de Paul with information and updates relating to the activities, clubs, programs and outreach services. Since its inception, Croí na Gaillimhe has striven to deal with needs as they arose in the community we live in and become more inclusive of all the citizens of Galway. The world is dealing with two major crises of our time, climate change and the refugee crisis, which are intertwining to reach historical dimensions. People the world over and all beings of nature are existentially threatened with nowhere to turn to. To quote a person well known to the St Vincent de Paul (Sr. Nora Lally) Croí na Gaillimhe has “opened some new furrows” to deal with the crises of our time. We have engaged more with people living in Direct Provision Centres and new to our shores. We have done this through Fáilte Isteach conversational English classes, NALA Blended Learning, Homework Club based in a Direct Provision Hostel, providing activities for children living in direct provision, OWL (One World Ladies) basketball, OWC (One World Voices) Choir and our Volunteer Clinic, which supports asylum seekers in preparing for interviews or appeals. Croí na Gaillimhe successfully negotiated better terms with the local Credit Unions around ‘house deposit loans’ for people trying to get out of Direct Provision.

**Not forgetting the hardships faced by our own citizens, with people having great**

difficulties paying their mortgages or simply struggling to survive on ever reducing incomes. In particular people living on pensions or social welfare payments are finding it difficult to make ends meet. On a more positive note, staff and volunteers in Croí na Gaillimhe have observed that there are more important things in life than money, and more and more people using our services realise that positive human attributes such as kindness, caring and love are qualities that cannot be destroyed by economic recession or market share collapse. These qualities are in abundance in our Older People’s Social Club, Men’s Group, Intergenerational Programme, outreach programmes and classes for all to see. I would like to sincerely thank all the staff and volunteers for creating such a positive environment in Croí na Gaillimhe and for recognising the equality of each human being and their capacity to contribute to an effective outcome to the questions we all face together as human beings. For honouring the ‘soft’ values like sensitivity and respect and disregarding the ‘hard’ ones of walking on people, which is of course a metaphor for violence: In order for us to win others must lose. I would like to thank the members of St James Conference for creating the atmosphere that has allowed the centre to flourish.

It only remains for me, on my own behalf and on behalf of all of us here at Croí na Gaillimhe and St James Conference, to wish you, your families and friends, both at home and abroad, a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

**Right to Reply** In fairness to our readers and given that this newsletter is not insured against libel, damages or costs, we undertake the following: In case of error of facts we will publish corrections when we become aware of such. In cases of unfairly impugning the reputation of any person we hereby offer that person or their representative the right to reply in the next issue of this newsletter subject only to reasonable length, the law of libel and our right to respond to such a reply. (This project is assisted by the Maureen O’Connell Trust and the Galway Area Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.)



# The OWLS Ladies Basket Ball Team

**The OWLs had a busy year this year and it's not over yet**

They were recently picked as regional winners in KBC Bank Brightest Ideas Competition.



The OWLs (One World Ladies) have been playing basketball together for the last three years. We're a group of women from a direct provision centre (asylum seekers) and the local community in Galway City. The idea came about when the women in direct provision asked us (Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre) if there was anything we could do around improving their health and fitness. Because people in direct provision have so little disposable income, they cannot afford to join clubs or gyms, so the option to keep fit in a group setting isn't open to them. The benefits of exercise on physical and mental wellbeing are well understood.

We were successful with our application to Galway City Council for a sports grant and Titans Basketball Club agreed to help with the coaching aspect. It's a real local effort and an example of how agencies can work together to offer something so worthwhile.

A coaching event was organised by Croí na Gaillimhe in August in conjunction with Titans Basketball Club. It was a great success and the team learned a great deal about the rules and safeguards required while coaching a basketball team. There were lots of tips around play and training.

The OWLs played a match against the Yummies ladies basketball team in Westside Community Centre for social inclusion week.

## The Team.

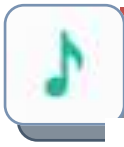
We train on Friday mornings during school term. We start with a warm up, some techniques and end with a game. We have 20 members evenly balanced between asylum seekers and women in the community, but on a Friday morning all that matters is that we want to keep fit and have some fun doing it.

We always have a few coffee mornings during the year when we get to chat about anything and everything.

**Where and When:** Friday Mornings in Westside Community Centre from 10am to 11am. For further information contact Loretta Needham @ 091 895 203.







## One World Voice Choir

Social Inclusion is the core of everything that Croí na Gaillimhe (a resource centre of St Vincent de Paul) does. Social Inclusion Week offers a great opportunity to showcase some of the unique events which bring people together from all walks of life. The celebrations got off to a harmonious start with a musical fusion between older people, transition year students and the One World Choir. The choir is made up of people living in Direct Provision Centres in Galway and the local community. They have been together for just a year under the excellent guidance of a choir master Ronan De Burca. They were joined by Croí na Gaillimhe Intergenerational Group called Young Hearts, which is made up of Transition Year Students from Galway Community College and older people from the Community.

Maria Moore said, "This week is Social inclusion week and Loretta Needham from Croí na Gaillimhe suggested that we mark the occasion with a morning of singing." The nineteen Young Hearts were joined by a large group of singers from the One World Voice choir. The singers come from many far-flung places such as Ghana, Congo, Nigeria, Malawi, Cameroon, Rwanda, Zimbabwe and Achill Island. They meet weekly to sing together under the direction of Ronan De Burca.

The Choir Master, Ronan De Burca, explained the therapeutic benefits of singing. This was very reassuring to the many nervous singers sitting in the room. There were 6 different songs chosen, some were oldies *Que será, será*, a few classics from the 60's, as well as some traditional Irish tunes. The Irish tunes proved particularly popular. The musical choice ensured that there was something for everyone and by the end of the day even the most reluctant singers were belting out the songs.

By 12 pm, guests began to arrive and the performance began. Loretta warmly welcomed the participants and outlined Croí na Gaillimhe's wide variety and diversity of activities related to social inclusion operating out of the centre. Songs were sung with gusto and it was great to hear so many people of all ages, abilities and nationalities singing together. We were treated to two songs from the One World Voice choir that incorporated the theme of peace. Then Kingsley from Ghana played some dancing music and the party was in full swing when we left.

For further information contact Loretta Needham at 091 895 203, or email: [info@croinagaillimhe.ie](mailto:info@croinagaillimhe.ie)





# St Vincent De Paul Member Training



Members of the Galway Area Council of St Vincent de Paul attended two workshops on Domestic Violence (April and October) organised by Croí na Gaillimhe and delivered by Waterside House Staff from COPE Galway.

The workshops explored issues such as the definition of domestic violence, dynamics and warning signs of abusive relationships, healthy and unhealthy relationships, effects on women and children, dealing with disclosures and good practice responses. The training was tailor made to suit the needs of St Vincent de Paul members, particularly taking account of safety for the woman and safety for the volunteer.

The Facilitators also dealt with financial abuse as this is very relevant to the role of Visitation Members.

Waterside House is the only 24 hour accessible refuge in the Western Region. It provides refuge accommodation, information, support and court accompaniment to women and their children experiencing domestic violence. There is an Outreach Service for women in the city and county who are in abusive relationships and who need support and information on their options.

Children are provided with a range of supports including one to one support, therapeutic play and play therapy, and women are supported with parenting issues that may arise in the context of domestic violence.

**Waterside Refuge House**  
**Waterside House, Courthouse Square.**  
**Telephone No: 091 565 985**  
**Email: [waterside@copegalway.ie](mailto:waterside@copegalway.ie) or**  
**[watersideoutreach@copegalway.ie](mailto:watersideoutreach@copegalway.ie)**





## Leaving direct provision: Easing the Financial Pressures



**A new initiative introduced by Croí na Gaillimhe and delivered by the Galway Credit Unions:**

### Leaving direct provision: Easing the Financial Pressures

Families and individuals who have 'leave to remain' in Ireland face a number of obstacles when trying to move into the community. Finding suitable accommodation is a real difficulty and the well documented situation of demand exceeding supply means that people often remain in direct provision for long periods of time. The cost of moving is another issue as the majority of people have no savings and can't access credit through the normal lending channels. This seriously disadvantages people as they can't make up any shortfalls in deposits or buy essentials when they find a home.

This situation prompted us to contact St. Columba's and St Anthony's & Claddagh Credit Union to discuss the possibility of offering loans to people in direct provision with a deferred payment option until they move into their new home. The Credit Unions were very open to the idea and promptly put a mechanism in place for people to apply for a loan. They have held information sessions in both direct provision centres and already have new customers.

The SVP Social Justice Committee is also very supportive of the initiative as it is a natural fit with their aims and objectives.

Croí na Gaillimhe is delighted that the Credit Union responded so quickly and that the initiative will in some way help make the transition to the community that bit easier.

For further information contact Loretta Needham or Janet Kehelly at 091 895 203, or e-mail: [lorettaneedham@gmail.com](mailto:lorettaneedham@gmail.com)



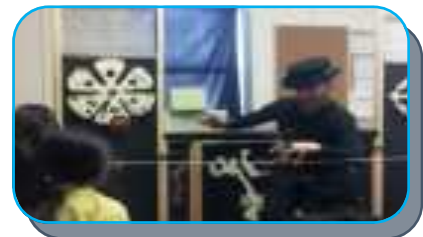
## ***Croí na Gaillimhe Homework Club at the Eglinton Hostel***

The Croí na Gaillimhe Homework Club in the Eglinton Direct Provision Centre is now running for the third year. The project is funded by the Maureen O'Connell fund and the Christ the King Conference. It is supported by a Steering Committee the membership of which is as follows: the manager of Croí na Gaillimhe, the homework club coordinator, the managers of the Eglinton Hostel, the President of St. James conference, a member of Christ the King conference and two parents of the children in the homework club

We have 18 volunteers currently working with us. They are very dedicated and come with a wide range of skills and expertise and have contributed greatly to the success of the club so far.

The Club runs from 2.30pm to 6.30pm Monday to Thursday. The majority of the children who come to the club attend primary school, ranging from senior infants to sixth class as well as three secondary school students.

Throughout the year we had some very interesting visitors. One of them was Your Man's Puppet, who is a well known performer and came with a large stage set, lots of props and very funny characters. He volunteered his time and the children absolutely loved the show (see photos below). Another visitor was Clowns without Borders. There were two clowns involved and again they volunteered their time and put on a spectacular show (some photos below).



**We also went on a trip to St. Bridget's Gardens with 15 children and 5 volunteers. We had a wonderful day with lovely food and plenty of running around and exploring the natural habitat.**

For more information on volunteering with the Homework Club please contact Croí na Gaillimhe by calling into the office or calling us on 091-895203



# Young Hearts Intergenerational Programme



YOUNG HEARTS, our intergenerational programme, involves Transition Year (TY) students working together with older adults within a community setting. TY students from Galway Community College and older adults from Croí na Gaillimhe meet weekly in Croí na Gaillimhe throughout the school year to engage in a shared learning experience. Along the way they make new friends, learn a lot about themselves and others and develop new interests and awareness. Now in it's sixth year, the intergenerational project is run jointly between Galway Community College and Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre.



## **This year the group held an Art Exhibition 'If you can write you can paint'**

This exhibition of paintings was made collaboratively by Transition Year Students from Galway Community College together with older adults in the Intergenerational Programme Young Hearts.

Over the years Young Hearts have compiled two booklets of their own art and creative writing, they have staged a historical play that they wrote themselves, and another which was generated by guided discussion of social issues, they have made a variety of artwork, enjoyed visits to museums, libraries and historic buildings, and enjoyed drumming, singing, and dancing classes.

Young Hearts won the 2016 GRETB award for social inclusion.





# Technology for Beginners, Laptops, Tablets and

Our computer class was designed with the needs of the absolute beginners in mind. It is delivered by Eugene in a relaxed way and in an environment which breaks down any barriers or fears related to the use of IT that the participants may have.

The classes run for eight weeks on a Tuesday morning and cover various topics such as Internet surfing, e-mail, Skype, Facebook, Word, the use of various devices like laptops, tablets and smartphones, plus whatever else the participants might be interested in.



**We spoke to students to see how they felt about doing and completing the class.**

Marian had attended the computer class before but came back to refresh her skills and memory as she says she did not keep up the practice in her daily life. She wanted to learn the basics such as using the internet, writing emails, word processing etc.

Marian thinks that Eugene is a wonderful teacher and also appreciates the assistance during the class. She finds working with the laptop rather new but has become more familiar with its use in the course of the programme. She came with an open mind and is happy about the outcomes. She has learned some new things, for example that there is still more to learn!

Paddy was hoping to gain more general knowledge about the use of computers and to improve his memory. He wanted to “grasp the basics”, he says.

He thinks that the class is good, especially as he is using his own laptop.

Paddy sees himself as a slower learner overall, though he is glad he has attended the course. He feels he would like to attend the next round of classes too. In this way he can keep practicing what he has already learnt.

**The duration of the class is eight weeks.**

**Classes are on Tuesday Mornings from 10.30am to 12.30pm**



**For more information please call 091895203 or call into Croí na Gaillimhe, Maureen O’Connell House, 1 Mill Street.**



## Mens Group



The Men's Social Clubs recent outing to the Aran Islands was a great success and the men really enjoyed the whole experience.

The group activities vary on a weekly basis from movies, games, talks and many other activities. The Men's Group meets on Thursday afternoon from 3pm to 5pm. Contact 091895203 for further information.



***NALA - English Language using Write On to help improve reading writing and numerical skills, computer and personal development skills***

### **WHAT OUR PARTICIPANTS SAY.**

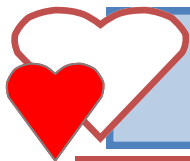


**Khizer** enrolled in the course through the Eglinton Hostel. He has been coming for eight weeks and loves it. His main reason for attending the classes is to improve his English. He says, "The course is very good. We do language exercises on a PC and Cathal assists with any queries we have. He's very friendly, patient and a really good teacher."

**Miriam** also heard about the course through the Eglinton. She has been attending the classes since the beginning. Miriam comes to improve her reading, writing and listening skills. She thinks the teacher and his teaching methods are good and finds the computer easy to use as a learning tool. Most of her expectations have been met and the classes certainly helped her with literacy skills. She is happy with the outcomes and would like to continue going to the classes and improve her communication and IT skills even more.

The class is on Monday morning at 10.30am to 12.30pm here in Croí na Gaillimhe. On successful completion of the course the applicant will receive a QQI qualification certificate.





## Classes at Croí na Gaillimhe

### Knitting Club

The Knitting Club meets on Tuesday afternoons from 2:30pm to 4pm (September to June). We have a skilled group of knitters who have produced very high quality craft over the years. They are always happy to share their technique and knowledge of the craft with new members. If you are a beginner or a seasoned knitter you will be warmly welcomed and have a very enjoyable and rewarding experience. You can bring your own materials but demonstration wool, needles and patterns are available to get you started. The club is very relaxed and social, there is always room in the afternoon to put down the needles and wool and enjoy a cuppa tea or coffee. Why not give it a try? Just come along!

**Tuesdays 2.30pm –4pm**

### Dancing Class

Here at Croí na Gaillimhe we are lucky to have one of the best dance tutors in the west of Ireland. Maureen has been volunteering her time as our dance tutor since 2009 and is loved by staff and class members equally, always smiling and full of energy. Maureen is one of the reasons that this fun and friendly class on Thursday morning is so popular. Best of all, new research shows how beneficial dancing is for your mental and physical health.

**Thursday Morning 11.45-1.00pm**

### Art at Croí na Gaillimhe

People come to art class for different reasons, some to nurture existing skills and others to explore a new hobby and interest. Whatever the reason you will be glad you came to the Croí na Gaillimhe art class. The class takes place in the inspiring surroundings of our social club room.

We are forever lucky in having secured excellent voluntary art tutors over the years, all of whom bring their own special brand of skill and magic to their students. The course caters for all, from the absolute beginners to those progressing with their skills. It covers basic principles to abstract forms. Whether you wish to work in pencil, pastels or oil you will be accommodated within the class structure. You will be encouraged to work at your own pace in a creative, friendly environment. The classes run in 8 week intervals from September to June. If you wish to reveal hidden abilities and talents or just want a relaxing positive experience why not give our art class a try.

**Contact Loyola King (091) 895203 for further details.**





## Lunch & Social Club for older people

We hold a lunch and social club for those over 55 each Wednesday 1-4pm.

A three course lunch is served from 1pm –2pm, mains, desert, tea/coffee and biscuits, all for just €7. It's an enriching dining experience, scrumptious nutritious food, good company and all in the lovely ambience of our stunning social club room.

From 2pm onwards we run our social club. We have a variety of activities on offer, starting with the ever popular bingo with lots of excellent prizes – never was a pot of jam or a packet of biscuits so keenly played for! We follow bingo with some really good floor games bocce (similar to French boules), target mat (a sort of floor darts with bean bags), bean bag games and more. We invite guest speakers throughout the year on various interesting and relevant topics, e.g. community safety courtesy of community Gardai, health promotion talks, complimentary health talks on Chinese medicine, holistic therapies, to name but a few. We also honour all the festivals that celebrate ageing throughout the year e.g. Positive Ageing Week, Bealtaine, which celebrates creativity as we age. Over the years we have dabbled in all things artistic initiative origami workshops, poetry readings, to musical afternoons and more recently we have worked collaboratively with the Galway Arts Centre on the Burning Bright project.

They are both very welcoming clubs and we are always happy to have new members. If you are interested please contact Loyola King (091) 895203



A lovely visit to the Brothers of Charity Project in Glenina

## Volunteer Profile – Barry Dempsey (Social Club for Older People)

Barry Dempsey has been a key member in the Social Club team since 2010, making him one of the longest Social Club volunteer's to-date. They say great volunteers hit the ground running, undertaking all tasks with enthusiasm and drive. This is very true of Barry, who is the first volunteer to arrive each week. He is approachable, friendly and co-operative, all the skills necessary to keep a centre such as Croí na Gaillimhe ticking over.

Barry's friendliness is his star quality. It leaves a lasting impression on participants, staff and fellow volunteers. Barry hails from Tuam, County Galway; he is a keen member of his local karate club and has a great interest in the outdoors, horse-riding, surfing, and looking after his beloved dogs. We are truly honoured here in Croí na Gaillimhe to have Barry on board; we appreciate all of his contributions and look forward to him volunteering here for many years to come.



"Eyes Down" Barry calling Bingo



## **Siel Bleu - Exercise for the older person**



### **Siel-Bleu Exercise programme**

Our Siel-Bleu facilitator Keith Hammond has been delivering this specially designed physical activity programme in Croí na Gaillimhe for over a year. This adaptive exercise programme, which originated in France and literally mean Blue Skies aims to improve physical strength and well-being by working on muscle strength and flexibility. It is largely chair based but is always adaptive to the capacity of its participants. The programme runs for one hour over 8 weeks. If you are interested in active and healthy ageing why not contact Loyola King (091) 895203 for further details.



**Creative Writing every Friday morning from 10.30am to 12.30pm in the beautiful surroundings of the Social Club Room in Croí na Gaillimhe. Short Stories, Poetry and non-fiction are all on the table in this welcoming and creative class led by Mr. John McGinty . One of the writers has given us one of his poems. Call 091-895203 for more Information**

### **A Poem By Martin O'Brien**

A small bottle, is it empty  
Lost in a sea that appears dense  
Not even another bottle to bicker with  
Then washed up, not on a beach but a desert Island  
Options appear to be pencil thin  
A show of hands, a vote for a boat  
A gust of wind, a whirl of water  
The bottles up and floating again  
Waiting to be picked up, Far and Away.



## **Fáilte Isteach conversational English Class for Migrants**

On Thursday morning the whole Croí na Gaillimhe building is buzzing as the Fáilte Isteach classes get underway. With up to thirty students and eight tutors from all over the globe, it is a very social and a fun way to learn conversational English and meet new people.

Here is a few words from one of the students and also one of the tutors.

*"This is my second year in Failte Isteach. I found that conversations are best way to improve my English. Croí na Gaillimhe is the place where I make new friends and the atmosphere is warm and welcoming. Social contacts are very important for the people especially for us as foreigners. We share our traditions and cultural and historical knowledge. We exchange information about famous travel points and festivals in Ireland. Because topics are different for each lesson we are learning particular words from this point of view. I like being part of the classes and I know that our fantastic tutors enjoy it too.*

*Thank you very much all of you."*

**Veselina Kavastoyanova**

*"It's Thursday morning and shortly after 9.15am the Social Room starts to fill up with tutors and students. By 9.30am Janet is calling for silence to announce any changes or information. Then we divide into our three groups: beginners, intermediate and advanced. Our students come from all corners of the non-English speaking globe, from Azerbaijan to Venezuela. Maura and I work with the beginners group, 7 students from 7 different nationalities. Each week we work on a topic to try to help them feel more comfortable in their adopted country. For generations Irish people have emigrated leaving behind families and friends, often not knowing when they will meet again. The same is true for many of our students. They come to us week after week to establish new friendships and for a sense of belonging. It is a privilege to be able to help them and a great opportunity for us, the tutors, to learn about other cultures."*

*"Ar scath a cheile a mhaireann na daoine"*

**Anna Rowlands.**





## Asylum Seeker Volunteer Working Group

# Help preparing for your Interview or Appeal

We are a group of volunteers working with **Croí Na Gaillimhe**, working to support Asylum Seekers in preparing for their interview or appeal for Refugee Status or Subsidiary Protection. We are not solicitors, nor do we provide any legal advice.

Our goal is to enable the protection applicant to give a clear, coherent and complete account of their experience. We explain the interview or appeals process and will help the applicant to:

- **Prepare a timeline and personal statement prior to interview for Refugee Status**
- **Provide Country of Origin information and/or case law relevant to the case**
- **Email relevant documents to the solicitor of the applicant, who decides if it is useful to submit them to the Department of Justice.**

**Working Group Members: Cathriona Naughton and Marian Merrick.**

If any Asylum Seeker would like to avail of this service, please contact Croí na Gaillimhe at 091—895203 or call in to the Croí Na Gaillimhe Resource Centre at 1 Mill Street, Galway to set up an appointment.



## A Special Acknowledgement for two very Special Sisters.

Croí na Gaillimhe would like to acknowledge the outstanding work of two Sisters (Sr. Nora Lally and Sr. Patricia McLoughlin) from the Daughters of Charity who left Galway during the year to go to Dublin. For your farewell we want to let you know that you were the best company we could have asked for and we really miss both your contributions here in Galway, especially your connections with Croí na Gaillimhe. We gained a lot from your experience and examples of working with people in need. We wish you both a lot of success on your way.

Sadly we will not go this way together. You are both different but powerful women, always competent and yet tirelessly helping the people that need it, without any desire for acknowledgement. We are very sad at your leaving and hope our ways will cross again. We wish you all the luck of the world and lots of success on your vocational paths.





## Croí na Gaillimhe Timetable

### Monday

Painting and Drawing Class: 10am -12pm  
 Grow: Mental Health and Anxiety Support Programme: 11am -1pm  
 Homework Club (Eglinton Hostel): 2.30pm to 6.30pm  
 Grow: Mental Health and Anxiety Support Programme: 7.30pm -9.30pm

### Tuesday:

Intergenerational Project Young Hearts : 10.30am-1pm  
 Beginner Computers: 10.30am – 12.30pm  
 Knitting Club: 2.30pm – 4pm  
 Homework Club (Eglinton Hostel) : 2.30pm to 6.30pm  
 Grow: Mental Health and Anxiety Support Programme: 7.30pm to 9.30pm

### Wednesday:

Volunteer Working Group for Asylum Seekers: 9am-5pm  
 Siel Bleu: 10.00am – 11.00pm  
 Dinner for Older People: 1pm Price: €7  
 Social Club: 2pm Social activities include cards/ board games, movies, bocce and bingo  
 Homework Club (Eglinton Hostel): 2.30pm to 6.30pm

### Thursday:

Fáilte Isteach (Conversational English for Migrants): 9.30am -11.30am  
 Dancing for Older people: 11.45am-1.00pm  
 Social Club for Men: 3.00pm – 5.00pm  
 Homework Club (Eglinton Hostel): 2.30pm to 6.30pm  
 Choir: 6.30pm to 7.30pm

### Friday:

Creative Writing: 10.30am – 12.30pm  
 Ladies Basketball 10am -11.am  
 Workshops running throughout the year  
 check our website and blogspot for details  
[www.croinagaillimhe.ie](http://www.croinagaillimhe.ie)  
[www.croinagaillimhe.blogspot.com](http://www.croinagaillimhe.blogspot.com)  
 Phone: 091-895203/895204





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We require good  
quality useable

clothing, household items, bed-room-ware,  
books, paper carrier bags & items of  
furniture you no longer need

Concessions for Health & Safety reasons  
we cannot accept electrical items, tools, damaged  
food, appliances or liquids

Goods, that are saleable can be left in:

Plot 47, Curiosity Shop,  
St. Vincent de Paul,  
Galway  
Open - Tues - Thurs - Fri

On-site curbside  
Phone  
Call 091 895 204  
Or Email: [curiosityshop@croinagaillimhe.ie](mailto:curiosityshop@croinagaillimhe.ie)

## Useful Numbers:

<b>Croí na Gaillimhe</b>	<b>091 895203</b>
<b>SVP (Ozanam House, Galway)</b>	<b>091 563233</b>
<b>Age Action</b>	<b>091 527831</b>
<b>AWARE</b>	<b>1890303302</b>
<b>Care and Repair (local)</b>	<b>091 527831</b>
<b>Citizens Advice Bureau</b>	<b>091 563344</b>
<b>Community Garda</b>	<b>091538079</b>
<b>Community Welfare</b>	<b>091 536700</b>
<b>COPE (Meals on Wheels)</b>	<b>091 700800</b>
<b>COPE (Homeless Service)</b>	<b>091 525259</b>
<b>Employment Services (FAS)</b>	<b>091 534400</b>
<b>Fire Services</b>	<b>091 570900</b>
<b>FLAC Legal Advice</b>	<b>091 561650</b>
<b>Galway City Council</b>	<b>091 536546</b>
<b>Galway County Council</b>	<b>091 509000</b>
<b>Galway Hospice</b>	<b>091 770868</b>
<b>Galway Rape Crisis Centre(local)</b>	<b>1800355355</b>
<b>Galway University Hospital</b>	<b>091524222</b>
<b>Garda - Mill Street</b>	<b>091 538000</b>
<b>Galway Simon community</b>	<b>091 381828</b>
<b>Garda - Salthill</b>	<b>091 521333</b>
<b>MABS</b>	<b>091 569478</b>
<b>Merlin Park University Hospital</b>	<b>091 751131</b>
<b>Mervue Health Centre</b>	<b>091 753887</b>
<b>Newcastle HSE Clinic</b>	<b>091 523122</b>
<b>Office of the Ombudsman (Local)</b>	<b>1890223030</b>
<b>Public Health Nurse</b>	<b>091 546365</b>
<b>Emergency Public Health Nurse</b>	<b>0876504456</b>
<b>Road Safety Authority</b>	<b>189040604</b>
<b>Samaritans</b>	<b>091 561222</b>
<b>Shantalla HSE Clinic</b>	<b>091 523122</b>
<b>Peta House West</b>	<b>093-25586</b>
<b>Waterside House</b>	<b>091 565985</b>
<b>West Doc</b>	<b>1850365000</b>
<b>Westside Age Inclusion</b>	<b>091 589861</b>
<b>Emergency Number</b>	<b>999 / 112</b>



# *Croí na Gaillimhe Newsletter 2018*







**Loretta Needham, Manager, Croí na Gaillimhe.**

Croí na Gaillimhe established in 2009 is now nine years old and is one of six Resource Centres run by the Society of St Vincent de Paul in Ireland. The Resource Centre was funded by the Maureen O' Connell Bequest from 2009 till 2018 and the Galway Area Council of St Vincent de Paul. As one of the strategic means of achieving the Society's mission the Resource Centres *provide a safe, welcoming place for people to learn and grow, to develop new skills, to meet others, to make new friends and to have a positive impact on people's lives* (What We Do - [www.svp.ie](http://www.svp.ie)).

CNG operates within this ethos running a range of programmes seeking especially to effect strategic interventions in the lives of vulnerable groups:

- **children** at risk of early school-leaving and poverty with a view to supporting educational attainment
- **adults** lacking in self-confidence, life-skills and vocational skills with a view to offering pre-development courses as a first step into further training and development
- isolated **elderly people** with a view to offering social contact and other practical supports
- **asylum seekers and migrants** with a view to providing advocacy, practical supports, language skills and fostering integration



On average some 400 people connect with CNG on a weekly basis. The centre works with a range of people across the life span: children, parents, women, men, older people, people with disabilities and mental health issues, migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. Since 2014 the centre has had a strong emphasis on the needs of children in direct provision and is known for its work in this area. While there are many examples of the really positive impacts of our work the economic crisis and refugee crisis are still impacting on many members in our community. We are particularly concerned with the lack of funding for afterschool facilities for children living in direct provision and in the broader Galway communities. We are concerned about the impact of homelessness on children as family homelessness continues to rise in Galway as is witnessed by the army of SVP Members working in the City of Galway.

On behalf of Croí na Gaillimhe, St Vincent de Paul, "We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our volunteers who are an inspiration to us for all the work you do with the people in Croí na Gaillimhe. "You are doing an outstanding job".

**It only remains for me, on my own behalf and on the behalf of all of us here at Croí na Gaillimhe and St James Conference, to wish you, your families and friends, both at home and abroad, a very happy and healthy 2018.**

**Right to Reply** In fairness to our readers and given that this newsletter is not insured against libel, damages or costs, we undertake the following: In case of error of facts we will publish corrections when we become aware of such. In cases of unfairly impugning the reputation of any person we hereby offer that person or their representative the right to reply in the next issue of this newsletter subject only to reasonable length, the law of libel and our right to respond to such a reply. (This project is assisted by the Maureen O'Connell Trust and the Galway Area Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.)



# Monday & Wednesday Afternoons in Croí na Gaillimhe

## Lunch and Social Club

Our Monday and Wednesday Lunch and Social Clubs continue to thrive. This year saw a substantial increase in the numbers attending both, which is very encouraging. The Lunch Club, which is run by a staff member together with excellent volunteers, is a service open to and attended by older people from all parts of Galway city and county. It is well documented that social engagement is a vital component for the health and wellbeing of older people and the Lunch Club provides the ideal opportunity for this engagement. The follow on Social Club provides a variety of activities with the most popular being bingo, floor games and exercises as well as informative talks. Throughout the year we endeavour to celebrate all festivals that honour ageing, e.g. Bealtaine, Positive Ageing Week, as well as Halloween, Christmas and Easter.

We are delighted to have continued our collaboration with the Galway Arts Centre on the Burning Bright arts project which celebrates the power of creativity as we age.

Our Lunch and Social Club is a warm welcoming space; we value all our participants and always welcome new members. Why not give it a try?



Art in the Social Club



Music and Dance at the Social Club



Lunch Club Christmas Celebration



Games in the Social Club

**Come along**

**Where: Croí na Gaillimhe**

**When: Monday &  
Wednesdays**

**Lunch: 1pm - 2pm €7.00**



Summer Celebration Seaside Bingo



## Outreach at Croí na Gaillimhe

### **The award winning Croí na Gaillimhe Homework Club for the children in the Eglinton Direct Provision Hostel in Salthill.**

The Croí na Gaillimhe Homework Club in the Eglinton Direct Provision Centre is now in its fourth year. The Homework Club runs from 2.30pm to 6.00pm from Monday to Thursday. The children who come to the Homework Club range from senior infants to sixth class as well as secondary school students. Over the last two years we began a new initiative called "the parent participation project". This entails a parent attending with their child for a regular number of sessions and working with them on either homework or informal educational activities along with a volunteer or staff member, so that when the family leave direct provision, they will be able to help their child with school work. We also started a Book Club, which runs once a week, where children pick a title from a wide selection of books from the Eglinton library. They get a chance to share ideas and points of view with the group and to draw pictures of their favourite characters. This club is facilitated by the Homework Club volunteers and students from NUIG.



We went on a bus trip with 15 children to Loughwell Pet Farm in Moycullen in June to celebrate the end of the school year. The children got to play outside and see all of the farmyard animals. For many of the children this would be the first time that they had seen these animals up close. It was a great fun day out thoroughly enjoyed by all involved.

At the Galway City Mayoral Awards, the Homework Club volunteers won the Child and Youth Award section. There was great excitement and well deserved recognition for our volunteers' work and dedication to a very worthy project. We have 14 volunteers currently working with us and 2 volunteers from a children studies course in NUI Galway. Our regular volunteers are very dedicated, come with a wide range of skills and expertise and have contributed greatly to the success of the club so far.



**For more information on volunteering with the Homework Club please contact Croí na Gaillimhe by calling into the office or phoning us on 091 - 895 203.**



## GROW offers positive mental health promotion here at Croí na Gaillimhe

Every Monday and Tuesday throughout the year GROW World Mental Health promotion organisation meet here at Croí na Gaillimhe.

Are you struggling with your mental wellbeing and interested in learning more about positive mental health, breaking isolation and beginning your journey to recovery?

The community mental health organisation GROW holds three free weekly mental health support meetings in Galway. Open to people experiencing mental health difficulties, the Galway GROW groups always welcome new members and meet every Monday at 11am and 7.30pm and Tuesday at 7.30pm in the SVP Croí na Gaillimhe building on Mill street Galway. GROW is one of Ireland's oldest mental health organisations and has been holding peer-support meetings in communities across Ireland for almost 50 years. GROW group meetings are free to attend and open to all aged over 18. These meetings provide mutual help and support to anyone experiencing mental health difficulties or struggling with any aspect of their mental wellbeing. Meetings are confidential and provide a safe, non-judgemental environment.



Galway Area Coordinator Alan Keaveney emphasises that GROW is about breaking social isolation and promoting mental wellbeing.

*GROW tells us that "you alone can do it, but you cannot do it alone". GROW offers a structured, user-friendly and practical programme. "The focus is on peer support, mutual encouragement and understanding. It is about people supporting people," he states.*

*"The GROW experience helps people develop coping skills by providing practical positive steps which help develop positive behaviour and attitudes. People are supported by others and learn from their experience."* For further information on the Galway groups **contact Alan on 086 417 7726** or visit the GROW website **[www.grow.ie](http://www.grow.ie)**

### Yoga and Mindfulness and Pilates at Croí na Gaillimhe

There are many other activities like Yoga, Pilates and Mindfulness running throughout the week.

**Tuesday Evening** - *Love Yoga* involves two types of class: **1) Slow Flow Yoga** which is suitable for beginners and those who wish to engage more mindfully with the poses; **2) Energising flow class** which is suitable for people who want to move a little bit faster with some more challenging poses. Both classes offer some time for meditation, awareness to breathing and full relaxation. **Contact: [loveyogaclasses@gmail.com](mailto:loveyogaclasses@gmail.com)**

**Tuesday Evening** Mindfulness ` Galway City Mantra Meditation is an open group where people can come along and try the class anytime they want. Mantra meditation is an ancient practice involving the repetition of a mantra. Mantra strengthens the mind and can change the direction of one's life . **Contact Robert: [roibaird@gmail.com](mailto:roibaird@gmail.com)**

**Wednesday Evening** - *Yoga with Duffs* is a gentle flow class for beginners and for those looking to get their yoga practice up and running again. It incorporates elements of both Hatha and Ashtanga yoga with emphasis placed on correct alignment, slower movements and breathing techniques, **contact Adrian: [yogawithduffs@gmail.com](mailto:yogawithduffs@gmail.com)**

**Wednesday Evening** - *Solas Gheal Sangha* Galway Mindfulness Group meet between 6.30pm and 8.00pm to practice mindfulness inspired by the tradition of Plum Village and Zen Teacher Thich Nhat Hanh. We practice guided and silent meditations, walking meditation, deep relaxation, dharma sharing, the Five Mindfulness Trainings, and listen to talks by Thich Nhat Hanh and others. **Contact: [galwaysangha@gmail.com](mailto:galwaysangha@gmail.com)**.

**Thursday Lunchtime** - *Pilatesfitness4u*: A 45-minute lunchtime class which is ideal for a midday break, switching off, tone up Pilates style and return to work refreshed. **contact: [pilatesfitness4u@gmail.com](mailto:pilatesfitness4u@gmail.com)**



# Young Hearts Intergenerational Programme

The intergenerational group *Young Hearts* is run jointly between Galway Community College and Croí na Gaillimhe and it is now in its seventh year. It has been very busy this year with music, drama, crafting, carol singing, and so much more but the future of the group is heading into the stratosphere in the new year with the introduction of a collaboration with NUIG in the exciting field of astronomy (full details on the next page). We are seeking older adults to come and join in this fun and rewarding programme.



The *Young Hearts* group brave the streets of Galway every year and raise their voices in song against the cold and the rain to help fundraise money for Croí na Gaillimhe. They also produce crafts and baked goods to sell.

**What one of group has said about their experience of attending Young Hearts:**

***"I was introduced to a new generation that I would not otherwise meet, a great opportunity. We built confidence, enjoyed the laughter, loved the atmosphere, felt 'useful' again, loved the weekly contact."*** (An older Adult)

***"Improved my communication skills, got to know my class better, got to know older people, improved socialising skills and confidence, learned to mix better in the class, loved the facilitators' approach, loved meeting the older people and the teachers were very nice."*** (Teenager)



**We would love to hear from older adults who are interested in joining this group.**

**Contact us at 091-895 203 or call in and talk to us.**





## Young Hearts Intergenerational Group here at Croí na Gaillimhe

### Royal Astronomical Society funds Galway Public Engagement Project to mark 200th anniversary

NUI Galway, Galway City Museum and Galway Arts Centre secured funding from the Royal Astronomical Society (RAS) for a “Making Space project.” This is spearheaded by Prof. Andrew Shearer in the National University of Ireland Galway. The multi-layered project will begin this year and culminate in a year of creative events, collaborations and a celebration of astronomy and geophysics in 2020. Infrastructural developments such as an outdoor Planetarium and a Planetary Walk will be complemented by an education programme aimed at primary school pupils, teachers, children and adults in Direct Provision. Residencies and collaborations between artists and scientists will take place, creating new research and artworks, as well as a cross-disciplinary engagement with schools and the public. A new music piece will also be commissioned. The artistic commissions, residencies, scientific engagement and education projects all intertwine to contribute understanding, discussion and dialogue to the already vibrant arts and culture scene and science community in Galway City and County. The project will broaden and deepen this culture by celebrating the breadth of astronomy: weaving it into public installations, music, a creative events programme and engagement with diverse communities across the region, with an impact that will stretch beyond 2020.



Prof. Andrew Shearer says: *“With our RAS 200 project we want to address this by showing that the astronomical sciences can stimulate artistic projects and ventures. We want this to be a two-way process whereby we can also, as astronomers, learn different ways of communicating our science to different audiences.”*

With all the above in mind, Croí na Gaillimhe is aiming for the stars through its Intergenerational Programme *Young Hearts* and working with Prof. Andrew Shearer on this very exciting new

venture into astronomy, starting in January. We are looking for older adults to come and join the transition year students every Tuesday morning from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Here are some of the participants playing the Astronomy games, the group also have an exciting trip planned to the great telescope at Birr castle.

**For more information contact Croí na Gaillimhe 091-895203**





# Learn a new skill with classes at Croí na Gaillimhe

## Knitting Group

The knitting club meet every Tuesday. It provides an opportunity to learn/ relearn and develop knitting and crochet skills. There is a lot of support and encouragement for those who are beginners and may be struggling with intricate patterns or difficult stitches. The group also like to work on collective projects. It's very relaxed and informal with lots of chat and of course warming cups of tea/coffee to boot. *Why not give it a try.*



**When:** Tuesday

**Where:** Claddagh Room, Croí na Gaillimhe

**Time:** 2.30pm to 4.30pm

## Digital Technology Class for Beginners

This fun and friendly computer class will help to take the fear out of digital technology for all ages. In a warm and safe environment the course covers lots of different areas such as Gmail, sending and receiving an email, Facebook, Skype, Internet safety, shopping online and much more. The class is tutored by Eugene, Peter and Lenka all of whom are patient and friendly and look forward to meeting the class every week. Laptops are available to use and students are encouraged to bring along their own devices. The atmosphere is relaxed and very social with a break for tea and coffee where participants can get to know one another and share tips. We also present a certificate to each participant on completion of the eight weeks.



**When:** Tuesday

**Where:** Claddagh Room, Croí na Gaillimhe

**Time:** 10.30am to 12.30pm

## Dancing for the Older Person

"Put on your red shoes and dance the blues," so said the late great David Bowie in his iconic song *Let's dance...* Well, our dance tutor Maureen doesn't mind which colour of shoes you wear, as long as you enjoy yourself. This extremely popular class takes place each Thursday and always welcomes new members. The class begins with some warm up exercises, essential to get the oxygen circulating and the muscles stretched, ensuring all the joints are loosened and ready for the rhythms and movement of the class.



Maureen's class doesn't focus on any particular dance style, but concentrates on basic dance steps, routines and coordination. The participants will learn about rhythm and timing and the atmosphere is fun and energetic with lots of encouragement from Maureen and fellow dancers. Why not give it a try and ensure you are always...dance floor ready.

**When:** Thursday

**Where:** Social Club Room, Croí na Gaillimhe

**Time:** 11.45am to 1.00pm

**For more information or to book a place on any of the courses, contact the office @ 091-895 203 or call in to talk to us here in Croí na Gaillimhe, 1 Mill Street, Galway. We will be happy to help.**



# Classes at Croí na Gaillimhe

## Art and Drawing Class

These very popular drawing and painting courses are currently led by an experienced artist. The course is designed for beginners (but supportive to those with more advanced skills), teaching the basic principles of colour and tone, composition, perspective and other skill enhancing techniques. Participants can choose a medium of their choice from watercolours to pencil, all in a very relaxed informal setting with excellent instruction and guidance.



**When:** Mondays     **Where:** Social Club Room     **Time:** 10 am to 12 pm

## Siel Bleu Exercise Programme

Keith Hammond, Siel Bleu Instructor, continues to deliver this excellent tailored exercise programme for older people. The exercises are largely chair-based, but with all the benefits of a full workout programme. The focus is on working all joints and muscles to improve physical capability, cognitive skills, breathing and relaxation. The class is for one hour each Wednesday morning from 10am to 11am and runs over 8 weeks.



**When:** Wednesdays     **Where:** Social Club Room     **Time:** 10 am to 11 am

## Crafting Sessions

New to Croí na Gaillimhe, these very popular crafting sessions are held in a relaxed, fun and informal atmosphere. There is a different craft done each week and at the end of the class the participants will take home their finished craft item. New techniques of crafting are learned on a regular basis, also some of the latest equipment in crafting is used. The classes offered so far have been: Creative Greeting Cards, Canvas Art, Decoupage Boxes, Decorated Boxes and Altered Mirrors. Lots more new classes are planned for the New Year. Christmas classes begin in early November; these include: Creative Christmas Cards, Decorated Christmas Bags and Tags, Christmas Ornaments, Decorated Christmas Jars, Christmas Frames and also Decoupage Christmas Trinket Boxes.



**When:** Mondays     **Where:** Social Club Room     **Time:** 2 pm to 4 pm

***For more information or to book a place on any of the courses, contact the office 091-895203 @ 091-895 203 or call in to talk to us here in Croí na Gaillimhe, 1 Mill Street, Galway. We will be happy to help.***



# Croí na Gaillimhe Men's Shed Group

**In the true spirit of the men's shed, "moving forward shoulder to shoulder."**

As part of the Men's Shed we strive for a future in which all men have the opportunity to maintain and improve their well-being on their own terms within their own communities. The Men's Shed plays an important part in the busy week of programmes and courses here at Croí na Gaillimhe every Thursday from 3pm to 5pm. The kettle is boiled and Felim is waiting to welcome the men to the group for activities which can be anything from a chat to board games and documentaries. The 4pm to 5pm session involves an hour of gentle exercise in the form of Tai Chi. The group have been on many outings this year, from the *1916 Exhibition* in Collins Barracks in Dublin to the Computer Museum in Galway and a trip along the Wild Atlantic Way to the beautiful island of Inisbofin. Below are some of the highlights of the year so far.

## **Collins Barracks 1916 Exhibition, Arbour Hill, Dublin.**

Off on the bus on a beautiful Thursday morning to Collins Barracks in Dublin where the men were led across the square in perfect formation by our own Larry who spent many years in the army. They then enjoyed a guided tour of the 1916 exhibit, followed by a very tasty lunch and a sing-song, fun-filled journey home.



Luigh Isteach , Go Mall Máirseáil



## **Computer and Communications Museum of Ireland – CCMi**

The computer and communications museum was a fascinating look at the story of the key moments in the history of communications from the first telephone and mobile phone to the history of computer and computer games from the Commodore 64 to the Atari and Pac Man, there is even a death star and old wooden school desk . We would like to thank Brendan Smyth of the Insight Centre for Data Analytics, NUI Galway for giving the men a great afternoon that was both fun and informative.

"Live Long and Prosper"

## **Wild Atlantic Way to Inisbofin**

On a very wet day the men headed off on the Wild Atlantic Way to Connemara to visit the beautiful Inisbofin. Although the weather wasn't at its best, it didn't dampen the spirits of the group. Larry's legendary singing voice kept the spirits up, as did the well-earned bowl of hot Irish stew. A big thanks to Citylink for providing the transport to Cleggan.



The west is truly awake today on Inisbofin

**Men's Social Club runs every Thursday from 3pm to 5pm. For more information call us on 091-895 203.**



# Creative Writing Classes at Croí na Gaillimhe

Participants in the creative writing class come from all walks of life and all ages. Each have their own writing style, but come together to support each other on their writing journey under the expert guidance of tutor John McGinty.



This writing class will ignite your imagination and challenge your creativity. A writing style is different for everyone and individuality is what makes your writing style unique.

Here are some of the comments by the class participants about the class and the tutor Mr. John McGinty, who has been the creative writing facilitator here in Croí na Gaillimhe since 2009:

*"John leads the class by welcoming the participants and giving them the space, opportunity and encouragement to read their work." "There is no such thing as writers block," John believes. "Just get started and the words will come."*

*"John has many tools to support the participants in their work, i.e. taking notes on a favourite book or a current one that they are reading, all the time highlighting that the skill of writing is in giving it time and patience. John often highlights the many published writers in the group as an encouragement to keep going."*

*"John helps us build confidence in our abilities and he helps us to be the best we can."*

The group published a book of poetry and prose during the summer.

**When: Friday mornings, 10.30am to 12.30pm**

**Where: Croí na Gaillimhe**

**For more information phone 091-895 203.**





## The Asylum Support Group here at Croí na Gaillimhe

The Asylum Support Group team have been providing support to Asylum Seekers in preparing for their interview or appeal for Refugee Status or Subsidiary Protection for the past three years. We are the only organisation offering this service in Galway.

Our goal is to enable the applicant to give a clear, coherent and complete account of their experience. Our work includes:

Working with Asylum Seekers in preparation for their interview/appeal

Preparing a timeline and personal statement prior to interview for Refugee Status, Subsidiary Protection and Permission to Remain

Providing Country of Origin information and/or case law relevant to the case

Providing relevant documents to the solicitor of the applicant, who decides if it is useful to submit them to the Department of Justice.

It can often take a number of meetings to gather all the required information and we rely on volunteer translators to help where needed. While the work is very intensive, it greatly assists people in their application and at interview and gives them a better understanding of how the process and system works. This service is strictly by appointment only, for more information or to make an appointment contact Croí na Gaillimhe @ 091 -895203

## Online Learning here at Croí na Gaillimhe

### NALA Online English language (Blended Learning)

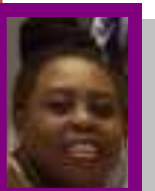


Croí na Gaillimhe was delighted to be able to run these classes for people wanting to improve their literacy, numeracy, computer and other skills and gain a QQI qualification.

A few words from our tutor Lenka: *"I was delighted to be asked to run the NALA classes in the Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre this September. As a non-native English speaker I had to go through years of language learning before I felt confident to start using it outside the class environment. Perhaps it is this learning experience that allows me to relate the NALA class students. I love being in the class, interacting with the students and assisting them with their Level 2 Write On sessions. It is a good learning experience for me too which allows me to improve and refresh my own language, numeracy and other skills. It feels great to be able to help people gain the tools for raising their confidence and to increase their opportunity for meaningful inclusion into the wider society".*

### Digital Pathways Online Job Preparation Course

Digital pathways is a new programme here at Croí na Gaillimhe, it runs on a Wednesday morning and is online based learning programme for job seekers, it helps with key skills like reading job descriptions, interview skills, CV and letter preparation, this is done at the participants own pace and all done online. There are a minimum of 15 modules to complete to receive your certificate .



Jenny has been attending the class since October and this is what she has said about the class *"I am really enjoying the class because I have learned so much about what is involved in getting a job in Ireland. We have learned about where to get information on the jobs available, how to write a letter and how to do a CV, information on how to do a good interview and much more"* .



## ***Failte Isteach Conversational English Class for Migrants***



The Failte Isteach English conversation class is now in its sixth year, with forty students and nine tutors attending every Thursday. The students come from every continent and the majority of students in the lower and intermediate groups are living in direct provision accommodation. The classes are 2 hours long with a very sociable coffee break mid way. There are between 4-6 students in each group and the tutors work individually and in pairs. We're very lucky that both the tutors and students tend to stay year on year but we always have a few new people which is good and have a long waiting list of people hoping to join.



We have a few social events in the year as well as feedback meetings and we've an experienced tutors workshop coming up in March. Our classes follow the school term so we'll finish at the end of May and start back again in September.



### **Failte Isteach: A tutors perspective Cathy Peck**

Volunteering with Failte Isteach reminds me weekly why I've chosen Ireland to be my home. In Ireland, it's natural to make strangers welcome, to take a genuine interest in people from other places, and to respect that they have different stories to tell. The unpretentious warmth and great humour among the volunteers is infectious and playing a small part in the program is a weekly lift for my soul.



### **A participants perspective: My personal experience in Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre**

My Name is Shakeel Ahmed Junejo. I am an asylum seeker living in Great Western House. I want to study social work. One of my friend told me about Croi na Gaillimhe, but I was afraid as there are lots of students from different countries and I'm an asylum seeker and I was worried how they might treat me. One day I decided to go there and I met with the lady on reception, she spoke to me really nicely. I realised that I was wrong and all the team members are like a family. I met with Janet and she told me how the centre and English language course worked. I started the English course to improve my English. Our teachers and centres team members are friendly, polite and respectful and I've made new friends as well. They provide tea, coffee and cakes for all students. I was also scared about the behaviour of people but the teachers have given me confidence. I am also doing a computer courses which is really helpful for me. I am especially thankful to Janet and all team members of Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre.



# **Croí na Gaillimhe Resource Centre**

## **CELEBRATES THE STORY OF US**

To celebrate our 10<sup>th</sup> year in Galway Croí na Gaillimhe, *Resource Centre of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul*, will host a celebration morning on Friday 23 February 2018 entitled the '*The Story of Us*'

The Mayor of Galway Pearce Flannery will launch the celebration at 10.15am in the Resource Centre, in *Maureen O'Connell House, 1 Mill Street, Galway*. A number of local politicians and councillors will also be in attendance.

Invited guests will hear from participants who have been helped over the years and give their account of what being part of the Croí Na Gaillimhe project means to them. *The Story of Us* will be a fitting retrospective of a very unique project that has delivered such excellent services over the last number of years. And an opportunity to thank all who have participated in making it a success.

From humble beginnings in 2009 and with the help and generosity of the Maureen O'Connell Bequest, Croí na Gaillimhe has gone on to touch the hearts and offer hope to those most in need.

The celebration will chronicle and honour the project's many achievements which include the Aontas "Star Award", KBC "Bright Ideas Award", GRETB "Award for Social Inclusion", the Mayoral Award in the "Children & Youth Support" category to name just a few of the centres achievements. None of these good works would have been possible without the staff and the many volunteers who have given their time, energy and expertise.

With a mantra of 'the only criteria is need' the centre has worked diligently to ensure that no need in Galway is left unmet. *Older people's* services were the initial focus of the project, the centre evolved as new needs arose to include other age groups delivering programmes for youth and offering family support services.

The ethos of Croí na Gaillimhe is to offer a place of welcome for all, and in 2012 saw the centre develop asylum seeking support services as this marginalised group had no support or voice.

In 2014 CNG opened a homework club for asylum seeking children in direct provision at the Eglinton hostel in Salthill. The project continues to develop these services for asylum seekers and currently offers a migrant support clinic, conversational English classes and integration projects such as the One World Ladies basketball and One World Voices Choir.

Those who wish to donate to the service can do so at [www.croinagaillimhe.ie](http://www.croinagaillimhe.ie) or contact Loretta Needham [lorettaneedham@gmail.com](mailto:lorettaneedham@gmail.com) Manager of Croí na Gaillimhe @ 091 895203.



## OWL's (One World Ladies) Basketball Training Sessions

Every Friday morning in Westside Community Centre a group of women come together for a basketball training session. These sessions are particularly unique as the participants are women from new communities and Irish women all different ages, different nationalities, different levels of fitness and skills. These fun and friendly sessions are supported by Titans Basketball Club who provide equipment and coaching and the use of Westside Community centre at a reasonable fee. Croí na Gaillimhe supports this initiative by organising the sessions, providing the transport and the support staff to play alongside participants. The OWL'S were one of the regional winners of the KBC Bank 'Bright Ideas' community initiative awards. This programme provides a real opportunity for women from the community to come together and get fit and most importantly make connections and have some fun.



## Singing your cares away with the 'One World Voice Choir' here at Croí na Gaillimhe.

All voices are welcome.

The One World Voice Choir meet every Thursday evening from 6.30pm to 7.30pm to sing at here at Croí na Gaillimhe. The group learn songs from around the world as well as loved and known tunes. The Choir is for people living in the Asylum Process and people from the local community.



The choir is now in its third year and has grown in strength and numbers with the guidance of choir master Ronan De Burca. They have also gained in confidence. This choir has performed in St Nicholas Church as part of the choral concert in support of Homelessness in

Galway. They have also performed for Africa day an event organised by ARD family resource centre, social inclusion day, and have supported the Young Hearts in a carol singing fundraiser for Croí na Gaillimhe in the Galway Shopping Centre in December and many other events for more information contact 091-895203



# Croí na Gaillimhe 2018 Timetable

## Reaching Out - Open Door - Sharing Skills

### MONDAY

**Art Class - 10am -12pm**

**NALA Blended Learning - Online English Class - 10.30am -12.30pm**

**GROW: Mental Health & Anxiety Support - 11am - 1pm**

**Lunch & Social Club 1pm to 3pm**

**Homework Club (Outreach Project) - Eglinton Hostel - 2.30pm -6.30pm**

**Crafting & Card making class 2.00pm -4.00pm**

**GROW: Mental Health & Anxiety Support Programme - 7.30pm -9.30pm**

### TUESDAY

**Young Hearts - Intergenerational Programme - 10am to 1pm**

**Beginner Computers - 10.30am – 12.30pm**

**Knitting & Crochet Club - 2.30pm – 4pm**

**GROW: Mental Health & Anxiety Support Programme - 7.30pm -9.30pm**

**Homework Club (Outreach Project) - Eglinton Hostel - 2.30pm -6.30pm**

**Love yoga - Yoga 6.15pm-7.15pm**

### WEDNESDAY

**Siel Bleu (gentle exercise for the older person) – 10am - 11am**

**Digital Pathway/Employability Skills – 10.30am -12.30pm**

**Volunteers Clinic - Support for Asylum Seekers in interview or appeal for Refugee & Subsidiary, by APPOINTMENT ONLY; call 091-895 203**

**Lunch Club for Older People - 1pm - 2pm (2 course Lunch €7 for over 55yrs)**

**Realta Speech & Drama 4pm –6pm**

**Social Club for Older People (Bingo, exercise and music, friendship, fun and much more) - 2pm - 4pm**

**Yoga with Duffs - Yoga 5.30pm- 6.30pm**

**Homework Club (Outreach Project) - Eglinton Hostel - 2.30pm -6.30pm**

**Solas Gheal Mindfulness 6.30pm-8pm**

### THURSDAY

**Fáilte Isteach (Conversational English for Migrants) - 9.30am - 11.30am**

**Dancing for Older People - 11.45am – 1pm**

**Lunch time Pilates Class 1.pm-2.pm**

**Social Club for Men - 3.00pm – 5.00pm (including Tai Chi 4pm to 5pm) (on going)**

**Yoga with Duffs 5.30pm -6.30pm**

**Homework Club (Outreach Project) - Eglinton Hostel - 2.30pm -6.30pm**

**One World Voice Choir - 6.30pm to 7.30pm**

### FRIDAY

**Women's Basketball - OWLS 10am -11am Outreach**

**Creative Writing - 10.30am – 12.30pm**

**There are many workshops which take place during the year subject to numbers keep an eye on our face book, website and blog pages**

**Contact Croí na Gaillimhe @ 091-895 203, email: [info@croinagaillimhe.ie](mailto:info@croinagaillimhe.ie), Web: [www.croinagaillimhe.ie](http://www.croinagaillimhe.ie)**

