



"Doors of Hope"



P.O. Box 101529, Pittsburgh, PA 15237

March 2025



Dove House

By: Jayne Quigg



We recently held our 16 days of activism against gender-based violence which involved multiple organisations assisting with the white ribbon campaign which were made by women who have suffered gender-based violence. We launched t-shirts which were worn by staff throughout the campaign, and we had a candlelight vigil at the end of the 16 days at Free Derry Corner marking the end of our campaign. The billboard was a huge success, and we wanted to highlight that not all abuse leaves bruises. This powerful billboard also stated that you are 0.4 mile from help which ultimately gave us 10 referrals in the duration the billboard was up.

We are currently working on a domestic abuse awareness training for all staff in the Triax area to increase their understanding of the signs and symptoms and the help and support to anyone who approaches them with domestic abuse related issues. We are also working collaboratively with Outer West to carry out a huge public campaign around ending violence against women and girls and will launch 3 different posters throughout the city to highlight the issue.

We are also working in collaboration with Féile to launch a huge social media campaign around the project which will be 3 videos- the service and how we support women, the taxi company's and the potential participation of Derry City Football club, who have also worked in partnership with the project previously on ending violence against women and girls. We want to create stickers that can be put onto the windows of taxi cars in the city to show that they are a safe car for women to get into. We really will be encouraging this with the local taxi firms as women's safety is a huge subject now particularly around the taxi companies.

For International Women's Day, we are working again alongside organisations within the Advocacy Project steering group to host a variety of events, particularly another billboard which will be at Free Derry Corner from 4th-8th March and will involve the Dove House Women's Group and Advocacy Project members.



Altram

By: Aisling Walls

Altram supports the voluntary and statutory Irish-medium early years education sector in the North of Ireland. We provide comprehensive services to practitioners, children, and families in our early years settings. Throughout the year, we conduct regular visits, training sessions, networking events, and parental engagement activities. We also offer resources and pre- and post-inspection support visits, ensuring



that high-quality Irish language and learning experiences are delivered consistently to our children. Furthermore, we actively engage with the broader education sector and political representatives to ensure that the needs of the Irish immersion sector are addressed.

Altram is currently conducting a regional ‘State of the Sector’ survey, in an aim to gather data on the needs of the Irish medium sector here in the North of Ireland. It is a crucial time for this research, as there have been a lot of developments within the early education sector in the North of Ireland. Unfortunately we face another phase of uncertainty where our funding is concerned, as we have no assurances about funding for the coming year. We also face challenges due to the lack of governmental movement on the Irish Language Act- the key element of the Good Friday Agreement, and given that the current Minister for Education and Minister for Culture in the Northern Ireland assembly, have a somewhat negative attitude towards the Irish language, which leaves us in a very precarious position. We continue to lobby local political representatives and make a case for the rights and needs of our sector.

Our financial situation continues to be unstable, operating on a minimal budget each year; however we endeavour to respond to the needs of the sector, which is focused on parents who send their children to Irish medium preschools.

Our lack of sustained investment means we are fully dependent on funding such as that from the Conway Mill Trust in order to create materials that will help support children, their families in their Irish immersion education experiences. Our ‘Ag tacú le Tuistí’ programme continues to flourish, and we will soon be launching our parent’s language workshops.

Also, as part of the Ag Tacú le Tuistí programme we are offering training to groups who are running parental engagement events and parent and toddler sessions.

Acknowledgement

Our long serving colleague Danny Cassidy is due to retire at the end of March 2025. As a great advocate for the Irish medium early years sector for the past 3 decades, and a fantastic asset to Altram as an organisation, we wanted to take this opportunity to thank Danny for his years of dedication and bid him a sad but fond ‘Slán go fóill’, we do hope that he will remain a great friend to Altram and the Irish medium early years sector. Danny, a proud Derry man, has over the years built up a great relationship with the

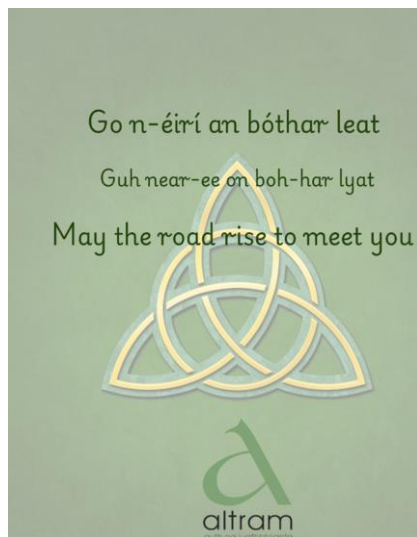


Conway Mill Trust and without this Altram wouldn't have been availed of the great support the Trust has to offer.

So míle buíochas ár gcara agus go n-éirí an bóthar leat!

A note of thanks to Conway Mill

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude for the ongoing and essential support provided by the Conway Mill Trust, which serves as a vital source of funding for our organisation. We greatly appreciate the dedicated community of donors who assist in promoting our initiatives. Your support enables us to directly support children and families in some of the most disadvantaged areas of the North. The invaluable contributions from the Conway Mill Trust not only sustain our programmes but also empower us to advocate for the rights of the Irish language community and for the families who access Irish medium early years services in the North. Thank you very much—Míle buíochas.





St.Patrick's day
Lá Fhéile Pádraig
La Ella Pawdrig



Saint Patrick

Naomh Pádraig

Neeve Pawdrig

Happy St.Patrick's day

Beannachtaí na Féile Pádraig ort

Bannaktee na fayla Pawdrig urt

Shamrock

Seamróg



Shamroque

Green

Glas

Glas

One, Two, Three

a haon, a dó, a trí

a hane, a daw, a tree



Put your shamrock on

Cuir ort do sheamróg

Kur urt daw he-am-rogue

Will we make a hat?

An ndéanfaidh muid hata?

An n-yan-hee mwidge hata?

I like your hat, good work!

Is maith liom do hata, obair mhaith!

Iss my lom daw hata, ubar why!



Still Imprisoned Project

By: Peter Jones

Thank you for your correspondence!

We are pleased to say that our project grows from strength to strength and your help has been invaluable. Please pass on our thanks to your many readers. Since those dark days 21 years ago when the Still Imprisoned Project seemed like it would never happen, and indeed without your help and assistance it may not have, we have branched out in many aspects of our work.

Currently we are involved in a project that explores the heritage of interment from 1971 – 1976. Internment means imprisonment without trial and many of the victims that were interned have since sought help from the Still Imprisoned Project.

S.I.P volunteers are currently carrying out interviews and gathering information to advance this project. Our volunteers have been working tirelessly for many years, they seek no reward for all the services they provide, and most have been with us for the past 21 years.

Because of the successful nature of our work, we have been approached by some of the statutory agencies willing to provide updated services that would benefit our volunteers and their clients. Unfortunately, we have been unable to accept their offers due to lack of funding to adequately train and bond our volunteers. Any financial help you provide would go a long way to help us.

In addition to providing updated training and bonding of the current volunteers, increased funding would allow us to recruit new volunteers. This would allow us to continue to explore new areas where help is needed.

Once again, we thank you for all your help and support and we also wish you and all the newsletter readers a wonderful and Happy St Patrick's Day. God bless and take care.

From all the Volunteers of the Still Imprisoned Project. P.J.





Springhill Community House

By: Ciaran Cahill

The work at the House continues unabated as one season rolls into another not to mention one year rolling into another. Our education programmes including General Certificate in Education or GSCE's Math, Science and Irish began in September 2024 and run until June 2025. Students have completed one exam module and are preparing for their second exam in March with the



final paper in June. In addition, our NVQ level 3 diploma courses in Aromatherapy, Massage and Reflexology will complete at the end of March with students becoming fully qualified therapists. This work focuses on victims and survivors of the conflict. Our students fall into that category and when they become qualified, they will be best placed to work with and deliver therapies with other victims of the conflict.

Qualified therapists will be able to assist in the running and delivery of our weekly complementary therapy clinics. We have weekly clinics in Homeopathy, Aromatherapy, Reflexology, Massage and Acupuncture. Two hundred and forty victims and survivors of the conflict each receive five one to one therapy sessions treating a range of conditions including grief, trauma, stress and anxiety.

Our service users also benefit from programmes in Gairdín an Phobail – The People's Garden. A reclaimed derelict site that has now blossomed into a vibrant community garden. We have just started an eight-week horticulture programme for beginners. The programme is not just about learning how to grow your own vegetables but is about improving physical/mental health and

social connections. In the garden this week we celebrated Imbolc the beginning of spring and St Brigid's Day by making crosses, it's also the perfect time to start planning the crops for the season ahead.

We have also started our Photography for Beginners' course which is another opportunity for participants to get out and about visiting local beauty spots. The course is delivered by award winning photographer Mal McCann who teaches participants how to get the best results out of mobile phone cameras and photo apps for improving photos. Participants are not only discovering the joys of photography and learning new skills but are discovering the beauty on our doorstep and creating works of art with their framed prints and can be seen



in John Teggart's black and white framed photograph of swaying trees near Ballykinler, Co Down. We plan to put all of the framed photos on display in Conway Mill theatre later this year.

In the early 1970's Fr Des visited a "Mothers House" in rural Germany which provided respite to mothers and children away from the stresses of city life. He felt a similar space was needed in Ireland and purchased a two-story derelict house in Falcarragh Co Donegal.



Since then, the house continues to provide a safe neutral space for people to come together on study weekends and residential workshops or just an opportunity to get away from the hustle and bustle of the city for a time of quiet reflection. Last weekend we hosted a cross community residential weekend which was an opportunity for women from Ballymurphy and Springmartin to come together and talk about day-to-day issues that affect them as well bigger issues such as what a united Ireland means. It was also an opportunity to build relationships and discover there is more that unites us than divides us.

As St. Patrick's Day approaches, we would like to take this opportunity to send our blessings and thanks to all who continue to support our work.



Eileen Hickey Irish Republican History Museum

By: Susan Hickey

First of all, we would like to thank all those at the Conway Mill Trust for your continued support and generosity and we hope you have had a great start to the new year.

We are happy to report visitor numbers remain steady as does the donation of items. We have made progress in getting our collection of An Phoblacht/Republican News copied and bound and have completed one full year so far, 1981. We have placed an order for another year, which is in the process of being made, plus we are in the middle of sorting through the papers to get another year made. For one year of newspapers it takes two bound volumes at a cost of £230 per book.

Soon, we will be replacing the display cabinet which is currently housing the plastic and rubber bullets as it is rather bulky. We plan to replace it with multiple vertical glass cabinets as this will allow us to display many more items than we currently can.

Once again, we would like to thank you all for your hard work and dedication, and we hope you have a great St Patrick's Day from all the volunteers of the Museum.

Go raibh maith agat!

We are, and continue to be, humbled by your generosity and support. On behalf of the Conway Mill Trust trustees, and the organizations we support, thank you!

Knights of Equity Court 9, Pgh., PA

John P. Holland AOH, New London, CT

Msgr. Charles Owen Rice AOH Div. 1, Pgh., PA

St. Patrick's AOH Div. 4 – Pgh., PA

Kevin Barry

Joseph P. & Eileen Brennan

Barbara J. Bogdan

Margaret A. Bond

Cecilia & Michael Byrne

John M. Cahill

Sheila P. Caulfield

Kathleen M. Cole

Allan D. Curran

David & Virginia Doughton

Joseph C. Drotter Estate

Francis E. Durkin

Daniel J. Engler

Michael J. & Timothy J. Foley

Sandra J. Haas

John B. Haltigan

Herbert W. Hennings

Kathleen Holmes

Michael T. & Kathleen M. Keenan

Sean P. & Noreen Kinnevy

Mary E. Madden

Mary T. Mannion

Sarah J. & Samuel A. Bellin

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Thomas J. & Roberta M. McGrory

Edward J. McManus

Rev. Joseph M. Mele

Seamus P. & Eileen K. Metress

Roberta A. Nagle & Richard Murphy

John A. O'Brien

Michael Francis & Marilyn L. O'Brien

Margaret O'Connor

Diane M. O'Donnell

Seán O'Murray

Robert G. & Rita M. Parry

Elizabeth A. Ramsey

Claire Regan

Richard Rosenthal

Bernadette Skuse

Andrew A. Somers

Brendan Walsh

Happy St. Patrick's Day!