

Intergenerational Project – elderly and youth: bridging the age gap our way

The present Transition Year Class from Mean Scoil Mhuire have started visiting the residents of St. Joseph's Care Centre every Wednesday afternoon. This year's groups are carrying on the strong links that have been built up by previous Transition Year Classes. The Wednesday afternoon visits are giving the younger generation a chance to take time to chat and get to know the residents and likewise it is giving the older generation a chance to pass on their life stories to the younger generation. The students have been enthralled by the amazing adven-

tures and talents of the residents from flying airplanes over Africa to playing various musical instruments and learning Spanish from a fluent speaker! The girls are looking forward to the annual St. Joseph's Christmas concert where they will get an opportunity to put their entertainment skills to the test! So another year has brought more opportunities for a new set of students to experience the friendship and mutual respect that different generations can have for one another and we say long may it last.



Mean Scoil Mhuire Transition Year Class 2010-2011 and their teacher Ms. Killian pictured at a preparatory workshop in St. Joseph's Care Centre, September, 2010.

21 years at the Family Centre

Mrs Maureen O'Rourke



For the past 21 years Mrs Maureen O'Rourke has been the keystone in the Family Centre.

If ever you go to a meeting, a course or even a coffee morning in the Family Centre there's one person sure to be there to welcome you and that's Mrs Maureen O'Rourke. For the past 21 years she has been the keystone, the heart and energy source of all the groups and organisations that need a place to meet, talk, discuss, plan and promote. From childcare to theology Maureen takes the bookings sets up an appropriate meeting room with the heat on and a welcome cup of tea.

I met Maureen in her busy office where she works every morning from ten to twelve and every evening from six looking after the needs of the many organisations that use The Family Centre. And is she busy? When I tried to have a chat there with her about her work the phone rang and rang and she cheerfully talked and noted each request. Does it ever stop I wondered. She smiled and said 'Ah sure it is busy I suppose'.

Back in 1989 when Fr Pat Earley Adm set up Teallach Iosa and Maureen started work there, one of the first groups set up by Fr Hugh Turbitt was Club 89. Even back then it was quite busy. There were many Pre Marriage courses dur-

ing the year and it was the venue for the Pastoral Council meetings. Other groups include the Legion of Mary and the Pioneers. The AA meets four days a week and CASA, the National Parents Council and Older Persons' Network. One of the groups dear to Maureen's heart is the children who attend the Rainbows course. It's lovely to see the children settle in and make friends'.

But all really appreciate the warm efficient way Maureen runs the centre, as Sr Angela said 'she's way ahead of you and she knows exactly what is needed and has it done without you ever having to ask'. Maureen misses the Cathedral and indeed for several weeks the Family Centre was closed while the building was being made safe following the fire. It was a busy time as she tried to get alternative accommodation for the many groups booked in. The Friday Coffee morning after 10 a.m. Mass is now held in St Mel's college.

Does she get time off? Well the Centre closes for the month of August and also for a short break at Christmas and Easter. But fair weather or fine Maureen is always there first in the morning and last to turn out the light at night.



Longford Credit Union Ltd.

Longford Credit Union

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This is the ethos of the Credit Union Movement. Longford Credit Union is in existence for the past 40 years and has embodied this ideal in all its dealings with its members. In doing so, it has been a force for good in all sections of the community.

The Credit Union is a financial institution with a difference. Involved in Longford Credit Union, and its sub-office in Edgeworthstown, are over 30 volunteers who meet weekly and monthly to serve on the Board of Directors, and numerous other committees. There are over 500 Credit Unions in Ireland, and with an average of 25 volunteers per branch, that results in a total of approx. 12,500 volunteers working wholeheartedly for the members of their respective communities.

The standard of living in today's Longford is light years away from the Longford of 1969. Then, people saved in shillings and borrowed in pounds for such basic essentials as cookers, washing-machines, frams, First Communions, fuel, etc. These loans were paid off and another item ear-marked. In an era before credit cards, the Credit Union provided a lifeline to many people who simply had no other way of borrowing money.

Longford Credit Union is proud to sponsor Co Longford School's Soccer League, Backstage Theatre and a number of smaller local initiatives. We have also been involved with local Car Dealers since the introduction of our popular Car Draws in 1998.

The Credit Union's commitment to young people also extends to our annual Poster Competition and Schools Quiz. In addition, a free draw is held for our young members every two months.

Longford Credit Union appreciates the commitment of its Manager, Staff, Board of Directors, members of Edgeworthstown sub-office, and various committees. We pay tribute to past Credit Union personnel and those who are no longer with us. Long may the Credit Union tradition continue.

Unique echoes from St Mel's Cathedral

Songs that were recorded in St Mel's Cathedral in the months before it perished in the flames last year have been put together on a unique CD. 'Cathedral Echoes' is the title of the new recording put together by St Mel's Cathedral Folk Group, who play at the monthly holy hour, now held in St Mel's Cathedral Centre on the last Saturday of each month.

"It's a project that grew out of the holy hour, which we started a number of years ago, and that has bonded

a lot of them and drawn the group together," explained Fr Brendan O'Sullivan, the director of the group.

"It is important for me to have music for every liturgy that we can because it enhances everything so much. The music has helped us to develop the holy hour," he added, with close to 400 now attending the monthly hour of reflection.

The location of the recording, says Fr Brendan, is what's makes the CD all the more special.

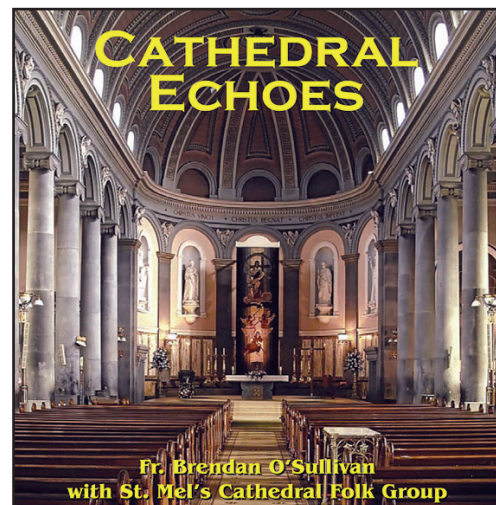
"This was recorded in the cathedral; that's what's kind of precious about it. Paul (Gurney, Real World Studios) brought the equipment in (to the cathedral). We had done it before Christmas, but then with the way things went with the cathedral, we didn't get time to complete it until now," said Fr O'Sullivan.

With 17 in the group, the variety of vocalists and musicians (accordion, banjo, saxophone, keyboards and guitar) provide a unique sound on the CD, particularly given where it was recorded.

"There's a nice mix; there's a kind of a traditional Celtic mix to it," he said. "The acoustics in the cathedral are fantastic and that's something that we miss hugely from a choir point of view."

"The talent in the group is very good; they are all good musicians and good singers, which you can hear on the CD."

"The sanctuary in the cathedral is where we practiced every Monday night for about two and a half hours. The sanctuary is where we recorded it and that's where we get the front cover from. It's kind of precious to us. And that's where we get the name from as well – it kind of echoes of times past," he explained.



The cover of 'Cathedral Echoes'

Funds raised through sales of the CD will go towards the Cenacolo Community in Knock, Co Mayo and the St Mel's Cathedral Restoration Fund.

The CD is available from the Cathedral Presbytery during office hours (Mon to Fri 9am – 5.30pm – 043 3346465) and Fuschia Design, Dublin Street, and also in Knock Book Store, Knock, Co Mayo.



Tommy Cowan selling Cathedral Folk Group CDs.