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In this Issue:

CEO Introduction

Our Friends from
Belfast

Young Peace-
builders Pro-
gramme

Transition Year

Open Day in De-
cember

The film 'Born
and Reared'

Pat Fleming—
Our Man on the
Mountain



Notifications:

AGM Friday 27th May
at 4.30 pm in Glencree.
**ALL ARE WEL-
COME**

Glencree Event in late
June "**Imagining Rec-
onciliation Through
Culture**". Key Note
speaker:: Professor
Richard Kearney, Writ-
er, Philosopher, Aca-
demic and 21st Century
Thinker [http://
r i c h a r d m k -
e a r n e y . c o m / b i o - 2 /
b i o](http://richardmk-earney.com/bio-2/#bio)

**Details will be availa-
ble later**

2016—An Exciting Year Ahead

2016 promises to be another exciting year at Glencree as we continue to 'hold the space' for people to engage in difficult conversations and be challenged and learn from each other as we seek to transform violent conflict and build peace in what is a rapidly changing Ireland and world.

We have four ongoing dialogue and learning programmes contributing to building peace on this island; Community and Political Dialogue focusing primarily on legacy of violence issues; Women's Programme and Young Peacebuilder's, developing leadership capacity for peacebuilding and reconciliation and 'Southern Voice' seeking to "call to attention" the importance of continued engagement by the Republic of Ireland in matters related to Northern Ireland and the on-going peace process. The latter will include an 'Imagining Reconciliation' event at Glencree in June, an inaugural annual Glencree lecture and another series of lunchtime talks in Dublin by people from the north.

Our Peace Education programme is increasing as we offer modules to transition year students and we will continue to facilitate dialogue and run workshops for a wide range of educational institutions and other groups from around the world who are interested in peace and reconciliation.

Our international work is beginning to grow again. In 2015 we secured funding from the Tony Ryan Trust to facilitate Glencree's engagement in a developing international network seeking to reduce and prevent religion related violence focusing initially in the Middle East and North Africa. This network is currently in a research and scoping phase from which greater clarity on action that can be taken will emerge. Discussions with potential development and humanitarian partners are ongoing and we wish to be able to apply together for grants to do work in specific fragile contexts.

As a result of horrific violent conflicts the so called 'refugee' crisis poses significant challenges to both the EU and Ireland. We are committed to ensuring that our unique skills can make a positive contribution to welcoming and helping the peaceful integration of people that come to Ireland.

Early in 2015 we were able to open our residential facilities again and it has been wonderful to see the Glencree site becoming increasingly active. This will increase further in 2016 both with our own peacebuilding work and with those that wish to come and stay and work here. *William Devas, CEO*

Our Friends from Belfast Talks Series

In November and December Glencree – in partnership with Partners in Catalyst – put on a series of public lunchtime talks in Dublin's Liberty Hall entitled 'Our Friends from Belfast' which brought down five speakers from Belfast's working class loyalist communities.



The series was opened by Billy Hutchinson – leader of the small left-wing Progressive Unionist Party (PUP), North Belfast community worker and former UVF prisoner – who joked that he was the result of a mixed marriage between a unionist and a socialist. He called for the continuing building of stronger relationships between North and South - personal, economic and political - alongside existing East-West relationships.

The second talk was given by Linda Ervine, who runs the Turas Irish language programme, which now teaches Irish to 150 people in loyalist East Belfast every week. She is also in great demand as a speaker, estimating that she had addressed nearly 7,000 people about the Irish language, including the PUP, the Orange Order and groups on loyalist housing estates. “As long as it's used as a weapon, the language has no future. But as a bridge it has a bright future,” she said.



The third talk was given by Philip Orr, the Carrickfergus-based author, playwright and historian, who talked about Protestant unionist loyalist attitudes to the Easter Rising and the First World War. Orr sees one of his principal tasks as “civilianising the loyalist narrative”. There is a massive emphasis on the military in the culture of loyalism, and a particular preoccupation with the Battle of the Somme. There are too many parades and military commemorations. He said what was needed were more discussions, debates and hedge schools to talk about other people's stories: the people back on the home front, the women, people in trade unions, people in religious life and so on.

The fourth talk was given by Julie-Anne Corr Johnston, Progressive Unionist Party member of Belfast City Council, and the first openly lesbian unionist politician in Northern Ireland. Julie-Anne said 17 years after the Good Friday Agreement Northern Ireland “should be moving towards promoting tolerance for a diverse society rather than merely reacting to a divided society.” She said people of her generation (she is 28) were still too focussed on the recent conflict, but hopefully the next generation of young people would be “inspired to work for a multi-cultural, multi-faith, multi-national society”.



The final speaker in the series was Robert 'Beano' Niblock, East Belfast-based playwright and former UVF prisoner. He was first imprisoned as a 17-year-old in 1973, followed by a 15 year sentence for murder in 1975. He said working-class loyalists felt “betrayed, disenfranchised, let down” by politics. Pointing out that 99% of the people who were imprisoned during the Northern Ireland ‘troubles’ were working class, he said forgotten working class communities like his “need a voice to get their experience into a wider arena. The arts in these areas open borders rather than close them off.” *Andy Pollak, Director*

Transition Year Modules

We are offering a range of one day modules at Glencree that are designed for Transition Year students but can be adapted for other age groups. The following modules are now available and we are happy to talk to Transition Co-ordinators and teachers to explain more about the content, aims, prices etc.

Working with Conflict: This module looks at ways to build our capacity to deal with conflict in everyday situations. We practice communication skills and work on strategies to manage conflict more creatively and successfully through activities and games.

Exploring Identity and Diversity: We explore our own sense of identity and how we see others and focus on increasing tolerance and working with difference. We also look at migration into Ireland, how the refugee crisis affects us and how we can break down and challenge ethnic and religious stereotypes.

Building Peace in Northern Ireland: What were the causes of the Troubles in Northern Ireland and what were the costs? What does religion have to do with this and what do we mean by sectarianism? We look at the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement and what has changed. What has this got to do with people living in the Republic of Ireland and what contribution has Glencree made?

Finding the leader within: This module looks at ways to become more confident and take responsibility for the things we do. What are the qualities of good leadership and how can we become better leaders? We explore different kinds of leadership and how communication plays an important role in this. Has everyone got the ability to be a leader?

If you are interested or would like to bring a class to Glencree please contact Eamon Rafter at eamon.rafter@glencree.ie or Kieran Allen at kieran.allen@glencree.ie *Eamon Rafter, Education & Training*

Young Peacebuilders Programme



In May 2015, Glencree announced the start of the Young Peacebuilders 2015 programme, a cross-border initiative aiming to “establish a group of young (18-24) *Peacebuilders* across the island of Ireland, north & south”. The aim of the programme was to establish a core group of young leaders who are passionate about and committed to peacebuilding. Furthermore, in Glencree we had become frustrated by the temporary nature of project based work, therefore a second aim of this programme was to train and empower this group to eventually be able to become self-sufficient or sustainable. In other words, at the end of the process, the group would be able undertake the planning and execution of peacebuilding initiatives of its own accord.

In broad terms, the process was planned as follows: participants would apply, attend one day introductory workshops in key locations around the island, and from these workshops, Glencree would select a core group, with whom we would continue to work. The application form went live in May 2015, and we received over 50 applications over the next few weeks.

Project co-ordinator Eamon Rafter and head-facilitator Kieran Allen met the applicants in a series of workshops in July that took place in Dublin, Dundalk, Belfast, and Dungannon. These workshops introduced the four main themes of *Identity*, the *Legacy of Conflict* in Ireland (north & south), *Leadership*, and *Peacebuilding and Reconciliation*. The people who had applied were, in each case, very keen to engage in political dialogue with people from different backgrounds. They also had strong and passionate opinions about social justice, and most of them had come from a background of having been involved in community work and wanting to make a difference and see positive change in society.

Following these introductory workshops, a core group was selected. The group met together for the first time in Newry and spent the day in team building exercises, political dialogue, and planning for the documentation process. They were also joined by actor, director, and drama facilitator Jenny Macdonald, and film-maker and facilitator Martin McKenna who ran sessions with the participants to introduce them to further material that was to be explored on the residential.



The Young Peacebuilders 2015 group attended a residential at Glencree late September. Three days were spent together exploring the four key themes, as well as engaging in dialogue, team building, and outdoor activities. According to feedback, the residential was a very positive experience for the participants, and created a sense of hope for many of them. Despite their differing backgrounds, their shared commitment to working to build peace unified them.

In October, a follow up meeting in Belfast took place, including a cross-community tour of West Belfast (Falls Road and the Shankill). However, a poorer turn out led to the team calling for further and more specific training in order to move the project forward. A date was set for a training day in Dundalk, which took place in December. Morale was positive for this meeting as the group started looking in more depth at specific peacebuilding skills and concepts, however, some expressed their desire for participants to start taking the reins of the project. It was therefore decided that further training and group cohesion was needed. March 2016 will see the second residential gathering in Derry-Londonderry, where training will be continued.

During the course of the project, certain social and political issues of importance have been identified. The next step, therefore, is for the Glencree 2015 Young Peacebuilders core group to decide on their future together. In Derry, the group will be deciding what specific goals they have for the future, and formulating a plan to achieve these goals. *Kieran Allen, Learning Programme Officer*



The Glenree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation

Newsletter

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Glencree is an Irish Peace and Reconciliation Centre dedicated to transforming violent conflict and building peace. Our vision is of a shared world where diversity is cherished; where all can live free from violence and where conflicts are resolved peacefully.

Thank You to all the supporters who make our work possible.

"Ask Pat, He'll Know"



Part of the furniture? I don't think so, Pat Fleming is far far more than that. He is our resident caretaker primarily but by no means does it stop there! He is a storyteller, historian, joker and jewellery maker. An artist, weather forecaster, baker of our famous teabrack, fixer and mender. How long is a piece of string so I will round off the list by saying Pat is a unique character, one in a million. Our man on the ground.

Everyone who comes to Glencree knows of Pat—volunteers, visitors, groups, residents, walkers, film makers, dignatories and more.

Thank you Pat for being 'our man on the mountain' for the 17 years that have gone by and to all the years ahead. *Sue Paterson, Editor*



Charity Screening in the Mermaid Arts Centre, Bray

A wonderful evening's viewing was had by all when on Thursday 21st January, the Glencree Staff, in the company of Ann Ferris TD, Liz McManus and members of the general public, enjoyed the premier screening of 'Born and Reared', the moving documentary of four men living in Northern Ireland post conflict at the Mermaid Arts Centre in Bray, Co Wicklow.

With film makers Hen Norton and Dan Dennison on standby for a Q and A session afterward, we had a great insight into every aspect of this honest portrayal of the lives of these four brave men.



All proceeds went to The Glencree Centre and we would like to thank most sincerely all those that attended. *Val Kiernan, Admin*

Open Day before Christmas

Thirty hardy people braved the rain and wind to attend Glencree's Open Day on the 6th December.

Fortified by mulled wine and mince pies, Kieran and Val led the curious and intrepid explorers on a tour of the Glencree site while the less adventurous preferred to remain indoors savouring the warmth and chatting with each other.

Chair of the Glencree Board, Barbara Walshe welcomed everyone to Glencree, CEO Will Devas outlined Glencree's current work and plans for the future, he was followed by Eamon Rafter who talked about his work with young people across the island and Carol Ganly, Café Manager shared her optimism about increasing the use of Glencree's accommodation which had gone up significantly in the previous twelve months.



Aisling O'Callaghan, Glencree's Development and Communication's Executive emphasised the importance of making Glencree sustainable and asked people to contact her if they were interested in supporting Glencree, not just financially but as a member or volunteer.

Andy Pollak, journalist and Board member facilitated a lively discussion on Glencree's role in reconciliation, its current role in helping to deal with the legacy of the past and its future work with new and diverse communities coming to Ireland. Chair of the Board, Barbara Walshe concluded the evening by promising to have many more opportunities for discussion between Glencree and the public in 2016. *Aisling O'Callaghan, Fundraising and Communications*