

work & life

ISSUE 37 • SPRING-SUMMER 2017

REMEMBERING RESCUE 116

IRISH
COAST
GUARD
CUE



ALSO INSIDE

FOCUS ON SERVICES TO CHILDREN –
LIBRARIES, SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS,
CHILDCARE, YOUTH SERVICES
AND EARLY EDUCATION

PLUS

PAY, IMPACT PEOPLE,
STUDY GUIDE AND MORE.

LOOKING FOR
AN ALTERNATIVE
TO YOUR EXISTING
HOME INSURANCE
POLICY?

JLT Ireland can
offer you a very
competitive home
insurance quote.

Call our team today on
1800 200 200 or visit
www.jltonline.ie

For all
new policies
taken out enjoy

€25
CASH BACK
as a gift to you!



Subject to underwriting and acceptance criteria.
Terms and conditions apply.

JLT Insurance Brokers Ireland Limited trading as JLT Ireland, JLT Financial Services, GIS Ireland, Charity Insurance, Teacherwise, Childcare Insurance, JLT Online, JLT Trade Credit Insurance, JLT Sport is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland
Directors: Eamonn Bergin, Paul Doherty, Adrian Girling (British), Aidan Gordon, Patrick Howett, Michael Lacey, Dan McCarthy, Raymond O'Higgins.
Registered Office: Cherrywood Business Park, Loughlinstown, Dublin 18. A member of Jardine Lloyd Thompson Group plc.
Registered in Ireland No. 21622. VAT No. 0042175W. Private Company Limited by Shares.

work & life

Spring-Summer 2017

The Pay Issue

Work & Life is produced by IMPACT trade union's Communications Unit and edited by Niall Shanahan.

Front cover: Remembering the crew of Rescue 116. Main photo: Conor Healy. Photo of Captain Mark Duffy reproduced with kind permission of IALPA.

Contact IMPACT at:
Nerney's Court, Dublin 1.
Phone: 01-817-1500.
Email: info@impact.ie
www.impact.ie

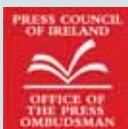
Designed by:
N. O'Brien Design & Print
Management Ltd.
Phone: 01-864-1920
Email: nikiobrien@eircom.net

Printed by Boylan Print Group.

Advertising sales:
Niki O'Brien.
Phone: 01-864-1920.

Unless otherwise stated, the views contained in *Work & Life* do not necessarily reflect the policy of IMPACT trade union.

Work & Life is printed on environmentally friendly paper, certified by the European Eco Label. This magazine is 100% recyclable.



Work & Life magazine is a full participating member of the Press Council of Ireland and supports the Office of the Press Ombudsman. In addition to defending the freedom of the press, this scheme offers readers a quick, fair and free method of dealing with complaints that they may have in relation to articles that appear in our pages. To contact the Office of the Press Ombudsman go to www.pressombudsman.ie or www.presscouncil.ie

IMPACT

All suppliers to *Work & Life* recognise ICTU-affiliated trade unions.

Services to children

IMPACT has a diverse membership working across a huge range of different services, and with each edition of *Work & Life* we try to shed a little more light on the range of work our members do, the services they deliver and, whenever possible, to show reveal the personalities behind the work.

In this edition of *Work & Life* we wanted to concentrate on the work of those IMPACT members who provide a range of services to children. As it turns out, there are more members providing services to children than one edition of this magazine can adequately reflect.

We were particularly chuffed to have Darina Molloy on board for this edition as a guest contributor. Darina works in Castlebar library and has provided us with a detailed and colourful account of the range of services provided through our libraries to children and schools in the community.

IMPACT's Early Education branch was officially launched in March this year. Cairín de Buis outlines the *EarlyImpact* campaign now underway to secure greater state investment, professionalise the early education service, and hold the Government to account on its commitments to accomplish these aims.

While we have focused previously on the vital service provided by SNAs to children with special education needs in *Work & Life*, in this edition Martina O'Leary looks at the work of the Special Education Needs Organisers (SENOs) whose work is to identify the needs of children with special education needs and to allocate the necessary support resources to schools.

Lughan Deane digs out the history notes and provides a study guide for Leaving Cert history students who want to prepare themselves for questions about the 1913 Dublin Lockout, while I talk to some of our members working in childcare and youth services, and the IMPACT organisers they collaborate with.

Our movies and garden features are all about a child's perspective too, Daniel Devery improvises with fresh pasta, Isobel Butler gives notes on how to run more effective workplace meetings and Raymond Connolly wonders whatever happened to the local hop?

Shortly before this edition went to print the entire IMPACT family was shocked and saddened to learn of the loss of Irish Coastguard Rescue 116 and its four crew members. All were members of IMPACT. We pay tribute in this edition to their bravery, dedication and service.

Go Mairidis Beo.



Niall Shanahan
Editor

PEOPLE



4

PAY



6

LIBRARIES



10

RESCUE 116



12

SENO



18

1913 NOTES



20

FOOD



22

MOVIES



26

TRAVEL



30

INTERNATIONAL



32

SERVICES TO CHILDREN

IMPACT PEOPLE4
Margaret Coughlan

PUBLIC PAY BACK IN PLAY6
by Bernard Harbor

TUSLA AND THE BLAME GAME9
by Niall Shanahan

KNOWLEDGE, STORIES & MAGIC10
Inside our libraries by Darina Molloy

TRIBUTE TO RESCUE 116.....12

EARLY EDUCATION14
Time for the professionals by Ciarín de Buis

ORGANISING FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS18

1913 DUBLIN LOCKOUT20
Leaving Cert study notes

FOOD22
Freestyle pasta by Daniel Devery

GARDENS24
A job for all the family

MOVIES26
The kid stays in the picture

MUSIC28
Raymond Connolly looks good on the dancefloor

TRAVEL.....30
Una Minh Kavanagh overcomes a fear of flying

INTERNATIONAL.....32
Trump and TTIP by Lughan Deane

UNION NEWS34

BOOKS37
Syria fundraiser raises musical memories

PHOTO GALLERY38

FASHION.....40
Is that what you're wearing to work?

CAREERS42
Work that meeting!

THE SOCIAL NETWORK.....44
Campaigning for gender pay transparency

WIN WIN WIN46
Enter our competitions and survey to win cash prizes

Campaigns

Gender pay equality – an idea whose time has come

IN FEBRUARY, IMPACT petitioned the Irish Government to introduce regulations requiring employers to disclose information on the gender pay gap in their organisations. The call came after similar regulations were drafted in the UK, where they are set to come into effect in April.

The regulations will require large employers to publish details of the average hourly pay of women and men in their employment, and to calculate the gap between the two.

With Ireland's national gender pay gap stubbornly stuck at 14%, IMPACT official Ger O'Brien said Ireland would benefit from similar transparency. "The disclosure of data like this is key to addressing the gender pay gap. What gets measured gets done, and publishing this kind of information would represent a real and concrete action on the part of employers".

The day after IMPACT sent its request to Government, Labour leader Brendan Howlin asked Taoiseach Enda Kenny in the Dáil to support IMPACT's call for new laws.



In early March, IMPACT welcomed the publication of a Labour Party Bill that aims to introduce gender pay gap reporting in Ireland. The union called for cross-party support for the legislation.

In particular, IMPACT welcomed the inclusion of a provision in the Bill requiring employers to disaggregate data on the age and part-time or full-time status of employees. The union had suggested that this specific measure be included in the legislation.

IMPACT then launched an online social media campaign. The campaign focused on the idea that women, when compared with their male counterparts, effectively work

for free for 71 minutes of each working day. The response was significant and encouraging. It generated strong popular and media interest from across the political spectrum.

Following that campaign, IMPACT wrote to other parties in the Dáil seeking their support in passing the Labour Bill. Updates on the progress of the legislation will be provided through the union's e-bulletin ●



From little acorns

IMPACT's vice-president Margaret Coughlan, of the Wicklow health branch, chairs the ICTU women's committee and IMPACT's training committee. On top of that she has spent almost two decades working on behalf of her Wicklow health branch members. MARTINA O'LEARY had a chat with her.

MARGARET DESCRIBES herself variously as self-motivated, a people person, committed to the trade union movement, which she was involved in since she was 18, and in possession of a good sense of humour and fun.

She started her career as a community catering manager, looking after the mental health section in a number of the old Eastern Health Board areas. Given Margaret's chosen career I couldn't resist asking if she's any good in the kitchen? "I'm told I'm a great cook, I love cooking, and I love entertaining, bringing people to my home. I do a great chowder. Fish is on the menu if you come to my home for dinner," says Margaret.

Margaret has been on full-time release as a union representative for 17 years. "I was continuously complaining about representation on the east coast and Wicklow areas, so when management and IMPACT sought for a full-release to help with that, I was selected," she explains.

Challenges

Margaret's a firm believer in encouraging people to stand up for their rights. "There are many challenges for all workers. It might be longer working hours, longer travelling times, many have huge problems finding accommodation near their workplace.

"There can be problems associated with a disconnect between the senior people of an organisation and the workers on the ground, or the growing struggle of huge childcare costs. Those are some of the challenges on a one-to-one basis for a person,," she says.

"I think, in general, people can become disillusioned for a time, in any walk of life. I believe it's up to the person themselves to ask themselves what are the problems? How can I personally make a difference? And the way to make a difference is to speak out about how you feel.

"Instead of being negative all the time, you have to be willing to get in there, roll up the sleeves and help the organisation to move in a direction that you want. People do listen, I've seen many changes take place over the years," Margaret says.▶

"Training is about empowerment and passing on knowledge. We are sowing seeds to grow stronger IMPACT branches."

Margaret chairs the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) women's committee and is also a member of ICTU's disability committee and IMPACT's equality committee. "I feel we have gone backward in relation to equality. It's something we need to keep fighting for. We're still fighting for equal pay between men and women, not so much in the public system, but certainly in the private sector.

"You see in countries not as developed as Ireland, there are huge problems in relation to educating women and with disabilities. Equality is a global problem. Equality must go through everything we do, in work, at home and in society generally. We can't say we live in an equal society, because we certainly don't," she says.

Margaret is particularly pleased with IMPACT's INSPIRE training programme, developed specifically to encourage and develop women activists. "I'm delighted with the programme. This encourages women to go forward within the trade union movement, and explores what's stopping women from going on through the movement. Many say it's childcare, but it's not necessarily that alone. It's more complex than that. There's an element of women not putting themselves forward. We need to find ways to address this," she says.

All cases have their own complexities. The satisfaction in helping another human being, in whatever problem they have, is fantastic.

Training

Margaret's interest in activist training stems from her firm belief that it's all about empowerment and passing on knowledge. "We're sowing seeds to grow stronger IMPACT branches. Through IMPACT's branch representative training programme members are getting new information and more confidence. This leads to meeting new people involved in the union, building a network.

"There's a lovely buzz about new people coming in and learning, there's an energy in the building, which I love. We hope that this energy will transfer into the branches. Anyone I have seen in the union training programme has gone on to be much more involved in the organisation," she says.

Spare time

Margaret loves to spend her spare time with her family and friends. "I have loads of interests but don't get a lot of time to follow them. I love movies, especially thrillers, and the theatre. When it comes to music I particularly love jazz, but there's no music I don't like."

When it comes to travel, finding time remains a challenge. "I love camping, particularly in Ireland. It's a different type of travelling. I've camped in tents, caravans and motor vans. I'm definitely a camper at heart, I love the fact that there's no routine. With camping you get up when you want and have breakfast when you want. This is the only time I get to read. I've two books on Nelson Mandela I can't wait to read."

So what motivates Margaret to keep involved after so many years? "It's hard work but great being involved with IMPACT, you just get a great sense of satisfaction when issues are resolved. It's not every case we can win, because all cases have their own complexities. But where you do well, the satisfaction in helping another human being, in whatever problem they have, is fantastic. You have to care, you have to be passionate about things," says Margaret.

Margaret concludes our chat with a nod to the people that keep her going. "I'd like to give a huge thanks to my family, branch and people that have supported me through the years. It's made a big difference" ●

Public pay back in play

Talks on a successor to the Lansdowne Road agreement will be no pushover. BERNARD HARBOR takes a look at the challenges.

WHEN PUBLIC expenditure minister Paschal Donohoe addressed the prestigious *Industrial Relations News* conference in March, he reiterated his Government's commitment to negotiating a new public service pay deal, saying pay rises were the "sign of a normal functioning economy." So far, so reassuring.

But his comments were caveated with warnings about other demands on the public purse, and he followed up with a call for tax cuts a few days later.

The Minister also warned that productivity measures introduced under recent agreements would be maintained. Indeed, he went further, saying new productivity improvements would have to underpin any pay adjustments.

Donohoe made specific reference to the additional hours introduced under the Haddington Road agreement, saying they "remain critical to enabling us to meet increased demand in frontline services, and to improve services to the public generally."

It's no surprise that the Government is taking a firm stand on working time and other issues in advance of negotiations. But it does portend that Donohoe and his department will be no pushover, even if his early determination to see out the Lansdowne Road deal to its September 2018 conclusion wilted in the face of union arguments last December.



Paschal Donohoe: Pay rises are the sign of a normal functioning economy.

Unity

The talks are set to start after the Public Service Pay Commission reports in the spring. For its initial input, the Commission has been charged with the fairly narrow task of addressing "how the unwinding of the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Service (FEMPI) should proceed."

This neatly matches IMPACT's priority, agreed at last year's biennial delegate conference, which is to secure a pay round and restore incomes through the quickest possible unwinding of the FEMPI legislation, which introduced pay cuts and the pension levy.

Indeed, this is the common denominator linking the priorities of all the unions, and it should provide a focus for unity heading into what will be a difficult negotiation.

That united approach will be underpinned by a determination that the outcome must benefit all public servants.

This demands a more sophisticated approach than the simple removal of FEMPI which, in the absence of other measures, would be of little benefit to those on the lowest incomes. That's because the Lansdowne Road deal has pretty much taken them out of FEMPI territory. ➤

Reacting to Minister Donohoe's comments on productivity, an IMPACT spokesperson said they were further evidence that public servants had made a large and tangible contribution to Ireland's recovery. "We accept the point that any deal must be sustainable, and that there are competing demands on the public purse. Nevertheless, working time will be on our agenda when we enter talks in a couple of months' time," he said.

Recovery

The core issue in the talks will be the timetable and terms for pay restoration, which finally got underway under the 2015 Lansdowne Road agreement. The pay commission was asked to set its analysis of this in the context of factors like public-private pay comparisons, international pay trends, and the value of public service pensions.

Recent stats from the Central Statistics Office are useful on the first of these factors. Published in March, they showed that public service workers now earn slightly less than their private sector counterparts when you take account of the so-called 'pension levy,' and factors such as occupation, education and length of service. **continued on page 8** ➤

Many a slip?

Reaching agreement is no foregone conclusion when pay talks get underway, as public servants found to their cost during the economic crash of 2009. BERNARD HARBOR surveys the field and runs an eye over the potential hurdles.

The purse strings

It's over a year since unions voiced the view that the economy and exchequer finances were picking up faster than envisaged when the Lansdowne Road deal was done in 2015. Last December, the Government effectively accepted the argument that pay recovery should be accelerated to reflect this.

The economic indicators – including tax receipts – seemed to be slowing again at the end of last year, but have picked up since. A shock (or even a hiccup) on the economic front, where Brexit looms large, could cool official enthusiasm for a deal. Meanwhile, the price of any deal will be measured against other calls on the public purse, including badly-needed staffing and capital investment in public services.

The politics

Tough lessons were learned in 2009, when a backbench rebellion scuppered a deal that could have avoided the pay cuts. Since then unions have sharpened their political communications, but 'new politics' means we have to convince the opposition as well as the Government. Any deal worth its salt will need support across the Oireachtas, so unions will have to convince a lot of politicians that a deal makes sense for Ireland and not just its public servants. ➤

Photo: dreamstime.com

“Public service workers now earn slightly less than their private sector counterparts when you take account of the so-called ‘pension levy,’ and factors such as occupation, education and length of service.”

But they also showed that public servants earn over 5% more than their private sector counterparts if you ignore the so-called ‘pension levy’ contribution. And you can be sure that the value of public sector pensions – and the contribution that public servants make towards their retirement income – will be the central bone of contention in the talks.

Employers’ body Ibec made much of this in its submission to the pay commission, prompting the ICTU Public Services Committee (PSC) – which coordinates the union voice in talks – to respond. The PSC said public servants contribute 6.5% of gross salary in superannuation contributions, and that the pension levy represents a further 10% or 10.5% contribution, depending on earnings over €28,750 a year.

The PSC, which was finalising a specific submission on pensions as *Work & Life* went to print, also slammed Ibec’s assertion that public servants are paid more than their

European counterparts. It pointed to union research that shows Irish public servants are in the lower half of EU15 average public earnings, and are paid almost 20% less than the average in northern and central European countries.

The final battleground is likely to be around the state of the public finances or, in industrial relations terms, the employer’s ‘ability to pay.’ Ireland’s growth and tax receipts remain strong in spite of international risks like Brexit and Trumponomics’.

If growth sustains, the ‘ability to pay’ argument is likely to hang instead on the many other calls on the public purse. Some of these – like increased staffing and capital investment in public services – are voiced by unions themselves. All of them are of keen interest to citizens and taxpayers, regardless of what sector they happen to work in.

Bernard Harbor is IMPACT’s head of communications ●

selective stats around international and public-private pay comparisons.

The players

The acceleration of the €1,000 pay adjustment, which appears in pay packets in April rather than September 2017, was achieved quickly and cleanly because unions were united on their priority and spoke with a single voice. But let’s face facts: that kind of discipline among 20 public service unions tends to be the exception rather than the rule.

Since that deal was done in January, various unions have voiced different priorities, with some even suggesting their members should gain much more than the rest. Minister Donohoe recently said groups who “shout loudest,” or were “best placed to influence” should not get better treatment than others. That resolve could be tested in May. But if unchecked, disunity and dissonance among the union players could suit employers best.

The pendulum

Time is not on our side. No pay adjustments are budgeted for 2018 right now. And, while a successful outcome will change that, money won’t change hands next year unless it’s in the Budget estimates next October, just six months after the Public Service Pay Commission publishes its interim report.

That means a deal must be negotiated and accepted by members by the end of a summer during which many groups (special needs assistants, teachers, third level staff and others) are hard to ballot. It’s doable. But any delay – caused by political developments, for instance – could put a seriously disruptive spanner in the works.



When blame culture explodes, the facts are sacred

By Niall Shanahan

THE INTERNATIONAL news cycle of recent months has obsessed over the twin calamities of Brexit and the US presidency. It took the crisis caused by the treatment of Garda whistle blower, Sergeant Maurice McCabe, to push both aside from Irish front pages back in February.

With such a high volume of coverage in an intensely competitive media environment, it becomes challenging for the wider public to discern facts from opinion. This is particularly the case when calls for ‘heads to roll’ become increasingly shrill.

As is often the case in moments of crisis concerning public service workers, these calls generate more heat than light, and the term ‘public servant’ can once again find itself being turned into a casual insult. We’ve seen it happen before, most especially at the height of the economic crisis, when public servants became the focus of widespread rage, fuelled by a desire to pin the fault of the crisis on someone, anyone.

Bear in mind that we’re talking about a crisis that started when one public servant, Sergeant McCabe, tried to do his job with selfless honesty.

Tusla

In February the child and family support agency Tusla, became the focus of attention. An episode of RTE’s *Prime Time* outlined the circumstances around the existence of a Tusla report making allegations against Sergeant McCabe.

It was suggested that it was the failure to delete information from a standard reporting form template that led to Garda McCabe’s name appearing on a Tusla report document. The social media response was as swift as it was brutal.

I asked one of my colleagues working with IMPACT members in Tusla to enquire about the report form. It’s a standard reporting form with tick boxes and spaces for ‘free text’ to be written by the social worker, or other professional, filling it in. There is no requirement to delete information from the template.

Subsequent reports suggest that the error involved the use of an existing report from an earlier case. At the very least, this demonstrates that more information is needed before any of us can draw a solid conclusion about what took place. We’ll leave that to the tribunal, chaired by Mr Justice Peter Charleton, which is now underway.

Damage

For now, the damage has been done, and Tusla staff have been subject to the brunt of media outrage that sought out a culprit in this case.

I’ve been made aware of the distress and anger of social workers in Tusla who feel that the manner in which the story has been reported places the blame on Tusla staff. One piece of correspondence from a social worker in the mid-West described the experience for her and her colleagues as “extremely distressing” and morale in the agency as “very low”.

The same correspondence highlighted how social workers were continuing to do their work in a very challenging environment, as they do throughout the year, despite the noise and opprobrium raging on the airwaves, in the press and, without any fact-checking boundaries, in the wildfire of social media opinion.

This doesn’t make the work of child protection any easier ●

from page 7

While an early change of Government looks unlikely, the Dáil arithmetic means it can’t be ruled out altogether. And even a change at the top of Fine Gael (or DPER) could alter the Government’s approach or its timetable for talks.

The public

Public opinion matters, not least because politicians track it carefully. Attitudes to pay turned during years of pay stagnation across all sectors. But, while a couple of polls at the end of last year showed general support for public service pay restoration, we all need to tread carefully to sustain that support.

With many other calls on public spending, Ireland’s citizens and taxpayers need to be convinced that pay improvements are deserved, and represent value for money. And, bad as the pay cuts and related changes have been, any claim – real or imagined – of public service ‘victimhood’ goes down very badly with equally hard-pressed private sector workers.

The press

The vitriolic attacks on public servants that were common media fare in the late noughties are largely absent today. But the media aren’t about to give us a free run. Expect to read and hear a catalogue of reasons why pay should not move.

Commentators already complain that pay increases are swallowing too much ‘fiscal space’ and many titles are now pushing for tax cuts rather than investment in public services. Even where there’s backing for the latter, it seldom translates into support for pay recovery. Expect to read a lot about the value of public service pensions. And get used to very

STAY UP TO DATE

Stay up to date with IMPACT’s latest news via impact.ie, @impacttu on Twitter and IMPACT trade union on Facebook. Subscribe to the IMPACT members’ ebulletin. Contact info@impact.ie for details.

Knowledge, stories and magic

We're delighted to welcome guest contributor Darina Molloy, an IMPACT member working in Castlebar Library, who writes in this edition about the multitude of services offered to children and young people by the library service.

IT'S A beautiful, blue sky morning in County Mayo and the 44 boys who have just arrived in Castlebar Library are clearly glad to have escaped the classroom. For the next hour, they will be entertained and engaged by historian Mike Moylan, who has brought his science and engineering roadshow to Mayo as part of Engineering Week. The two fourth classes from St. Patrick's BNS in Castlebar are clearly enjoying his demonstration of hydraulics and other engineering tricks.

And, of course, it being International Women's Day, the girls from St. Angela's NS are not to be outdone. Engineering might be a male-dominated field, but that will change if these young women have anything to do with it. These are the first of six such shows for Moylan – two each in Castlebar and Ballina, and one each in Westport and Swinford.

With Seachtain na Gaeilge also vying for the same calendar spot as Engineering Week this year, there are plenty of events for children scheduled for the first half of March. Other hotspots on the library's calendar for children include Children's Book Festival (October) and the summer reading initiative (June to September).

With sixteen library branches throughout Ireland's third-largest county, Mayo Library is very well placed to offer an engaging and wide-ranging array of services to the county's 20,000 children. In the bigger towns like Castlebar, Ballina and Westport, the library is often the first port of call after school, with many children busying themselves with homework assignments during the early part of each evening. Regular storytime sessions are held in Castlebar



Young readers at Castlebar Library who gathered to celebrate their Summer Reading efforts. Back row, L to R, Darina Molloy, Mary Mitchell, Maureen Costello, Helen Greene, Mayo County Council Cathaoirleach Al McDonnell and County Librarian Austin Vaughan.

and Ballina libraries, and are well attended and very popular with a demanding and discerning young audience.

The value of a library is not just determined by what's on its shelves, although book stock is a very good place to start when it comes to children's services. Big Nate, Horrid Henry, Judy Moody, Tracy Beaker and Hetty Feather are just some of the characters who populate any self-respecting library. Librarians throughout Ireland are very used to being asked for the latest books by David Walliams, Jacqueline Wilson, Jeff Kinney or Holly Webb.

Harry Potter remains a firm favourite as many of the teenagers who came of age with his first adventure in 1997 are now raising the newest generation of Potter fans. Enid Blyton, of course, continues to entertain young readers, as she has done since the 1930s.

Young Mayo readers are fortunate to have at their disposal a very up-to-date selection of books – including all things *Minecraft* and *Pokemon*, and featuring all the on-trend bloggers and vloggers, as well as a wide range of music and DVDs, as well as visits from a range of children's authors.▶



A very happy Kate McHale shows off her Summer Stars reading certificate for 2016.



Photo: Alison Laredo

Another happy summer reader.

With so many counties now linked together under a national umbrella, the library catalogue of books, films and console games available to junior borrowers has grown exponentially. Mayo County Library also features, through its website, an exciting variety of online resources, including magazines, ebooks and downloadable audiobooks, including several children's titles.

For many children, their first point of contact with their local library is not through their parents but through their schools. Teachers who are fully on-board with the value of libraries in any child's life play a hugely important role in bringing their classes to the library. The library can often feature as part of the annual school tour, and all of the branches in Mayo are more than happy to arrange a tour of the library and its facilities, with an option for storytime also available in some of the larger branches.

One thing the library would like to do more in the future is to bring the library out into the community a little more, particularly into primary schools. These visits proved a big hit in the past, and there is no classroom that can't be improved by a 15-minute break to catch up with a box of shiny, new books showcasing what the local library has to offer.

The summer reading scheme, which has turned into a national initiative over the past three years, continues to be a big hit in Mayo. Six branches have taken part during the last few years, and the authority is hoping to roll it out in additional branches this year. The premise is simple – children read a certain number of books during the summer holidays, complete a special review sheet for each book, and once they have reached the minimum number of reads, they are invited to a special presentation evening with certificates and goody bags and sometimes even the occasional local celebrity or two.

That presentation evening has fast become established as one of the highlights of the children's calendar here at Mayo County Library. The young



Photo: Alison Laredo

Norah Doyle is thrilled to meet Mayo footballer Keith Higgins and to collect her Summer Reading certificate at Castlebar Library.



Photo: Alison Laredo

It's not the bookworm you'd expect to find at Castlebar Library but a millipede from Horkan's Petworld, who brought friends both furry and scaly to the presentation evening for Summer Reading 2014.

readers have an opportunity to see their comments and pictures on display, and to enjoy refreshments while waiting for their names to be called. The local newspapers never skimp on space when it comes to the summer readers, and the sense of celebration and achievement is second to none.

Another hugely popular element of the library service to Mayo children in the last four years is the music library, operated from Castlebar and Ballina branches under the auspices of Music Generation Mayo and Mayo's Music Education Partnership. From the littlest ukulele to the largest digital piano, there is every instrument imaginable to fulfil the musical ambitions of Mayo's young musicians.

For a small lending fee and a refundable deposit, parents can borrow that drum kit or guitar before digging into the college fund to purchase an instrument that may well be cast aside within months. The steady stream of parents and children collecting and returning instruments on a daily basis is testament to the brilliance and usefulness of the scheme.

Every library also contains a valuable resource which parents are very well acquainted with. Librarians are well used to recommending books for the younger reader who loves football, or who read the entire *Harry Potter* series in three weeks, or who likes books about girls who solve mysteries. Sometimes it's the parent looking for advice or assistance, sometimes it's the young reader who wants something else engaging because Jacqueline Wilson just isn't writing fast enough.

Last year, Mayo County Council joined forces with Business in the Community Ireland (BITCI) to provide volunteers for the Time to Read programme – whereby volunteers from a business or company spend an hour a week reading with second class pupils in a local school. Mayo County Library continues to be an enthusiastic participant, supplying two volunteers, and more than 100 books, to the young readers.

It's late afternoon, the sky is still bright, but a paler blue now. The children's room has been restored to Lego-stocked normality after the morning crowds. There is a low hum of chat from the children's section, as homework is put aside to discuss far more important things. Young boys and girls, along with their parents, are beginning to filter in for the afternoon storytime. It's time for grapes to be washed, for stories to be gathered, and for throats to be cleared. Welcome to the library, little ones, we're very happy to welcome you here today ●

Courage, resolution and commitment

It was with a profound sense of sadness and loss that the entire country awoke to the news that Irish Coast Guard helicopter Rescue 116 had gone missing. Work & Life pays tribute to the crew and the remarkable work undertaken by the Irish Coast Guard search and rescue service.

IN THE early hours of Tuesday 14th March the Dublin-based Sikorsky rescue helicopter and its crew, Rescue 116, were providing support to a sister aircraft in Sligo as it carried out a medical evacuation of an injured fisherman working on a ship 250km off the Mayo coast. The helicopter was making its way back for a routine refueling stop at Blacksod lighthouse when it disappeared.

In the first few hours of the search it became clear that the helicopter had experienced a catastrophic event, and we later learned that Captain Dara Fitzpatrick, one of the most senior pilots in the Irish coastguard rescue service, had been rescued from the water but had lost her life.

President Michael D Higgins described it as a “dark day” in the history of the Irish Coast Guard, reflecting the universal sense of loss and sadness felt throughout the country. President Higgins said the people of Ireland were indebted to the “courage, resolution and exemplary commitment” of Captain Fitzpatrick and her crew.

Loss

That loss is also felt deeply throughout the membership of IMPACT, as Captain Fitzpatrick and Captain Mark Duffy were members of the union’s IALPA (pilots’) branch, while winchman Ciarán Smith and winch operator Paul Ormsby were members of our IAESA branch.

As news broke of the accident, members of the IALPA executive made contact with the Coast Guard and with CHC representatives and management (the company that provides the helicopter service to the Irish Coast Guard) with an offer to provide assistance.

In a statement, IALPA expressed heartfelt condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of the crew. “The decorated crew of Captain Dara Fitzpatrick, Captain Mark Duffy, Ciarán Smith and Paul Ormsby paid the ultimate price in their service to the State and the people of Ireland should be proud to have men and women like the crew of ‘Rescue 116’ watching over them.

“IALPA are proud to have represented members Captain Dara Fitzpatrick and Captain Mark Duffy and have offered any assistance we can in the aftermath of this tragic accident.”

Consummate professional

Dara Fitzpatrick is remembered as an active IALPA member and was among those who brought CHC staff into the union. She was a pilot with some 25 years’ experience.



Captain Mark Duffy



Paul Ormsby



Captain Dara Fitzpatrick



Ciaran Smith

IMPACT assistant general secretary Michael Landers first met her in 2002, and recalls a pilot who took absolute pride in the job. “Dara was a consummate professional, and maintained a reputation for being really sound.

“She was instrumental in bringing the staff of CHC helicopters into the union. In fairness, the relationship between staff and management at CHC has always been extremely positive, they’d be one of the better ones, and by far the best I’ve seen within the aviation sector.

“They had a number of issues with management, and they weren’t a unionised workforce at that time. The issues they had were ironed out very quickly, and IMPACT membership there has remained strong ever since,” he says.

Michael says there’s an incredibly strong culture of “looking after one another and looking out for one another” in the Irish Coast Guard helicopter rescue service. “There’s a huge level of trust between the pilots and the crew. For example, if they’re

doing a cliff-top rescue, the winch has a better view of what’s going on, they are the pilot’s eyes and ears in that situation, so the level of teamwork on board is very high.”

Responsibility

In an article for *Work & Life* in 2013, Martina O’Leary spent some time with an Irish Coast Guard helicopter rescue crew captained by Ed Shivan. Co-pilot Mick Meally described the good days and bad days faced by the rescue service, “Most times our intervention has a very positive influence on people’s lives. It takes its toll on you when it doesn’t. You’ve tried your best and it hasn’t worked out. We have to accept that and move on.”

Throughout her time with the crew, Martina was struck by the professionalism and high level teamwork that characterised the crew. “This was a team who placed their own lives in each

other’s hands. I was struck by their sense of mutual respect and absolute dedication and professionalism with which they approached their work. It was a privilege to see that up close,” she says.

Dara Fitzpatrick’s perspective on this high level teamwork was captured in an interview recorded for the Irish Bishops’ Conference, where she said “My responsibility as captain is to get them all back in one piece, everything is based on trust.

“The most vulnerable person in the whole crew would be the winchman because, if you think about it, he’s dangling down up to 300 feet below the aircraft, trusting me that I’m on the ball, not tired, and flying well to keep him safe. You have to be on the ball when you walk in here because if you’re not, you can actually endanger somebody.”

Tenacious

Winchman Ciarán Smith was the union rep for the Irish Coast Guard Dublin base for a time. Michael recalls a strong personality, and an intensely single-minded and forthright union activist. “Ciarán was an extremely hardworking person, and an impressive all-round guy. If he came to you with an issue he had already pretty much decided what he wanted to achieve and how he was going to go about it.

“He was very conscientious, focused, and absolutely tenacious in terms of fighting for his members. He was also very reliable. If you asked him to do something, be it pass on a message, distribute a circular, arrange a meeting, you just knew it would get done. He was that kind of guy,” he says.

A statement issued by the IAESA branch of IMPACT said that, along with the entire aviation family, members were devastated to learn of the loss of Rescue 116.

“Our thoughts are with the families, colleagues and friends of Captains Dara Fitzpatrick and Mark Duffy, winchman Ciarán Smith and winch operator Paul Ormsby who were bravely carrying out their role as the saviours of those in need of rescue on our seas, mountains and coastline.

“That they did not return safely from their work on Tuesday is a tragedy that is keenly felt throughout the trade union family. The IAESA branch is proud to have represented Ciarán and Paul. They are in our thoughts constantly, as are their families their colleagues, and all the staff at CHC, to whom we offer all the support we can.

“We are grateful to the very brave men and women of the agencies involved in the recovery operation, and hope that their work can be completed quickly and safely. At this very sad time we embrace with love and compassion our comrades’ families, colleagues and friends.”

IMPACT President Pat Fallon said the entire organisation shared the sadness felt by the two branches for their colleagues and fellow union members. “The entire IMPACT family shares your pride in your co-workers and your pain at their loss. We send our profound sympathies to the families, colleagues and communities of Mark Duffy, Dara Fitzpatrick, Paul Ormsby and Ciarán Smith,” he said.

The thoughts and sympathies of all IMPACT members, branches, representatives and staff are with the families and colleagues of the crew of Rescue 116.

Go Mairidis Beo ●

The Professionals

IMPACT is embarking upon an ambitious task to professionalise early education in Ireland. The current workforce is poorly qualified, poorly paid, and endure insecure working conditions. Publicly, as the post-Budget debate following the announcement of the single affordable childcare scheme last year showed, there is little recognition for the early education professional and their crucial role in child development. CIAIRÍN DE BUIS outlines the challenges, and sets the course for IMPACT's campaign to professionalise the sector.



Ciairín de Buis

THE IRISH Government spends remarkably little when it comes to early education. We need to spending multiples of what we currently invest.

This chronic lack of investment means everyone loses out. Professionals teaching and caring for our youngest children are on poor wages, and enjoy little in the way of job security. In addition, the lack of investment means that parents pay for some of the most expensive childcare in the world with no guarantee of quality early education for their children.

This is the pattern we are setting out to change.

Market

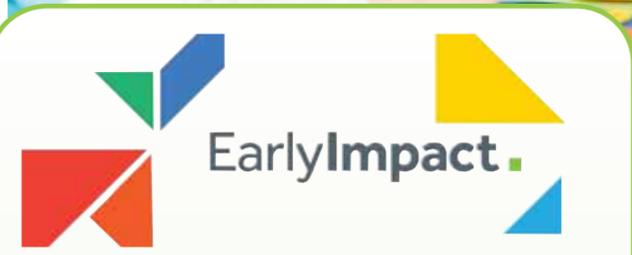
Ireland's early education system is delivered through a market model, creating significant barriers to professionalisation, both in terms of improving qualification levels and achieving decent levels of pay and working conditions.

Average wages range between just over €9 per hour to just below €20 per hour. Last year an Early Childhood Ireland survey showed an average wage of €10.27 per hour, with a €1 premium for graduates.

By contrast, many other states in the EU recognise early care and education as a shared venture, a public good. This is reflected in the level of investment. Across both the EU and OECD countries the average expenditure on 'early childhood educational institutions' in 2013 was 0.8% of GDP. Ireland spent just 0.1% of GDP. ➤



Photo: dreamstime.com



EarlyImpact is the campaign IMPACT is rolling out for its members and the wider early education profession. We all know that early education benefits children. But children benefit only where early education is high quality, and professionals caring for and educating our young children deserve to be treated as professionals. We want to make that happen.

We know that parents in Ireland pay some of the highest childcare costs in the world. Our government doesn't properly subsidise early education. We're anxious to address the cost as well as quality of early education. Parents can't afford to pay more, but professionals do need to be paid more.

The need to address quality of childcare, as part of addressing affordability for parents, was the key message of IMPACT's recent submission to the Department of Children and Youth Affairs on the Single Affordable Childcare Scheme.

Most of those caring for and teaching our young children in early education earn little more than the minimum wage, with very little chance of career progression and huge job insecurity.

That's why our campaign will focus on quality and the need for increased government investment. Salaries and working conditions are a key component of quality. We're starting a long-term campaign for agreed salary scales and better working conditions.

'Like' Early Impact on Facebook and follow @early_impact on Twitter.

The Sector

- More than 170,000 children are cared for by approximately 25,000 staff
- Half of those working in early years services work part-time
- 37% of staff have a seasonal contract
- 1 in 8 staff are participants in various employment schemes (primarily CE)
- Almost all are women - only 2% of staff working directly with children are men
- 18% of the early education workforce are qualified to degree level or higher. 11% have no qualification
- It is a young sector, with 70% under 45 years of age
- EU Commission CoRe report recommends 60% graduate workforce.

That recognition is also reflected in the implementation of better policies on leave time, flexible working conditions, along with high quality affordable and accessible childcare for parents who choose to use it.

Advances

Nevertheless, there have been some advances in recent years. The introduction of the free pre-school year is significant, as it is the first universal early education system in Ireland, with a funding structure that incentivises quality. Albeit, a vastly inadequate funding structure.

Despite significant lobbying for childcare tax credits, the state has recognised that supply-side finding is a better policy option, while improvements in leave policy include the introduction of paid paternity leave and a commitment to paid parental leave.

Opportunities

With the launch the IMPACT's Early Education branch in March this year, the union has now set a course to organise and professionalise the early education sector. There has been a strong response so far from early education professionals themselves, who recognise the value of organising and working toward major improvements in the sector.

As this is happening, there are opportunities for the campaign to realise its objectives.

The European Commission has advised the Government to improve the quality and affordability of childcare, while an EU commissioned report has recommended a graduate-led workforce with appropriate pay and conditions.

The current Programme for Government contains some significant commitments that, if fully implemented, could significantly help to advance the professionalisation that is crucial to the early education sector. These include a commitment to an independent review of the cost of providing quality childcare in private and community settings "consistent with the principle of ongoing professionalisation of the sector."

The Government has also committed to monitor the implementation of new quality regulations and standards and work towards further paediatric first aid training for staff, and to review and reform the inspection regime, committing to the withdrawal of funding from providers that do not meet quality standards.

A significant part of our campaign will be to hold the Government to those commitments, and to continue to lobby for improved funding as an instrument to professionalise the sector and improve the quality of the service delivered to Ireland's pre-school children.

Investment

If we value our young children's education, we must value those who teach and care for our youngest children.

Our primary target is to push for an increased investment in early education. Investment must focus on professionalisation, higher qualifications, agreed salary scales and better working conditions. The goal to reach is the OECD investment average of 0.8% of GDP within five years, and to the UNICEF quality benchmark of 1% of GDP in 10 years.

Organising

Recognising the low pay of early education workers, IMPACT has introduced a specific campaign membership rate and category for early education professionals.

Because of the existing poor rates of pay throughout the sector IMPACT is offering a specific membership category at a cost of €20 a year until substantial progress on pay has been achieved.

We're able to do this because we're building a successful campaign to win professionalisation, including proper pay and conditions. This is a turning point for professionals working in the sector which sets us on the road to build a stronger culture of early childhood care and education in Ireland.

See photos from our launch event on pages 16-17 ●

IMPACT launches Early Education branch

IMPACT's Early Education branch and EarlyImpact campaign were formally launched at a seminar event at the union's head office in Dublin on Saturday 25th March. The branch will provide an effective and professional focus for the campaign for adequate investment and professionalisation of the sector, with agreed salary scales and a proper career path for early education staff. Photographs by CONOR HEALY.



The newly elected executive committee of the Early Education branch.



Cathaoirleach of IMPACT Education Division, Gina O'Brien with IMPACT's interim early education campaign director Ciairín de Buis.



IMPACT deputy general secretary Kevin Callinan, head of the union's education division.



Rena Walsh and Elaine Walsh from Waterford.



Mairead McDermott, Cork and Ruth Cullen, Dublin.



Caitriona Kearns, Toni Hickey and Paige Edwards from Churchtown.



Tina Dunston and Joanne Corcoran from Cork.



Miriam Stewart and Aoife O'Loughlin from Sligo and Dublin.



Marian Quinn, Mick Kenny and Catherine Kelly from Kilkenny.



Special needs assistants Clare Keaveny, Dublin and Antoinette Mullen, Laois and Mary Keating, Dublin also attended the meeting.



Jane Thornton, Dublin, Peter Smith, Gorey and Bernie Griffiths.



Mathias Urban is Professor of Early Childhood Studies and Director of the Early Childhood Research Centre at the Froebel College, University of Roehampton, London.



Claudia Rettigan and Ciara O'Connor from Connaught Ulster Branch and Cork.



IMPACT organiser Helen Cousins, IMPACT lead organiser Linda Kelly with Mary Gibbons from Galway.



Susan Silver from Crumlin with Michael Smith, a member of IMPACT's education divisional committee and the CEC.



Caroline McDonnell and Tracey Maree from Meath.

Making a difference

Children with special educational needs in our education system are supported in various ways including the provision of resource teaching, or access to the provision of Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) for support with care needs. Special Educational Needs Organisers (SENOs) are represented by IMPACT, and they are the professionals who decide on the level of resources needed. MARTINA O'LEARY spoke to some of them about their work.

SENOs work for the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) to provide a direct local service to the parents of children with special educational needs and to schools.

"Our bread and butter up to now was the applications from the schools for both resource teaching hours and SNA support. Resource teaching hours for individual applications will be replaced by a new model of allocation from September 2017, and our role will change somewhat as a result. We receive 8,000 applications for SNAs support," explains Ruth McKernan, a SENO based in Tallaght, Dublin. Ruth has worked in the service since its inception in 2004.

The work of a SENO involves liaising with parents, schools and health professionals on a regular, and ongoing, basis so that each child can access the additional supports that they are eligible for, in school.

A SENO deals with applications for SNA support for children with special educational needs from all schools and they also assist with applications for transport and assistive technology. There are around 75 SENOs doing this work, covering the 26 counties, and all carry huge workloads.

SNA allocations

Ruth is responsible for 37 Dublin-based schools, including primary, post-primary and special schools. Her biggest school has 1,600 children. Her colleague Máire Aherne, currently has 66 schools, covering a large geographical area in Roscommon/Galway. Some SENOs cover up to 100 schools.

"We're responsible for sanctioning the level of SNA resources," says Máire. She explains that some of the factors considered are the size of school, as well as the school's previous experience in meeting student care needs. "Every SNA is busy – my job is to ensure that are where they're most needed and to reassure parents and teachers," explains Máire.

"SNA allocation takes up the bulk of our time. Once we have all our initial paperwork done, we go in and observe the child. The arrival in the school of a new child in need of support may mean the school needs an increase in their SNA allocation, so we observe all the other children under SNA care to see if this is the case.

"As well as considering medical and educational reports about each child, and talking to parents and school staff about their care needs, we also have to consider the environment of the school. Is it on a busy road, is it a new school, or recently amalgamated? Some children will probably always need support. With other children their needs change over time," explains Ruth.

Máire says the challenge is to determine the level of support a child needs, without smothering them. "It's difficult, but more valuable, to assist the child to do things themselves. We have to note every single gain. We're careful not to remove too much support," she says.

Relationships

The SENOs work starts with an individual child, but their working relationships include parents and teachers, as well as health and educational professionals. "Building relationships is a vital part of the job. For example, we spend time bringing new principals up to speed with the system. These working relationships are crucial" says Máire.

Parents have direct access to SENOs and, naturally, have lots of questions. "Sending a child to school is a very difficult time for any parent, but if your child has additional needs there'll be lots of questions about the support they'll need and what decisions are right for their child," says Ruth.

"Our job is to explain how supports can be accessed. Sometimes parents and even schools can be confused about the



Photo: Michael Crean Photography

Ruth McKernan, SENO based in Dublin.

role of the SNA. The SNA is there for their care needs, the teacher is there to teach your child. The two roles are complementary for the child, but very different," Ruth added.

Among the changes Ruth has seen over the last 13 years is a significant increase in the number of children diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). "This is a worldwide phenomenon," she explains.

Understaffing

The service had 4,600 SNA applications in 2009, this had almost doubled to 8,000 applications for SNA assistance by 2015.

IMPACT official Tony Martin says the SENO work area is chronically understaffed. "SENOs have a huge and increasing workload, with falling staff numbers. This is due to a number of factors, a growing population and an increase in the number of children being assessed for support."

Because of the pressures that have arisen due to increasing demand and declining staff numbers, Ruth says there's a growing challenge "to provide the service we want to provide, the service we feel the children and the parents and schools are entitled to," she says.

SENOs have been trying for many years to address the staff shortage, including a brief period of industrial action in 2016. The minister for Education and Skills, Richard Bruton, announced a new model for allocating special educating teaching resources as part of the current budget, without recourse to either IMPACT, the SENOs or their management.

An evaluation of the SNA scheme is also underway and both of these developments impact on SENOs work.

Miriam Hilliard is a SENO manager, managing a team of SENOs in addition to working half a caseload of schools over a widely dispersed area. "As a manager our role is to ensure the team manage the tasks, and that all the children get the support they are entitled to in a timely fashion. If a SENO has a complex case, managers would advise on these. They also deal with appeals on decisions made by SENOs," she explains.

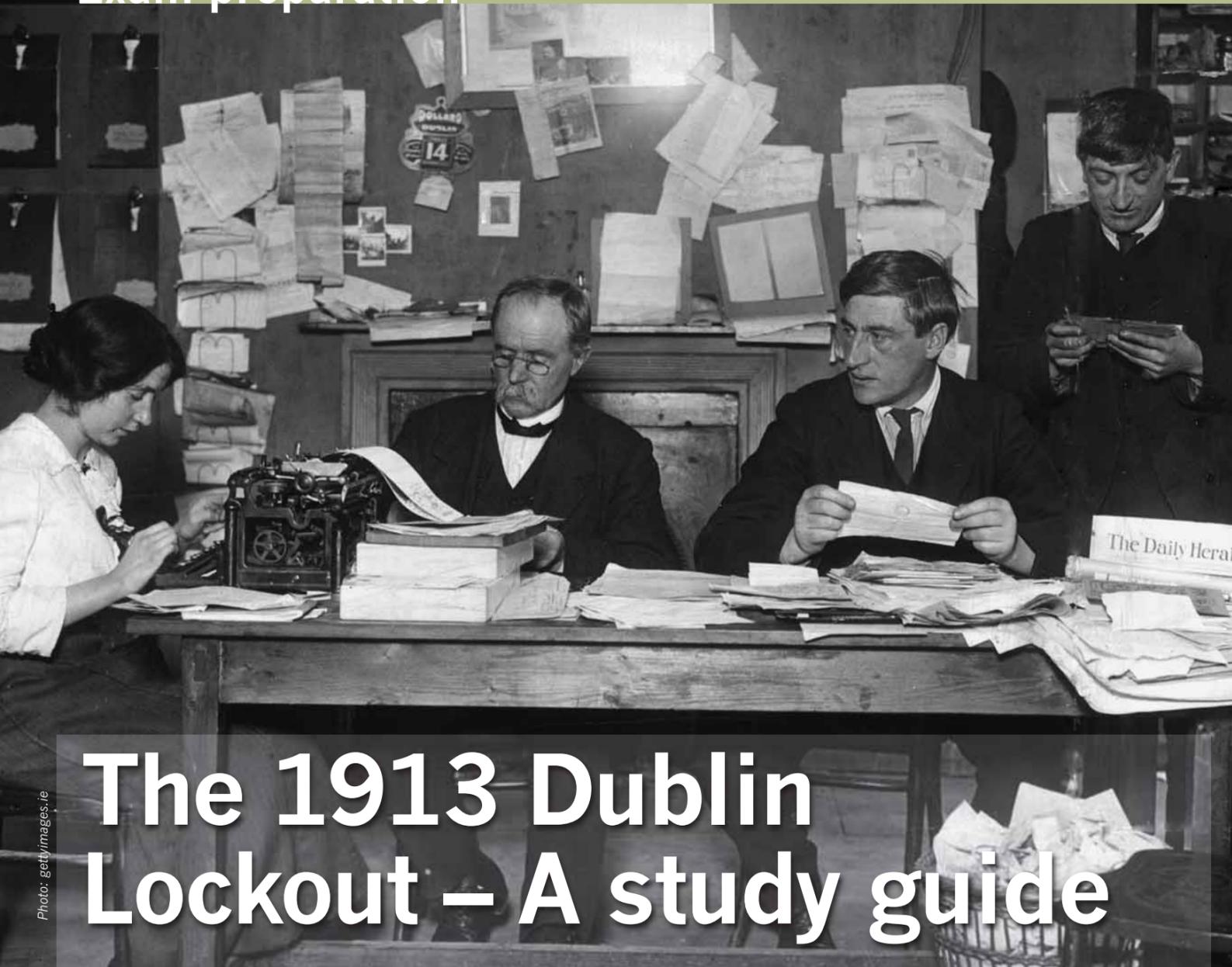
Making a difference

While much of the work is administrative, she says getting into the schools to see the work in practice is always satisfying.

"What I enjoy most is getting into the schools, seeing the children, seeing how they are getting on, talking to the SNA, teachers, principals. That to me is our core work. There isn't always time to do that.

"There are huge challenges with the job. Working with children who are ill, it does play on your mind. I met a child recently, she has a short life expectancy. It can be stressful and emotional," she says.

"Yet there is a great sense of satisfaction, you can find solutions to complex cases. You can point schools in the right direction. For parents they have someone to talk to, you can advise them on potential solutions to the problems." ●



Irish trade Union leader and social activist James Larkin pictured in his office at Liberty Hall in Dublin with his typist and secretary Mrs McKeon perusing a mass of correspondence, dealing with transport and other matters left in absence during his imprisonment. Picture taken 16th November 1913.

The 1913 Dublin Lockout – A study guide

With the Leaving Cert just a few short months away, LUGHAN DEANE compiles a reliable guide for history students preparing to answer exam questions about the 1913 Dublin Lockout. In recent years the question has appeared frequently, though not every year.

Elements contributing to the success of the strike

- I. The skill and experience of Jim Larkin: Jim Larkin, a leader of the striking workers and founder of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union, was a formidable and talented union organiser. By the time he reached Dublin, he had already proved his credentials in carrying out effective industrial action. He had orchestrated several successful strikes.
- II. Syndicalism: Larkin's preferred method of industrial action, syndicalism, had proved highly effective. Pro-

ponents of this method believed that all workers should behave as though they were in a single union. The key technique in syndicalism is the 'sympathetic strike', this involves workers supporting other striking workers by refusing to cooperate in any way with employers. For example, as soon as tram workers began the 1913 strike, delivery workers began refusing to handle William Martin Murphy's Irish Independent.>

- III. Timing of the strike: Larkin timed the beginning of the strike for maximum impact. He chose to stop the trams at 10am on the 26th of August in order to coincide with the first day of the Dublin Horse Show.
- IV. Police brutality: Fierce baton charges resulted in numerous injuries amongst the striking workers. In fact, three people, James Nolan, James Byrne and Alice Brady, were killed. Seeing the workers brutalised helped move public opinion onto the side of the strike. The funerals of James Nolan and Alice Brady became focal points for public support.
- V. The British connection: Though it ultimately dried up, the initial support that the striking workers received from the British congress was instrumental in allowing the workers to hold out for so long. British unions sent a shipment worth of 60,000 'family boxes' of food and supplies to the striking workers.
- VI. The Askwith Inquiry: A tribunal of inquiry, known as the Askwith Inquiry, was set up to resolve the dispute. The findings of the inquiry were not all in the workers' favour. However, the inquiry did side with the workers on some important points. Most notably, the findings condemned

the employers for requiring workers to sign a document pledging not to engage in any way with the ITGWU or face dismissal.

- VII. Alleviation of slum conditions: One short-term and crucially important success of the strike was that it contributed to raising awareness of the horrific slum conditions in which many of Dublin's poor lived. The year after the strike, in 1914, a civic exhibition was held in Dublin. One of the main objectives of the exhibition was to explore ways in which effective town planning could alleviate the worst of Dublin's slum conditions.
- VIII. The coming of age of the trade union movement: Workers were banned from engaging with the ITGWU in any manner. However, it didn't take long after the end of the lockout for workers to begin drifting back to the union. A labour shortage caused by World War 1 meant that workers, who were suddenly in demand, had more power and influence. Before long, the ITGWU was the largest union in Ireland with 120,000 members.
- IX. The Irish Citizens' Army and 1916: The events of 1913 taught Irish organised labour leaders, particularly James Connolly, an important lesson: that they would only succeed in achieving their aims if they managed to align themselves with nationalism and republicanism. As a consequence of this, the Irish Citizen Army – a militia force that had been set up by labour leaders to protect the striking workers from police brutality – joined forces with the Irish Republican Brotherhood. That alliance would ultimately prove to be instrumental in the events of the 1916 Easter Rising.

Elements contributing to the failure of the strike

- I. The striking workers also encountered a great deal of adversity. Much of the political landscape was not arranged in their favour.
- II. William Martin Murphy, a formidable opponent: Murphy was Ireland's most influential businessman. He was vastly wealthy and was the proprietor of several iconic brands: Clery's Department store, the Irish Independent and the Dublin United Tramways Company amongst them. His extensive business interests gave him both significant clout amongst fellow business leaders as well as the material resources to absorb the costs of a long and difficult dispute.
- III. Syndicalism of the bosses: Murphy's stroke of ingenuity was to defeat Larkin and the striking workers by using the very tactic that had made Larkin's strikes so successful: syndicalism. The Dublin Employers' Federation refused to recognise Larkin's union. The employers involved in the federation drew up a pledge for workers, which stated that they were not, and wouldn't become, members of the Larkin's union. If they signed the pledge, Murphy said, they could return to work.
- IV. Weakness of the workers: In stark contrast to Murphy and his elite gang of employers, Dublin's workers were in a very weak position. Work was casual and precarious. There were more workers than jobs. The unemployment rate was around 20%. Consequently, workers were in no position to make demands.
- V. 'Scab' labour: Some workers did not go out on strike in

solidarity with Larkin's union members. This had the effect of undermining the strike to an extent.

- VI. British support dries up: Though British unions were an important source of support for the striking workers, that support only went so far. On a number of occasions Larkin attempted to push British unions into going on sympathetic strike in support of the Dublin workers.
- VII. 'Save the Kiddies': By October 1913, many families had no food for their children. Larkin and Irish labour leaders decided to send the children of the worst-affected families to sympathetic homes in England. They called this the 'Save the Kiddies' campaign. The Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, William J. Walsh, however, was opposed to this because he believed that impressionable Catholic children would be exposed to dangerous ideas in non-Catholic households.
- VIII. Opposition from Home Rule: Not only did Larkin lose the support of the Catholic Church, he also lost the support of an influential cohort of nationalists. The middle class nationalist Home Rule movement saw Larkinism as a great threat. The Home Rulers had been campaigning for 40 years and now their goal appeared within their grasp. They needed the support of both the Liberals and the Labour Party in Britain.
- IX. The Findings of the Askwith Inquiry: As discussed above, some of the findings of the Askwith inquiry were beneficial to the workers' cause. Others, however, were not ●

Freestyle pasta

When's your Dolmio Day? With readymade pasta sauces taking a nosedive in popularity, DANIEL DEVERY wonders how they ever managed to be popular in the first place, as improvising a tasty pasta sauce requires only a handful of ingredients and a little imagination.

I EMERGED, bleary-eyed, on a February Sunday morning after two nights of socialising in a row (a very rare occurrence these days). Having missed the opportunity to shop for veggies on Saturday, I resolved to see what could be recruited into the service of a family Sunday dinner from whatever was already in the fridge and cupboard.

After rustling up a few sausage sandwiches to keep the troops happy until dinner, I surveyed the mixed bounty in the kitchen. There was a pumpkin. Not one of those giant pale boulders bred for Hallowe'en carving. This was a medium sized, deep orange specimen that would give a Seville orange a run for its money in a Donald Trump lookalike contest. Perfect for roasting, de-seeded and cut into wedges, with a little oil, salt and pepper.

There were a few red onions, thinly sliced and caramelised on a pan with an unapologetic wedge of quality Irish butter, along with a handful of sliced brown mushrooms.

I found a tin each of cannellini beans and chickpeas, these went in with the onions. Then I added the (lightly mashed) roast pumpkin wedges, a splash of stock, and some roughly chopped garlic to keep the whole thing lively. A vegetarian ragu was taking shape, and I began to think about lasagne.

Eggs + flour = pasta

A half bag (500g) of Italian '00' flour was also to hand, which I normally use to make the dough for homemade pizza. My final discovery was five eggs, the exact amount needed to make up a batch of fresh pasta with the flour. I blitzed the flour with the eggs and a pinch of salt in a food processor until it looked like breadcrumbs. I finished by combining the

dough by hand, wrapped it in clingfilm and allowed to rest in the fridge for a few hours. This finally gave me some time to pop out for a few more supplies.

The pasta rolling machine was a Christmas present many years ago. I hadn't used it in years so, when I pulled it out from the darkest recesses of the kitchen cupboard, it was looking a bit tarnished. A quick scrub and it was ready to roll. It's an inexpensive kitchen gadget (around €35) but is useful for transforming a lump of pasta dough into a nice thin pasta noodle. A rolling pin is a useful alternative, as every Italian nonna will tell you.

Rolling the pasta is less tricky than it sounds. You just need to keep the pasta dusted with semolina flour and, on each pass through the roller, your pasta gets longer and thinner. I built up alternating layers of lasagne with the pasta, the veggie ragu and separate layers of wilted spinach with frozen peas. The soft fresh pasta tucked each layer in snugly. Instead of pre-cooking the pasta I added a little stock to each layer to ensure the pasta didn't dry out.

Topped off with a layer of bechamel (white) sauce and a generous sprinkling of cheese (mostly cheddar and a little smoked gouda), it went into the oven for 40 minutes and was served to a hungry mob with a green salad. Murmurs of approval were heard as everyone tucked in.

Improvisation

I love this type of cooking, improvising with a mixture of fresh ingredients and whatever's in the cupboard. As improvised ►

meals go, it was probably at the more labour-intensive end of the scale, but I think that's what weekends are for. Mind you, making fresh pasta is something I'll only do, at most, a couple of times a year.

A pack of good quality pasta in your cupboard lends itself to improvisational cooking. Italian cooks pride themselves on being able to conjure up a pasta dish with no more than five ingredients. As long as there's some olive oil, parmesan, garlic and some herbs and pepper to hand, you have the makings of a great pasta sauce.

The rule for the sauce is that it should be simple enough to let the pasta sing, rather than drown it out, as jars of readymade sauces tend to do.

A recent UK trade report showed that sales of cooking sauces fell by £30m in 2016, the sixth consecutive year of decline. The fall is attributed, at least partly, to consumer health concerns. Consider the warnings issued last year by Mars Foods (owner of the Dolmio and Uncle Ben's brands) that the high salt and sugar levels in some of their products mean they should only be eaten occasionally.

But why opt for readymade sauce to begin with? A tin of good tomatoes, some garlic and/or onion, a little fresh or dried herbs and (if you have it) a splash of red wine, is quickly transformed into a *Salsa di pomodoro* (tomato sauce) that will make any pasta sing like Pavarotti. Add some chopped fresh chilli and you have instant *all'arrabbiata*, evoking the fiery spirit of southern Italy, by which time you've switched from Luciano Pavarotti to Enrico Caruso.

Marcella Hazan

The late Marcella Hazan introduced the US to the delights of proper Italian cooking. In a series of books, commencing with the *Classic Italian Cookbook* in 1973, she challenged the American tendency for overcooked pasta slathered in muddy tomato sauces crowned with mountains of inappropriate cheese (I doubt very much that she would have approved of my improvised lasagne). This was a phase of culinary evolution that probably only hit Ireland through television; somewhere between late '80s Delia and late '90s Jamie.

Hazan's mission – to teach the US how to cook authentically Italian – has been an enduring success. I came across her recipe for 'Tomato sauce III' in a newspaper article a couple of months ago. It's incredibly simple and delivers an outstandingly pure, sweet tomato flavour. Paired with her meat ragu recipe (simply google 'Marcella Hazan Ragu'), it provides a good excuse to spend a little extra time making a batch of fresh pasta with which to adorn it ●

Marcella Hazan's Tomato Sauce III



The only other vegetable in this sauce is an onion, and it gets discarded at the end once it has imparted its flavour to the sauce. If you don't fancy making your own pasta, it's worth your while checking out fresh egg pasta in your local supermarket. Fresh pasta is becoming much more readily available. The only hard and fast rule I insist upon is that you season this with real parmesan cheese (Parmigiano-Reggiano) – accept no substitute!

For 6 servings

- Roughly 1 kg fresh, ripe plum tomatoes
- 110g butter
- 1 medium onion, peeled and halved
- Salt
- ¼ teaspoon granulated sugar

Wash the tomatoes in cold water. Cut them in half, lengthways. Simmer in a covered stockpot or saucepan for 10 minutes. Puree the tomatoes (using a mouli, blender or food processor) and return to the pan.

Add the butter, onion, salt and sugar, and cook at a slow but steady simmer, uncovered, for 45 minutes. Taste and check salt. Discard the onion.

If using tinned tomatoes: use two 400g tins, and start the recipe at the above step.



Growing a little magic

For those of us lucky enough to have grown up gardening with our parents, cutting the grass with a push mower, planting flowers and vegetables, or getting soaked as you water the new plants will be amongst our childhood memories. Our resident gardener ITA PATTON gives some tips on how to get the little ones into the green-thumbed spirit.

LOOKING THROUGH my son's photo album, I was struck by a particular picture of him, aged two, in the garden wearing only his pyjama bottoms as he enthusiastically swept the patio stones with an oversized broom. Now he's a teenager, it's very difficult to get him to join me in the garden unless he wants to throw a ball through a basketball hoop. But I have fond memories of him, and his younger sister, helping me in the garden, and hopefully they will have them too.

Many of us remember our childhood days in the garden – it was always sunny back then! The smell of freshly cut grass, making daisy chains, placing buttercups under our chins, holding snail races and, perhaps for some, sowing seeds and planting. Of course it seems a lot harder these days to bring children outside with so many temptations of technology luring them indoors.

A little preparation and having a particular project in mind, with all the tools/pots available, will help before enticing the wee ones outdoors.

If there's enough space in the garden you could consider giving children their own plot so it feels like a special treat and can help them to learn responsibility. ▶



However, don't let a lack of space be a deterrent – just a pot or two or even just a sunny kitchen windowsill can give a child the chance to grow a wide range of herbs and flowers.

Gardening could be described as the perfect children's activity, combining the chance to get mucky, exploring green spaces and the rewards of spectacular results from tiny seeds. Also, while children may think they are simply having fun, they will also be learning gardening tips, such as how to sow seed, the process of germination, weeding and the importance of bees and other pollinators.

Tools and clothes

Kids love to have their own special garden tools and I've recently noticed that there's a much greater range available in garden centres and discount supermarkets. However, before you buy any, make sure they are strong enough as some of them are very lightweight and flimsy.

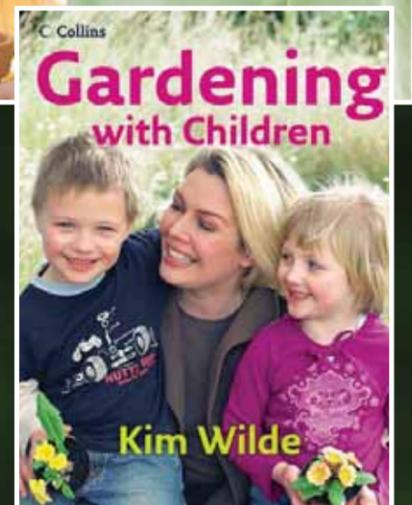
Gardening gloves are important, especially if your garden is being used as a cat's outdoor litter box, but children should be encouraged to work with and touch soil, compost, dead leaves etc. Old and stained clothes become "garden clothes" and for the colder days it's important to wear them in layers. Even on dull days always apply sunscreen and encourage children to wear hats, preferably one with a brim.

Safety

Obviously younger children will need full supervision and there's the fear of them exploring everything with their mouths! Children should be supervised when using sharp tools, such as secateurs or hedge clippers, and never leave rakes or hoes lying on the ground. Be sure to lock away any chemicals including paints and preservatives, lawnmower fuel and fertilisers.

Green gardening and recycling

Nowadays our children often come home from school to lecture us on climate change and importance of recycling. Gardening gives us the opportunity to teach them how to put these important lessons into practice. For example, making compost with a mix of vegetable peelings, garden waste and paper or cardboard, using large plastic bottles as mini propagators (by cutting off their bases and placing them over seedlings) and recycling all sorts of everyday packaging to be used as pots.



The delicate balance of nature can be observed in a garden which encourages wildlife by including bird feeders and welcoming "friendly bugs" such as ladybirds and hover-flies which feed voraciously on pests such as greenfly.

Children can be taught about different soil types and the importance of worms. A wonderful way to do this is to buy a wormery or, better still, make a homemade one. There are many websites and books with instructions and the resultant fine rich compost and liquid fertiliser are fantastic. Also children invariably love to watch and handle worms without the "ugh" reaction!

Most children can be a little impatient, so it's good to know that some seeds germinate very quickly, such as radishes, basil, dill and peas. Cress can germinate in just a few days on damp kitchen paper or on cotton wool. Many vegetables, herbs and salads which can be eaten at the seedling stage, called micro leaves, offer children a good opportunity to sample healthy nutritious foods.

There are many books available which offer wonderful and unique ways to keep kids interested in the outdoors, including *Gardening with Children* by Kim Wilde (yes, that Kim Wilde, 1980s pop legend of *Kids in America* fame) with illustrated step-by-step projects such as making scarecrows, tile mosaics, window boxes and rainy day indoor jobs.

Research has shown that there are huge benefits for children who get involved in gardening. They learn about science, develop new skills, try new healthy foods and learn the valuable lessons of patience, along with spending quality time with adults ●

The kid stays in the picture

MORGAN O'BRIEN looks at the rich cinematic history of how children and childhood have been represented in cinema, the milestone films that have been made as a result, and he gives a quick roundup of forthcoming releases.

THE REPRESENTATION of children and childhood in cinema has a lengthy history and wide range of perspectives. There are significant strands of work that either treat children as the 'other', a threat and something to be feared, or view them as recipients of adult authority and control.

The horror genre has long played on adult fears of children from *Village of the Damned* and *The Innocents* in the early sixties, through the malevolent characterisations in films such as *The Exorcist*, *The Omen*, and *Children of the Corn* in the seventies and eighties.

However, there is an equally rich tradition of films that present children as active characters and look at the world from their viewpoint. Many films have used the theme of childhood as a means to evoke a time of innocence and purity, rendering children as cyphers for nostalgic reminiscences such as in *The Railway Children* and *Swallows and Amazons*.

Elsewhere, issues of childhood naïveté have been presented with more nuance and subtlety. For example, Carol Reed's *The Fallen Idol* navigates between the innocence of childhood and its darker edge as the imaginings of six year old Phillipe are shown to hold dangerous consequences for his hero, the butler Baines, serving to implicate him as a suspected murderer.

A more prominent theme is showing children encountering difficult and challenging realities, and how they make sense of their worlds. Following its literary source material, *To Kill a Mockingbird* filters the wider issues of racism and civil rights through a child's view, where the parochial

innocence of Scout and Jem is shown to be slowly invaded by the wider dramas of the adults around them.

While often read as a nostalgic trip through to the halcyon idyll of childhood, in *E.T.* director Steven Spielberg explores, in the context of a sci-fi adventure tale, the often difficult issues of childhood and family relationships. The latter subject also underscores his much eerier later film *AI*.

Spielberg subsequently adapted JG Ballard's semi-autobiographical work in *Empire of the Sun*, for a more direct coming-of-age drama set against the backdrop of war. The film taps into a rich seam of filmmaking about children's experiences of conflict, which includes Louis Malle's *Au Revoir les Enfants* and John Boorman's *Hope and Glory*.

Elsewhere, in *The Devil's Backbone* and *Pan's Labyrinth*, Guillermo del Toro addresses the Spanish Civil War through the prism of childhood, glossing the narrative in the metaphors of fantasy.

Fantastical elements have also been deployed in exploring the lives of children in the animated films of Studio Ghibli, whose work also includes an exploration of children's experiences of war. *Grave of the Fireflies* is a sensitive portrayal of a brother and sister as they struggle to survive in the devastation of Japan at the end of the Second World War.

Their other work includes Hayao Miyazaki's *My Neighbour Totoro*, a loving celebration of childhood imagination about two sisters who move from the city to the countryside and explore their new fantastical surroundings. While Miyazaki's Oscar winning *Spirited Away* is an evocative and wondrous fairytale, which follows a ten year old girl who must visit an alternative world to remove a curse placed on her parents.

Ghibli and Miyazaki's work has been cited by John Lasseter, creative director at Pixar, as one of the most significant inspirations in the development of the studio. In particular, the evocation of the bittersweet nature of childhood in the *Toy Story* franchise are indebted to Miyazaki's influence. Similarly, Spike Jonze's adaptation of Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are* is suffused with visual flourishes and otherworldly elements, but at its core it is a moving story of childhood fears and emotions.

Two recent works, *Boyhood* and Pixar's *Inside Out*, have captured and distilled key elements of the ways in which childhood is positively represented on screen. Richard Linklater's *Boyhood* follows the triumphs and travails of growing up amidst the ebb and flow of personal, family and social changes. *Inside Out* evokes the emotional experiences of childhood in a way that is funny, touching and honest.

While at times joyous and buoyant both *Boyhood* and *Inside Out* resist viewing the world of children through a rose-tinted lens and provide meaningful stories that show the experiences of childhood in ways that are emotionally resonant, presenting children's lives as being often complex and difficult. The

films offer audiences richly textured and complex stories about the excitement, anxieties and tensions of childhood and carry with them some of the recognisable tropes from across films about the lives of children ●

FORTHCOMING RELEASES

A QUIET PASSION (April 7th)

Director Terence Davies (*Of Time and the City*, *The Deep Blue Sea*) helms this biopic of celebrated poet, and notable recluse, Emily Dickinson (Cynthia Nixon).

FAST & FURIOUS 8/THE FATE OF THE FURIOUS (April 14th)

The outrageously successful, and hugely profitable, crime and cars series returns (again). This instalment sees Vin Diesel and gang drawn back into a life of crime.



UNFORGETTABLE (April 21st)

Renowned producer Denise Di Novi makes her directorial debut with a familiarly themed thriller about a jilted wife (Katherine Heigl) exacting revenge on her ex-husband and his new wife.

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY VOL. 2 (April 28th)

An eagerly awaited sequel to the hugely entertaining 2014 original, which sees Guardians leader Peter Quill (Chris Pratt) seeking answers about his parents. At the very least we can expect quips a-plenty and a well curated soundtrack.

MINDHORN (May 5th)

Mighty Boosh co-creator Julian Barratt stars in this 'Patridge-like' comedy as a washed up actor who gets to reprise a once successful character, TV detective Mindhorn, when a killer - and obsessed fan - will only negotiate with him.



KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD (May 12th)

The Arthurian Legend gets the Guy Ritchie treatment in the first of an intended series. Charlie Hunnam stars as the titular character, who leads of a gang of criminals before learning of his royal lineage.

ALIEN: COVENANT (May 19th)

Ridley Scott directs this sequel to *Prometheus*, and prequel to the original *Alien* series, where the crew of the *Covenant* land on an uncharted planet, which, unsurprisingly, is inhabited by deadly creatures.

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: SALAZAR'S REVENGE (May 26th)

A fifth instalment of the *Pirates of the Caribbean* franchise, which has suffered from considerably diminishing returns, sees Johnny Depp's Captain Jack Sparrow seeking Poseidon's Trident in order to defeat Javier Bardem's pirate hunter.

BAYWATCH (June 2nd)

A played-for-laughs action comedy version of the '90s television series, which stars Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson and Zac Efron as rival lifeguards who must join forces to foil a criminal plot.



WONDER WOMAN (June 2nd)

After an appearance in last year's *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice*, the eponymous DC Comics character gets a standalone feature. Gal Gadot stars as the Amazonian princess as she intervenes in the events of *World War I*.



John, I'm only dancing

While RAYMOND CONNOLLY spends most of his time complaining about how everything was better in the 1970s, his love of dancing remains undimmed. From his usual barstool location somewhere on Dublin's Northside, he describes the solace to be found at a monthly ska club in Dublin, and also under a slightly faulty neon sign in Nenagh, while some of the editorial team share their tales of dancing glory.

THIS IS NOT a gender biased comment (It better not be – Ed.) but I can't help noticing, with the advent of TV's *Dancing with the Stars* how expert our female sisters seem to be on the fine art of dancing.

Regardless of sexuality, there are major differences in the psyche of the male and female gender and this, my friends, is vital to the world turning on its axis. For example, have you noticed how many males, some of whom wouldn't fight sleep, become gurus on the technicalities of boxing or mixed martial arts any time there's a big fight on? Guinness and two Heineken please.

Dancing is undoubtedly one of life's craziest but greatest pastimes. George Bernard Shaw rather provocatively suggested that dancing was "a perpendicular expression of a horizontal desire." Down with that sort of thing. Bob Hope was more pragmatic in his assessment, "I grew up with six brothers. That's how I learned to dance; waiting for the bathroom."

Nowadays, life is very orderly. My dancing stints take place on the second Friday of every month at an organised mod/ska/soul night called Pimlico. It's a wonderful opportunity to re-live youth, if my powers of recall stretch that far. A fantastic selection of vinyl and all that stuff that numpties like myself thrive upon.

"These days it's clubs, bars and venues, all of which are a completely different circus animal than the disco as we knew it."

Discotheque

Quite recently however, I had occasion to socialise in Athlone, on a night where a colleague of mine discovered that high heels and northern soul are uneasy bedfellows. What struck me most was that this was actually a full-on, proper old-school disco. For all of Dublin's wonderful social choices, the classic discotheque has long since expired.

That is with one notable exception. *Copperface Jacks* is, let's face it, all of provincial Ireland crammed into Harcourt Street. The last time I was there I recall the place being full of nurses. I assume that if they were getting ready between the hours of 6pm and 8pm they were claiming for time and one sixth?

So is it just in cities that the disco has died? I need to go off on a fact finding mission. I lived in Nenagh for a year. Yes, Nenagh. It's twinned with Finglas, despite two very different interpretations on the correct use of a hurley.

The local disco, *Easy Street* was the centre of the social scene. Maybe it still is? I always liked the way, in a nod to the local linguistics, the neon 'E' was missing from 'Easy'.

Slacks n' beef

In Dublin these days it's clubs, bars and venues, all of which are a completely different circus animal than the disco as we knew it. For instance, you don't have to borrow your father's slacks to get in. That always amazed me, as if by donning a pair of slacks a sudden celestial calm would descend upon a melodious drunk lunatic, who might otherwise wreck the place if he was wearing jeans? Not guilty your honour.

One other condition of the disco, for licencing reasons, was the compulsory provision of food. The options were usually sausage and chips or beef curry and rice, which was also suitable for vegetarians as there was no beef. The term 'gluten free' originated at the disco, as the gluten was in fact provided free of charge. It does seem rather a world away now. However, before the formal burial of the disco can go ahead, I'm off to Nenagh to have a gander at that neon sign ●

Dancehall days

Headbanger



Saint Mary's Rugby club in Tempelogue was the venue for our Friday night head-banging session. This is where I found my love of rock music. The evening always began with the chart toppers of the day, there was a time when I knew all the moves to *C'mon Eileen* by Dexy's Midnight Runners.

You'd have two slow sets, with Wham and the rest, but it was the rock legends of The Doors *Light my Fire* or *Riders on the Storm*, Neil Young's *Heart of Gold* and Led Zeppelin's *Stairway to Heaven* that got the hair flicking, and that was just the boys.

AC/DC's *Whole Lotta Rosie* or *Thunderstruck* were the normal end of night tunes. Even to this day these songs will always get the feet tapping and the head bobbing.

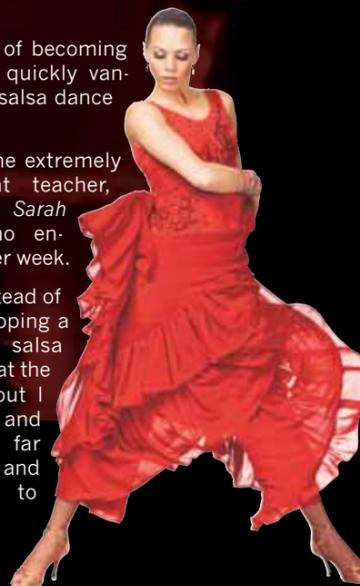
Martina O'Leary

Salsa queen

Any notions I ever had of becoming a reasonable dancer quickly vanished when I joined a salsa dance class a few years ago.

The high point was the extremely likeable and patient teacher, Charlene Gleeson of *Sarah and Steve* fame, who encouraged me week after week.

The low point was, instead of discovering and developing a hidden talent as a salsa dancer, and getting fit at the same time, I found out I have two left feet and dancing requires a far higher level of fitness and stamina than I had to offer.



I now content myself with watching professional dancers, and their celebrity partners in *Dancing with the Stars* and *Strictly Come Dancing* in total admiration of their efforts.

Patricia Callinan

Shameless carry on

Dancing, like singing, is something I can rarely manage in public these days, but I've had my moments. In 1979 (aged 10) I found myself the unwitting recipient of the title of 'Young Mister Bulfin' in that year's Bulfin Estate community festival. How had I managed to garner this accolade? It was my toe tapping shenanigans at the festival's junior disco in the local resident association hall, as judged by a local priest.

The prize was a sash, a medal and pride of place in my scout uniform in the festival parade, precariously perched on a local builder's flatbed truck beside 'Young Miss Bulfin' (the enigmatic Aisling Carr).

In July 1985 I danced a freestyle pogo all night, like a man possessed, at a gig by legendary Dublin band Blue in Heaven at the Project Arts Centre. This was significant for two reasons. One, I was the only person dancing in a crowd of about 200 people. Two, the gig was filmed by the band and my incongruously enthusiastic dancing is visible throughout (thanks to my baggy white shirt). I sometimes suspect I was responsible for bringing their career to a premature conclusion.

I've been known to throw the same shapes around the dancefloor on the last night of an IMPACT conference, but I'm reaching the stage in life where this dancing style can be written off as "drunk uncle at a wedding."

Niall Shanahan



Spring-Summer 2017 solutions (From page 46)

7	8	1	2	4	5	6	3	9	4	6	8	9	7	5	1	2	3
3	6	4	1	7	9	8	2	5	2	9	1	4	6	3	5	7	8
2	5	9	3	6	8	1	7	4	7	3	5	2	1	8	6	9	4
5	9	3	6	8	4	2	1	7	3	1	2	5	8	7	9	4	6
1	2	6	5	3	7	9	4	8	8	4	9	3	2	8	7	1	5
4	7	8	9	1	2	3	5	6	5	7	6	1	4	9	3	8	2
8	1	7	4	9	3	5	6	2	9	2	4	6	5	1	8	3	7
9	3	5	7	2	6	4	8	1	6	8	3	7	9	2	4	5	1
6	4	2	8	5	1	7	9	3	1	5	7	8	3	4	2	6	9

Easy

Difficult

Winter-Spring 2017 Crossword Solutions See page 46 for the competition winners from issue 36.

ACROSS: 1. Began 5. Paris 8. Indiana 9. Arran 10. Rondo 11. Tarbert 14. Death 17. Stool 20. England 21. Vial 22. Bean 23. Liosnagri 24. Neasa 27. Asian 30. Venison 32. Alamo 33. Godot 34. Coroner 35. Hyena 36. Yeats
 DOWN: 1. Brand 2. Garda 3. Ninth 4. Limb 5. Parts 6. Rondo 7. Shoal 12. Rolleston 13. Edentates 15. Eclipse 16. Trellis 18. Titbits 19. Oceania 24. Niamh 25. Abate 26. Avoca 27. Angry 28. India 29. Notes

I believe I can fly

While many of us love to travel, plenty of us have to overcome our fear of flying in order to get to our destination. We're delighted to welcome journalist, travel blogger and social media consultant UNA MINH KAVANAGH as she guides us through her practical steps toward a more relaxed flying experience.



Una Minh Kavanagh

IF THE IDEA of flying scares the bejeebus out of you, I feel your pain. I may love to travel but I absolutely hate flying.

Unlike my Mom, who flies like a pro, I'm terrified of heights (or more the fear of plummeting to my death). I also live with anxiety. This means that my mind likes to run wild with worry when it comes to flying!

I've taken tonnes of flights over the years, but a typical scenario would usually go like this:

Pilot – "This is your captain speaking. Just letting you

know that there's a small chance of a bit of turbulence during this flight"

My brain – "OH MY GOD THE PLANE IS GOING TO CRASH AND WE'RE ALL GOING TO DIE!"

I white-knuckle grip the armrest. My stomach clenches. I close my eyes and start to panic. For some reason, even though I know that, statistically, flying is one of the safest modes of transportation, I just can't acknowledge that fact when I'm on a plane. There is a one in 11 million chance of dying in a plane crash by the way!

Control

I can't quite put my finger on what exactly causes me to go into panic-mode. Maybe it's the lack of control? After all, there I am 37,000 feet above the ground with my fate in the hands of two strangers, in a metal tube in the sky.

Does this all feel familiar to you?

Bear in mind that these methods mightn't work for you. I still hate flying but these are the things I do to calm myself down slightly:

- **Do not watch any movies with planes in them**

Not never again, but definitely not before a trip. I consciously make a greater effort in the run up to the flight not to watch a lot of movies. I've an overactive imagination and if I see a plane crash on screen I get incredibly worried. Movies to avoid before flying include *Flight*, *Castaway*, *World War Z*, *Final Desti-*

nation, *Alive*, *Flightplan*, *Air Force One*, *Fearless*, *Con Air*, *The Grey* and *Knowing*.

- **Bring a bottle of water**

The cups of water that you get in flight usually aren't enough for me as I like to sip. I find water incredibly calming when I'm nervous. You can't obviously bring a bottle through airport security so what I usually do is bring through an empty bottle and fill it when I reach the other side.

- **Reach out**

Don't be afraid to tell the person next to you, or even the crew, that you're scared of flying when you get to the airport. This may make you feel particularly vulnerable but you'd be so surprised at how empathetic people can be. If you're flying alone this can be particularly effective because you won't feel alone. Don't suffer in silence.

- **Bring something to listen to**

If there's no monitor to distract you, having something to listen to is one of the ultimate distractions. Pop on those earphones and indulge in some good listening. Great podcasts to listen to on flights include *Zero to Travel*, *The Indie Travel Podcast*, *Ted Radio Hour*, *BBC Food Programme*, *Serial* and *99% Invisible*.

- **Have a drink**

Do you like to have a little tippie? Sometimes a drink (especially on a long-haul flight) will help take the edge off. That being said, don't have lashings of alcohol. It has the potential to hinder you rather than help. Coffee may also make you feel jittery, something that you probably don't need if you hate flying!

- **Recite the facts**

To bring my mind back to the rational, I like to keep reciting facts about plane safety. Knowing how safe flying actually definitely helps. Consider this: you would have to take a flight every day for 55,000 years before encountering a fatal accident.

In fact, you're more likely to be struck by lightning than be in a crash, with a one in 13,000 chance for your lifetime. Of course, fatal accidents do occur, but the media gives them so much attention that your mind gets fooled and you begin to think they happen all the time. Besides, commercial aircrafts go through extensive testing before they're sold to airlines. ➤

- **If there's turbulence take a look at the cabin crew**

Cabin crew are highly trained to remain calm and I find that if I ever need reassurance, looking at them is usually calming. Especially if they're still walking up and down and serving drinks from the trolley. If the cabin crew aren't freaking out, then I don't need to be. Turbulence will not bring down a plane. They are designed to withstand it and pilots always do all they can to avoid it.

- **Nab a wing seat**

For me, I often like being by the window so I can see the wing. Why? Because my mind sees it as being an outside reassurance. Also if you hate turbulence then the wing is also a great place to sit. The roughest spot is usually the rearmost rows closest to the tail. The caveat, however, is remembering that you'll hear a large thump followed by an increase in noise when the landing gear comes down. Personally, I've never minded landing though because I'll be back on terra firma!

- **Imagine you're on a bus**

This in one way sounds overly simplistic but it's a technique that sometimes works for me. Once I'm familiar with the sounds and "bumps" of turbulence, I close my eyes and imagine being on a bus. With slow, long breaths, the feelings start to become familiar and the bumps don't seem so scary.

- **Deep breaths**

This sounds like an awful cliché but there's science behind this. What happens when we get anxious is that our breathing becomes shallow. This is when my overactive imagination kicks in. What I like to do is breathe in for four seconds, hold it for a further four to six seconds and finally breathe out slowly for four. That will trigger your parasympathetic nervous system. Repeat this as often as you need to.

- **Download the SOAR app**

Fear of flying? There's an app for that. You can use this on your phone (available on iOS and Android). The app contains a bit of everything from how to prep yourself at the airport, calming tools while you're in-flight and a G-force meter. Note however that there are in-app purchases.

You're not alone

Remember you're not alone, so don't feel embarrassed if you hate flying. A fear of flying can steal the joys of travelling and greatly reduce your ability to enjoy the rest of your trip. And I hate that feeling. I think the most important thing for me is to remind myself that there isn't a quick fix when it comes to this.

I will remain persistent even though I still hate flying. It's about challenging myself to feel the fear and do it anyway.

Bonus suggestion – try a fear of flying course

This is something I'm absolutely trying to save up for. I haven't done one yet but the fact that they go through all the motions from airline safety to mock evacuation could really give me peace of mind. Check out FearofFlying.ie (courses start at €149), *Fly Fearless* (starting at €90) or *Flying with Confidence* ●

Una Minh Kavanagh is a journalist, travel blogger and social media consultant.

This article was previously published on her travel blog beforemymamdies.com and is reproduced here with Una Minh's permission. Food lovers should also check out her excellent food blog spillthebeans.ie

'America First': Trump and trade

Donald Trump is pulling out of the Transpacific Partnership (TPP). He is also likely to abandon the TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership) and NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement). You'd be forgiven for thinking that IMPACT (and organised labour in general) might be pleased about this. After all, we have engaged in several campaigns in opposition to TTIP. LUGHAN DEANE says we don't mourn the probable passing of TTIP, but Donald Trump is tearing it up for all the wrong reasons and, what's more, he wants to replace it with something that may be even worse.

TO UNDERSTAND where we're coming from, let me first refresh your memory as to why we opposed TTIP in the first instance. This point is not moot given that TTIP is still alive. TTIP's sister agreement, CETA, continues to progress. Our opposition to TTIP is the context in which we oppose Trump's new vision.

We opposed TTIP because, despite what its cheerleaders might say, it is not a 'free trade agreement' in any meaningful sense. Rather, TTIP (along with TPP and NAFTA) are investor rights agreements for US corporations.

It's no coincidence that these giant agreements come about (beginning with NAFTA in 1994) just as the emerging economies of the so-called BRIC countries (Brazil, India, China and Russia) began to gain some leverage within the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Competition from these regional powers proved intolerable to the US superpower, and so the United States government embarked on a mission to set up a parallel global trading and investment system specifically aimed at strangling these emergent challenges.

NAFTA is designed to isolate Brazil, the TPP to isolate China and TTIP to isolate Russia. Both the TPP and TTIP have negative effects on India.

Immediately, then, it's obvious that these agreements are not interested in facilitating open, free trade. In fact, their main purpose is to protect wealthy, powerful US incumbents. They are protectionist agreements.

Transfer not trade

Part of the key to understanding this is to realise what percentage of what is called 'global trade' is actually just



President Donald Trump is against TTIP, but for all the wrong reasons.

intra-firm transfer, and helps to facilitate some very large scale tax avoidance operations. That is to say, one arm of company 'X' shifting goods over to the other arm of company 'X' and happening to cross a border in the process.

An OECD working paper from 2011 states that, in 2009, intra-firm transfers accounted for 48% of US goods imports and 30% of US goods exports. 58% of US imports from OECD countries were made up of intra-firm transfer.

The working paper concedes that the actual figures are likely to be higher as the data does not capture various forms of intra-industry transfers in which very closely related (though not identical) firms transfer goods between one another.

So, it's likely that in more than half the cases we refer to as 'international trade with the US' we are talking about

multinational corporations shifting goods around internally between their organisations.

We should consider why it is that multinational corporations split up their operations and locate parts of themselves in various places around the globe. The idea is that, as long as there are no penalties for shifting capital across borders, these corporations can locate the various sections of their enterprise in the places most advantageously set up to receive those particular parts.

For example, a company may locate manufacturing in a low-wage, high-repression environment where it relies on the state to bust unions through violence.

It might locate waste disposal in West Africa, having ensured there are no environmental regulations to contend with. It might choose to pay its tax in Ireland, where it can be sure Government will mobilise state resources to defend its low



corporate tax-rate against external upwards pressure. It might also locate its research and development somewhere where it can rely on the taxpayer to fund it through subsidies to universities' science departments.

Finally, it might use the population of the United States as its consumer base: it can rely on the US government to bailout the financial system when it collapses, meaning that US citizens can continue to consume on credit. In order to ensure this state support these corporations buy elections for pro-business candidates.

Eliminating risk

There is risk involved in globalising a business though. All of a sudden, the corporation has to contend with numerous different electorates, regulatory systems, leaders etc. who may disrupt business activities.

In order to mitigate this risk, the corporation designs these investor right agreements that transfer power away from the state and into their hands. The agreements do away with tariffs – economic barriers to entry that enrich the state – and replace them with (as in TTIP) extremely strict patent protections. These act as economic barriers to entry that enrich incumbent private enterprise. They also include detailed rules of origin which offer preferential treatment to US incumbents and prevent BRIC competitors from entering the market.

These are not free trade measures, they are highly protectionist measures aimed at protecting US incumbents from competition and state interference. These measures demonstrate a contempt for the principles of the free market. They're market distortions on a grand scale.

These are not conspiracy theories. Of course agreements like TTIP have to contain complex regulations and much of the detail has to be agreed upon behind closed doors in order to allow for serious negotiation. Unregulated free trade is not a good alternative. Regulation is good. What matters is making sure that the regulation included in these agreements is the right regulation for workers, the environment and wider society.

'America First'

Donald Trump is against these deals in a very specific sense. His idea is to import into the United States Irish tax policy, West African environmental policy, Mexican wages and to fund research and development under the guise of increased military spending.

In other words, he wants to turn the US into a one-stop-shop for corporate exploitation. Both TTIP and Trump are protectionist (in slightly different ways) and protectionism is of little use when it is designed to protect such narrow corporate interests.

A protectionist US policy that deregulates private industry in order to attract multinationals home represents a real risk for European economies. But a system of global trade deals that hand power over to corporations is an equally unattractive option.

There are other options if we are prepared to look at them. Reasonable trade deals that protect workers, the environment and encourage innovation are achievable. There seems little hope right now that that such an approach is likely.

Europe needs to get behind a more progressive alternative. ●

IMPACT backs call for HSE ‘downsizing’



Eamonn said it would be a mistake to make the health department directly responsible for service delivery, and said the regional health authority model would serve citizens best.

IMPACT has said it supports the view that the HSE could be significantly downsized, and that a small number of integrated regional health groups could better perform most of its functions while reporting directly to the Department of Health. IMPACT national secretary Eamonn Donnelly said this vision was reflected in the evidence submitted to the Oireachtas Committee by ICTU health unions last November.

Eamonn was responding to proposals put forward by health minister Simon Harris at the Oireachtas Committee of the Future of Health Care in March. Eamonn said he

believes health unions could support many of the proposals outlined by the minister.

“I fully agree that structural reforms, and the development of services, must be planned over a ten-year time frame. In our submission to the Oireachtas Committee, IMPACT and other ICTU health unions proposed that the HSE be replaced with four well-resourced regional health authorities, which would have responsibility for all community and hospital services in their area. This is very close to what the Minister said at the Committee.

“The current structure of seven hospital groups and nine community health organisations is unlikely to work, and it is

already struggling to achieve integrated hospitals, community services and health promotion. Such integration is a precondition of dealing with many of the problems in our health service, including the A&E crisis and unacceptable waiting lists,” he said.

Mistake

Eamonn said it would be a mistake to make the health department directly responsible for service delivery, and said the regional health authority model would serve citizens best.

“I think we can find much common ground with Minister Harris so long as he also recognises the need for proper resourcing and staffing across the health service, and if he listens to the experience and concerns of his reform-fatigued staff, for whom this would be the third fundamental structural change in health service configuration in less than 15 years,” he said.

IMPACT rejected any suggestion that the health service is overburdened with administrative staff. The union says clerical, administrative and management staff together represent just 10.5% of total health service staffing – down from over 16% in 2007 – with the vast majority delivering services to patients or clients, or directly supporting doctors, nurses and other health professionals.

The few that aren’t on the so-called ‘frontline’ perform vital behind the scenes tasks in IT, human resource management, payroll, service management, legislative and information roles, and other support functions.

Wider application of revised T&S sought

IMPACT has sought the application of new civil service travel and subsistence rates across the public service. The union has tabled the issue in discussions with local government management, and letters have also been sent to officials in the education and health sectors.



Similar rates to those agreed in the civil service are usually applied across the public service – as well as being used in other sectors – because they have Revenue approval.

In a move designed to reduce carbon emissions, the new rates encourage the use of more environmentally-friendly vehicles and methods of travel. This is in line with national policy on climate action.

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform published the revised civil service rates in early March. Unions and

management agreed them following an arbitration hearing on a new system to calculate expenses for work-related travel. The new rates will apply from next month.

This is the first time motor travel rates have increased since they were cut by 25% in 2010. The new formula for calculating travel expenses – the first since 2005 – is to remain in place for at least three years.

IMPACT national secretary Andy Pike said the revised system, which takes account of overheads and running costs, can be easily updated with new data. “The intention is to create a more transparent method for the review of motor travel rates in future,” he said.

For IMPACT’s quick guide to the new rates visit impact.ie



Unions push for Brexit plan

THE IRISH Congress of Trade Unions is seeking urgent engagement with Government, opposition parties and business groups on preparations for a ‘hard Brexit,’ which could put thousands of jobs at risk. Congress also wants specific measures to protect employment standards in sectors most dependent on trade with the UK and Northern Ireland, as these are most vulnerable to the new trade environment expected once Britain leaves the EU single market.

In a new bulletin, Congress says the Government has yet to publish a concrete plan to achieve its broad objectives of maintaining the common travel area, preventing a hard border, and protecting the provisions of the Good Friday agreement.

It calls on the administration to set out a detailed set of policy principles now that the British Government and the European Commission have published white papers on Brexit.

Unions believe Brexit will lead to the imposition of trade barriers, currency fluctuations, and a slowdown in the British economy, which is Ireland’s largest single export market. “Although both governments have emphasised their wish to see a ‘seamless’ and ‘frictionless’ border, Congress believes this would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to achieve in practice,” it says.

See ictu.ie/download/pdf/brexit_bulletin_march_2017.pdf for more details

Semi-state solution can crack housing crisis

THE NEVIN Economic Research Institute (NERI) has called for the establishment of a new ‘housing company of Ireland’ to undertake the construction and acquisition of 70,000 new homes and resolve the housing crisis.

The trade union-backed think tank said this new body should be a semi-state company, which could draw on relatively cheap long-term borrowing, as well as funds from the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund, to supplement the housing programmes of local authorities and voluntary housing associations.

NERI says the new housing company could crack a housing crisis in which fewer than 4,000 rental dwellings were available last month, compared to 23,000 in 2009. It said average rents increased at an annual rate of over 13% in 2016, and are now higher than in 2008.

NERI’s report, *Ireland’s housing emergency: Time for a game changer*, calls for a fundamental rethink of social housing models in Ireland, with the adoption of “European norms of mixed-income renting provided by public enterprises,” and funded and operated in ways that don’t add to public expenditure or debt.”

The full report is available at nerinstitute.net



Photostimages: dreamstime.com

NEWS SHORTS

Psychologist Dáil motion welcomed



A motion tabled for a recent Dáil debate on the Government's commitment to increase staffing in the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) has been welcomed by IMPACT. The union's NEPS branch has called for the immediate recruitment of at least 94 educational psychologists.

The Fianna Fáil private members' motion, which was tabled on 8th March, called on the Government to act on its commitment to increase the number of psychologists by 65, and to ensure that no child assessed for special needs would be without adequate resources.

IMPACT national secretary Andy Pike said the debate was welcome as it acknowledged the enormous amount of work – undertaken by the union's NEPS branch over the last two years – to press for additional recruitment.

Public-private pay gap disappears for now



A new analysis by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) shows that public service workers now earn slightly less than their private sector counterparts when you take account of the so-called 'pension levy,' plus factors like occupation, education and length of service. The figures show that, on average, public sector staff now earn 0.65% less than workers in the private sector.

The new data show that the gap between private and public earnings declined steadily between 2011 and 2014, in response to various changes in the two sectors during that period.

The CSO figures also reveal that the gender pay gap is much narrower in the public sector than among commercial employers. Many male public servants now earn up to 6.6% less than men in private employment, while women in the public sector earn 6.5% more than their private sector

counterparts. This reflects the fact that many women in private sector employment experience very low earnings.

However, public servants earn over 5% more than their private sector counterparts if you ignore the so-called 'pension levy.' The value of public sector pensions – and the contribution that public servants make towards their retirement income – is likely to be a major bone of contention in talks on a successor to the Lansdowne Road agreement, which are set to take place in the early summer.

Former IMPACT staffer becomes Labour Court deputy chair



Louise O'Donnell

Former IMPACT official Louise O'Donnell has won a public competition to become one of three Labour Court deputy chairmen. Louise worked for the union for 17 years following a long period as an activist in the civil service. Louise was national secretary with responsibility for the Health and Welfare division before she left the union in October 2015 to take up post as a 'worker member' of the Labour Court.

Youth quizzical over Syria



Members of IMPACT's young members' working group are holding a table quiz to raise funds for World Vision Ireland's humanitarian work with refugee Syrian children. The event takes place at IMPACT's Dublin office at 6.30pm on 4th May, and branches are being invited to participate.

The cost is €100 for a table of four, and donations are also being accepted from members and branches who are unable to attend. The money will support World Vision Ireland's work with young Syrian refugees. The event will also feature a special screening of a short documentary film about ICTU's visit to the Calais refugee camps. Contact joconnor@impact.ie to book a table or to arrange a donation.

Gig memories support Syrian refugees

IN CONCERT – Favourite gigs of Irelands Music Community was launched in January in aid of Irish Red Cross Syria appeal. The book was compiled by Niall McGuirk and Michael Murphy, both of whom are well regarded within Dublin's DIY music scene.

THE BOOK brings together a fascinating series of recollections of favourite gigs from over a hundred of Ireland's musicians, authors and music fans, including members of the Pogues, Stiff Little Fingers, the Undertones, the Blades, Bell X1, That Petrol Emotion, the Frames as well as musicians who performed with David Bowie, Rory Gallagher, Ronnie Wood and Marianne Faithful.

Proceeds for the limited print-run of 1,000 copies are going to the Irish Red Cross Syria appeal.

Niall is vice president of the PSEU and a member of ICTU's Global Solidarity Committee. He played an instrumental role in the Hope Collective, a DIY organisation responsible for bringing a wide range of independent bands to Ireland including Chumbawamba, and the legendary Frank Sidebottom.

Michael Murphy is a lecturer on the music industry and entrepreneurship in the Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology, having previously worked in the music industry for 20 years, touring with artists including the Red Hot Chili Peppers and Foo Fighters. He's also responsible for bringing Jeff Buckley to Ireland for his first show outside New York in the early 1990s.

It started as a simple idea. "Let's try to help the Syrian refugees. We saw the horrific images being displayed for public consumption around the world and felt compelled to do something. Our simple idea didn't stay simple for long because of the generosity, creativity, responsiveness and good



hearts of the many contributors," explain Niall and Michael in the foreword of the book.

The book came together as the pair asked friends and family about their favourite gig, and features 105 of the replies they received. The recollections are arranged chronologically, thereby providing an intimate history of Ireland's live music scene with eye-witness accounts from the people who were there.

The book opens with a nod to 'ten of the best' by promoter Ted Carroll, who namechecks gigs by Bill Hailey & The Comets (Theatre royal, Dublin, February 1957), the Beatles and Bob Dylan.

Then, as Larry Mullen Jnr might say, "it's a musical journey" from Fleetwood Mac at the national Stadium in 1969, via U2's first appearance (as 'Feedback') in 1976, The Specials and The Beat at Dublin's Stardust in 1981, to Grace Jones at Electric Picnic in 2015.

Featured concerts include Tom Waits (the only one in the book I was at myself, at the Phoenix Park

in 2008), Leonard Cohen, The Stranglers, The Clash, The Smiths, Ian Dury, Dexy's Midnight Runners, Echo & The Bunnymen, Elvis Costello, The Stone Roses, Sonic Youth and (even) Garth Brooks one week sold-out residency at The Point in 1995.

The book is available to buy in Tower Records, Dublin and online.

By Niall Shanahan ●

Photo gallery

IMPACT hosted a young members' forum in February, arranged by lead organiser Joe O'Connor. Arising from this a young members working group has been established, and has already held its first meeting.



Lorraine Fox, ETB and Robert Byrnes, Fingal branch.



Sarah Begg, State Enterprises No. 1.



Seamus Ryan, Clare branch.



Danny Meehan, Donegal County Council.



A delegate listens intently to the debate.



Una Maguire, South Dublin.

The Sligo branch representatives level 1 class of 2017.



IMPACT president Pat Fallon and Gordon Burke.



IMPACT president Pat Fallon and Joanne Rafferty.



IMPACT president Pat Fallon and Louise Moyles.



IMPACT president Pat Fallon and Patrick Gannon.



Back row: Maeve Coultrey, Pat Fallon, John McConalogue, Patrick Gannon. Middle row: Elsa Jane Edwardson, Maria Collery, Joanne Rafferty, Elaine Lawless, Geraldine Gannon. Front row: Gerard Gilroy.

Level 1 branch representative training course graduated in 2017.



Fintan Davitt, Belinda Fitzgerald, Brian Delaney, Gillian Cawley and Ian Harte.



Christine Gurnett, Claire Murphy, Theresa McAteer Fintan Davitt.

Level 2 branch representative training course graduated in 2017.



Brendan Hanratty, Sinead Sweeney and Emilia Sfetcu.



In March IMPACT presented a copy of the complete IMPACT archive to the library of Dublin City University (DCU). The archive includes all IMPACT News publications, including *Work & Life*, from 1991 to 2017. Pictured is IMPACT communications officer and *Work & Life* editor Niall Shanahan presenting the archive material to David Meehan Associate Director, Special Collections & Archives at DCU library.

Some members graduated from the Cork level 1 branch representatives training programme.



Working together with tutor Chris Cully.



IMPACT assistant general secretary Dessie Robinson and Geraldine Heath.



Congratulations to IMPACT member Fiona Allen from Co. Meath who won an Apple iPhone SE in the *MyCornmarket* competition draw from Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd. *MyCornmarket* allows Cornmarket customers to get secure and instant access to all their policy information 24/7 on their pc, tablet or smartphone. For further details see www.cornmarket.ie/mycornmarket.

Is that what you're wearing to work?

Some take pride in them, for others it's a reminder of the regimentation of their school days, but they are a practical solution to the question of what to wear to work. Uniforms, good idea? Bad idea? And is the office environment a battleground of unspoken dress codes where we have to trade-off between bland and casual? Who knows? Good job we've got TRISH CALLINAN on the case to suss it out.

ARE WORK uniforms a good idea? In a recent poll carried out by fashion magazine *Style In a Stylist.co.uk* readers, over 75 % said they would either consider or try a work uniform.

Lucy Kellaway wrote recently in the *Irish Times* about the rise of the super-bland office uniform, with everyone "all shiny and beautiful and looking the same as one another. No one dares look individual." She went on to say "The only way of standing out is by looking even sleeker and richer than everyone else."

This lead me to think that people might as well wear uniforms, saving themselves a lot of money, time and hassle in the morning. That's not to mention the additional stress of trying to decide what to wear. People generally have strong opinions about wearing uniforms to work. There is a large cohort of IMPACT members who wear uniforms, like cabin crew, pilots, physiotherapists, and Fire Brigade personnel, to name a few.

Pride

I asked Madge Daly, cabin crew support officer at IMPACT – and a former Aer Lingus cabin crew employee – about her thoughts on the subject. "Having worn a uniform for 25 years I loved wearing my uniform and I wore it with great pride," she said.

Uniforms can boost team spirit and build a stronger sense of belonging to – and pride in – the organisation. There is a body of research that claims people who wear uniforms are more productive. A study carried out by the Uniform & Textile Service Association (there's a clue in the title there I reckon) said that employees in uniform had increased confidence in their ability to do their job. Uniforms make it easier for members of the public to identify staff, therefore adding to increased efficiencies.

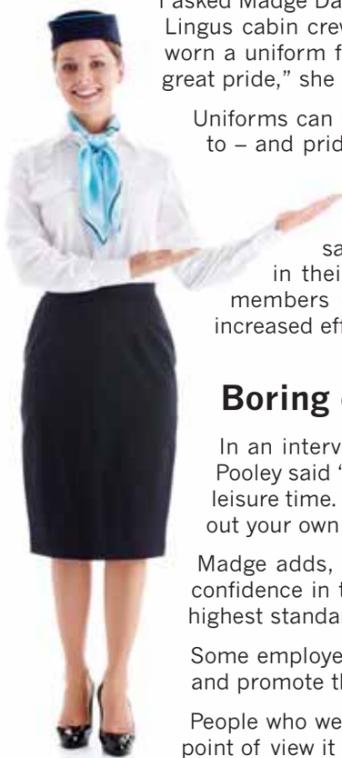
Boring or beneficial?

In an interview for the *Style In* article, chartered psychologist Dr John Pooley said "wearing a uniform helps to differentiate between work time and leisure time. And that can only be a good thing for mental health. You can carve out your own identity with bow ties, socks and cuff links".

Madge adds, "A uniform portrays a professional positive image. A uniform worn with pride helps to create confidence in the wearer and for the customers you are dealing with. A uniform should always be worn to the highest standard as it represents the company or profession within which you work."

Some employers will pay for or subsidise uniforms, as it is free advertising for them and helps to demonstrate and promote the organisation's branding and image outside their four walls.

People who wear them take great pride in their uniform, often seeing it as a badge of honour. From a practical point of view it saves a lot of money, and hassle, and protects your clothes from wear and tear. ►



Main pic: House of Fraser

Madge says "A uniform allows a level playing pitch for all wearing it, which is very important for those who may not be able to afford the more expensive brands of trendy clothes."

Uniforms come in varying styles to suit individual preferences and body types. Many are made from good quality materials, in classic styles and are made to last a few years.

It puts everyone on the same footing, materially at least. It eliminates oneupmanship and employees trying to prove that they're better, just because they have more expensive clothes, or because they can afford to update their work wardrobe more often. This in turn cuts down on potential bullying and bitchiness.

Not so, say the anti-uniformers

My daughter has recently started working in an office with a large workforce in Dublin. I asked her what she thought about wearing a uniform? "Oh no", she said immediately. "I like buying clothes for work. I spent too many years wearing a school uniform. Now it's time to enjoy what I wear. Besides, I would get bored wearing the same clothes every day."

Probably the greatest drawback of wearing uniforms is the restriction of personal choice. People don't like being told what to wear. For people who enjoy fashion, uniforms can become boring and personal style can be inhibited. Some people use clothes as a way of expressing themselves and their personality. Individuality can be compromised. Dry cleaning costs also need to be taken into account.

What makes a good uniform?

They don't have to be the restrictive, conventional two piece trouser/skirt suit that we normally think of. It could be just a dress code or consist of a variety of styles that suit individual preferences. Or maybe you plan on investing in some work-only clothes, like a suit or separates.

Accessories add individuality, and trend. Achieve your signature look by adding something like a neck scarf, brooch, ribbons, earrings or a belt should do the trick.

Highwaisted wide pants and culottes are fashionable, flattering and versatile. Create different looks by wearing them with flat pumps, trainers or ankle boots.

Slightly flared and cropped trousers are high fashion. This style doesn't suit everyone, try before you buy! If you want a less formal look than a two piece suit, cardigans are great for chilly days and can be dressed up with a belt.

Certainty

In an uncertain world, the consistency and certainty of a uniform might provide some sense of security, but only if the job requires it. For the rest of us, where dress codes are becoming increasingly casual, or at least less strictly formal, it's an opportunity to write our own rules about how to dress in the workplace.

Having said all that, there's no excuse for double denim... I don't care if it's casual Friday (or even for a charity event), double denim is just a whole heap of wrong. Don't go there ●



A manifesto for effective meetings

As an astute colleague once observed, “meetings are where work goes to die.” But whether it’s work, our voluntary life, or our trade union world, meetings are a part and parcel of how we get business done. ISOBEL BUTLER suggests how we can make these shorter, efficient and more productive.

“A meeting is a place where the minutes are kept but the hours are lost” (Unknown)

MEETINGS SHOULD be interesting, productive and satisfying and participants should leave them with a sense of having achieved something. However, they have become something people dread as being boring, frustrating, inefficient and a distraction from their real work.

Research on how costly and non-productive meetings can be backs these views. Analysis of data from one study showed managers believe that up to half the time they spend in meetings is non-productive.

Despite this there has been a steady increase in the frequency and duration of meetings because they are still seen as an essential way of exchanging information, solving problems and collectively getting things done in the modern team environment. Whether you are a manager or a team member there is a strong imperative to make your meetings more efficient and these suggestions will help you in your efforts.

Purpose and people

Make sure that every meeting has a purpose, that the right people are there and that they know why they are there. If planning a meeting, make sure that there is a clear statement of the meeting’s purpose and what needs to be achieved. If this is not evident at meetings you are attending, then ask.

A clear agenda and any preparatory reading should be circulated a short time in advance of the meeting to ensure that it is still fresh and relevant but with enough time for people to read and prepare. The agenda should include the purpose of the meeting, the desired outcome and what needs to be achieved if the meeting is to be judged as being successful. Avoid vagueness or leaving it open to interpretation. Inclusion of the date, time and venue increases the likelihood that the essential people arrive prepared and on time, and ready to focus on the common meeting purpose.

Only those who need to be at the meeting should be invited and if it might not be clear to anyone why they are being invited, then spell it out. If it’s unclear why you’ve been invited to a meeting, ask why.

Timing

Plan the length of the meeting based on its purpose and what needs to be achieved. Then manage the meeting time, including starting and finishing on time. Longer meetings tend to be most unproductive and allow people to wander off the

agenda. Decide exactly what time is needed based on the agenda items and desired outcome rather than automatically allocating the usual time to a meeting.

If you schedule a meeting to take one hour then discussion will expand to fill that hour. The 22-minute goal-focused meeting has been proposed as a way of making meetings more focused and efficient. Don’t be afraid to schedule a short, stand up, ten minute meeting if that is all that is required.

Focused

Team leaders and meeting chairs need to encourage focused participation and keep the meeting focused on achieving its stated objective. Writing the purpose of the meeting on the whiteboard/flip-chart helps maintain the necessary focus. Evidence shows constructive meeting interactions, where all participants are able to voice opinions and make comments directed towards solving the problem and taking actions, and where responsibility for those actions is clear, are associated with higher levels of meeting satisfaction and greater productivity.

Action oriented

Meeting minutes need to be short, focused and record only the agreed actions. Frustration and inefficiency result from lengthy detailed minutes filled with unnecessary details that no-one reads or follows through on. Appoint a minute taker to record agreed actions and who is responsible for what. Team leaders/chairs should summarise the decision, actions, timelines and people responsible at the end of each. ▶

The minute taker then simply records these, putting names and timelines beside actions. These more focused, action oriented minutes allow faster circulation after the meeting, increasing the likelihood that people follow through on what was agreed.

Energy

Energy, momentum, attention and creativity are needed for effective meetings. Avoid having meetings around a large table. Bring people closer together by simply arranging chairs in a circle around the whiteboard /flip chart. Proximity and being able to make eye contact helps people feel more equal and increases the likelihood of constructive and supportive participation. Standing meetings can increase focus and instill energy, preventing daydreaming or drifting and helps to keep meetings shorter.

Trying something different that moves people out of their comfort zone can be very energising and encourages growth. Starting the meeting on a positive note helps set the tone of a meeting and is more energising than a negative discussion.

If you are having a long meeting have a number of short, one-minute breaks and encourage people to stretch, move around and perhaps even change seats. Don’t schedule back-to-back meetings. They’re draining and delays in one meeting knock on to the next one.

Ground rules

Have ground rules. Agreeing a set of basic ground rules make it clear to people how they should behave in the meeting and helps prevent problems. Chairs and team leaders find it easier to constructively challenge inappropriate behaviour by simply reminding people of the ground rules. Nipping problems in the bud prevents them growing and frustrating everyone.

Phones and laptops distract and prevent people giving their full attending to the discussion. Laptops should only be used by the minute taker or someone delivering a presentation. Ground rules about keeping contributions short and focused, observing time limits, being open and respectful, not dominating the conversation, and which outline how conflict will be handled are all useful.

Good luck, remember investing in these suggestions will save time, money and frustration.

Interesting resources

Nicole Steinbok speaking at Inspire Seattle in 2010 on the 22-minute meeting. <http://scottberkun.com/2010/the-22-minute-meeting/>



Isobel Butler is an independent organisational psychologist who works with people on a wide range of workplace issues including conflict management, dealing with change and solving problems. If there are specific issues you’d like her to tackle in these articles send them in via the editor, Work & Life magazine, Nerney’s Court, Dublin 1 or info@impact.ie.

'Clocked Out' to highlight gender pay gap

IMPACT provoked a huge response, from across the political spectrum, to its ongoing social media campaign aimed at winning support for legislation compelling firms to publish details of their gender pay gap. The social media and lobbying campaign, developed by LUGHAN DEANE and TRISH CALLINAN, focuses on the idea that women effectively work 71 minutes for free each working day when compared to their male counterparts. In other words, they are 'clocked out by the pay gap' at 15:50 each day. See #ClockedOut on Twitter for the full social media story.

IMPACT Trade Union @IMPACTTU

We're asking working women in Ireland to post a #clockedout selfie each day at 15:50 to mark the moment the pay gap kicks in @labour @NWC!

14/03/2017, 15:50

VIEW TWEET ACTIVITY

78 RETWEETS 64 LIKES

FSU Ireland @fsuireland

@fsuireland urges Govt to be ambitious in tackling #genderpaygap #ClockedOut @IMPACTTU

fsunion.org/updates/2017/0...

IMPACT Trade Union @IMPACTTU

Great to see some coverage of the #ClockedOut campaign by @SarahMagliocco of @ShemazingIE shemazing.net/clocked-out-ir... Let's #CloseTheGap

'Clocked out.' Irish women take to Twitter to mark gender pay gap shemazing.net

PSEU @PseuTradeUnion

The ladies in PSEU HQ today supporting the campaign to highlight the gender pay gap #CloseTheGap #clockedout

Reply to PSEU

SIPTU @SIPTU

Fair play all in @IMPACTTU - Great working on the #ClockedOut campaign with you to highlight the #GenderPayGap - Solidarity!

TT Mobile IE @TTMobile_ie

TT IRELAND 17:47

- 1.Special Tiara
- 2.Cause of Causes
- 3.#ClockedOut
- 4.Coral Cup
- 5.#MSJC
- 6.Willie Mullins
- 7.Washington
- 8.Mark Walsh
- 9.#sunshine

The Labour Party @labour

Labour is committed to tackling gender inequality in the workplace labr.ie/2nnVcIO #clockedout

Brendan Howlin @BrendanHowlin · 5d

Great to see the important #ClockedOut campaign by @IMPACTTU getting traction. It's beyond time to #CloseTheGap

The Labour Party @labour

Irish women take to Twitter to mark gender pay gap shemazing.net/clocked-out-ir... #ClockedOut #CloseTheGap

IMPACT Trade Union @IMPACTTU

Great to see @FFWomensNetwork & @labourwomen sharing the #ClockedOut campaign - cross party support is key to passing pay gap reporting laws

IMPACT Trade Union @IMPACTTU

10 minutes from now, women working in Ireland will be #ClockedOut by the pay gap. Show your support for pay gap reporting law. Post a selfie

ifut @ifut

@ifut supports Close the Gender Pay Gap #CloseTheGap #clockedout

Grace Williams @Almost_Graceful

Great to see so many people tweeting about ending the gender pay gap with #ClockedOut. Well done @IMPACTTU!

Trendsmap Dublin @TrendsDublin

#clockedout is now trending in #Dublin

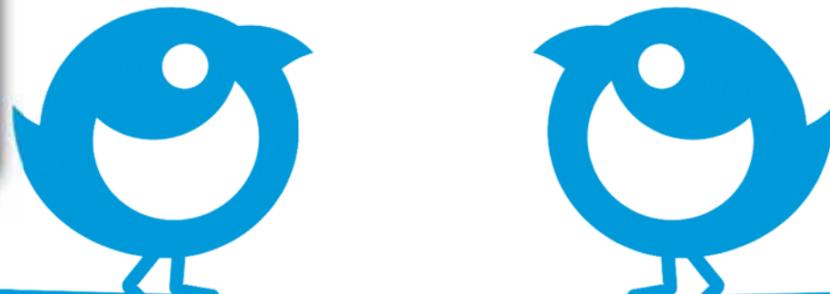
trendsmap.com/r/IE_DUB_ed/nmr

Irish Congress (ICTU) @iabccongress

Working Women - time to close the gap? Support #clockedout initiative today

IMPACT Trade Union @IMPACTTU

Working women of Ireland! Don't forget to post your #ClockedOut selfie today at 15:50 to mark the moment the pay gap kicks in



PRIZE QUIZ

WIN €50

Just answer five easy questions and you could win €50.

YOU COULD have an extra €50 to spend by answering five easy questions and sending your entry, name and address to Roisin Nolan, Work & Life prize quiz, IMPACT, Nerney's court, Dublin 1. We'll send €50 to the first completed entry pulled from the hat.* You'll find the answers in this issue of *Work & Life*.

1. IMPACT vice president Margaret Coughlan works with which IMPACT branch:

- a. Waterford
- b. Wicklow
- c. Wexford
- d. Westmeath

2. SENO stands for:

- a. Serial Ends November or October
- b. Sensible Ensemble with New Overcoat
- c. Special Education Needs Organiser
- d. Seasonal Enforcement of Natural Onions

3. Fresh pasta is made by combining eggs with:

- a. Sausages
- b. Tomatoes
- c. Flour
- d. Sugar

4. Who stays 'in the picture'?

- a. The Moon
- b. The Stars
- c. The Kid
- d. The Edge

5. TTIP stands for:

- a. Trump Tiptoes in Pyjamas
- b. Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership
- c. Tragically Trump's Influenced by Putin
- d. Truly Trump is Pathetic

The small print*

You must be a paid-up IMPACT member to win. Only one entry per person (multiple entries will not be considered). Entries must reach us by Friday 2nd June 2017. The editor's decision is final. That's it!

PRIZE CROSSWORD

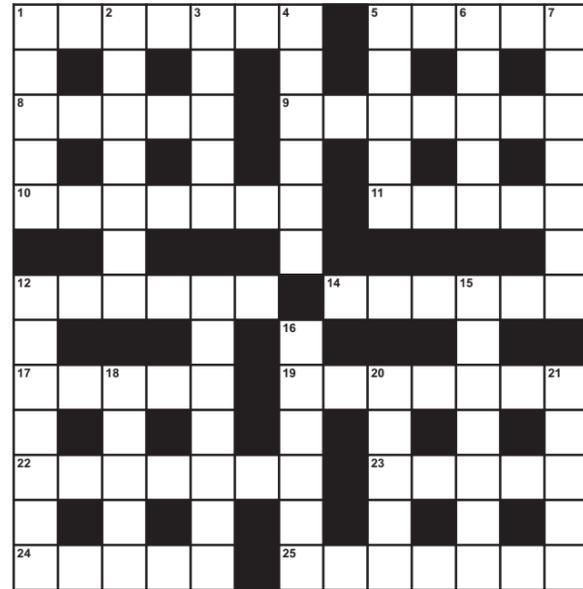
WIN €50

ACROSS

- 1. Former American President who named his daughter after an English Premiership soccer side (7)
- 5. Roman goddess (5)
- 8. Eastern country (5)
- 10. High in rank (7)
- 11. This poet heard lake waters lapping (5)
- 12. Lovely roses bloom here annually (6)
- 14. The Spanish tomorrow (6)
- 17. Tiny Scottish shire and county town of the same name (5)
- 19. Tragic Ulster ship (7)
- 22. To elevate to noble status (7)
- 23. Adhesive substance secreted by trees and plants (5)
- 24. body sinew, bravado (5)
- 25. Carrying capacity of a ship or haulage vehicle (7)

DOWN

- 1. A much execrated British administrator in 18th century India (5)
- 2. American state (7)
- 3. Characteristic, feature (5)
- 4. Wanderers, particularly in Arab lands (6)

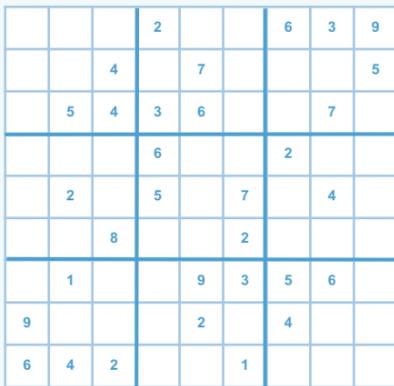


Crossword composed by Sean Ua Cearnaigh.

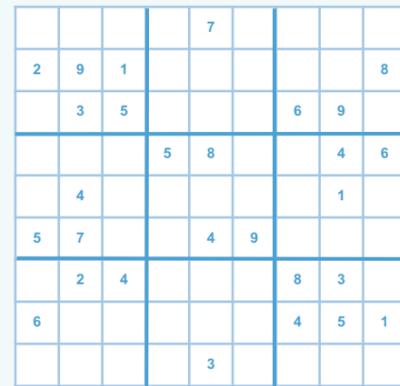
- 5. Light song or ballad (5)
- 6. Con Colbert, 1916 patriot, was born in this West Limerick Village (5)
- 7. Tailless Tongueless amphibian (7)
- 12. This ruined Monmouth abbey inspired a Wordsworth poem (7)
- 13. See 22 across (7)
- 15. Loss of memory (7)
- 16. Town or village road with adjoining houses (6)
- 18. The Isle of Skye, largest island of the ----- Hebrides (5)
- 20. North western Italian city renowned for its famous shroud (5)
- 21. Long low narrow boat (5)

SUDOKU

HOW TO PLAY: Fill in the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no maths involved. You solve it with reasoning and logic. Solutions on page 29.



EASY



DIFFICULT

Win €50 by completing the crossword and sending your entry, name and address to Roisin Nolan, Work & Life crossword, IMPACT, Nerney's Court, Dublin 1, by Friday 2nd June 2017. We'll send €50 to the first correct entry pulled from a hat.

Winners!

The winners from competitions in the autumn-winter issue were:

Crossword: Marjorie Conway, Fáihte Ireland. Survey: Eugene Bole, South Dublin HSE.

Quiz: Catherine O'Loughlin, Louth/Meath ETB.

Lots more competitions to enter in this issue!

WIN €100

How do you like Work & Life?

WE HOPE you enjoyed this issue of *Work & Life*, the magazine for IMPACT members. We want to hear your views, and we're offering a €100 prize to one lucky winner who completes this questionnaire.

Simply complete this short survey and send it to Roisin Nolan, Work & Life survey, IMPACT, Nerney's Court, Dublin 1. You can also send your views by email to rnolan@impact.ie.

We'll send €100 to the first completed entry pulled from a hat.*



The survey

1. What did you think of the articles in the spring-summer 2017 issue of Work & Life?

Excellent

Good

Okay

Bad

Awful

Comments _____

2. What did you think of the layout, style and pictures in the spring-summer 2017 issue of Work & Life?

Excellent

Good

Okay

Bad

Awful

Comments _____

3. What were your favourite three articles?

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4. What were your least favourite articles?

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

5. What subjects would you like to see in future issues of Work & Life?

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

6. What did you think of the balance between union news and other articles?

The balance is about right

I want more union news

I want less union news

7. Any other comments?

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Phone _____

IMPACT branch _____

The small print*

You must be a paid-up IMPACT member to win. Only one entry per person (multiple entries will not be considered). Entries must reach us by Friday 2nd June 2017. The editor's decision is final. That's it!



FREE 24/7 LEGAL ADVICE HELPLINE
Phone 1850-77-66-44

FREE LEGAL HELP WITH BODILY INJURY CLAIMS
Phone 1850-77-66-44

FREE 24/7 DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE HELPLINE
Phone 1850-77-66-44

FREE CONFIDENTIAL COUNSELLING HELPLINE
Phone 1850-77-66-55

IMPACT helplines *24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year*

Commercial membership services

IMPACT has facilitated the provision of a number of national membership services and discount schemes on behalf of its members. These include Additional Voluntary Contribution Schemes (Pensions), Life Assurance, Salary Protection in the case of illness and Car, House and Travel Insurance Schemes. A number of local discount schemes are also negotiated by local branches.

The Union uses the size and composition of its membership base and, where possible, competition between the various service providers, to seek the best possible deals for the widest possible sections of our membership. It is probable that the majority of members will get better value from these schemes than if they sought the same service individually. However, this will not be true in all cases and there will be occasions where individual members may, because of their specific circumstances, be able to get better value elsewhere. It is not possible always to ensure that all schemes will be accessible equally to all members and the scheme underwriters will not depart totally from their normal actuarial or risk assessment procedures and rules.

IMPACT does not make any claims as to the quality or reliability of any of these products/services and while advising members of the availability of the National Membership Services and Discount Schemes does not endorse or recommend any particular product or service. IMPACT's role is that of facilitator to ensure that such schemes are available to its members. All contracts are directly between the product/service provider and the individual member. IMPACT is not in any way a party to these contracts and will not accept any responsibility or liability arising from any act or omission on the part of the product or service provider. Neither IMPACT nor any member of its staff receives any fees or commissions or other rewards from these product or service providers arising from such schemes.

While IMPACT does occasionally provide such product/service providers with limited information regarding IMPACT branch and/or workplace representatives for the purpose of advertising such schemes, the Union does not make any personal data relating to individual Union members available to them for any purpose.

The Union requires that product/service providers agree to ensure that all such schemes comply with all lawful requirements including the Equal Status Act 2000.

Advertisements for agreed membership services will have an  logo on them.

Some of the companies providing agreed membership services may offer other products or services (that are not as a result of any agreement or arrangement with IMPACT) directly to IMPACT members. The Union has no role whatsoever in relation to such products or services. Likewise, other product or service providers may make offers directly to IMPACT members through advertisements in the Union newspaper or otherwise. These do not arise as a result of agreements or arrangements with IMPACT and the Union does not ask members to consider availing of such products/services and accepts no responsibility whatsoever for any such offers.

The product/service providers with which IMPACT has agreed the provision of membership services and/or discount schemes are as follows:

KennCo Insurance.

Travel Insurance – all Divisions.

Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd.

Car Insurance – all Divisions.

AVC Schemes – all Divisions, excluding Municipal Employees.

Salary Protection and Life Assurance – Local Government, Health, Civil Service, Education and Services & Enterprises Divisions.

Jardine Lloyd Thompson (JLT) Ltd.

Car Insurance – all Divisions.

House Insurance – all Divisions.

December 2004

DISCLAIMER (Approved by CEC 10th December 2004)

You're better off in IMPACT

IMPACT

IMPACT members can save a lot of money through a wide range of financial benefits provided or negotiated by the union. Some of these are free to all IMPACT members. Others are optional benefits, available only to IMPACT members, which can mean savings on insurance, salary protection, additional pension coverage and more.

IMPACT members are entitled to*

- €5,000 personal accident insurance
- €5,000 specified critical illness or death benefit
- Spouses now covered for death benefit too
- Free legal help in bodily injury cases
- Free 24/7 legal advice helpline
- Free 24/7 confidential counselling helpline
- Free 24/7 domestic assistance helpline.

Members can opt to avail of IMPACT-facilitated financial benefits

- Car insurance
- Home insurance
- Travel insurance
- Additional pension benefits
- Salary protection and life cover.

IMPACT members can also apply for

- Gaeltacht scholarships for their school-age children
- Industrial relations scholarships
- Benevolent grants for members in financial distress.



*Protection
at work
too!*

For more information visit
www.impact.ie



cornmarket
group financial services ltd



Protect what you love most...

*With Life Insurance from just €3 per week**

Why pay more than you need to for your Life Insurance? Whether it's a review or a new policy that you need, we've got the best value cover for you.

- ✓ One quick phone call
- ✓ We compare all insurers
- ✓ Best price Life Insurance
- ✓ All done over the phone!

Call us today on (01) 420 0961

www.cornmarket.ie/life-insurance

*Lowest Pricematch is €13.13 for Mortgage Protection Plans and €15.15 on Level Term Plans, per month.

Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd. is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland. Cornmarket is part of the Great-West Lifeco group of companies, one of the world's leading life assurance organisations. Telephone calls may be recorded for quality control and training purposes.