



Inniú

A Newsletter for NA in Ireland

March 2010

Welcome to the Second Edition of *Inniú*, the Newsletter of the IRSC of NA

OUR FIRST EDITION was in October 1991. It only took 19 years for a second, but it's progress we look for, not perfection. :-)

A facsimile of that first edition has been included with this edition in remembrance of Oliver S. who wrote it, and Austin C., who helped him produce it. We will be forever grateful to them for their Service in our fellowship, which helped make it what it is today.

Our plan is to have four editions a year. These will be available to download online, from our website; go to www.na-ireland.org. Also, hard copies will be produced and distributed to the four areas.

Our thoughts are that the newsletter will be used for the following purposes: Each issue will contain NA related announcements of events in Ireland and around the world. Also included will be major decisions taken at the Region, European Delegates Meeting and World Services. There will be information on our literature and other resources. There will also be an 'old timer's corner' - anecdotes and bits of history from Ireland and the fellowship around the world. We would like to include an area with letters from members in hospitals and institutions. Each edition will have a theme or topic and input on this will be asked for from the local fellowship. We also hope to have cartoons, competitions and a bit of fun.

This newsletter comes under the remit of the Regional Literature Committee, and will be a joint effort with the Irish Service Office and Public Relations. Members of the subcommittee come from the four areas of Ireland and hopefully this will help bring us closer together. This is a work in progress and we need your input to make this work.

We hope that you will find this newsletter, useful, informative, enjoyable, inspiring, entertaining - or all of the above!

In fellowship and service, Irene C., IRSC Literature Chair.

Old Timers' Corner

The following is one Addicts Recollection:

"A.A. meetings were run by the Rathfarnham Group of A.A. on Thursday evenings and 12 o'clock Sundays. They extended the hand of friendship to us and for this we will be always grateful. There was however awkwardness and unease - a few of us who had to deal with this formed 'Drugs Anonymous'. Mary B., a counsellor in the Rutland and an addict herself was very helpful and used to say there was a similar organisation in the U.S. and she was trying to contact them. One morning she produced the small "White Booklet". We had a group conscience and obviously decided to be part of the larger group. Thus N.A. was born in Ireland. Drugs Anonymous ceased to exist and the 12 steps of D.A., written on cardboard, was thrown away!"

Tom C.

World Service Conference (WSC)

The NA WSC happens in April every two years in Los Angeles. The 30th WSC will be held from April 25 to May 1, 2010.

There are representatives from most of the 130 countries that have NA meetings. Ireland, sends a Delegate and an Alternate Delegate. The delegate is funded by the World Service Office and the Alternate by the Irish Region. Anyone can go along as an observer. Each region has one vote.

The conference is used for discussion and voting on a range of issues that have arisen in the fellowship from the past two years. New literature is approved, new workshops introduced, World Service positions voted in, and finance and strategic planning discussed. You can download the Conference Agenda Report (CAR) at www.na.org under Services to Members.

See *Letter from our Regional Delegate* on the back page of this newsletter for further information.

Irish Region Convention 2010

The 2010 Irish region convention will to be held on the 22, 23, and 24 of October in the Stormont Hotel Belfast.

The theme is *FREEDOM*.

Rooms are £75 per night for a single room and £95 per night for a double room. Convention flyers will be distributed soon.

More information at www.na-ireland.org soon.

Ian M. - Irish Regional Convention Chairperson



N.A. Inniú

A newsletter for NA in Ireland

October 1991

A SHORT HISTORY OF NA BEGINNINGS

The NA Fellowship as we know it today was founded in Sun Valley in the Los Angeles area of California in July 1953. Its principles had been first applied to drug addiction at the U.S. Public Health Service Hospital in Lexington, Kentucky in 1947. The following year it was organised in New York City by an ex-addict familiar with the Lexington programme. These groups did not last however. The present NA fellowship was formed by a group of addicts who had been attending regular AA meetings in Sun Valley. They had seen the benefits of the AA programme to recovering alcoholics and decided to set up a similar group for addicts. Jimmy Kinnon whose story is included in the Little White Book under the heading We Do Recover, is credited with setting up this first group. Sadly Jimmy died of throat cancer a few years ago after many years in recovery.

The first meetings were fairly sporadic and were mainly restricted to California. Over the next few years NA grew very slowly. In the 1980s there was an explosive growth in NA meetings worldwide. This coincided with the publication of the book Narcotics Anonymous (The Basic Text) in 1983. There are currently estimated to be 20,000 NA meetings in 50 countries.

I R E L A N D

NA's beginnings in Ireland have a parallel with the original group in Sun Valley. In September 1978 a group of addicts who saw the recovery available for alcoholics in AA decided to start a group for addicts. A meeting was set up in a treatment centre in Monastery Road, Clondalkin. There was no information available at the time regarding NA so this first group was called Drugs Anonymous. The Twelve Steps were written out on a poster and the First Step was "We admitted we were powerless over drugs, that our lives had become unmanageable." The meetings were run using AA literature and substituted the words alcohol and drugs for one another. Tom C. was the secretary of this group. Sometime in early 1979 some NA literature was received from the World Service Office of NA and the group changed its name to Narcotics Anonymous. Shortly afterwards the group stopped meeting for a short while.

In October 1979 the meeting was restarted in the same venue using the

same poster from the original meeting. This group used whatever literature was available which again was probably from AA. Mark F. was secretary of the meeting. Within a few months a meeting was started in the the Community Centre in Drogheda and this was followed by a Wednesday evening meeting in the Church of Adam and Eve on Merchant's Quay in Dublin.

MOVES

As time went by the Drogheda meeting eventually folded. The Merchant's Quay meeting moved a couple of years later to the Dublin Central Mission, Abbey Street. There was a subsequent move to 13 Talbot Street before returning to its present site in Abbey Street.

The meeting in Clondalkin moved temporarily in December 1983 to the Jesuit College, Rathfarnham before moving in March 1984 to where it remains today- Knocklyon House, Knocklyon Road, Templeogue.

Outside Dublin a meeting was started in Limerick in the Social Service Centre, Henry Street in late 1981 which is still going strong. The first meeting in Northern Ireland was held in Brycon House, Bedford Street, Belfast in September 1983.

COOPERATION

For the first couple of years any Twelfth Step work was carried out on a

personal level and the groups cooperated with one another in an informal way. In early 1983 some members attended a "learning weekend" in London. A service structure had already been set up in London and these members returned to Dublin with enthusiasm to form a forum which could coordinate the work of the Irish groups in their efforts to "carry the message to the addicts who still suffers".

The first meeting of the Area Service Committee of Ireland was held in a member's flat in Rathgar, Dublin on May 14 1983. Public Information, and Hospitals and Institutions subcommittees were soon established. These committees started an NA meeting in the then Detox centre in the Out Patient's Department of Jervis Street Hospital in October 1983. The first prison meeting was held in St Patrick's Institution in April 1984.

The following month, May 1984, saw Ireland

being the first non North American region to be represented at the World Service Conference of NA held in Los Angeles. An Irish Representative has attended the WSC each year since with the exception of 1986. The idea of a forum which would bring the European Fellowships closer together grew out of the International Affairs Subcommittee which was set up during the WSC of 1984. Ireland was asked to host this event. The first European Service Conference was held in the Arts Block, Trinity College in July 1984 with representatives from several European countries as well as the US.



The original meeting place in Clondalkin

Two years later the Conference came back to Ireland when it was held in the Parish Centre, Rathgar.

Convention

In October 1985 130 NA members registered at the first Convention of NA in Ireland which was held in the Dublin Sports Hotel in Kilternan. The profits from this convention were set aside to be used to establish a phoneline service. After every option was considered a contract was signed with a telephone answering service in July 1986.

In early 1987 a number of service workshops were held in Cork, Limerick and Galway to encourage greater unity with the groups in Ireland. As a result of these workshops the groups in Limerick and Cork decided to form the Munster ASC which first met in Mallow, Co. Cork on the 15th April 1987. The ASC in Dublin then renamed itself the Dublin Area Service Committee. In March 1988 another workshop was held in Limerick. At this stage there were about 10 meetings being held outside Dublin. As a result of this meeting a decision was made to establish a Regional Service Committee for Ireland. This committee had its first meeting in Ozanam House, Galway on May 14 1988.

THE NA SERVICE STRUCTURE AN INTRODUCTION

The basic unit of structure in NA is the group. Each group fulfills its primary purpose of carrying the NA message by holding meetings every week. When a number of groups in a certain area wish to cooperate and communicate with one another in a more structured or formal way they form a committee to do this. This is called an *Area Service Committee (ASC)*. ASCs usually coordinate service activities such as phonelines, public information etc on behalf of the groups. When a number of areas or groups in a wider geographic area want to cooperate with one another they form a *Regional Service Committee (RSC)*. At the moment there are about 50 NA regions established. Some of these regions represent countries such as Ireland, some represent places with large populations and many meetings such as London. On the other hand some regions

represent groups in several countries such as the German Speaking Region which as its name suggests fosters unity between all groups in German speaking countries i.e., Germany, Austria and parts of Switzerland.

THE WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE

The *World Service Conference (WSC)* of NA is the body that promotes unity between all the various regions and many isolated groups. The WSC is made up of delegates, called RSRs, who are elected by the regions (One RSR and one alternate to a region). It meets annually, usually in the Los Angeles area, though 1992 will see the Conference meet somewhere else for the first time - possibly Dallas, Texas. The WSC has an Administrative committee and several standing sub committees

such as Public Information and Literature.

There are two other elements to World Service. The first of these, the Board of Trustees is elected by the participants at the annual conference. There are currently 13 members serving on this board and each member is elected to a 5 year term. One member from Europe, Jamie S-H, from London serves on the Board of Trustees. The Board meets regularly to consider issues effecting the philosophy and development of the Fellowship.

THE WORLD SERVICE OFFICE

The World Service Office (WSO) is the other constituent of World Services. It is the primary service centre for the Fellowship. It is situated in the San Fernando Valley, North East of Los Angeles. It occupies three separate buildings and has a staff of about 40. All of NA's literature is published from there and distributed all over the world. Technical support is also given to the WSC and its sub-committees as well as direct support to members and groups

worldwide. The WSO is administered for the fellowship by a Board of Directors which is elected by the participants at the WSC. The directors serve

for upto three year terms depending on the method of election. There are currently ten members on the board. One of these is from Ireland.

FROM THE NA WAY MAGAZINE

Home Group

Slugg copes



Parents and Carers Committee

Mission Statement

The Parents and Carers committee was formed to help further assist Parents and Carers and those addicts seeking recovery who struggle to make regular meeting attendance due to family responsibilities.

Recovery is a challenge for all addicts and identification is paramount to the principle of one addict helping another.

Parents who need to attend meetings with their children may feel unwelcome or different. These parents and carers may also not be able to attend meetings as often as other recovering addicts and may find themselves surviving with less meetings and less fellowship interaction such as after meeting coffee breaks, conventions, fundraisers and other social gatherings.

Our aims are to help support parents and carers by encouraging existing meetings to become child friendly meetings. We can also assist groups who are willing to hold meetings offering creche facilities.

Addiction is a family illness and many of us have parents or children affected by our disease. Our families have suffered and we often feel shame and guilt in relation to this. It is important that we find identification and look for similarities between us and other recovering addicts. Many of us have partners or ex partners who are addicts some of whom are in recovery some of whom are not. As the fellowship grows and changes so do the needs of our members and it is important that any addict is welcome to attend our meetings.

We have to be careful not to isolate but to make the effort and put our recovery first. Meetings can be a difficult choice for parents with small children who need to be put to bed. Hopefully together we can make our fellowship more accessible for parents and carers seeking recovery. Just as our disease is progressive so is our recovery. Recovery also affects our families. Don't leave before the miracle happens. Keep coming back.

Mary C., Chair, Parents and Carers

IRSC AGM

(Irish Regional Service Committee Annual General Meeting)

This happens every year, the last Sunday in May, 1pm Bachelors Walk, Dublin 1. It is where we elect the officers of the Region for the coming year. All positions are up for election and everyone is welcome to come along to put yourself forward or watch the proceedings. Positions up for election are Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and chairs of the following subcommittees: Webmaster, Office, Entertainment, Parents and Careers, Literature, H&I, Public Relations, Regional Delegate, and Regional Delegate Alternate. For descriptions of any positions and clean time requirement you can contact the regional Secretary at ircsecretary@gmail.com

Letter from our Regional Delegate

Let me give you an insight into the service position I have had the privilege to hold over the first two years as alternate, then as fully fledged delegate, of the Irish Region of NA. As I started out on the journey of recovery, some thirteen years ago, I remember being struck by the manuals and guidelines that were made available once I went looking, which referred to this bigger picture, business conducted in far off places where the literature was posted from and where the 'big' decisions were made. It aroused my curiosity. I struggled to believe that we did this ourselves-addicts in recovery. In the very recent past I visited the 'Office', saw the literature being produced, along with the keytags, met and shared with members from every NA Region- at the same meeting, and contributed in a very active and humbling way in fellowship development within the European communities of NA.

The role of Regional Delegate has been consistently developed over the years to best serve the community from which they are elected. I certainly had doubted any ability of mine to contribute until I was reassured that the body on which I served had faith that I would fulfil the role. As such, the role is a four year commitment, and I have been fortunate to have been able to fulfill this term. As the responsibility has grown so too has my life expanded 'beyond my wildest dreams'. This faith in my ability helped me overcome any doubts. Compromises and accommodations ARE significant and rather than come about through wishful thinking, instead have been made with loving partners and understanding employers with a certain amount of negotiating, supported all the while by sponsorship and fellow addicts.

In much the same way as a GSR would carry the conscience of a group to an Area business meeting, both delegate and alternate participate at the EDM (European Delegates Meeting) on behalf of the Irish Region, representing views and experience relevant to our community. It didn't take long for it to become apparent that our communities contribution both at EDM and WSC (World Service Conference) is highly valued and sought. In return, skills are shared and training made available to both RD & RD Alt in order that this experience goes back to the respective communities to assist in effectively carrying the NA message. While serving as alternate I accompanied the delegate in workshops throughout the four Area's of the Irish region and grew to understand the many similarities, not only in challenges but also in solutions that Area committees evolved through over time. The desire to improve the availability of NA services and nurture an atmosphere of respect and cooperation has been an underlying characteristic of each request received from an Area committee. In responding to each request the RD's role, on behalf of the Irish Regional Service Committee is to assist the Area committees through facilitation of workshops on topics relevant to each Area. Witnessing the growth of the Area committees in particular in carrying out their functions has been a source of inspiration and an indicator of the relevance of the bigger picture.

Now that I've almost completed my term of four years I can see my initial curiosity has been richly rewarded by a Higher Power where nothing is missed, that more WILL be revealed. The process of rotation ensures that as I do hand over the responsibility and an opportunity arises for the next person to consider this possibility I can relay my experience, that there is evidence enough that the barriers that exist are the ones we make ourselves. I can't, we can.

In loving service, Niall S. Irish Regional Delegate

Next Edition: June

The topic will be "The Steps". Please send in any writings, thoughts, drawings, or poems you have on the subject to irsliterature@gmail.com

We reserve the right to edit all submissions. We will only use two or three so don't be offended if we don't use yours! Writing is always good for us!