

Travellers in prison news

Newsletter of the
Traveller Equality
Project

Issue 14
March 2015



BEANNACHTAÍ NA FÉILE PÁDRAIG! HAPPY SAINT PATRICK'S DAY!

Welcome to the fourteenth edition of TIPN and Happy St Patrick's Day to you whether you are Irish or not!

As usual it has been a busy few months for the Traveller Equality Project. We have visited ISIS, Bronzefield, Pentonville, Belmarsh, Wormwood Scrubs and Brixton in the past few months. And as part of our work promoting access to education for Travellers we are going to be visiting a number of prisons in the north of England in the coming months. We've been contributing as usual to Prison Radio's 'Open Road'. We've also been working on improved monitoring of Travellers in Secure Training Centres.

The work of the Irish Chaplaincy in Britain is funded in part by grants from the Government of Ireland, the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference, and the support of many generous friends.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter and please let us know what's happening in your prison. We are especially keen to hear of any education events or initiatives for Travellers

TIPN is your newsletter so, please send us your poems, letters, stories and pictures for the next issue.

Contributions can be sent to:
Traveller Equality Project, Irish Chaplaincy in Britain, 50-52 Camden Square, London, NW1 9XB

Prison and Probation staff can also download resources from our website here:

bit.ly/XCUhAc

Or email us:

travellers@irishchaplaincy.org.uk


ShannonTrust

TRAVELLERS

**Become a learner or a mentor
today!**

If someone you know would like to be able to read **OR** you would like to help others read **ask staff for the details of the Shannon Trust Reading Plan (AKA Toe by Toe).**

ST PATRICK'S BREASTPLATE

CHRIST BE WITH ME,
CHRIST WITHIN ME
CHRIST BEHIND ME,
CHRIST BEFORE ME
CHRIST BESIDE ME,
CHRIST TO WIN ME
CHRIST TO COMFORT ME
AND RESTORE ME.
CHRIST BENEATH ME,
CHRIST ABOVE ME
CHRIST IN QUIET,
CHRIST IN DANGER
CHRIST IN HEARTS OF ALL
THAT LOVE ME
CHRIST IN MOUTH OF FRIEND
OR STRANGER.

On the 17th of March we celebrate St. Patrick's Day, an iconic day all over the world. Thousands will flock to the streets to celebrate 'Irishness' but here's a little history of Saint Patrick himself.

St Patrick was probably born in England arguably in the late 4th Century A.D., and lived a relatively normal life until he was captured and taken to Ireland at age 16. He was enslaved for 6 years before he managed to escape. During his enslavement, he was called to Christianity. He returned to Ireland as a missionary, and in his teachings, combined Irish pagan beliefs with Christian sacrament, devising the Celtic Cross. He is annually honored on March 17.



Ellena from the Traveller Equality Project attended the last All Party Parliamentary Group under the current government at the Houses of Parliament, to discuss the introduction of monitoring Traveller and Gypsy children in the four Secure Training Centers around England and Wales. With monitoring of 'W3 – Irish Traveller/Gypsy' already in place in the adult prison estate and YOI's, we cannot see any reason for there not to be the same ethnic code in place in these centers. Correct figures for the amount of Travellers and Gypsies in all institutions allows them to better support the needs of the group. This may be done through regular Traveller/Gypsy groups or access to Traveller magazines for example.

ShannonTrust



TRAVELLERS

**Become a learner or
a mentor today!**

If someone you know would like to be able to read **OR** you would like to help others read **ask staff for the details of the Shannon Trust Reading Plan (AKA Toe by Toe).**



Poem by Jane in HMP Newhall

I love the way you touch my heart
whenever I'm with you...with the
many romantic things you always
say and do.

I love the way you melt my heart
with just a glance or touch. You
mean the world to me I love you
very much.

I love the way you fill my heart
with a love so deep and so true...
I've never felt like this before, no
one makes me feel like you.

I love the way you've captured my
heart in oh so many ways.

You make me laugh, you make me
smile, and you brighten up my
days.

I love the way you catch my heart
whenever we are together.
You're affectionate, loving and
caring I hope it lasts forever.

This is your newsletter so please
send your poems, stories and
pictures for the next edition.



A lesson learned hard is a lesson remembered by Patrick in HMP Liverpool

The days go by but they seem to slow, with every day that passes the older I grow. Time stops for no one and life can be cruel you become emotionally scarred from all the stuff you've been through. Selfish choices and wreckless decisions and the consequences that came along with it. This cold hard steel they place around my wrists and these four high walls that I'm confined within. Regret and remorse for all the things I've done the darkness of chaos has cast a son. The resentment inside my mind starts to feel for all missed opportunities and cold buckled dreams. I carry on living the best way I can for there is darkness inside every man. But it is how you choose to deal with your demons, because it is what we say and do that defines us as humans. There is no point in always feeling upset but never impose on another that, which you would not choose for yourself. People in general can be almost as cold as November but a lesson learned hard is a lesson remembered.

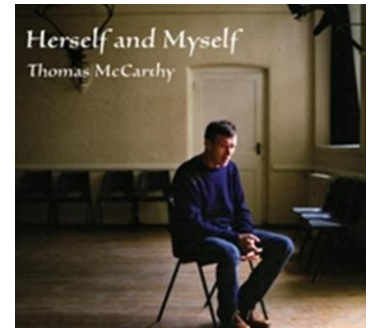
COMPETITION

We have two Thomas McCarthy CDs to give away. Thomas was recently recorded singing for the popular TV series 'Call the Midwife' which aired on the 22nd February 2015.

The best poem, letter, story or drawing received by Friday 10th April 2015 will receive a CD. The competition will be judged by Fr. Gerry McFlynn and Liz Power in our sister project, The Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas. It will also be included as the star letter in the next newsletter.

The second CD will go to the winner of a raffle of all names who return the completed word search which is enclosed with the newsletter. There are 13 words to find, all related to what's in this edition of the Travellers in Prison News.

GOOD LUCK!



In Prison

People sometimes ask me ‘why funerals are so important for Travellers?’ Or say something like ‘it was only his aunt that died – it wasn’t close family’.

And that is just it – for a Traveller family is everything. There is no such thing as close family on the one hand and distant family on the other. When a member of a Travellers family dies like us all, it hits hard. But for a Travelling man or woman the death of a family member is the loss of someone central to their life.

When you grow up knowing that the only people you can always trust are your family, no matter how distant then the loss of a part of that family hits especially hard. The death of a person in your family circle in your community is a blow to every Traveller, a massive change to their life. Because of this Travellers mark death very solemnly. Funerals are milestones in a Traveller life because the death of one Traveller changes the lives of all Travellers who knew him or her.

Remember to register today in your prison as:

‘W3 – Gypsy / Irish Traveller’

If you are not counted, You won’t count!



THERE WAS A FULL HOUSE AT THE PARLIAMENTARY SEMINAR ON TRAVELLER SITES WHICH WAS CHAIRED BY LORD AVEBURY.

You must now register if you transport waste as part of your business. You must also register if you buy, sell or dispose of waste, or arrange for someone else to do so: Below are the contact details of the organization in your region if you have any further questions:

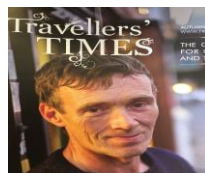
England Environment Agency
Email: enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

Telephone: 03708 506 506

Natural Resources Wales
enquiries@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk

Telephone: 0300 065 3000

FREE COPIES OF THE TRAVELLERS' TIMES



We have been working with prisons across the country to improve access to resources for Travellers so we were delighted when our friends at the Travellers' Times told us that they would provide free copies to prisoners/prison staff.

Contact them at:
info@ruralmedia.co.uk or
Travellers' Times, Packers House,
22-24 West St, Hereford, HR4
0BX.



Prisons and Probation

Ombudsman

The recent report by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman is a very big step in the right direction. They have called for greater awareness to prevent Traveller and Gypsy deaths in jail. It suggested prisons should be doing the following things:

- Prisons should be identifying and recording Travellers at reception and updating records for those who are not identified as 'W3- Irish Traveller/Gypsy' when they should be.
- Prisons should be aware that members of the Travelling community are at an increased risk of suicide.
- Prison equality groups should have a prisoner and staff member representing the Travelling community. This could also include inducting new Travellers when they first enter prison.
- Prisons should be aware that family ties are considered even more important to Travellers and should support prisoners and families to remain in contact.
- Prisons should consider the risk of suicide for apparent victims of bullying.
- Prisons should take in to consideration the needs of illiterate prisoners, especially with things like healthcare and provide alternatives, for example pictures.

What can you do as a Gypsy or Traveller to improve things in your prison:

- Request to change your ethnic code on your P-NOMIS to 'W3'.
- Ask the Equalities/Diversity Officer or the Equalities Rep on your wing about whether there is a Traveller group running in your prison. If not ask how you can set one up and think about volunteering for the role.
- If you think you have suffered discrimination as a Traveller then you need to complain. You can do this by filling in a Diversity Incident Reporting Form (DIRF). Request help with this if you need it.



Government Discriminated Against Travellers' Planning Applications

Eric Pickles, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, has recently been found to have breached both English and Welsh law and the European Convention of Human Rights with his controversial policy of 'recovering' (calling in for special examination) Traveller site planning appeals. In January's court case the judge, Mr Justice Gilbart, found that Mr Pickles's policy had breached both the Equality Act 2010 and Article

6 of the European Convention of Human Rights. The Judge held that the Secretary of State's decision to recover all the Gypsy and Traveller appeals was unlawful because it indirectly discriminated against Gypsies and Travellers, it had breached his public sector equality duty. As a consequence the Judge quashed Mr Pickles' decision to recover the two appeals by two Romani women, Charmaine Moore and Sarah Coates.

According to experts in the field of Gypsy and Traveller law, the judgment means that the vast majority of Gypsies and Travellers who have had successful appeals recovered and overturned by Mr Pickles' office may now be able to challenge those decisions in court.

Mr Pickles had issued a ministerial statement in July 2013, stating that his office would 'consider for recovery appeals involving Traveller sites in the Green Belt'. In practice this meant that where appeals involving Gypsy and Traveller sites had been allowed by Planning Inspectors, they then faced being overturned by Mr Pickles.

Mr Justice Gilbart highlighted the seriousness of Mr Pickles's contravention of the law.

Some questions we've had from prison staff and our answers –

Why do you use a capital letter for 'Gypsies' and 'Travellers'?

Gypsies and Travellers are groups of people – an ethnic group – and so for the names of things we always use a capital letter. It is a matter of respect for a group, just like when we use a capital letter for English, Irish and French.

Are Travellers that don't travel still Travellers?

Travellers are an ethnic group with a shared heritage. Just one part of that shared heritage is the custom of nomadism – moving on for work and pleasure from place to place.

Nowadays it is very difficult to live a nomadic life or even to live on an authorised site or halting site because of various laws and prejudice. **BUT** living in a flat or house or wherever a Traveller still remains a Traveller because that is his or her heritage and ethnic origin.



Open Road is the monthly National Prison Radio Show for Gypsies and Travellers. It has been running for almost a year. If you've listened to Open Road or contributed to it, let us know your opinion about the show.

Where do Gypsies and Travellers come from?

Although Gypsies (Romanies and English Travellers), Welsh Travellers (Kale), Scottish Travellers and Irish Travellers (Pavees or Minceir) have different origins, they share similar experiences and traditions.

Generally speaking and this is in no way the full story – Gypsies / Romanies / Kale originated in Northern India – although they have lived and worked in Britain for many centuries.

Again it's not the full story but Scottish Travellers mainly have their origins in Scotland and Irish Travellers their origins in Ireland.



Norah's Traveller Academy

Norah's Traveller Academy is a new TV program aired on Irish television following the lives of four ambitious and inspirational Traveller women trying to crack the world of business. Norah mentors them



to develop skills to make their chosen businesses a success both inside and out the Travelling community.

It is groundbreaking Irish television as the girls still experience some prejudice and exclusion. The girls say changing attitudes towards Travellers is top of their agenda.

What Can You Do To Support Your Gypsy and Traveller Community?

*** REGISTER AS 'W3 – Gypsy / Irish Traveller'**

- Become a Shannon Trust Mentor or Learner
- Become a Traveller Rep
- Organise a Traveller Group
- Become a Listener

EDUCATE / ORGANISE / EMPOWER

Tyson Still On Track for Klitschsko



Tyson Fury fighting Christian Hammer

Tyson Fury kept alive his hopes of a WBO world heavyweight title fight with Wladimir Klitschko later on this year with a conclusive victory over Christian Hammer at the O2 Arena in London on 28th February, after the German-based Romanian retired after eight rounds.

Fury has said he is willing to risk his shot at the big prize and big purse fight with Wladimir Klitschko by facing a different opponent just to "keep busy". The Mancunian fighter Fury is the mandatory challenger for Klitschko's WBO heavyweight title and expects to face the Ukrainian by the end of the summer.

Fury risked his lucrative position when he took on Christian Hammer at London's O2 Arena last Saturday but his confidence in his own ability was justified when he forced Hammer to quit on his stool after eight rounds.

"I'll take another fight if one is there, I am easy," Fury said. "If I want to keep busy, I'll keep busy but it really is up to my trainer Peter Fury to decide what's next. If he thinks another fight, we will have one, if not then we will go into a deep training camp."

26 year old Fury, who is unbeaten in his 24 fights as a professional, believes Klitschko is the only fighter in the division capable of causing him problems. Klitschko will be forced to vacate his title if he fails to fight the challenger by September.

We'll soon see if this fight is really going to take place.

Saunders Steps Aside as Andy Lee Makes a Defence in New York



Following Andy Lee's extraordinary defeat of Russia's Matt Korobov in Las Vegas last December to claim the WBO title, he is now due to defend his WBO crown against Peter Quillin in New York on April 11th.

Middleweight titleholder Lee will make his first defence against Quillin after a deal was made for mandatory challenger Billy Joe Saunders to step aside and allow Lee to defend against the 31 year old Quillin.

Saunders was owed the next title shot but Lee and Saunders worked out a deal for England's Saunders to step aside for an undisclosed payment. Saunders' management said "It's possible Saunders could be on the undercard of Lee-Quillin, but he will get an interim fight regardless, possibly in the States."

Thirty year old, Andy Lee (34-2, 24 KOs), won the vacant title by sixth-round knockout against Matt Korobov in heroic come-from-behind fashion on December 13th in Las Vegas.

Peter Quillin (31-0, 22 KOs), 31, of New York, won the belt in October 2012 when he knocked down Hassan N'Dam six times in a unanimous decision. Quillin went on to make three title defences before vacating the title.

Lee had hoped to make his first defence against the 25 year old Saunders (21-0, 11 KOs), in Ireland, but the money to face Quillin was much greater than facing Saunders.

Lee was even considering vacating the belt to face Quillin in a nontitle bout rather than defend against Saunders because of the difference in money that was involved.

Saunders became the mandatory challenger for the belt by winning a split decision against Chris Eubank Jr. on 29th November last year in a title eliminator in London. Saunders said that by accepting a step-aside deal he was "in a better position" and would be getting a six-figure payment to allow Lee-Quillin to go through as a title bout.

"And if I didn't step aside Andy Lee was vacating his world title," Saunders wrote. "I want to fight a champion. Not for vacant belt."

Although Saunders will have to wait a bit for his title opportunity, Lee-Quillin shapes up as a competitive and entertaining fight.

"It's a great match and it's a huge opportunity for Andy, who wanted to defend his title," his manager Lou DiBella said.

"It's a really good matchup of styles. They aren't going to run from each other. There will be bombs thrown. Pete is strong and a come forward kind of guy, but Andy is a go-to-battle warrior with a good chin and he's got that tremendous equalizer, the killer right hook. That may play into one of Peter's weaknesses. I think it's a sensational fight."

Investigation into Racist Abuse of Hurler

It's one of the fastest and most fearsome sports in the world and an Irish Traveller plays at the top level but there are questions over his continued participation in hurling after he was subjected to racist abuse.

An investigation has been started by the governing body, the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) into the racial abuse of Wicklow hurler and Traveller Andy O'Brien during a match against Meath.

Full-forward O'Brien (27) has been playing senior hurling for the Wicklow for 10 years but has threatened to quit the inter-county game unless action is taken.

"I was racially abused. It was out of order. I was called 'tinker' and 'knacker' and every name under the sun," O'Brien said.

"I'm determined to do something about this. I have a lot of nephews and I don't want this happening to them.

O'Brien was honoured at the Traveller Pride Awards in 2011, receiving an award for his performances in the Christy Ring Cup. The father-of-two has threatened to quit the game if the issue of racism is not tackled. "My family was there and my father heard



Andy O'Brien, Wicklow Hurler it," he added. "I will pack in the hurling if nothing is done about this."

A formal complaint has been made by the Wicklow County Board and is being investigated by the GAA.

STAY IN TOUCH!

We hope you enjoyed this newsletter and will sign up for future editions.

- Do you have a question about Travellers in prison?**
- Are you thinking of starting a Travellers Group and would like advice?**
- Are you looking for resources for Traveller prisoners?**

Then please get in touch!

**Traveller Equality Project,
50- 52 Camden Square,
London,
NW1 9XB**

travellers@irishchaplaincy.org.uk

Tel: 020 7482 5528

Our Staff:
Conn MacGabhann (Manager)

Ellena Costello (Policy Officer)