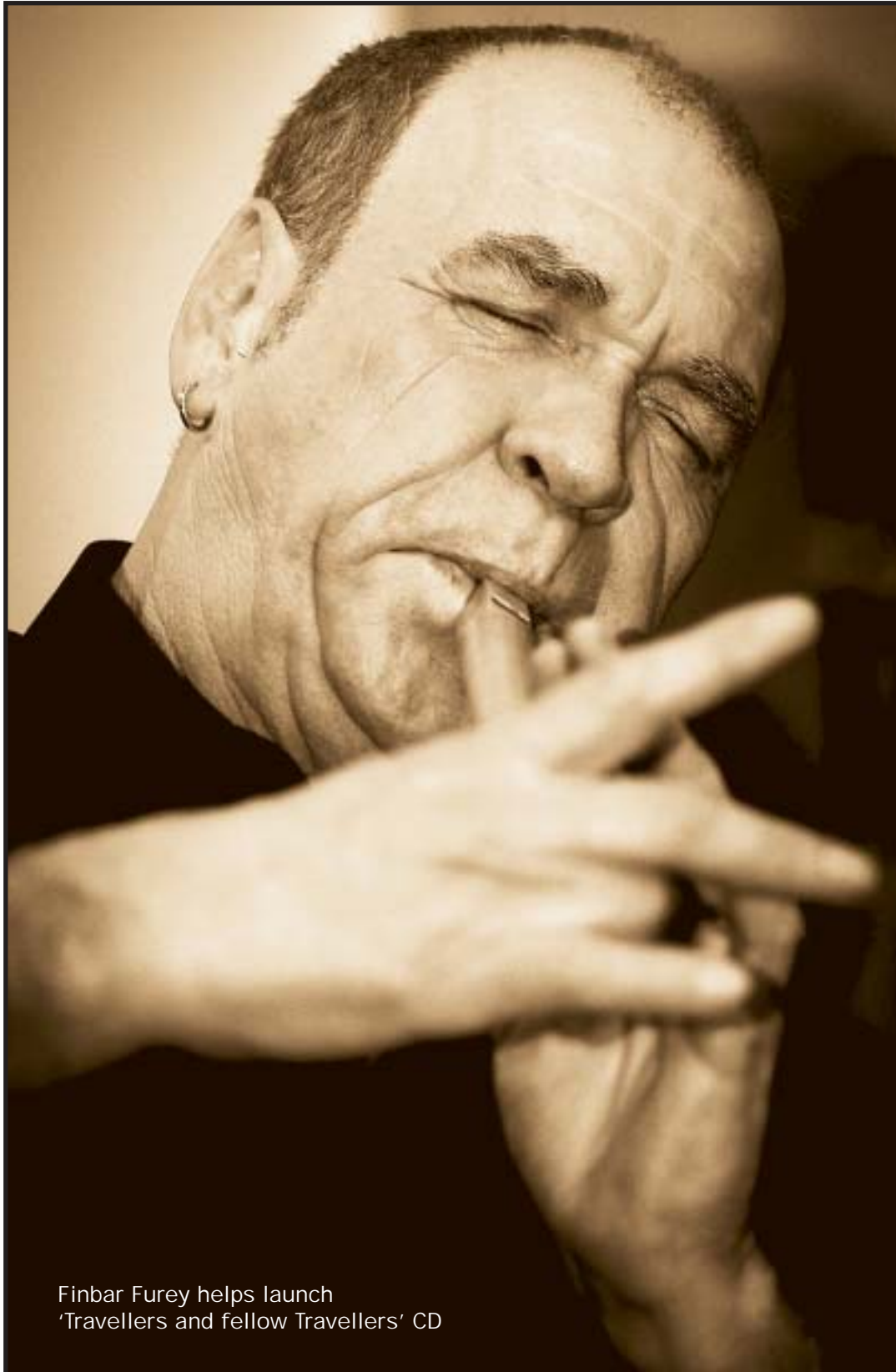


# PAVEE



PAVEE POINT Double Edition Newsletter



Finbar Furey helps launch  
'Travellers and fellow Travellers' CD

Report on  
High Level  
Officials  
Group

FCPNM  
Visit



Winnie  
Kerrigan's  
winning story  
'A Traveller  
woman's  
memories'

Pavee Point  
Staff Raise  
8,000 in  
Response to  
Tsunami  
Disaster



Raising Funds for Tsunami Appeal – Mini Marathon Participants

All photos this page Derek Speirs

# Concerned Travellers

Following the Tsunami disaster of St. Stephen's Day 2004 Travellers returning from the Christmas break wanted to know if Pavee Point was going to do anything to help in the aftermath. A number of women approached Winnie Keenan (Mediation Programme) and asked for a Hall Meeting to discuss possible responses. It transpired that immediately after the disaster Travellers on sites and in their local communities had donated money to collections but wanted to do more to continue to help those affected in the region. After talking about what could be done, Pavee Point staff both Travellers and settled, decided to set up a fund and collect money for a twelve month period, and set up a sub-group to organise events. The main source of funds came directly from staff themselves who contributed directly from wages. Weekly deductions decided by each individual went into the newly opened Bank Account the 'The Pavee Point Tsunami Appeal Fund'.

In addition to deductions from wages a number of events and fundraising initiatives were embarked upon including two Easter Egg Raffles 2005/2006, the Women's Mini Marathon where 20 Women entered and raised 1218.60, a ticketed Bangladeshi lunch and Mary McCann donated money raised from flower making for the NWCI's International Women's Day celebrations. After it emerged that the area affected by the Tsunami had received excess donations and that other areas abroad were in dire need the subgroup organised a meeting with Concern to decide best where to send money raised. An initial donation for 1218.60 raised through the mini-marathon went to Concern's livelihood programme in Cambodia. This programme was aimed at involving local communities in establishing systems to enable them to become more



Fundraising Committee present Cheque to Joe Hennigan Concern

disaster prepared and livelihood self sufficient.

The final total raised through all efforts came to 8,000 and was presented on the first of June to Concern on behalf of the staff in Pavee Point.

"I think the efforts of Travellers and settled people in Pavee Point show that people can pull together in a time of tragedy and need. Somewhere in the world there is always a tragedy happening and we feel this appeal should always be kept open so we can do ongoing fundraising wherever possible. We plan to donate the remainder of the money raised to a Concern clean water supply project to make sure people have access to clean water. Travellers know how difficult life is when people have no access to water. Living on the side of the road or on unofficial halting sites we could relate to how hard it is to raise a family and live without access to water. I want to thank everyone who took part in the appeal and hopefully we can keep it going." Winnie Keenan Pavee Point Mediation Service.



Winnie Keenan, Pavee Point Mediation Programme headed fundraising efforts



Derek Speirs

# Editorial

**T**his newsletter is being published at a time when Traveller organisations, at national and local levels, feel we and our role is increasingly being sidelined from both the development and the monitoring of policy on Travellers. This is evidenced through the deconstruction of a range of national policy fora which we have engaged in since the publication of the Task Force on Travellers in 1995.

The Monitoring Committee on Travellers was disbanded last December; the National Traveller Education Advisory Committee has not met since last October and we still await publication of the Traveller Education Strategy; the National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee has not been re-appointed since its term of office ended last March; with the reform of the health boards the newly established Health Service Executive has set up a national working group on Travellers and Minority Ethnic Groups with no representation of Traveller organisations.

This is not good enough. Traveller organisations have worked well in partnership with a range of government departments and statutory agencies over many years. In fact the government cite this partnership at a range of European and UN committees as a model of good practice. The recent developments outlined above and specifically the exclusion of national Traveller organisations from the establishment, composition and operational structures of the High Level Officials Group on Travellers continues to be an area of serious concern to Pavee Point. It harks back to the failed assimilationist policies of the 1960s when settled people decided what was good for Travellers and this resulted in flawed and ineffective policies which represented bad value for money. It is no longer acceptable for settled people to develop policy without Traveller inclusion just as it is unacceptable for men to design policy for women. We call on all right thinking people to raise their concerns about these developments and to seek to remedy the situation. Our position paper on the HLOG is included in the newsletter.

These negative developments once again high-

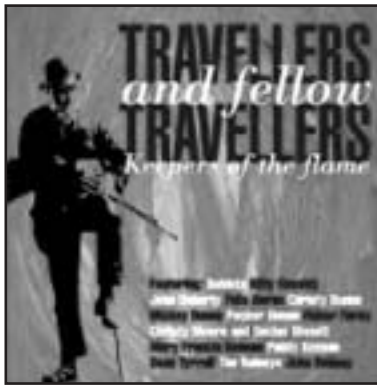
light the need for an independent oversight mechanism in relation to Travellers. Pavee Point once again calls on the government to introduce a statutory agency/Ombudsman to drive, monitor and if necessary enforce policy on Travellers. We call on all political parties to include this in their election manifestoes.

Despite these negative and regressive developments at a national level it would be remiss not to focus on some of the positive initiatives which have taken place over the past six months. Last December we co-ordinated a very successful Traveller Focus Week with the theme of Recognition, reflecting one of the pillars of the National Action Plan Against Racism which funded the initiative. Some of the activities which took place during the week are reported on in this newsletter. The week was particularly timely taking place a few weeks after the negative fallout from the Nally case. We also highlight aspects of our emotive Anniversary Conference "20 years on the Road, Still Moving Forward" which was opened by President Mary McAleese.

Our work with the Roma community in Ireland is also highlighted through coverage of International Roma Day. An on-going challenge in supporting this work has been the lack of funding to employ dedicated staff to work with the growing Roma community in Ireland. We are hopeful that the National Action Plan Against Racism will be addressing this issue in the near future as it affects all the 'new communities' in Ireland.

Finally the newsletter covers some of the work which members of Pavee Point undertake on a daily basis covering issues as diverse as addressing suicide among Travellers; celebrating the writings of Traveller women and showing the positive efforts of Travellers in supporting communities in Cambodia and Bangladesh. The newsletter covers a range of other events, issues and publications.

*Ronnie Fay  
Director Pavee Point Travellers' Centre*



## Pavee CD shortlisted for MAMA award

Travellers and Fellow Travellers: Keepers of the Flame, the compact disc of Traveller music which was released by Pavee Point last year has proven to be a great success. This was reflected in its recent shortlisting for the prestigious Metro Eireann Media and Multicultural Awards. The awards ceremony was held in Liberty Hall on May 11th and was attended by staff of Pavee Point and the Cultural Heritage Programme.

The Awards night itself was attended by a large number of minority ethnic communities whose work over the previous twelve months was being recognised and celebrated. There were nine awards in all and Pavee Point was nominated in the overall group category. Among the other groups shortlisted were Animate, a strategic migrant worker equality partnership project based in Dungannon, Co Tyrone; Cairde, a non-government organisation, which has been working to reduce health inequalities among minority ethnic groups and supports the participation of communities in terms of enhancing their own health; and The Muslim Youth Society at NUI Galway, one of the most active societies at the university. In 2005, for the second year running, it won the University Societies Best Event Award for its Islamic Cultural Week.

In the event the award was won by Cairde for its excellent work, but Winnie Kerrigan, Training Coordinator of the Pavee Point Cultural Heritage Programme said "It was great to get shortlisted. We know our work is being recognised and that helps. We won this award in 2003 and a second win would have been amazing, but there is always next year!" CD available from [pavee-point@iol.ie](mailto:pavee-point@iol.ie)

## The Civil Service is running a work experience programme for Travellers.

This programme aims to provide quality temporary employment opportunities for Travellers within the Civil Service, to improve path-

ways for Travellers' entry into the Civil Service and to increase skills development for participants in the programme.

### When?

From October 2006 to March 2007

### For how long?

The work experience will be for 6 months

### Where?

Positions are available in the Department of Health and Children (Poolbeg Street), the Department of Foreign Affairs (St. Stephen's Green), the Office of Public Works (St. Stephen's Green), the Department of Social and Family Affairs (Store Street and other City Centre locations), the Department of Education and Science (Marlborough Street), the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (Kildare Street), the Department of Agriculture and Food (Kildare Street), the Department of the Environment (Custom House), the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources (Adelaide Road) and the Department of the Taoiseach (Government Buildings, Upper Merrion Street). These are all located in the Dublin 1 and Dublin 2 areas.

### What hours?

Participants will be expected to work from 9.15 - 5.00, Monday to Friday, with a 45 minute lunchbreak.

### How much?

Participants will be paid €413.25 per week, before tax.

### What kind of work?

Basically, participants will be doing general office work, e.g. typing, filing, answering the telephone: some computer skills would be useful.

### Do I need qualifications?

Participants should have passed their Leaving Certificate or possess an equivalent qualification.

### What's in it for me?

- ✓ 6 months work experience
- ✓ Regular salary
- ✓ Develop new skills
- ✓ Sessions on Civil Service recruitment
- ✓ Learn about the workings of the Civil Service
- ✓ record of skills learned/ projects completed for use in future employment
- ✓ Certificate and Reference presented on completing the Programme

### Who do I contact for more information?

You can contact Brid O'Brien, Pavee Point, Tel: (01) 878 0255 E-mail [te@pavee.iol.ie](mailto:te@pavee.iol.ie)

Or, Miriam Joyce, Equality Unit, Department of Finance, 73-79 Lower Mount Street, Dublin 2; telephone 01-6045464, email [Miriam.Joyce@finance.gov.ie](mailto:Miriam.Joyce@finance.gov.ie).

## Garda Recruitment -Reminder of the next round

In multi-ethnic societies, it is important that police organisations reflect the diversity of the communities they serve. In October 2005, An Garda Síochána held a recruitment drive aimed at encouraging members of minority ethnic groups to join the police service. Many groups welcomed this initiative, but felt that the period between the announcement of the recruitment initiative and the deadline for applications was very short in terms of getting the message out to communities and applicants getting prepared. Nevertheless, it was encouraging to see Travellers showing an interest in joining An Garda Síochána and looking for further information. A small number of Travellers applied and are currently going through a competitive selection process.

A new recruitment drive is expected to take place before the end of 2006, although the exact date has yet to be decided. As there may again be a short lead in time from announcement to application deadline, we would like to encourage Travellers who are interested in applying to join An Garda Síochána to give themselves plenty of time to find out what the job involves, what criteria they have to meet in order to apply, what is involved in the selection process and how to prepare themselves. Further information is available from the:

Public Appointments Service, Chapter House, 26-30 Abbey Street Upper, Dublin 1, Tel. LoCall 1890 252031 or 01-8587400 [www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie)

Admissions and Appointments Office, Human Resource Management, Garda Headquarters, Phoenix Park, Dublin 8, Tel. 6660000, Garda Racial and Intercultural Office, Garda Headquarters, Harcourt Square, Dublin 2, Tel. 01-6663817.

All applications are now done online. Individuals who are interested in applying can register their interest at [www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie) and they will be informed by email of the date of the next round of recruitment as soon as it becomes public.

Traveller Organisations continue to have an important role to play in bringing the Garda recruitment initiative to the attention of Travellers in their areas and encouraging Travellers to consider a job in An Garda Síochána as one of a wide range of valid work and career options.



Derek Speirs

## Planning for Diversity, Equality and inclusion in Early Childhood Forum

On Tuesday 20th June, Pavee Point Travellers Centre hosted a national forum on training and professional development in early childhood care and education.

A Vision Shared was the first national forum on training and professional development in early childhood care and education and sought to complement and build on existing diversity and equality initiatives in the early childhood sector. It aims were to develop strategies for the inclusion of a comprehensive approach to diversity and equality training and professional development focusing on planning, implementation and delivery in line with current policy developments.

Addressing the conference Glenda Mac Naughton from Centre for Equality and Innovation in Early Childhood (CEIEC) University of Melbourne, Australia stated:

"No child should want to wash away their skin colour; no child should need to blush when they tell us who they are. It is our responsibility ethically, morally and professionally to ensure that they don't."

Pavee Point's Early Childhood Programme has taken a leadership role in promoting diversity and equality awareness and training in the early childhood sector. The Éist project has laid the groundwork for mainstreaming equality and diversity

ty training. The training approach has been promoted, developed and tested across the sector at pre-service, in-service and at supervisory level. The training has shown that this approach is a successful way to promote anti-discriminatory practice and respond appropriately and inclusively to the needs of young children.

The Forum provided a space for practitioners' voices and combined them with internationally renowned speakers: Glenda Mac Naughton, (CEIEC) University of Melbourne, Australia, Anke Van Keulen, Diversity in Early Childhood Education and Training (DECET) Utrecht, the Netherlands, Mathias Urban, Strategies for Change Project, University of Halle, Germany, Chair Colette Murray, Pavee Point, Dublin

The Forum was a joint initiative by Pavee Point 'eist' project, the Europe DECET Network, the strategies for change project, University of Halle, Germany and the Department of Applied Social Studies, NUI Maynooth.

A Report of the Conference will be available from Colette Murray [ecce@pavee.iol.ie](mailto:ecce@pavee.iol.ie)

## Royal College of Surgeons

Pavee Point are delighted to welcome an initiative by the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland (RCSI) to support Traveller access to their Third level medical programmes, which will be achieved through the provision of affirmative bursaries. Martin Collins, Pavee Point.

**What is this all about?**

In 2005 the RCSI developed an

access programme for students and it is now keen to further widen access routes to students previously under-represented at third level. As part of this initiative the college in 2006 is working with Pavee Point to provide scholarship support to enable suitably qualified Travellers to join its medicine, physiotherapy and pharmacy programmes. Two scholarships per course will be made available, this will total 6 scholarships per year. This scheme is envisaged to continue over the coming years.

### Who is the RCSI?

The RCSI is the largest medical School in the country with students from over 40 countries worldwide studying medicine, physiotherapy and pharmacy at its Dublin campus on St Stephen's Green.

### Update on this Initiative

RCSI are working in partnership with Pavee Point to develop this initiative. A Steering group is being established to develop criteria and guidelines. Currently the scholarships will cover both tuition fees and associated costs to ensure that the student will be relieved of the financial burden normally incurred by participation in third level education.

Details of the programme have yet to be finalised, one of the areas being explored to increase access will be Third level Foundation courses which will also be included as part of the funding package.

Further information and updates about this exciting programme will be available as plans are formalised. Contact person Jane Rooney, Education Coordinator, Pavee Point [email: education@pavee.iol.ie](mailto:education@pavee.iol.ie)

## Children playing with Éist materials



Derek Speirs

# High Level Officials Group on Traveller Issues

Pavee Point's Position Paper on High Level Official Group

**T**his article examines issues related to the establishment (and associated structures at local level) of the High Level Official Group (HLOG) and the concomitant phasing out of existing consultative mechanisms related to the implementation of the Government's Task Force on the Travelling Community.

Pavee Point welcomes any initiative to improve the conditions faced by the Traveller community in Ireland, particularly one such as the HLOG that is backed by the Taoiseach and a cabinet sub-committee. Pavee Point contends that the establishment of this Group has potential to progress the better 'coordination of services'.

However because of the exclusion of national Traveller organisations from the HLOG, coinciding with the disbandment of structures associated with the implementation of the Task Force on the Travelling Community which involved Travellers, the HLOG is undermining and significantly narrowing the opportunities of national Traveller organisations to influence/contribute to Government policy, including coordination of services.

Pavee Point along with other national Traveller organisations has called for the establishment of a Traveller Agency to monitor and enforce policy related to Travellers, either across all areas of policy and/or specifically on Traveller accommodation. To date this approach has been rejected by the Government.

The weaknesses and failures of the Irish Government in relation to Irish Travellers have been increasingly well documented by International bodies in recent years:

For example the UN CERD Committee (2005) noted in its concluding observations on Ireland:

'While noting the efforts made so far by the

State party with regard to the situation of members of the Traveller community in the field of health, housing, employment and education, Committee remains concerned about the effectiveness of policies and measures in these areas (art. 5 (e)).

The Committee recommends to the State party that it intensify its efforts to fully implement the recommendations of the Task Force on the Traveller community, and that all necessary measures be taken urgently to improve access by Travellers to all levels of education, their employment rates as well as their access to health services and to accommodation suitable to their lifestyle'.

ECRI in its second report on Ireland (2001) stated:

'One of the main barriers to improvement of the situation as regards accommodation is reported to be the unwillingness of local authorities to provide accommodation and resistance and hostility among local communities to planned developments, often resulting in injunctions and court cases. In this respect, it has been commented that the fact that no sanctions are provided for in the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act against authorities who do not take measures to provide accommodation for Travellers may weaken its effectiveness'.

Despite the weaknesses, gaps and failures of the Irish Government to implement its own policy on Travellers, Pavee Point has consistently sought to play a constructive and forward looking role in planning, implementing and reviewing policy. Virtually all policy development related to Travellers in the past 20 years has involved a significant input from Travellers, and where progress has been made on issues such as the Task Force Report, or on individual sectors such as health and education, the role of Pavee Point has been widely acknowledged, including by relevant Government Ministers.

## Background to HLOG

In December 2003 at the request of the Taoiseach, a High Level Officials Group (HLOG) was established under the aegis of the Cabinet Committee on Social Inclusion. Its remit was to 'ensure that the relevant statutory agencies involved in providing the full range of services to Travellers, would focus on improving the integrated practical delivery of such services'.

The HLOG is chaired by an Assistant Secretary in the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and comprises members of the Senior Officials Group on Social Inclusion and other senior public servants.

These include civil servants from the Departments of Health; Environment and Local Government; Education and Science, Social and Family Affairs; Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs as well as Police and the Prison Service. The HLOG excludes all NGOs, including Traveller NGOs; social partner organisations (including employer and trade union groups) and relevant statutory bodies such as the Equality Authority. There are few women and no Travellers on the HLOG.

To date the HLOG has issued two reports, an interim report presented to the Cabinet Committee on Social Inclusion and a First Report in March 2006.

In May 2004, shortly after the establishment of the HLOG, the Three national Traveller organisations wrote to reiterate already expressed concerns and met with the chair of the HLOG, (an Assistant Secretary in the Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform) to raise a number of concerns, including:

- ◆ The absence of Traveller representation on the HLOG
- ◆ The absence of terms of reference for the HLOG
- ◆ The apparent duplication/potential undermining of existing government appointed bodies on Traveller issues (those associated with the implementation of the 1995 Task Force on the Travelling People).

In September 2004 the three national Traveller organisations wrote again to the Chair of the HLOG to highlight further concerns about the apparent replication of the HLOG at a local authority level, where once again Traveller organisations were excluded and where existing consultative mechanisms at a local level would be potentially undermined/sidelined.

## Key concerns arising from new coordinating structures

### a) Existing discussion/partnership approaches with national Traveller organisations have been sidelined/undermined

The work of the HLOG has effectively replaced all the structures associated with the Task Force on the Travelling Community, including Traveller participation. Since the establishment of the HLOG and associated local authority committee's consultation with national Traveller organisations in relation to overall

policy has virtually ceased. Existing consultative mechanisms at a national level have been disbanded or ceased operation, including:

- ◆ The Monitoring Committee of the Task Force on the Travelling Community (disbanded December 2005)
- ◆ The National Traveller Accommodation Committee (not reappointed in March 2006)
- ◆ The National Traveller Education Strategy was 'signed off' by its steering committee in October 1995. The strategy remains unpublished (June 2006) and the National Traveller Education Advisory Committee has not met since.

### b) The role of local authorities/CDB's in coordinating services to Travellers at local level

The report of the HLOG contends that local authorities (through County/City Development Boards CDB's,) should have a central role in implementing Traveller policy at local authority level (counties and cities).

While this appears reasonable, there is no recognition of the harsh reality that to date most local authorities (highlighted in Government and international reports) have failed by a considerable margin in meeting their own responsibilities in providing accommodation for Travellers. For example, South Dublin County Council which is one of the two pilot areas in the report has largely failed to meet its own Traveller Accommodation Programme 2001-2006, with the exception of the refurbishment of existing sites. Considerable numbers of Travellers continue to live in rat infested, poor quality 'temporary official halting sites' some of which have been in existence for over 30 years (for examples St Maelruans site in Tallaght and Bawnogue in Clondalkin). There are only vague targets for improvement in this situation.

The use of CDB's to coordinate services to the Traveller community may be a good concept in theory. However CDB's have been criticised in independent evaluations, including those carried out in respect of the evaluation of the effectiveness of EU funded programmes. For examples, a key report on coordinating structures for the Community Support Framework noted in relation to CDB strategy plans:

'Across the CDB's considerable diversity is evident in how the strategies address coordination and integration of social inclusion activity.... However, while recognising the need to facilitate interagency cooperation, these strategies did not develop this issue sufficiently nor provide any real detail on how coordination and integration could be achieved in practice.

The CDB's were also criticised in the same report for not having sufficient authority invested in them by the local authority and others for the process in which they are engaged. They have also been criticised for being overburdened and under-resourced by the NGO sector in Ireland. In short, CDB's do not have sufficient authority and resources to undertake the role that is advocated for them in the HLOG Report, 2006, whatever the commitments and skills of the individual staff who work for CDB's.

*There is no recognition of the harsh reality that to date most local authorities have failed by a considerable margin in meeting their own responsibilities in providing accommodation for Travellers*

*In the 21st Century it is unacceptable for policy on Travellers to be designed by settled people*

**c) National Policy Being Developed Without Traveller Participation**

One of the concerns expressed by the National Traveller Organisations early in 2004 was that policy on Travellers would be developed without the participation of Travellers or Traveller organisations. It would rightly be unacceptable for policy on women to be designed by men and likewise we would contend that in the 21st century it is unacceptable for policy on Travellers to be designed by settled people. We raised these issues with the Dept. of Justice, Equality and Law Reform in April 2004. We were given assurances that the HLOG would not be developing any new policy, merely focussing on the implementation of existing policy, which Traveller organisations were involved in.

However we note in the Report of the HLOG that 'a Sub-Group of the High Level Group on Traveller Issues on Employment and Training of Travellers was established in April, 2005 with a remit to develop an Employment and Training Plan for Travellers' (p34). While welcoming the focus on training and employment issues we are concerned that Traveller organisations are not involved in developing the proposed Employment and Training Plan. In our experience policies developed without Traveller inclusion are frequently inappropriate, usually don't work and often do not represent value for money.

**d) Lack of Targets and Indicators**

Pavee Point will continue to acknowledge where progress is made at a local level including by the work of the HLOG and its associated structures. However in the absence of meaningful targets and indicators in many policy areas it may be difficult to assess the real outcome and impact of the work of the HLOG

**e) Old attitudes Towards Travellers Persist and Could be Reasserted at National Policy Level**

The default of many statutory agencies working with Travellers can often be to perceive Travellers as a problem which can be solved through a) their assimilation into the wider settled community (for example in relation to pushing Travellers into standard housing through evictions and lack of provision), and b) to focus on Travellers issues to be solved through policing and law enforcement where Travellers are perceived as a nuisance and where there is little enforcement of policy and rights on accommodation, health, freedom from discrimination etc. With the exclusion of Travellers from local structures and national monitoring it is the sad experience of national Traveller organisations that such attitudes reassert themselves and are not sufficiently challenged.

In the absence of a Traveller Agency there is a danger that the knowledge and learning of senior civil servants who are supportive of Traveller issues will not be passed on to new colleagues. In short the present HLOG is not sustainable over the time needed to address the issues faced by Travellers.

**f) The role of Traveller organisations is being questioned by Government**

The role of Traveller organisations, in partic-

ular the critical voice of Traveller organisations is questioned in report of the HLOG, 2006. Under the heading of 'community development' the HLOG Report states

'Representative organisations have an important role in ensuring Traveller rights are listened to and respected. However the group believes that the role of these groups needs to be more than just an advocacy role, particularly in view of the significant state funding they receive'.

The report goes on to say that 'Traveller organisations should play a more explicit role in terms of service delivery to Travellers in areas such as education, training, employment or childcare'.

This statement is a matter of deep concern to Pavee Point, from the following perspectives:

- ◆ The statement is totally inaccurate. Pavee Point is actively engaged in service provision directly and in partnership with key Government Departments for example:
  - The Pavee Point/Health Service Executive (HSE) Primary Health Care initiative
  - The Mediation Service
  - The Youth Work Programme
  - Numerous training and employment schemes involving the State agency FÁS
- ◆ The statement is open to the interpretation that Traveller organisations should be less critical of the weaknesses and failures of Government policy in relation to Travellers. This is a worrying development that has caused deep unease in Pavee Point and other Traveller organisations.

**Options For the Future: A Traveller Agency is needed**

Pavee Point contends that the HLOG and associated structures is not and can never be sufficient to monitor coordinate and enforce agreed policy that impact on Travellers in Ireland, even with the good will and support of the Taoiseach and senior civil servants.

In the context of the lack of adequate progress on Traveller issues, Pavee Point has recommended the establishment of a Traveller Agency to update and ensure the implementation of the outcomes of the Task Force Report including in respect of a wide range of policy including accommodation, health, employment etc. As previously stated, this agency would both coordinate and where necessary enforce policy where Government and Local Government bodies have consistently fail to meet their own targets and standards, as well as encouraging good practice.

Such a body could have similar powers, (though not structure) as RIA, the Reception and Integration Agency and the Office of Refugee Applications Commissioner (ORAC), which have responsibility for asylum seekers and refugees in Ireland. Alternative proposals included the establishment of a National Traveller Accommodation Agency or a Traveller Ombudsman. In December 2004 the Minister of State at the Department of Local Government

and Heritage explicitly ruled out the possibility of establishing a National Traveller Accommodation Agency 'for it is not clear if such a body would be better able to deal with issues and problems arising'.

In the interim the HLOG and their associates bodies at local authority level should be reconstituted to be inclusive of Travellers.

In respect of the CDB's, if they are to be effective in coordinating Traveller policy at a local level they would need to be given sufficient authority and resources to do so and Traveller organisations need to be directly involved in CDB structures (at present such participation is very inconsistent).

In conclusion, Pavee Point along with other

national Traveller organisations have played a key role in both changing and seeking to deliver Government policy towards Travellers. Pavee Point will seek to continue to be forward looking and constructive in the interests of the most disadvantaged and marginalised community in Ireland.

However Pavee Point is concerned that the recent changes arising out of the emergence of the HLOG without Traveller participation, the apparent abandonment of the Task Force on the Travelling Community implementation structures and the contention that Traveller organisations should be more explicitly engaged in service provision, marks a distinct, unwelcome and worrying change in Government policy.

## Summary of the participation of Traveller organisations in decision making at National Level: 1995 to present

This section summarizes the participation of Traveller organizations in national policy developments related to Travellers since the publication of the seminal Task Force on the Travelling Community in 1995 and in particular the establishment of the HLOG in 2003 and the gradual dismantling/abandonment of structures associated with the Task Force on the Traveller Community.

**1995:** Publication of the Report of the Task Force on the Traveller Community.

**Pavee Point comment:** Task Force Report warmly welcomed by all Traveller organisations and perceived nationally and internationally as having the potential to make a significant impact on Travellers.

**1998:** Establishment of a Monitoring Committee to oversee the Task Force Report.

**Pavee Point comment:** Although there was a significant delay in establishing a monitoring committee, its establishment was broadly welcomed by Traveller organisations and Traveller organisations played a positive role in the work and outcomes of the committee

**2000-2005:** The Monitoring Committee published its first report on December 5th 2000. Its delayed second (and final) report was published in 2005.

**Pavee Point Comment:** Both reports recorded progress but expressed significant concern about both the pace of change.

**1998:** National and Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committees

(NTACC) established by statute by the Government to monitor progress on Traveller accommodation

**Pavee Point comment:** Again broadly welcomed by Travellers. The NTACC included participation from the 3 National Traveller organisations.

**2002:** Launch of the Traveller Health – A National Strategy 2002-2005. This strategy acknowledged the appalling health status of Travellers and set out 122 clear actions to respond effectively to this situation. The involvement of Travellers at every level of these actions was considered crucial to its' success.

**Pavee Point Comment:** Traveller organisations warmly welcome this strategy, and the accompanying budget to implement the proposed actions. Unfortunately of the €8 million agreed indicative budget for the strategy, only €5 million was allocated by 2005. There was also a significant loss to budget at regional level, when the Traveller health budget was used for other priorities. Another concern by Traveller organisations has been the delay in advancing the planned National Traveller Health Status Study, designed following an extensive consultation process which was completed with 900 Travellers and health providers around the country in 2003

**2003:** Establishment of a High Level Group of Senior Officials (HLOG). Government assures that Travellers will continue to be consulted

through existing mechanisms established under the Task Force.

**Pavee Point Comment:** Traveller organisations write to say that they welcome efforts to improve the coordination of the delivery of services by the Government but expressing our strong concern at the exclusion of Travellers from the HLOG and the potential of the HLOG to undermine existing consultative mechanisms established under the Task Force on the Travelling Community

**2004:** Establishment of high level officials groups in two local authority pilot areas (Clare and South Dublin), again without Traveller organisation membership but with commitments to consult

**Pavee Point comment:** Pavee Point write to the Government expressing concern about the exclusion of Traveller organisations from the local authority steering (decision making) committees coordinating these pilot schemes.

**2005:** Disbandment of the Monitoring Committee to oversee the Task Force Report on the Travelling Community

**2005:** National Traveller Education Strategy signed off by the National Advisory Committee on Traveller Education in October 2005

**Pavee Point comment:** National Traveller Education Strategy still not published (as of May 2006) and no meeting of the Education Advisory Committee since October 2005

**2005:** Further pilot projects were initiated at local authority level in the County and City

areas of Cork, Limerick, Galway, Waterford and County Offaly.

**Pavee Point Comment:** No Traveller organizations invited to participate in the committees coordinating these local pilots and no national Traveller organizations invited to speak at a seminar on these developments.

**2006:** Government fails to reconvene the National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee, despite the Committee being established by statute (term of office ended in March 2006)

**Pavee Point Comment:** despite being obliged to convene the NTACC, the Government has not done so and has shown no indication that it will in the near future

**2006:** The Government has endorsed the High Level Group's report that inter-agency cooperation is an important way for statutory bodies to enhance service delivery. It recommends that all counties and cities develop a strategic plan to implement a coordinated interagency approach and that the structure of the County and City Development Boards (CDB's) would be used to facilitate the development of the plans and to oversee their implementation.

**Pavee Point Comment:** Very few Traveller organizations are represented on CDB's. These are local authority bodies and it is clear from Government and international reports that local authority bodies have consistently failed in their obligations to meet their own targets in respect of Traveller accommodation.



All photos this page Derek Speirs

Mary Frances Keenan and Maria Stefan (Far Right) celebrate IRD 2006

# International Roma Day

and Launch of “Assimilation Policies and Outcomes: Travellers’ Experience”



Above: Christina and the Adrienne Gypsy Band  
Right: Sandrino Stefan & Zernado Bacelan with Ombudsman for Children Emily Logan



**A**s part of European-wide Action Week Against Racism, Pavee Point Travellers’ Centre marked International Roma Day with the launch of a Report “Assimilation Policies and Outcomes: Travellers’ Experience” and a celebration of traditional Traveller and Roma food, music and dance. An exhibition highlighting the work of the Centre over the past twenty years, and the work of the Roma Support Group over the past five years was on display for guests to view on arrival. Speakers on the day included Pavee Point Director Ronnie Fay; Assistant Director Martin Collins, who highlighted Travellers’ experiences in “Assimilation Research- A Traveller Perspective” and Ion Zatreanu Education Worker with Pavee Point’s Roma Support Group who explored the current situation of Roma in Ireland. The Roma Support Group is a voluntary group that has been working to promote the human rights of Roma in Ireland since 2000.

With funding secured through its work as a Specialist Support Agency to the Community Development Programme and the Family Support Agency, Pavee Point commissioned a complex piece of research which was formally launched on the day by Mr Gerry Kearney,



All photos this page Derek Speirs



Top left: Maria Caladara  
 Above left: Mary McCann prepares stew  
 Top Right: Mary McCann, Anna Horatova, Matej Makula, Calina Marku prepare traditional foods.  
 Left: Gerry Kearney (General Secretary Department of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs), Ronnie Fay (Director, Pavee Point), Julie Keenan & Pauline Collins (CE Workers, Pavee Point)

General Secretary of the Dept Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

The research was undertaken by Dr. Máirín Kenny and Eileen McNeela, independent research consultants. It is a challenging piece of qualitative research which provides new insights into Traveller exclusion in Irish society while at the same time suggesting mechanisms to promote their inclusion. The report demonstrates the dichotomy between official government policy and actual practice and illustrates the difficulties that Travellers encounter in trying to integrate into Irish society. "It illustrates some of the strategies Travellers have used in managing their identity and attempting to improve conditions for themselves and their children in Ireland over the past 40 years". It

becomes clear "that it is not Travellers' nomadism that fuels anti-Traveller racism; it is their group identity. They are ostracised whether they 'settle' or not," states the Report.

The Day highlighted Travellers and Roma shared experiences of racism and discrimination followed by performances by Traveller Musicians, Mary Francis Keenan, young Davy Keenan and Kathleen Marie Keenan and Roma Musicians Christina and the Adrienne Gypsy Band. Traditional Traveller and Roma food was served and International Roma day was celebrated with music and dancing.

*"Assimilation Policies and Outcomes: Travellers' Experience" is available directly from Pavee Point- please contact [info@pavee.iol.ie](mailto:info@pavee.iol.ie) or log on to [www.paveepoint.ie](http://www.paveepoint.ie)*

# Responding to the issue of Suicide in the Traveller Community

Traveller  
Suicide  
Working  
Group  
established

**T**he Traveller Suicide Working Group (TSWG) was established in September 2004 in a response to a growing concern by Travellers and community workers in relation to the perceived increase in completed suicides within the Traveller Community.

At the initial meeting which consisted of members from Galway Travellers Support Group, Parish of the Travelling People, Pavee Point, and Sligo Travellers Group, the issue of suicide was discussed and it was agreed that there was a need to develop a plan to assess in greater depth the issue of suicide within the Traveller community. Such a plan would involve a strategy of prevention, intervention and postvention support that would be culturally appropriate for Travellers.

In the early stages of the group's formation, members attended conferences on suicide, gathered information on suicide support services and met with those services working on this issue to ensure they had all the available and up to date information on Suicide.

The overall aim of the TSWG is to act as a catalyst in supporting the development of awareness raising initiatives on the issue of suicide within the Traveller community. The main objectives of the group are:

- ◆ To develop a strategy of Suicide awareness in the Traveller community
- ◆ To prioritise key actions and tasks that could impact positively on the Traveller community in relation to the issue of Suicide
- ◆ To ensure Travellers are represented and included in national suicide prevention, intervention and postvention strategies developed by statutory, voluntary and community organisations.

The Role of the Traveller Suicide Working Group is broad and includes:

- ◆ A space to share information about suicide prevention, intervention and postvention support, current models of best practice, research and upcoming conferences/training and funding opportunities.
- ◆ To update the progression of the work undertaken.
- ◆ To become informed regarding issues of suicide within the Traveller Community.
- ◆ To prioritise key practical tasks on Suicide prevention, intervention and postvention support which could impact positively on the Traveller community.
- ◆ To provide information to Traveller projects in the country regarding issues of suicide and any recommendations from the Government policy.
- ◆ To respond to needs highlighted by Travellers and Traveller projects e.g. hold information sessions with the community, develop materials etc.
- ◆ To ensure Travellers are represented in

any National Suicide Prevention, Intervention and Postvention strategies that are developed.

- ◆ To support each other when working with such a sensitive issue with the community

In January 2005, Pavee Point made a submission to the National Suicide Prevention Strategy, which was being developed; a copy is available on [www.paveepoint.ie](http://www.paveepoint.ie). The strategy was published in late 2005, and young Traveller men are now a target group in this strategy. The Traveller Suicide Working Group is working closely with the newly established National Office for Suicide Prevention and a meeting has taken place with the National Co-ordinator, who has responsibility of monitoring the implementation of the National Suicide Prevention Strategy, to ensure the strategy is meeting the needs of the Traveller community.

Membership of the TSWG is open to all Traveller projects, Travellers and people working in the community with Travellers who are concerned about the issue of suicide. Key people who specialise in this area can be invited by the group to help develop initiatives. Traveller participation is essential to developing a culturally appropriate response/action plan. Thus projects participating should encourage Traveller representation from within their organisations. Meetings will take place four times a year. The TSWG would like to see increased participation of Traveller groups in the working group and we welcome new members. The group provides an opportunity to share information, supports and the opportunity to work with other Traveller groups trying to work on this sensitive issue. The number of groups has increased since the first meeting in September 2004, reflecting the impact of this issue on the ground. Pavee Point is currently the secretariat for the group, so those interested in joining the group or who are looking for further information, contact Sinead Smith at 018780255 ext 111 or by email at [drugawareness@pavee.iol.ie](mailto:drugawareness@pavee.iol.ie)

On the 26th April, 2005, the Traveller Suicide Working Group organised a seminar for local Traveller organisations to come together and explore the issue of Suicide in the Traveller community. This seminar had a number of speakers such as a Suicide Prevention Officer, a Clinical Psychologist with experience of work with suicide and minority ethnic communities and Fr. Aidan Troy from the PIPS Project, a cross community project in Northern Ireland. Small discussion groups explored current issues re suicide in the Traveller community, suicide prevention and postvention supports for Travellers and finally how Traveller organisations could support the development of a culturally appropriate response to suicide. A copy of this report is available from Sinead Smith in Pavee Point Travellers Centre.



Maxwells

Veronica Fay Watt at launch TFW

# Traveller Focus Week

## Launch Traveller Focus Week 2005 and A Traveller's Ireland Photography Competition

**T**raveller Focus Week was organised by Pavee Point in 2005 and commenced Sunday, 4th December with the official launch in Templebar. The theme of the week was RECOGNITION reflecting one of the key objectives of the National Action Plan Against Racism (NPAR) under which auspices the week was funded.

The objectives set for Traveller Focus Week included:

- ◆ To develop Travellers pride in their Irish identity and cultural background
- ◆ To develop awareness and promote an understanding of Travellers position in Irish society
- ◆ To build relations with the Irish Media
- ◆ To highlight Travellers contribution to Irish society

"It was particularly timely that the week occurred when it did" said Ms. Ronnie Fay, Director of Pavee Point Travellers Centre "Given all the negative media coverage in the days following the sentencing of Pádraig Nally it was important that Travellers were seen and recognised as Irish citizens who make a positive contribution to society. We hope the events of

this week helped towards building relations between Travellers and the majority population" she continued.

The week took place from December 3-10th 2005 and included a range of events including: A Travellers Ireland Photo exhibition in Filmbase, Temple Bar;

- A play by Rosaleen Mc Donagh - 'John and Josie', dealing with issues of Traveller identity and sexuality which premièred to a packed house in the Project Arts Theatre;
- Design and Launch of Violence Against Women and Traveller Myths leaflets
- Special Screening of 'Pavee Lackeen' followed by a Q&A session with director Perry Ogden and Scriptwriter Mark Venner and screening of IFI Archive footage of Travellers through the years at the IFI;
- Launch of an Education DVD Pavee Primary Concerns in the Ombudsman's for Children's Office;
- Pavee Point 20th Anniversary Conference in Clontarf Castle; Launch of Music CD Travellers and Fellow Travellers and a concert in the Teachers' Club.

The week was formally launched by Ms. Lucy Gaffney, Chairperson of the Steering Committee overseeing the implementation of the NPAR.



Launch of Fotochat, Primary Health Care for Travellers Report, Mental Health Presentation and Community Care Directory of Services by Dr Abdul Bulbulia TFW 2005.

Left to right: Helen Collins Community Health Care Worker, Kathleen Mc Donnell CHCW, Bridgie Collins CHCW, Dr. Abdul Bulbulia Independent Chairperson National Traveller Health Advisory Committee, Mary Bridget Collins CHCW and Mary Bridget Collins CHCW

# Great week was had by all at range of TFW events



Above: Marie and Lisa McDonnell help launch Pavee Parents, Primary Concerns DVD.



Right: Also at the Pavee Parents, Primary Concerns DVD launch were left to right backrow: Tom O'Sullivan INTO, Maugie Francis National Education Officer for Travellers, Maggie Lawrence Information Worker Pavee Point, Noel Ward INTO, Kathleen McDonnell Pavee Point, front row Jane Rooney Pavee Point Education Coordinator, Marianne Azema Head of Investigations and Complaints Ombudsman for Children's Office



Launch of Violence Against Women and Traveller Myths leaflets

Right: Melanie Verwoed (Former South African Ambassador to Ireland), Ronnie Fay Director Pavee Point, Philip Watt Director NCCRI, Rosaleen McDonagh VAW Programme Coordinator Pavee Point



All photos this page Tommy Clancy

Top: Prof Alun Evans  
Above: Prof Tony Knowland  
Above right: Finbar Furey plays The Lonesome Boatman

# Concert marks launch of Traveller music CD

**T**ravellers and Fellow Travellers; Keepers of the Flame was released during Traveller Focus Week to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of Pavee Point Travellers Centre and features original tracks that have been recorded specifically for the album, for example those by Christy Moore, Sean Tyrell and Mary Frances Keenan. It also includes tracks from existing albums such as those of Paddy Keenan, Mickey Dunne, John Doherty and Felix Doran.

Also included are rare tracks recorded long ago such as those of Kitty Cassidy and the Rainey's. The Rainey's were well known Traveller musicians in Connemara and the music here is from the only known recordings of them made in the late 1950's by Prof Anthony Knowland. They (the Rainey's) have never been released before.

To mark the occasion a concert was held in the Teachers Club in December last to officially launch the recording. At a packed session various musicians, Travellers and 'fellow Travellers' played to an appreciative audience into the late hours.

Among those who played were Finbar Furey, Sean Tyrell, Mickey Dunne and Mary Frances Keenan, all of whom contributed tracks to the recording.

A special presentation was made on the night to two people who have ensured that Traveller music will be appreciated by many into the future. Prof Alun Evans, who recorded John



Doherty in the 1970's; and Prof Tony Knowland who likewise recorded the Rainey's in the 1950's. They were each presented with copies of the newly released compact disc.

The compact disc is available directly from Pavee Point, 46 North Great Charles Street, Dublin 1 and costs €22.50 including package and posting. Cheques/postal orders should be made payable to Pavee Point. For further information contact: [info@pavee.iol.ie](mailto:info@pavee.iol.ie) [www.paveepoint.ie](http://www.paveepoint.ie)

**Davy and Mary Frances Keenan perform at CD launch during TFW**



'Father's Embrace' by Julien Behal



'Ballinasloe Horse Fair' by Bo Gort



L-R: Julien Behal 2nd place, Lucy Gaffney Chair Steering Committee NPAR, Bo Gort 3rd place, Jacki Hehir 1st place



1st prize 'Reflections' of Chloe O'Reilly by Jacki Hehir

Maxwells

# A Travellers' Ireland Photo Competition



'Monagh By-pass Belfast' by Annie Mongan children's winner

The official prize giving in the national photo competition A Traveller's Ireland also took place marking the start of TFW. The competition aimed to capture the everyday lives of Travellers in Ireland and was judged by a panel comprising photo journalist Derek Speirs, Pete Smith from the Gallery of Photography, Arts Development Officer Emer Maguire from An Múna Tober (Belfast Travellers Support Group), Julie Keenan Information Worker Pavee Point and John Paul Collins Community Development Worker Pavee Point.

The winner Jacki Hehir from Limerick's photo 'Reflections' of Chloe O'Reilly was taken at Cahirmee Horse Fair, Runner up Julien Behal's work 'Father's Embrace' was taken in Dublin while Dutch finalist Bo Gort's photo was taken at Ballinasloe Horse Fair and children's

winner Annie Mongan's photo was taken on the Monagh By-Pass Belfast.

There were 25 photos on display, short listed from over 140 that came from all over Ireland, Europe and the United States. The exhibition ran for the duration of Traveller Focus Week in Temple Bar.

Due to the extremely positive response to the exhibition and requests from members of the public the exhibit has been extended for 2006 and will be brought to as many locations in Ireland as possible. A Travellers Ireland was successfully exhibited in Banagher Library Offaly in Feb/March and will be prominent part of the Kilkenny Arts Festival this August. Should you know of a suitable building/gallery in your locality and be available to coordinate the exhibition locally please contact Terry Battles at [info@pavee.iol.ie](mailto:info@pavee.iol.ie).



President Mary  
McAleese, Pavee  
Point Director  
Ronnie Fay,  
Assistant Director  
Martin Collins



Tommy Clancy

# 20th Anniversary Conference 20 Years on the Road

**O**n the 9th of December 2005 Pavee Point celebrated its 20th Anniversary with a conference “20 Years on the Road, Still Moving Forward” which was officially opened by President Mary McAleese. Guest speakers included Ms Anastasia Crickley Chairperson Pavee Point and European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia and Special Representative of the OSCE, Mr Mikko Puumalainen First Ombudsman for Minorities in Finland and Ms Françoise Kempf Secretariat, Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCPNM) Council of Europe, Actor Michael Collins who performed a special Drama celebrating the beginnings of Pavee Point and Mick Rafferty of Community Technical Aid who composed a poem in honour of the late John O’Connell, Pavee Point Founding Director.

Ronnie Fay, Director of Pavee Point opened the anniversary conference by paying tribute to the many friends and colleagues, Traveller and settled who are no longer with us, in particular the late John O’Connell. Ronnie reflected on the contribution Pavee Point has made to improving Travellers’ Human Rights over the past 20 years.

“From our inception Pavee Point or Dublin Travellers Education and Development Group as we were then known, had 2 key premises which are as relevant today as they were 20 years ago. Firstly we recognised Travellers as a minority ethnic group and racism as the root cause of many of the problems Travellers were

facing in Irish society; and secondly we recognised Travellers right to self determination and believed that Travellers themselves had to be involved in all decisions affecting their lives.”

“These premises of Pavee Point represented a key shift in the work with Travellers and although they continue to be contested and rejected by some sectors in Ireland, on an International and European level the battles have been won.”

“We were particularly proud that at the hearing on Ireland under the International Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination in Geneva this March the International Committee of experts challenged the Irish government on their stance on Traveller ethnicity and called on them to take concrete steps in recognising Travellers as a minority ethnic group. We look forward to working with the government in progressing this.” said Ronnie.

The Conference was told that Pavee Point used a range of innovative and creative approaches in progressing work with Travellers over the years. Pavee Point identified and used community work methods toward direct empowerment and participation of Travellers rather than focusing only on the problems of individuals. Pavee Point was also instrumental in getting the Task Force on Travellers established through getting a commitment for this in the Programme for Government.

“In the Task Force on Travellers Pavee Point and other Traveller organisations played a pivotal role in ensuring that this document was one



**Pavee Point Chair  
Anastasia Crickley,  
President Mary  
McAleese, Pavee  
Point Community  
Healthcare Worker  
Missy Collins**

which reflected a respect for Travellers culture and heritage and acknowledged the role of nomadism; it called for the Equal Status Act and a Traveller Health and education Strategy and independent Accommodation Agency.”

Ronnie concluded by quoting a poem by Margaret Maughan, written at the end of Pavee Point’s first Development Course in Meath Street in 1985.

*“I was hungry and you blamed it on my  
parents;  
I was thirsty and you went to see the EEC  
wine lake;  
I was sick and you told me to wait;  
I was dying and you set up a Commission  
on Itinerancy,  
A Review Body on Travellers, a monitoring  
Body on what?;  
I was naked and you said so were my  
ancestors;  
I had no job and you said we don’t employ  
knackers;  
I was all these things and you said it was  
the will of God;  
I was homeless and you sent me a lorry  
load of stones and a bulldozer;  
When did I see you hungry?”*

Martin Collins, Assistant Director of Pavee Point and member of the Human Rights Commission highlighted Pavee Point’s journey over the last 20 years, and the contribution of Pavee Point to the Traveller movement.

“The journey we have undertaken over the last 20 years has not been easy, at times it was sad and emotional, and at times there was a feeling of despair, powerlessness; but also a feeling of hope and optimism and always a steely determination to struggle on and pursue our convictions and beliefs that we can create an inclusive society based on justice, equality and respect for cultural diversity, and a society that frees the cancer that is racism.”

Martin pointed out that the situation of the Traveller Community has been well documented and commented on by a range of International Human Rights Bodies such as the FCPNM, the United Nations Convention for the Elimination

of all forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), ECRI, the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, all of whom have expressed concern about the treatment of Travellers in Ireland. “These International bodies have urged successive governments to take the necessary measures in partnership with Traveller Organisations to address the economic, social, political and cultural exclusion of the Traveller Community. It is blatantly clear that successive governments have not heeded the advice given by these expert human rights bodies. We know this all too well to our own cost.” Martin added.

“Many Travellers feel our situation has worsened in the last few years, for example: our equality law was diluted to appease the Vintner’s lobby. We saw the introduction of the Housing Miscellaneous Act, which criminalises trespass, and in a context where local authorities have failed to provide accommodation for Travellers, we see the establishment of a High Levels Officials Group to address Traveller issues – yet there is no Traveller representative on this group – it smacks right in the face of ‘so called partnership!’”

Martin highlighted that “One of the most significant contributions Pavee Point has made is the politicisation and consciousness-raising of our community and to position the Traveller agenda within a human rights framework both domestically and internationally, and this is very important because now Travellers are saying that good quality accommodation, access to healthcare, employment opportunities, cultural rights, access to education is not something to be hoped for, wished for, or prayed for, but rather, it’s to be demanded.”

“Pavee Point were, and are uncompromising in promoting these issues, and rightly so. You cannot negotiate away identity. It is not acceptable that non-Travellers continue to make decisions on key issues affecting our lives, and anti-Traveller racism is a fundamental issue that governs the relationship between Travellers and non-Travellers.”

“Over the last 20 years I have witnessed the emergence of a strong, vibrant, resilient Traveller movement, and Traveller leadership being at the core of that. We are now as a people more mature and confident and ambitious in asserting our rightful place in Irish society.”

“The Traveller movement as we know it today owes a great debt of gratitude to the late John O’Connell, who is regarded by many as the founder of the Traveller movement. I know as we go forward to meet these new challenges John’s presence will be with us”, concluded Martin.

President Mary McAleese also paid tribute to the late John O’Connell and reflected on the hard work carried out over the past 20 years by Pavee Point and thanked Pavee Point for helping society on the journey of multiculturalism. President McAleese particularly praised Michael Collins’ performance of his Drama ‘A Cultural thing or is it?’ depicting the early days of Pavee Point.

“Twenty years of seriously hard work and as we have heard its only the start- The work is

dedicated to improving the lives of Travellers, the health of Travellers, the education of Travellers, to promoting Traveller culture, making Travellers proud of their culture and making everyone proud of Traveller culture, showcasing it to the settled community, increasing tolerance and understanding and friendship and partnership between the Travelling community and the settled community. In fact not just between the settled community and the Travelling community but between all of us now who share this island because we are so many different people, so many different groups in the multicultural Ireland, this multiethnic Ireland.”

The President stated that there was no place for discrimination in modern Ireland, and said that we have a huge amount of work to ensure that the new Ireland has no room for ‘crass racism or bigotry’. President McAleese thanked Pavee Point for its work in fighting this battle.

“We have a constitution that has an embrace for every single human being, for every single child. Now those are the words, it is our job to make those words lived and real through the lives of everyone, to make sure that every human being gets a chance to blossom without being held back by discrimination, by poverty by lack of education or by that awful drain of energy that comes when you feel you are a person that is excluded.”

“When you started 20 years ago it was a very different story. Traveller accommodation was and still is such a huge issue a very big struggle that seems to have gone round in circles for such a long, long time but again thanks to you, the lobbying, the pushing the insistence of your rights to be part of every collaborative process that you are experiencing, that has made a big difference.”

“The journey to that better future is one that the Travelling Community doesn’t have to go alone; it is the responsibility of every one of us in society. It is a journey that has been made easier and again Pavee Point can take a bow for the huge changes and structures that have happened over these 20 years, the Equality Authority, the Equality Tribunal, the Employment Equality Acts, Equal Status Acts. All of these things that outlaw discrimination against Travellers and other groups and also vindicate them and support them and on the day whenever their rights are abused there is an organisation and structure, state backed by all the people who vindicate them and support them.” said the President.

The President warned that Pavee Point’s work is not completed yet. She said that society is dependent on the organisation to continue to strive for equality for Travellers and for minority ethnic groups in society.

President McAleese concluded:

“As we have heard we are only at the start of the journey. The day we look at a graph which tells us that the Travelling community lives as long as everyone else, that infant mortality is the same as the settled community, that educational pick up at third level and second level is the same as the rest of the community, that is the day we have our completed republic, that is the day our Republic’s vision is lived.”



Tommy Clancy

Michael Collins performs his drama ‘It’s a cultural thing, or is it?’

## It’s a cultural thing

Actor Michael Collins performed an extract of his drama ‘It’s a cultural thing, or is it?’ as part of Pavee Point’s 20th Anniversary celebration at Clontarf Castle December 9th. The drama paid tribute to the work and spirit of the founder of Pavee Point, the late John O’Connell and showed how Pavee Point or DTEDG as it was then, affected his life as a young Traveller.

The Drama showed how deeply Michael’s involvement with Pavee Point had changed his life. Collins used improvisation to show how the opportunity of doing a Personal Development course changed him from a shy young Traveller boy into a self aware and proud Traveller man.

Through John the young Traveller men and women learnt a word which changed their lives forever: ‘discrimination’. They also learned about other groups who experience racism and discrimination: oppressed minority ethnic groups and oppressed majority groups throughout the world: African Americans, Native Americans, Aborigines and about the system of Apartheid in South Africa. Collins described protesting against Apartheid outside the Dail with other young Travellers.

Collins’ drama brought home the everyday struggles of Travellers lives and showed how participating in the course gave the confidence to Travellers to demand their rights and to fight against discrimination. Through his humour and warmth Michael Collins gave a true sense of the struggle Pavee Point and Travellers have gone through in the past 20 years.

NGO & Pavee Point  
Reps Meet FCPNM  
Advisory Committee  
in Pavee Point May  
25th



Nurul

# Framework Convention for Protection of National Minorities

A delegation from the Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCPNM) visited Ireland from 29-31 May 2006. The visit formed part of the monitoring of Ireland's implementation of the Framework Convention, and follows the submission by Ireland of its Second Report under the Framework Convention on 21 December 2005. The Council of Europe's FCPNM is the first multilateral human rights instrument devoted to the protection of national minorities. Ireland signed the FCPNM on 1st February 1995 and ratified it on the 7th May 1999, and it entered into force with respect to Ireland on 1 September 1999.

The Advisory Committee (AC), Dr Lidija R. Basta Fleiner, Antii Korkeakivi and Gunnar Jansson met with NGO and Traveller organisation representatives in Pavee Point on the 29th of May as part of their monitoring cycle on Ireland. An interesting and informative meeting ensued where a range of key issues and concerns were explored by NGO representatives and the AC. Pavee Point raised a number of concerns pertaining to the Irish Government's Second Report to the FCPNM. These particular issues included accommodation; health; education; Travellers' culture and identity; Implementation and how the State has responded to criticisms on this issue; and Formal mechanisms to engage with Travellers and their representative organisations.

The Government's refusal to recognise Travellers as a minority ethnic group was explored in depth by the AC. The arguments presented in the Government's Second Report have been refuted by Pavee Point and other commentators on more than one occasion.

The question of how the State proposes to integrate Roma living in Ireland into Irish society was also raised; as was the slow rate or complete lack of progress on a range of Traveller issues including accommodation; education; health; and economic development. Over the years a range of commentators including the

FCPNM Advisory Committee and practitioners have queried this lack of progress. In response to slow progress the Government established the High Level Officials Group to explore and deal with the barriers to implementation. (see page 6) Traveller organisations expressed concern that there was no Traveller representation on this Group. Given the State's demonstrated lack of ability to incorporate cultural diversity into its policy and practice developments and its commitment to developing responses in partnership it seems extraordinary that it should set up a mechanism to undertake work for Travellers rather than with them. Such an approach runs contrary to Article 15 of the FCPNM.

Issues raised by the Advisory Committee included:

- ◆ the lack of Traveller representation in the Political structures of the State;
- ◆ the level of links between Traveller organisations and Migrant and New Communities in Ireland;
- ◆ the aggressive decrease of Traveller organisations in policy design and implementation;
- ◆ the dearth of antiracism training for educators and in the education system;
- ◆ the persistent refusal to recognise Travellers as a minority ethnic group; and,
- ◆ the powerful impact of media reporting on minority ethnic groups, focusing on Travellers.

In particular, the Advisory Committee highlighted recent media coverage of Travellers as being 'unthinkable' in Scandinavian countries. The need for an effective Independent Press Council with real means to redress racist reporting was explored.

The Advisory Committee assured that the meeting had provided an invaluable opportunity to be updated on the issues affecting Travellers and other minority groups in Ireland that would inform their questions and meeting with State representatives during their visit.

Pavee Point eagerly awaits the FCPNM's findings on Ireland.



# Pavee Point Position Paper on Senior Traveller Training Centres

Pavee Point Position Paper on STTC's and highlight on other initiatives

## Introduction

Pavee Point's position on Senior Traveller Training Centres (STTC's) is that they should be phased out over the next 5 years.

Pavee Point understands that such a major change in education policy is bound to create difficulties, challenges and uncertainties for both Travellers and those in teaching and administrative /ancillary positions within the sector.

Pavee Point further acknowledges the role that STTC's have played in the past and the commitment of staff in these centres over many years. Pavee Point contends that staff should be re-deployed to other roles of similar status in the Education system and a redundancy package introduced for those wishing to leave the sector.

Pavee Point also emphasises the need to make these changes on a phased basis- over 5 years to allow for such a significant change to be introduced fairly for both staff and Traveller participants

## Rationale for Change

Whatever the original rationale for establishing Traveller Training Centres it is acknowledged by many stakeholders that the approach to Traveller education policy and provision has moved on in recent years.

In particular the overall aim of the forthcoming Traveller Education Strategy (TES) is to ensure that Travellers are integrated into mainstream Education provision across the education system at all levels, including:

- ◆ Preschool
- ◆ Primary
- ◆ Second
- ◆ Third and
- ◆ Further/adult education levels.

Pavee Point contends that should STTC's be phased out, resources should be ring-fenced and invested in supports for Travellers to be integrated into mainstream schooling and vocational training. A failure to ring-fence funding would severely disadvantage Traveller participation in mainstream provision.

We also acknowledge the need for, and are working to achieve, the introduction of a range of new supports and developments to complement the phasing out of STTC's and to ensure that there are positive outcomes for Travellers from education, training and employment initiatives.

In the current climate of planning for change in Traveller Education, and with the forthcoming publication and roll out of the Traveller Education Strategy (TES) Pavee Point has decided to issue this short statement, clarifying our position on STTC's and highlighting other initiatives we wish to see develop. We feel there is a need to issue this statement so that our position is clear and to avoid misinformation. This position belongs to Pavee Point as a Traveller NGO and not to any one individual.

## The Traveller Education Strategy

For over 20 years Pavee Point has worked towards achieving an improvement in the quality of life, living circumstances, status and participation of Travellers in Irish Society. Part of this work has involved advocating for equality of access, participation and outcomes for Travellers in the field of Education.

It is widely known that inequalities exist for Travellers within the mainstream education system and that the education system has failed many Travellers in the past. Through our participation in the joint working group developing



*Internationally, institutionalised segregated provision for minority ethnic groups has been proven to be generally not on a par with what is offered in mainstream provision*

the NTES we, along with the other national Traveller organisations, proposed certain actions which would contribute to an improvement in Travellers educational status.

Some of these actions include:

- ◆ Traveller culture to be incorporated and embraced within the learning materials and teaching methods
- ◆ Educators to receive in-service and pre-service training on anti-racism and interculturalism
- ◆ Traveller children would only receive learning support in schools based on need and not identity
- ◆ There will be no Traveller-only classes
- ◆ Travellers would not be excluded from accessing education in terms of enrolment difficulties
- ◆ There should also be positive action measures to support Travellers to become teachers, teacher assistants and other positions in education service provision

The core principles of the TES are integration, inclusion and interculturalism. These are principles to which Pavee Point subscribes and will work to implement over the coming years. These are the principles we believe should inform all future education, training and employment policy and provision.

### **Pavee Point's Position in relation to Senior Traveller Training Centres**

Traveller-only provision: The STTC model should it continue to exist will inevitably conflict with the objectives proposed in the TES's objective of working towards integration as is happening in other areas such as Preschools, Primary, Post-primary and Third level.

Internationally, institutionalised segregated provision for minority ethnic groups has been proven to be generally not on a par with what is offered in mainstream provision.<sup>1</sup> For example, the Roma Community have been traditionally placed in segregated education provision leading to a lack of equal education opportunities for the community.

### **Traveller Education Budget should be Re-Allocated**

Currently an average of €46 million is spent annually on Traveller education about €13 mil-

lion of which is spent on Traveller Training centres. There is an urgent necessity for a rethink on how this budget is allocated and what outcomes it generates and whether it represents value for money. This money should be ring-fenced and invested in education, training and employment initiatives that will result in positive outcomes for Travellers.

### **Budget Allocation**

Instead of the Department of Education funding parallel services i.e. Traveller-only preschools and Training Centres there is a need to spend that budget on making the mainstream services more in tune with meeting the needs and aspirations of Travellers within a framework that embraces diversity and gives Travellers maximum choice and opportunity for progression.

### **Lack of Outcomes**

Existing research and anecdotal evidence demonstrates that there has been limited progression of Travellers to further education, training and employment from STTC's. Employment levels within the community are very low and the training received by Travellers should contribute to employment opportunities for Travellers.

### **Early School Leaving**

Early School leaving is a common problem within the Traveller community and Travellers educational status is considerably lower than their settled peers. There are many factors that contribute to early school leaving. One of the contributing factors as to why some Travellers are leaving school is that in areas where a Traveller Training Centre exists, the allowance that is offered can act as a draw out of school to Travellers of school-going age. Pavee Point believes that targeted provision should support, not draw Travellers away from mainstream education opportunities.

The National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion 2001-2003 and 2003-2005 has set key targets for the retention of Traveller students to complete the post-primary senior cycle. Young Travellers should achieve their full potential and in keeping with the target set within the National Anti-Poverty Strategy, be attending integrated mainstream education



provision at a level that is appropriate for their age.

### Possible Next Steps

A range of strategies are needed to ensure the successful phasing out of STTC's and the mainstreaming of Travellers within the education system. These are based on a number of key principles including:

### Principles Underpinning the Process

- ◆ The movement towards a mainstreaming approach to Traveller Education, training and employment in line with the TES
- ◆ The need for targeted strategies within mainstream education and employment to support the participation of Travellers
- ◆ A new focus and development of indicators to measure both progression outcomes for Travellers (qualifications, employment, further education and training)
- ◆ The budget allocated for Senior Traveller Training Centres should be ring-fenced and spent on measures promoting equality for Travellers in mainstream education and employment
- ◆ Employees within Senior Traveller Training Centres could be redeployed within the Education system and redundancy packages introduced for those leaving the education sector.
- ◆ Compensation should be provided to those who have additional expense arising from redeployment such as travel or training/education costs

### Proposed Next Steps

1. The drawing up of a Department of Education and Science strategy paper on the phasing out/mainstreaming of STTC's based on the principles set out in the forthcoming TES
2. The need to consult with a wide range of stakeholders about the implementation of the strategy, including staff and Traveller participants
3. The need for the strategy to identify and cost the additional types of supports that will be needed to support Travellers in mainstream education/training provision
4. The phased closing of STTC's and main-

streaming into local schools/training programmes could be conducted on a pilot basis in a number of areas

5. The development of a career path/redundancy strategy for all staff currently employed within STTC's, including support for further training where appropriate
6. The need to develop further strategies to ensure that Travellers of school going age should be supported in every way possible to complete their formal Education
7. The need for a monitoring/evaluation and research programme to be developed alongside the mainstreaming strategy
8. The development of a Traveller Training and Employment programme consistent with the principles set out in the TES
9. The need for quality Further Education and Training Opportunities for older Traveller women.
10. Strategies to combat early-school leaving among Travellers and providing the necessary supports
11. Targeting Travellers within FAS apprenticeships, BTEI Back to Education Initiatives and VTOS programmes
12. Providing scholarships for Travellers entering third level education
13. Providing a quality youth service which is inclusive of Travellers

### Conclusion

It is understandable why many Travellers enter Training Centres as Travellers do experience exclusion and discrimination in the formal education system. It is also understandable that many Travellers may fear a transition into mainstream education and employment and indeed some in mainstream provision may also resist such change out of prejudice towards Travellers.

However, in the current context of real change in terms of achieving better educational status, employment prospects and qualifications for the Traveller Community, the current Traveller specific model should be phased out in favour of a mainstream/targeted approach consistent with the TES and the principles established in the National Action Plan Against Racism (NPAR) under the Provision pillar.

Martina Harizaj,  
Elizabeth  
McDonagh, Bridget  
Power and Winnie  
Kerrigan at  
Prizegiving  
Ceremony



# Pavee Point's Writers win at CDVEC Writing Competition

The City of  
Dublin VEC  
Sport and  
Cultural  
Council's  
Writing  
Competition  
2006

**C**ongratulations to the Culture and Heritage Group in Pavee Point, a number of whom involved in literacy classes with the Dublin Adult Learning Centre entered the City of Dublin VEC Sports and Cultural Council (SCC) Senior Poetry/Short Story/Non-Fiction Competition 2006. Winnie Kerrigan won first prize and a particular mention for the freshness and style of her writing from the judges for her Non-Fiction story: A Travelling Woman's Memories. Kathleen Keenan came 4th in the same category for her work: A Beautiful Stranger. Winnie also came second in the New Writer category for 'It's Just a Dream' and Elizabeth McDonagh was Highly Commended in the same category. In the Novice Short Stories category a delighted Martina Harizaj won Highly Commended for Day Dreamer and announced her intention to continue writing after the success of her' first attempt' and Bridget Power won Highly Commended for her Poem "Who are They?".

"I am delighted that I won and the rest of the women in Pavee Point won and I hope that we will be able to continue writing. Hopefully we will be able to put a book together with our stories and lots more stories that we are going to write, please God." said a delighted Winnie Kerrigan at the prize giving in the Teachers Club. "It's so important to write these stories that we have in our minds because there are so many stories that have been lost or never written that need to be told. It's a good way of holding on to the culture that has passed from us older women that had known so much about it and for the young people to have an understanding of what our culture was like and how important it is to us to this day. Even though our



Writer Desmond Traynor congratulates  
Bridget Power Pavee Point Culture &  
Heritage Programme

culture has changed it is still very good for the young women to write on their culture now and share their stories. I hope that more Travellers will pick up on writing more stories, let it be fiction or non fiction. Please go and put pen to paper and start writing because you don't know how important it is because there are so many stories that we have heard from our older Travellers that we still have memories of and I hope that Travellers will share those memories with other Travellers and also to share it with Settled people. Putting a book together will be a good start so please you Travellers get writing!" says Winnie Kerrigan Culture and Heritage Group Pavee Point.



All photos this page Derek Speirs

# A Travelling Woman's *Memories*



Here is  
**Winnie  
Kerrigan's**  
winning  
story from  
the CDVEC  
Competition

**O**ur storytelling was an important part of our life. We would sit around the fire at night and tell stories to each other. Some would be about haunted camps and ghosts. The men would sit on oil cans at the fire. It would all start around seven o'clock. Then the women and children would come to the fire and they would put more sticks on the fire. Then they would put down the tea can and have tea and cake bread.

Then the stories or song would start off. The songs would always have a good story to them. There were very frightening stories too but they would all be told and everyone would listen to them. It would go on for long hours in the morning. I remember myself when I was very young sitting on the ground listening to all the stories. But then my eyes would be closing and I would lay my head on my mother's lap and I would fall asleep. Then I would hear my mother or father's voice 'Get up and go down to bed.' It's then I would be wakened to the fire going down and the stars shining bright in the dark sky and a shiver of cold in my bones. Then my father and mother would stand up and those were the last words that would be said at the fire. 'It's time for bed so goodnight to you all and have a good night's rest.' Then I would be put into a warm bed of straw in a tent. We would bless ourselves and say our prayers. Then I would go to sleep ready for another day.

Next morning my father would be an early riser. In the morning he would light the fire, put down the tea can for early tea. My mother would get a basin of cold water and wash her hands and face.

Then my father and mother would be chatting for a while at the fire, while me and my brothers would stick our heads out through the cover of the tent, thinking of what we could do for the day. My father would have our boots and socks drying at the fire but sometimes we didn't have socks to wear, we wore toe rags made out of sleeves of jumpers.

We would all get up and get dressed, bless ourselves, say a prayer and get washed. My mother would then plait my hair, which was very long. She would then tidy up the tent. She would put the blankets on the ditch, she would shake the straw. She would then go for water, sometimes a half a mile or mile to the well. She then would hand wash our clothes in a big bath. She would then get breakfast ready and sometimes that would be yellow bacon and eggs and cake bread, which she would have baked the evening before, and a big can of tea.

By this time my father or brothers would have gone after the horses. Sometimes the horses would be gone a long time so that meant my father or brothers wouldn't be back in time for breakfast so their breakfast would be put in the oven and left by the fire for them. When they would come home with the horses and they had



*Lazing about with the hot sun on our faces and the silence of everything except the noise that my father would be making with the hammer and his tin*

their breakfast the pony would be tackled and ready for the country.

My mother would get her basket and swag and the tin wear that my father would have made also the can for the new milk and the can for the buttermilk. Also a box for food that she would get that day and they would be put up in the pony and car. Then my mother would get her rug and get up on the cart and she then would get the reins and hit for the houses that she picked from early that morning.

If I didn't go during the day with my mother I would stay with my father. When my mother was gone, my father would get his tools out and his box of tin and he would start his work. He would sit down and sink the stake in the ground. He would make seven or eight buckets, two dozen of saucepans and pudding pans and lots of different things as well. I remember we would be sometimes staying in a camp where there would be no traffic on the road, lazing about with the hot sun on our faces and the silence of everything except the noise that my father would be making with the hammer and his tin. Later on in the day I would ask my father to make some tea. I would know if he would make the tea he would make pancakes which would be my delight because they were lovely and tasty. But sometimes his answer would be 'By and By' and he would keep hammering away while he would be humming a song to himself. But I would sit watching him working, sometimes asking questions trying to put him off his work so he would get up and make the tea. So then he would say 'Put down a few sticks on the fire and we will make a sup of tea.' After we had our tea and pancakes he would go back to his work and I would go off daydreaming.

My favourite thing was picking flowers, I would go in to the fields to follow the cattle, catch the butterflies, picking flowers or just run wild through the fields. I would then lie back down on the grass and fall asleep. I would be woken by the noise of the hammer and the tin and my father and his hard work. I would then hear my father call my name and I would run home to the camp. Then my father would tell me and my brother Michael, that my mother won't be long more. We would put more sticks on the fire and put on the tea can and have it boiled for my mother. Then we would be watching and waiting to hear the pony and car coming. At last my mother and brother Davey would come home after having a good day. Then my father would unyoke the pony and give him a drink of water and let him down the road. My mother would take down all the stuff off the car and of course I would run and look at the clothes that she would have got that day. And if she got a nice dress I would put it on straight away and I would feel so proud of that dress and I would go showing the other children my dress.

My mother would put down the dinner, which would be bacon, spuds and cabbage sometimes. When the dinner would be boiled and ready to fill out we would sit around the fire, my three brothers and my father and mother. We had no tables or chairs; our table was the bread box which was used for holding our food as well as a

table. So when we all had our fill of dinner my mother would tidy up. She had an evening's work in front of her. She would then start her baking. Then the beds would have to be made. She would start off by shaking the straw and making sure that we had a good bed, then she would spread the blankets. Then it would be time for evening tea.

While she would be doing this I would be gone playing with little girls of my own age and if there were no girls around the camp to play with I would go playing with my three brothers. We would go out to the fields playing Cowboys and Indians but I didn't like it much because my brother Anthony was always the good fellow and me and my brothers had to pretend to die. But with the freedom that I had I always found something I could enjoy, the time was all my own.

We were a very close family. We had all we ever needed and that was our love for each other and our freedom. The day that I would go out with my mother it would start off with a very busy morning, hurrying up and getting ready to go to a few houses where the people knew her and where she could sell and get a few bits and pieces.

I remember we used to go down around Summery Banks and around by the Widow Woman's lane. I remember the widow woman herself. She was a big tall woman with her hair up in a cowl and she wore an overall. It used to be navy blue with white spots on it and she would buy lots of things off my mother and she would also give her food, like flour, milk, eggs, spuds. She would make us a big mug of tea and give us two big slices of home made bread. She had a great liking for my Mother and my Mother felt the same way about her.

We knew all the people by name. Then we would come around by the Summery Banks and back up by the wood of Dromone. And if it happened to be in the spring when you came these roads, you would see sights that you would never forget, like baby lambs playing in the green fields and the banks full of primroses. That's why the Travellers gave it the name 'the Summery Banks'.

Sometimes we would camp at the wood of Dromone and when I think back I can picture people that camped on that road and the Settled people that lived nearby. I have a lot of happy memories. The wood was beautiful in spring, the trees were green and the ground was covered in bluebells. There was also an old empty gate lodge that we used to play in. We used to pretend to be Country people and with all the little bits of chainey's, me and my friends would play happily together.

Sometimes when I think back to my childhood days, I sometimes feel very sad. I miss my family and friends that I grew up with and don't see anymore. My God what I would give to go back to them times again. I feel sad for my own children. They see nothing but four walls and a site that is like a concentration camp with constant noise of traffic. Even though they know that they are Travellers they are still missing out on something that was taken from them that I had and will never forget.



All photos this page Derek Speirs

# Letting Go and Renewal Ceremony



Top: Molly Collins plants Hawthorn Tree  
 Above: Bridgie Collins burns cards, 'letting go'  
 Right: Hope cards hanging on the tree



As part of an arts and health project, the Primary Health Care Project looked at the issue of drugs and addiction and the impact this has on the Traveller Community. It was decided to make a tree with a difference using recycled wood. Decorations were made for the tree using recycled clay and materials which represented different addictions and the effect they have on individuals, families and the wider community. The tree was dedicated to all the people Travellers and settled, whose lives have been affected by drugs.

When the tree was completed, it was decided to organise a ceremony of 'Letting Go and Renewal.' This ceremony was organised by the Community Health Workers and trainee Community Health Workers. As part of the ceremony, staff and programme participants in Pavee Point were invited to write any negative issues and/or concerns onto red cards. These cards, along with the tree and symbols representing the impact of addiction were burnt.

As part of the renewal ceremony, it was agreed to plant a Hawthorn Tree at the front of the building. In order to symbolise people's hopes for the future people were invited to write their hopes onto blue cards. These cards were hung on the tree. Later on all the cards were placed in a tin box and buried along side the tree, so the tree could be fed with all our hopes, dreams and wishes for a better future.

# Pavee Point Resources



## DVD for Traveller Parents on Primary School, Pavee Parents; Primary Concerns

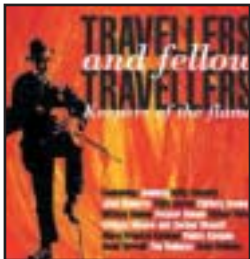
Pavee Point recently produced a DVD for Traveller Parents on ways to support their children in Primary school. Pavee Parents; Primary Concerns is an Educational tool which stresses the importance of parental involvement and how this involvement enhances a child's education. It also outlines the supports and organisations that are available for Parents.



## Travellers and Education – Leaflet

"Education shall aim at developing the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to the fullest extent. Education shall prepare the child for an active adult life in a free society and foster respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, and for the cultural background and values of others."

Article 29 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child



## Assimilation Policies and Outcomes: Travellers' Experience

Social programmes targeting Travellers were initiated by the Report of the First Government Commission on Itinerancy, published in 1963. The Commission's terms of reference were: "to enquire into the problems arising from the presence...of itinerants and...to examine the...problems inherent in their way of life" (CI Report, 1963, p 11).

Travellers have been the 'objects' of official policy since then. A key issue in shaping social policy and practice has been the way in which Travellers' identity is conceptualised. The Report illustrates the dichotomy between official policy and actual practice and illustrates the difficulties that Travellers encounter in trying to integrate into Irish society.

## Travellers and fellow Travellers Keepers of the Flame.

CD Featuring: Bohinta Kitty Cassidy John Doherty Felix Doran Christy Dunne Mickey Dunne Pecker Dunne Finbar Furey Christy Moore and Declan Sinnott Mary Francis Keenan Paddy Keenan Sean Tyrrell The Rainey's John Rooney Music and song have always been important to Traveller life and culture. This collection, which includes some of the best examples of recorded music and song by Travellers, was released as part of Pavee Point's twentieth anniversary celebrations.



## Review of Travellers Health using Primary Care as a Model of Good Practice

The Report sets out the background with facts and figures about Travellers including the Social Determinants of Health. This is followed by the information about Primary Health Care principles and how the Project came about. It also talks about PHC as a Model of good practice for Traveller health. Finally, it looks at programme interventions between the year 2000-2005 and finishes with challenges and opportunities related to the Project

## Irish Travellers Challenging the Myths

This leaflet sets out to challenge some of the most recurring myths and misinformation about Irish Travellers in Ireland.

## Challenging the Misconceptions of Violence against Minority Ethnic Women, including Travellers, in Ireland

An Information brochure for service providers This brochure sets out to challenge some of the misconceptions associated with minority ethnic women experiencing violence and to provide agencies, groups and professionals with information on appropriate responses to working with women from minority ethnic groups to address violence against women. Minority ethnic communities in this context mean both Travellers and migrant communities.

## Pavee Fotochat

Pavee Fotochat is a pack of 94 photographs designed to be used for training. This multipurpose pack could be used from simply showing the photographs to a very complex task of demonstrating the social determinants of health. However, the result will depend on how effectively learning/teaching session is facilitated. The results may vary from group to group for the same reason.

## Pavee Point Strategic Plan 2006-2010

This document states Pavee Point's vision and mission, highlighting key issues facing Irish Travellers, and stating Pavee Point's core values. Wider policy issues are also explored. The strategic plan sets out four key goals for Pavee Point, along with the objectives to help achieve these goals.

