Footprints

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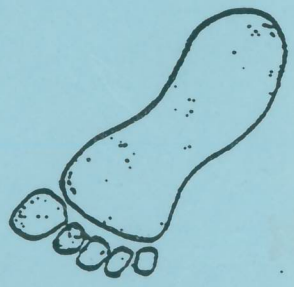
ANNUAL REPORT

JUNE 1994

Footprints



Footprints

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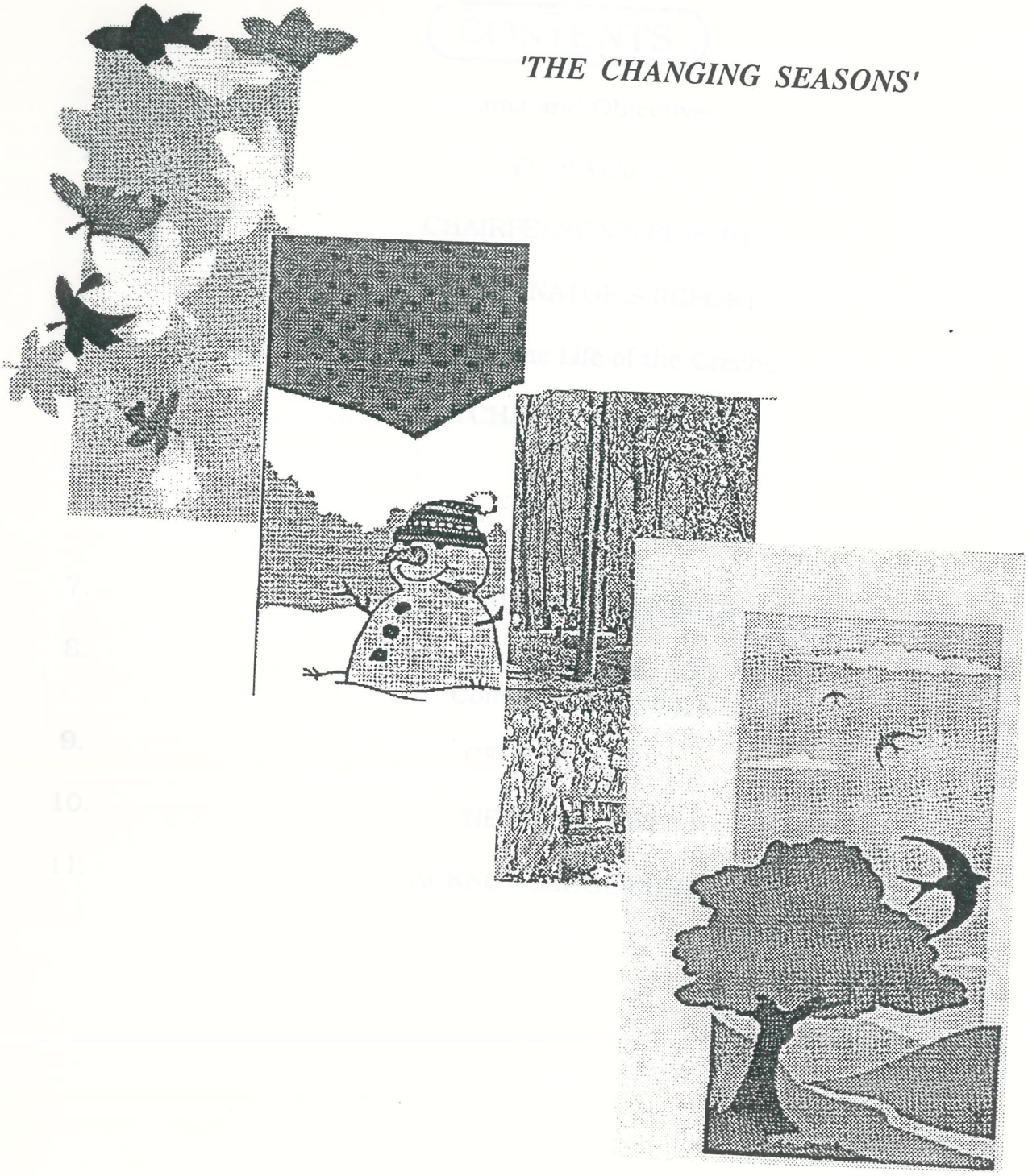
FOOTPRINTS WOMEN'S CENTRE

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 23 JUNE 1994

AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Announcement of new Women's Committee
3. Chairperson's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Co-ordinator's Report
6. Women's Voices
7. Any Other Business

FOOTPRINTS WOMEN'S CENTRE



'THE CHANGING SEASONS'

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AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To enable women to recognise their skills and develop to their full potential. To act as a focus and resource for the women of Poleglass.
2. To identify the individual and collective needs of women in the area.
3. To support women in their parenting role through provision of education, advice and training.
4. To improve facilities for women and children by liaising with voluntary and statutory bodies.
5. To act as an advice, women's information and resource Centre for individuals and women's groups.
6. To increase women's awareness of statutory and voluntary agencies, of needs of women and of avenues for change.

FOREWARD

FOOTPRINTS WOMEN'S CENTRE is known by local users as 'the Centre' - a place where women can meet, make friends and relax. The Centre was originally set up with this purpose in mind. As women have made time to come together, they have shared ideas, explored the opinions of others and set goals - not only for the Centre, but also for themselves.

An indication of Footprint's growth over the last year is to be found in the women themselves. Little changes are marked, in a wide variety of ways, often subtle and less obvious to the outside eye.

However, for those who come, week in, and week out to the Centre, there is a sense of growing confidence, independence and realism.
A priority for women who use Footprints is to reach out to other women from the area and to encourage them to avail of the support which they feel the Centre is in a position to offer, through courses, special programmes, social functions and a variety of other activities.

The Women of Footprints look to the year ahead as a time to move themselves and each other towards a greater feeling of control, authority and awareness, within their own lives.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Another year, another AGM and Footprints continues to grow and expand. This year more women have used Footprints. The drive to involve younger mums has been successful and they were able to form their own group and meet weekly for very informative talks. This group hopes to expand and continue to meet next year.

There have been a lot of very successful groups and courses run in the Centre, one of the groups, passing their computer examinations with 'distinctions'.

The all important Creche is flourishing and new equipment is being bought. An application for funding for a new part-time Creche Supervisor is being processed and if successful will enable the Creche to open in the afternoon and hence extend the time available for mums to use the Centre.

Our thanks to Gillian for all her hard work, enthusiasm, organisation and humour, a vital ingredient for the Co-ordinator. Fortunately her post has been funded for another couple of years and we hope this funding continues.

During the year, the Thrift Shop closed down as it was not thriving and it was felt the room could be used more effectively.

Unfortunately the vandalism continued during the year, leading to destruction of the premises and much heartache. During the brighter evenings of spring, the vandalism has ceased, so hopefully the new security light which we hope to install will present the vandalism in the winter.

On a lighter note, the Cross-community links continue to grow. Footprints has strong links with Seymour Hill and Windsor Women's Group. The women are looking forward to a week in Corrymeela in August. The last holiday 2 years ago was a big success despite the lack of sunshine.

The Management Committee are sorry to lose Fr. Paddy McWilliams who is stepping down this year but will continue in an advisory role. We would like to take this opportunity to thank him sincerely for all his wisdom, support, tolerance, enthusiasm and good humour down the years. Jean Jacque Pezet will also step down, but continue in an advisory role.

The Management Committee would also like to thank Gillian and Máire Firth for all their support, hard work in organising the monthly Management Committee meetings.

We wish you all a very happy summer!

Christine Lavery
CHAIRPERSON

CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

The work of Footprints Women's Centre over the last 9 months has been directed and influenced by a two-fold desire - firstly, to create a climate in which women are prepared to risk trying out something new and secondly, to expand upon existing opportunities for women returning to education, training and employment within the Poleglass area.

Whilst the supportive role of the Centre has continued to play an informal and active part, in the lives of many women, development of this aspect of the Centre's work has become a key objective for the coming year. Efforts to extend the Centre's programme of courses, have by and large, been met with measurable success. The Centre has managed to offer classes in the evenings, as well as to initiate a pilot health and fitness project aimed at young women and their children. As much as possible, Footprints has endeavoured to offer programmes to meet the distinct needs of individuals and groups who use the Centre.

In total, 3 women who started off attending classes have emerged as valued tutors. Margaret Murray has helped to sustain a busy and thriving craft group within the Centre, whilst Bridie Drain helped launch evening classes at Footprints with a Basic Sewing Class, which continues to grow from strength to strength. Through Nuala Marron, an Aromatherapy tutor, the Centre brings classes out into the Community. Nuala runs a very successful Aromatherapy Class based at Pembrooke Lodge which offers sheltered dwelling to the elderly.

The 'knock-on' effect of an expanding programme has forced the Centre to give up its only classroom as a Creche facility, and to take on a room at Cloona House, in its place. Consequently, the atmosphere of the Centre has been altered by these changes - the Creche benefiting with and increase in space and the Centre itself loosing out on contact with a significant number of women, who take classes at Cloona. This issue is presently under review, in anticipation of the Autumn Programme.

Parallel to the work of the Centre, is the development of links between Footprints and a number of other projects and agencies. Footprints Women's Committee have hosted a number of visitors to the Centre including a Mother and Toddler group from Derry, Ardoyne Mother and Toddler Group, the Golden Girls Group from Women 2 and the Belfast Traveller's Education and Development Group. The national organiser of Business in the Community also met with women from Footprints, early in January to look at the work of the Project, in relation to other groups within Northern Ireland and the UK.

A highlight of the year was an invitation to delegates from the Centre to meet with President Mary Robinson, along with representatives of other Women's groups from all over NI.

Cross-Community links with Women 2 and Seymour Hill Womens Group of Lisburn, continue to flourish, despite the last year of spiralling violence. Footprints have just returned from a fantastic residential weekend in Donegall evaluating their programme with Women 2.

Thirty women participated in total, on this very successful weekend, the outcome being the setting up of a strategy for continued contact between both centres over the coming year.

Unfortunately, the development of the Play Area has been hindered by vandalism. Sustained attacks upon the premises have resulted in the removal of the perimeter fence and on stronger replacement fence being erected in its place. The support of Suffolk Action Team, in funding the cost of the fence helped us respond quickly to what was becoming a detiorating situation. However, the damage to the play area itself makes it safe for use by children. Disheartened by many set backs to this project - the Women's Committee have decided to review the possibility of continuing with the play area at a later date.

The Community Health Project, set up by Barbara Murphy has attracted substantial interest and support within Footprints, with up to 10 women users being actively involved in carrying out interviews and taking part in the associated training programmes. For many of the women, their awareness of local health issues have been raised significantly and this can only benefit individuals and the local community.

Other links include contact with agencies such as the Women's Resource and Development Agency, Belfast Women's Training Services, Ulster People's College, the WEA, Business in the Community, and the Women's Information Group - all of whom have provided consistently, much needed support, advice training and encouragement throughout the year.

I have endeavoured to provide a flavour of what has been going on over the last year and would like to highlight the fact that the work of Footprints Women's Centre has been sustained primarily ghrough the enthusiasm, commitment and dedication of the staff, volunteers and members of the Women's Committee. A recent training programme, facilitated by Marie Quiery and funded by SS Cadbury Trust Fund and Suffolk Action Team helped establish greater 'team-work' between the various groups involved in the running of the Centre with priorities being set for the coming year:-

1. To offer more support to women in Poleglass.

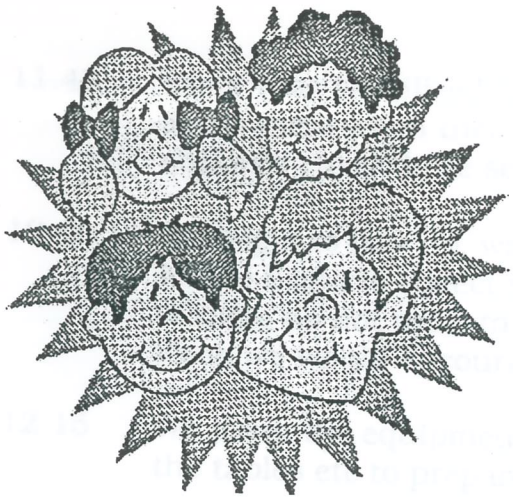
2. Increase the use of the Centre particularly in the afternoons and in the evening for night classes.

3. Decide the role of the volunteers in the Centre.

4. Develop a fund-raising strategy for 1994/95.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Mangement Committee for their ongoing support and guidance and to acknowledge the work of Fr. McWilliams and Mary Carty both of whom will be stepping down for the role of Chairperson and Treasurer. Maighread Kennedy will also be resigning from the Management Committee this year and we offer her out gratitude for the energy and enthusiasm she has brought to the Committee.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THE CRECHE



The Creche continues to thrive, and we provide a high level of care, and offer a safe and secure environment where the children can develop their motor and social skills. This year, we moved to a bigger and brighter room, and all the children have settled well. Pauline and Kate who were ACE workers left as their time was up, though Pauline continues to be a great source of help in a voluntary role. Tina and Anita joined us. During their time with us Tina has completed the **NIPPA INTRODUCTORY COURSE** and Anita has almost completed her **NIPPA DIPLOMA COURSE**. During the course of the morning we would offer the children the following:

9.15 Myself, Anita and Tina arrive early and have a cup of tea/coffee approximately 15 minutes and catch up on news.

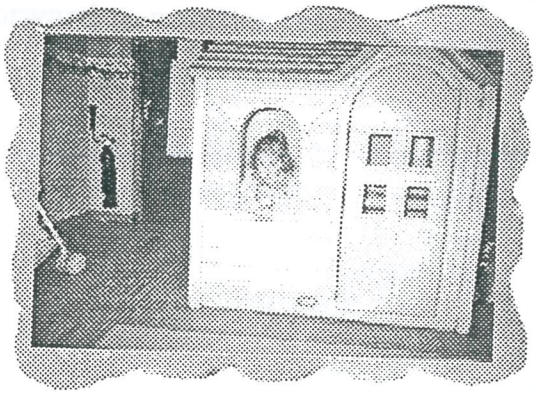
9.30 We set up the room for the days play. This would vary from day to day, according to the rota ie., dough, jigsaws, duplo, magnetic blocks, lacing fruits, stickle bricks etc.

10.00 The children begin to arrive.

11.00 The children are provided with juice and biscuits and it is during this time we would have a break ourselves.

11.15 We would supervise toilet sessions.

11.30 Play continues, and supervision is maintained i.e., whose turn it is to go down the slide, and helping sort out any little disagreements between the children.



11.45 Story time is utilised to quieten the children down, and settle them when their mums come to collect them. The children enjoy these sessions.

12.00 We begin to tidy up, wash paint brushes/pots etc. Mums begin to collect their children, and quite often some of them do not want to leave though as much as we enjoy having them we would encourage them to go with mum.

12.15 We clean the equipment and put everything away, wash down the tables etc to prepare the Creche for the next day.

12.30 **The Creche closes its doors.**

In March of this year the Creche were able to purchase new equipment and larger toys, thanks to 'Children in Need'. This has provided a lot of colour and the children love them and are a lot happier about coming to the Creche. Some of the older children moved on to school or playgroup ie., Charlene, Fiona, Neil and Michael. Next year it will be time for Charlie, Bronagh, Séan and Cora to move on and I hope they settle well in their various playgroups and nurseries. The Creche staff would like to thank all the parents for their support and look forward to another year.

'THE CHANGING SEASONS'

My role in Footprints Women's Centre is to provide administrative support to the Centre's Co-Ordinator. The seasonal changes throughout the year mark the beginning and end to periods of growth within the Centre's calendar. Against a backdrop of 'the changing seasons' I will put together an overview of the past year.

AUTUMN - a time of reflection and change, the lazy days of summer gone, children back to school, for many women it may be the first time, they have space in their lives. Just as the leaves change their colour, so too do women begin to make changes also. We endeavour through the Autumn Programme to meet the needs of all women who come through our doors.

A challenge for the Centre was to attract new faces. This was involved a good deal of forward planning, meeting with the women for ideas, and arranging classes with tutors; ensuring the programme was drawn up and circulated throughout the area, advertising classes through 'word of mouth', posters in 'key areas', and the parish bulletin.

As part of our drive to attract new members, we organised two information mornings. The purpose was two fold - acting both as a social morning, and a chance to see first-hand what **FOOTPRINTS** had to offer; it also helped dispel any rumour for many, and also enabled women to enrol for classes.

This campaign was a great success as over **100** women registered for classes. It was actually more than the Centre could cope with. The majority of classes were filled. These included:-

Maths and English, Aromatherapy/Reflexology, Floral Art, You and Colour, Craft, Faberge Eggs, Sewing for Beginners and Introduction to Computers in association with Montupet, as well as a Computer class which took place in Suffolk Community Houses.

In addition, we were also able to hire out a room on Monday mornings, and offer a **WOMEN INTO BUSINESS** course run through Glenwood Enterprises. This was a great boost for the Centre, as it generated income for the Centre and attracted women who would not otherwise avail of the Centre's facilities.

The highlight of the Autumn schedule was the Women's Returners Course in association with Belfast Women's Training Services. There were 15 places on this course and it was felt that half the places should be offered to women outside the Centre, the remainder being offered to users of the Centre. This course was well received and the applications came flooding in. All the women completed the 9 week course, attending 2 mornings per week, which involved a lot of commitment. However, everyone believed it to be very worthwhile and enjoyed it immensely.

WINTER - wet, windy, foggy mornings, rain thrashing down, people rushing home to stay indoors. Everyone's energy at a low 'ebb', as the 'Winter blues, set in.

Just as the elements were tiresome, this was reflected in the sluggish start to the Winter Programme, although for us this proved a welcome relief, following the demands of the Autumn Programme.

The bouts of vandalism suffered during this period, mirrored the 'wintery feel'. During the course of one week, alone 30 tiles had to be replaced causing a leak. The external security lighting was smashed, and the play area damaged.

However, this did not effect in any way the delivery of the Winter Programme, which was at a somewhat slower pace, but left time for the Women to organise events for themselves. A morning was left free for social events, invitations to guest speakers to have classes as they wished.

A number of the classes continued, with the addition of a few new classes which did not get off the ground, though we concluded that this was more seasonal as a number of Centre's experienced the same difficulty.

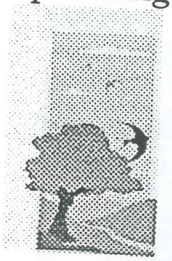
A big plus for us was the setting up of a Young Womens Group, (18-25) age group. This met with few lighthearted remarks about age discrimination, but ultimately the women of the Centre welcomed this move. Gillian obtained funding from Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust and recruited a group of young women, to take part in a Health & Fitness Course. The fitness element of the programme involved the group attending aquabics/swimming sessions at Cloona Pool, based locally in the afternoons, the Young Women themselves organised speakers to come to the Centre on related health issues.

SPRING - the first signs of new life, freshly cut grass fills the air, the sound of birdsong everywhere. Springtime a time when plantlife replenishes itself and awaits the moment when buds begin to bloom, so too people are poised on the periphery of realising their full potential.

By contrast the Spring Programme was a lively one, with the Maths and English classes continuing, and members of the Maths working hard towards an exam in June, and we wish them all the best.

The Hobby Course organised through Lisburn Council is due to end next month. This programme ran for 12 weeks with women having the chance to develope skills in making patchwork quilts etc. As part of the course the women will be displaying samples of their work at Harmony Hill Art Centre later this week.

The 'Women Moving On' course ran for a second time with places quickly taken up. Many of the women who have completed this course have already started planning ahead for the future.



SUMMER - bright sunlight days, gardens burst into life, everything in full bloom adding a blaze of colour. The summer for many is a mixture of energy and a winding down and plans being made for long summer holidays.

The programme planned for the summer reflected this, as many of the classes came to an end. The Young Women's Group finished, with great sadness - many of them would wish to continue the group, and hope to meet at a later date to plan further activities.

The Women Moving On course finished on the 10 June 1994, with a certificate presentation by representatives from the Training & Employment Agency who congratulated the women for their high standard of work and for their commitment and participation on the course. Some of the women were able to get up, and speak publicly and thank the tutor Pat Kernaghan for her dedication and delivery of the course. The morning was rounded off with a buffet lunch.

In keeping with the steady pace of the summer programme, and seeking to meet the women's needs, we were able to introduce the ever popular You & Colour course for a period of 4 weeks. This was well attended, though most of the women felt this was not long enough.

While classes were finishing and others beginning, an opportunity arose to run a programme facilitated by Carol-Anne from the Women's Resource & Development Agency, with a plan to run the second phase of the programme in September.

SPREADING OUR WINGS

Footprints Women's Centre has been functioning as a Community Resource for 4 years. Many women who have participated in various aspects of the Centre's programme have now gone on to further their development through other forms of training, as well as their involvement in local community initiatives.

MARELENE's EXPERIENCE

When I first visited the Centre I found the people very friendly and helpful, I began to make friends and became involved in the running of the Centre. I started a basic Maths & English class which I enjoyed and I then began to volunteer time in the Thrift Shop. I got to know people better through doing the Thrift Shop and began to realize I had a lot in common with most of them.

With my involvement in the Centre I was able to take advantage of courses being offered and applied to do the 'Women Moving On' course.
At the time I did not feel the benefits of the course but now I realise how much it helped me, especially with my C.V. and made me feel I was just as capable of having a job as someone who had not as much domestic responsibility.

I am now at present on a Job Training programme and am currently working three full days per week in a busy salon which I could never have imagined doing before.

Thanks to the classes taken up at Footprints I now have the confidence, and belief in myself to go forward.

MARGARET McGUINNESS' THOUGHTS

Since joining Footprints Women's Centre in 1991 I have enjoyed taking part in many of the courses and classes. These included a refresher course in English and Maths.

This helped me gain the confidence to join a Hairdressing Course in BIFHE on the Whiterock Road. My English and Maths came in handy for the science side of the course.

I then joined a JTP scheme through meeting Eilish Mullan of Colinbrook Training Centre in Footprints. After completing a years retraining in a local hair salon I have now gained employment on a part-time basis.

Since going to Footprints in those early days I never thought I would benefit myself as initially the Maths and English I attended were to benefit my children. Footprints has enabled me to do things I always wanted to do and prepared me for the time when my children will no longer depend on me.

MAUREEN's STORY

In September 1993 to November 1993 I attended the 'Women Moving On' course in Footprints Women's Centre.

Previously to this, I had been at home raising my family for the last fifteen years since the arrival of my second child. Although during this time, I was involved with various activities such as Parents Committees and a Mother & Toddler group, I found my confidence had waned.

On seeing the notice about the course in my local shopping centre, I decided this might be just what I was looking for. As the course was to be held in a women's centre and being locally situated, I felt this would be less daunting than enroling at a college or night school.

I enjoyed the course which included self-evaluation and confidence building and also reminded me of the skills I thought I'had forgotten This gave me the push I needed to enrol in a night class for CLAIT, and from that I went on to do voluntary work at the local library with a view to doing an NVQ for a Library & Information Assistant.

While I was doing this an opportunity arose for a JTP placement, which would enable me to gain some qualifications within the year. This is what I am doing at present and I certainly feel better about myself than I did this time a year ago.

I think the 'Women Moving On' course is invaluable as it is geared to suiting women's needs in working around school hours and being situated locally, so there is no need to travel out of your own area, which a lot of women are reluctant to do. For myself, enroling on the course was the best thing I have done for a long time.

CAROLINE McMAHON

I was introduced to Footprints Women's Centre in June 1993 by a friend who was a regular user of the Centre. At this time I was thinking of returning to education and the 'Women Moving On' course seemed the ideal starting point, so I enroled for it.

The course began in September and ran for nine weeks. During this time we were offered support and encouragement in personal development and we realised that all jobs done at home can be used in the more formal work setting. Encouragement was given to prepare our cv's, which was not as difficult as we imagined.

The course was a real confidence boost for myself and all the girls involved. Since then I have been involved in the running of the Good Shepherd Parents library. I have also taken a course in 'Storytelling' which was held in the Good Shepherd Primary School. This was a thirteen week course especially aimed at developing the skills needed to make storytelling to children a success. On finishing the course I was awarded an Open College Certificate with 3 credits which is equivalent to an 'O' level.

As a result of taking part in the Storytelling course myself and another girl were invited to speak to a group of students at Whitebait College about our experiences on the course, and we have also been invited to a School in Co. Donegal, having read a press article about our success. Following the course we were also able to produce and design a storytelling session for 200 children at the Good Shepherd Primary School.

I would not have been able to do all this but for the confidence I gained while doing the 'Women Moving On' course at Footprints. My advice to anyone thinking about returning to education I would say "don't just think about it - do it". It is surprising just how much you can achieve!

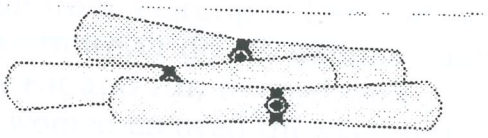
TECHNOLOGICAL AGE

Computer Training

Computer Training is now much sought after and in Footprints classes have become a big part of our programmes. We have successfully run a number of classes in Suffolk Community Houses facilitated by Chris Aldridge whom everyone holds in high regard. To begin with, the staff received computer training followed closely by 3 other groups. With the demands of computer training now on the increase the Centre has now a second computer, which was a kindly donated by the Belfast Action Team.

Six women who use the Centre undertook to do their RSA Stage 1 Wordprocessing exam, in March of this year. This was a particularly 'nailbiting' time for them as they were a little low on confidence, though their tutor had every faith in all 6 women. The women were able to gain extra practice with the use of the second computer, which increased their skills and confidence.

With the exam date looming, the women successfully completed the examination and 6 weeks later results arrived. All 6 women passed with DISTINCTION. This has improved their confidence and whetted their appetite to go on further. CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!



Below is an extract of how one woman felt.

My name is Mary, Mary Duffin. I reluctantly started my computer class in September 1993 along with Mary McNeill, Mary Carty, Margaret Murphy and Kate. At first we were very nervous but Chris quickly put us at ease with his great confidence and support. (By bawling! shouting and threats!). After the Christmas break we returned to study for our RSA exam and much to our surprise we all passed with distinctions I'm proud to say.

As well as women taking part in computer training offered through the Centre women are also independently taking up Computer Training. Mary Fox who has just recently completed The Women Moving On course is doing a Business Applications course at the Whiterock covering elements such as Desk Top Publishing, RSA Stage 2 Spreadsheet and Data Base and CLAIT Stage 2. To date Mary has been successful in passing her RSA Desk Top Publishing, and is currently awaiting results of the other elements. Good luck Mary!

CELEBRATIONS

The Annual Christmas Dinner was organised and held in the Colin Mill. Due to disagreement as regards the venue there was a poor turnout, though this did not in any way dampen the Christmas Spirit. The meal was superb and enjoyed by all. The entertainment was first class and all just danced the night away, and enjoyed each others company.

In recognition of the hardwork, and level of commitment the participants on the Women Moving On course celebrated their successful completion of the course with a buffet lunch kindly prepared by Patricia Firth a member of the Womens Committee.

In early June this year Footprints hosted a visit from a Group of Derry Women and Patricia Firth provided an excellent lunch. However due to circumstances beyond their control, the group had to literally eat and run to meet with another group. Whilst the visit was short the women enjoyed the visit and have received an invitation to Derry.

NEWS & VIEWS

Closure of Thrift Shop

The Thrift Shop opened in Footprints in 1991. During this time a lot of energy was used up trying to make this a viable source of income for the Centre. We had great support from Mary Carty, who provided clothes and rails and real interest and Fr. McWilliams who provided us with a room and indeed all members of the Management Committee and volunteers who gave their time weekly. Unfortunately we had to come to a decision to close the Thrift Shop, as it was not making enough income for the time and energy used by all involved. It was with regret that this decision had to be made, but on a positive note the women of the Centre are now looking to other ways to Fundraise with more in the pipeline, and indeed have already commenced with a successful Baby Fair.

Having been involved with the Thrift Shop from the onset I initially felt reluctant to let go of this project but soon resigned myself to the fact that this was really the end. I look forward with anticipation to my involvement in further fundraising events.

Mary Duffin.

'NOT EVERYTHING IS AS IT SEEMS'

On Sunday 17 October 5 women met to go on a Sponsored Walk. Everything seemed quite normal, and we were determined to finish the walk through Colin Glen Forest. We set off full of energy and enthusiasm, the children were having a good time, running around and we passed the time chatting endlessly. It was then when events began to turn. We came across a red van with it's doors wide open and no-one about. Obviously we couldn't go on and leave it there so we took a look inside and found that it belonged to someone on the Crumlin Road area. We were coming to the conclusion that it was stolen when a group of boys pounced on us from the bushes and informed us that it was theirs. Of course we didn't believe them and told them so and the result was a lot of verbal abuse with them jumping into the van to start it up. But underestimated us as one of the Marys (there were 3 in all) jumped on top of the van to stop them. They took off with her on top, much to our astonishment, but she jumped off gave the van a good kick, (has the bruises to prove it), and called for us to follow.

We knew there was no way out so we made a hasty pursuit and found the van hidden in the bushes. We successfully managed to push the van into the path and what did we find in it but a two way radio. Following a few attempts at trying to make contact we eventually got through to a man who informed us it was his sons and that it was stolen up at the market. We assured him that we would stay with the van, until it was collected, as the boys were still lurking in the bushes. We suffered a few more missile attacks, and had to bundle the kids into the back of the van for cover, whilst one of the Marys who couldn't control her temper scrambled up the grassy bank, using a few choice words of

her own and armed with a stick frightened the culprits off. Meanwhile one of the mothers maintained contact with the owner through the radio, and directed him to us.

Eventually the owner arrived and was delighted to get the van back in one piece as it was used for work and was his livelihood. They couldn't believe a bunch of women saved the day. They handed us a £20 note which we went towards the sponsored walk. Naturally we didn't continue our walk. We'd had enough excitement for one day. We all went home exhilarated after our adventure and proud of our good of the day.

MARY McNEILL

'Baby-Blues'

Following the demise of the Thrift Shop, the Women's Committee realised that other forms of generating income for the Centre would have to be explored.

In April of this year Pauline, Teresa and Máire organised a Baby Fair, which was held in the Dairy Farm. A great deal of hardwork and organising went in to this event. Local stores donated goods, which we balloted and Eileen McKinney provided cups, teabags and spoons for the refreshments, and Westside Stores donated £10 voucher which enabled us to buy crisps, coffee and biscuits and sugar.

The event itself was a huge success and we raised £300. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who supported us, to the Dairy Farm for the hire of the hall and all those who kindly gave donations. Last but not least we would like to thank the Creche Staff who provided Creche facilities during the morning and to all the volunteers who manned the tables. A big thankyou!

A group of women from the Women's Committee attended Women's Information mornings, which were packed full of information of relevant concerns of women and always ended with a spectacular lunch.

The Christmas Quiz organised by the Women's Information Group was no exception. The venue was held in the Dairy Farm, and was packed full with visiting Women Centres from all over Belfast.

Footprints Women's Centre took part in the Quiz which went extremely well, though I hasten to add I'm not entirely sure if their final result was won by legitimate means. See Mary for further details. Joking apart the Centre came a favourable 4th place. The 'craic' was good and the morning was enjoyed by all. Well done Footprints!

OUR YEAR OF OFFICE

When I first joined Footprints Women's Centre I was excited about the unknown, not only was I on the Committee but I was also the Chairperson. I have enjoyued chairing the meeting over the past year very much.

The first thing I have to do before any meeting is to get together with Sinead who is the Secretary of the committee. Together we go through the mail and if any other member of the Centre have anything to say we would bring their views to the Committee. As Chairperson I must get the meeting started on time, which sometimes can be hard. I would also have to keep the meeting in order which can be fun as we have a habit of getting off the topic. I have really enjoyed my year on the Committee as Chairperson and hope the next person as Chairperson has as much fun as I have had and gets as much enjoyment as I have. Thank you to all fellow members.

Pauline Hickland.

I started Footprints a few years ago. Since then I have completed a lot of courses which I enjoyed very much. In September I was voted unto the Women's Committee and was Secretary soon after. I worked closely with Pauline the Chairperson. I take minutes at the meeting and afterwards at home I reqrite them and bring them to Bernie to type. Pauline and I greet visitors when possible and make them feel welcome.

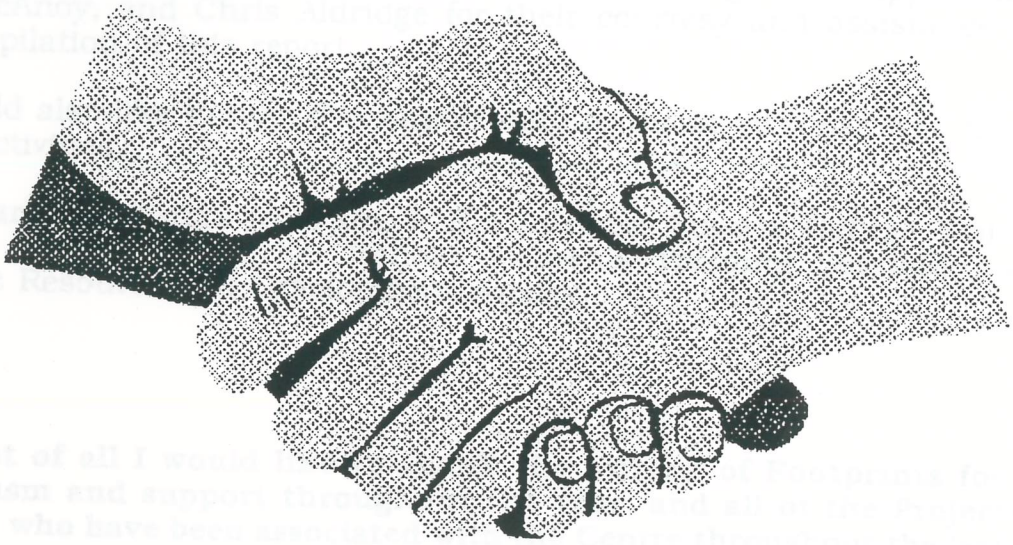
I was a member of the Management Committee for a period of time, but due to other commitments I had to resign, but I still standby if needed. I have had a great deal of support from the Women's Committee for which I am very grateful. My time on the committee has been a good one. Cheers! Sinead.

CORRYMEELA HOLIDAY WITH FRIENDS OF SEYMOUR HILL

Cross Community links is an important aspect of our work at Footprints. Over the years we have established good strong links with Seymour Hill and Windsor Women's Group.

This year will be our third time in Corrymeela in Ballycastle in August with the group, which has been enjoyed by all previously. The holiday is very popular, that when we received the invitation this year, we had a huge response, more than there were places available for. In order to be fair the names had to be literally drawn out of a hat! So commiserations to all those who were disappointed, better luck next time.

Seymour Hill earlier this year moved into their new premises and was to which we were invited. We were able to offer them advice and support during their move and wish them every success! We would also like to congratulate them on the success of their first AGM which took place recently.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On behalf of the women of Footprints I would like to thank the Ulster Peoples' College and Suffolk Community Houses for their time in helping to make this report a reality. I would like to extend grateful appreciation to Liam McAnoy, and Chris Aldridge for their courtesy and assistance during the compilation of this report.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all those who took part in our activities.

Particularly the tutors from the W.E.A., Rupert Stanley College Whiterock, Lisburn Technical College, Belfast Women's Training Services and the Women's Resource and Development Agency.

But most of all I would like to thank the women of Footprints for their enthusiasm and support throughout the year, and all of the Projects and Agencies who have been associated with the Centre throughout the last year.

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CVS (Bryson House)

Eastern Health & Social Services Board

Lisburn Council

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