



## **Reminiscence Network Northern Ireland**

### **e-bulletin: January 2014**

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*Welcome to RNNI's monthly e-bulletin. Keeping you up-to-date with what's going on at RNNI and in the world of reminiscence.*

#### **FORTHCOMING TRAINING – 29<sup>th</sup> JANUARY & 12<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2014**

In 2014, RNNI will continue to offer our popular 'Introduction to Reminiscence and Life Story Work' Course at the Crescent Arts Centre in Belfast.

During 2013, around 40 people have been accredited by the Open College Network on this course through RNNI. In this two day course participants learn about the benefits and risks, the ethical issues involved, the use of multi-sensory triggers and general guidance on best practice on reminiscence work.

For more details - please follow this link <http://www.rnni.org/pages/training%20courses> .  
If you are interested in attending you can contact us by email [monicaferrollopez@rnni.org](mailto:monicaferrollopez@rnni.org)

Don't forget to cross those dates off on your calendar!

#### **NEW OFFICE**

It seems the end of this year has brought good news... RNNI moved premises!  
We are still quite close to city centre in an easy accessible area of Belfast. So from now on you can find our office and resource room at Richview Regeneration Centre with address: 339-341 Donegall Road, Belfast, BT12 6FY (Entrance via Richview Regeneration Centre)

As you know our resource room is open to any of you interested in having a look at our books, triggers, articles, photos, newspapers and other reminiscence material. So give us a call and pop in!

Our current location on Google maps - <http://goo.gl/maps/dbicH>

## REMEMBERING YESTERDAY CARING TODAY AND FIRST APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME

Remembering Yesterday Caring Today is a wonderful programme designed to promote better understanding and communication between people with dementia and their family carers. This programme has been developed and perfected through our partnership with the European Reminiscence Network and it aims to provide a place where people with dementia and their family carers can come together to enjoy memories of the past and have fun.

Over the past ten weeks we have been meeting at the Antrim Day Centre and the comments below will testify to how much fun and laughter we all enjoyed. Using a variety of techniques to trigger memories we found ways which encouraged every member to participate.

Following two training programmes on Remembering Yesterday Caring Today in April and August we also used this programme as a training opportunity for our seven apprentices. The purpose of the apprenticeship programme is to develop the skills of individuals to equip them to deliver the programme themselves. The apprentices participated fully in the programme, led sessions, observed and encouraged participation and most of all embraced all the activities.



Here are some of our apprentices receiving their certificates.

These are some of the comments made from apprentices, family members, carers and participants of this programme.

"I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and feel I really have learnt a lot. I will really miss the guys - they were just too cute! I hope when I am that age, people like you and Audrey will give me the same opportunity, as just watching their smiles as they reminisced and seeing how happy they were with final products such as the pics and the book (which was amazing), melted my heart time and time again. You are doing an amazing job by valuing the individual and seeing the "person" not their 'dementia'. Keep up the good work girls and keep smiling. I hope our paths will cross again in the near future." – Apprentice

"Brilliant family day to see what has happened over the past few weeks. My mum –in –law really enjoyed the group and it was great helping her get to know others in our area now that she has moved closer to us. This is a wonderful service and long may it continue. Thanks to all the staff." – Family member

"A great programme and should be repeated as often as possible for more to enjoy and benefit." – Carer

"I wish it did not have to end. It was marvelous. I wish it could be repeated again please. Thank you." – Participant.

"It was great! I certainly did enjoy getting out and meeting new friends. I got a chance to talk to other ladies and gentlemen. It lifted my spirits and did me the world of good." – Participant.

### **MOVING THROUGH LIFE PROJECT - a success in the North West**



It is the experience of the Reminiscence Network that music and dance are powerful triggers for celebrating memories in the past and the present. The recent Moving Through Life Project, funded by Lloyds TSB provided the Reminiscence Network the opportunity to explore the richness of dance by facilitating six workshops across the Derry/Londonderry area.

The aim of this project was to enable older people and their group leaders to experience dance and movement by connecting to their personal life experiences for e.g. favourite places, seasons, family, working life and social events. Participants commented how much they enjoyed the experience and felt they were taken on a 'special journey' that was both relaxing and fun.

"It was time out for me" ..... "It reminds me that I need to keep moving and stretching throughout the day and..... "I loved dancing with the beautiful scarves, it made me feel so eloquent!" were a few of the participants' comments.

The programme, facilitated by Deirdre Doherty, Reminiscence Worker for RNNI and Carmel Garvey a local freelance contemporary dance practitioner provided an opportunity for older people to rekindle a sense of personal identity and self-worth.

The social factor of meeting new people and sharing life stories and experiences added value to the workshops. For many newcomers, it was their first time joining a group activity in the community. "It's nice to have a cup of tea with neighbouring groups, it makes it more enjoyable meeting new people" commented one resident from Clanmil Housing.

Susan Venn, co-director of the Centre for Research on Ageing at Surrey University, says it's not just the benefit of physical movement that improves health and wellbeing for older dancers.

"There's quite a lot of research that show that the social dimension is almost as important as the physical dimension. Engagement with others in the community has as many health benefits in terms of mental wellbeing as the physical benefits of keeping moving in later life."

The content of the workshops, which combined Reminiscence with Laban-based dance, also provided group leaders and activity co-ordinators with helpful advice on how to engage with older people through reminiscence and dance.

The feedback and response to the programme has been hugely positive and the Reminiscence Network aim to explore the possibilities of dance and movement throughout its member groups in future projects.

For further information contact

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## **INTERNATIONAL INSITUTE FOR REMINISCENCE AND LIFE REVIEW (IIRLR)**

*Announces the launch of the [International Journal of Reminiscence and Life Review](#) website!*

The IJRLR publishes original work exploring the nature, function, and application of remembering the personal past within a wide range of research contexts and practice settings. The journal welcomes submissions from authors in all fields incorporating memory for personal history as central to their focus, including reminiscence, life review, autobiographical memory, narrative studies, and oral history.

The International Journal of Reminiscence and Life Review is currently accepting submissions for publication. Questions and comments can be directed to the Editor, Thomas W. Pierce, Ph.D. ([tpierce@radford.edu](mailto:tpierce@radford.edu) or [editor@ijrlr.org](mailto:editor@ijrlr.org)). Please feel free to forward this announcement to anyone you think might be interested in receiving it.

## POEM

Yvonne Rock, Scheme Co-ordinator at Clanmil Housing, Co. Antrim, wrote "School and Wee Joe". It conveys a school memory told to her by one of the residents in Ahoghill. It illustrates the value of life story work and how listening skills are so important in reminiscence practice.

Yvonne shared the poem at a recent RNNI training day in Coleraine.

*Recited in Ulster Scots*

*"School and wee Joe"*

I don't much care for talk of old times  
Folk say they were great and maybe some were  
But I was reared with nothing, worked like a horse  
Sure I 'm better off now, with a lot less care.

Awk about my schooldays you say you want to know  
Dear that was nigh on eighty years ago  
I can barely remember any times or names  
But wait, sure that was when I met my pal Joe.

Aye me and wee Joe were in the same year  
Just two wee lads of five and a half  
Short legged trousers, feet that were bare  
And both of us filed with a burning fear.

I'll be honest now dear for you've started me up  
I didn't want to leave my mother, that's true  
For she had reared me softly up to that day  
Being patient and kindly to such a young pup.

I'm laughing now as I think of us two  
Joe and me being marched to the gates of the school

Him crying and moaning, and trying to tarry  
And me just behind, and I'm at it too.

Well in we were pushed by two ambitious mothers  
Joe holding on to me and me onto him  
What day we spent being told what to do  
Me and Joe stayed together, closer than brothers.

Nine years we spent learning the drill  
Joe was slower at sums than me but boy could he draw  
I could count in my head the best in the class  
Then Joe and me left and went for jobs at the Mill.

Would you look at the clock dear, its way past nine  
I've rambled on for more than an hour  
But you've made me smile and I'm glad of your time  
You know Joe was a very good friend of mine.

Yvonne Rock

*Well, that's all for now. Remember you can always send us your news and views for the next issue.*

*For further information visit our website: [www.rnni.org](http://www.rnni.org)*

*Don't forget to follow us on:*



**Best regards,**

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