

OMAGH SUPPORT AND SELF HELP GROUP

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NEWSLETTER

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RECENT VISITORS TO OMAGH SUPORT GROUP

OFFICE

The Management Committee of Omagh Support and Self Help Group met in the Support Group Office on 5th January with Mr Jeffrey Donaldson and Nigel Dodds.(See pictures below).

The Group also met on 19th January with Rev. Dr. Ken Newell (Moderator of Presbyterian Church) and Rev. Dr Brian Fletcher (President of Methodist Church).

We hope to continue our ongoing contact with our Church and political leaders and welcome their ongoing interest in our work.



SOCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR ALL MEMBERS!

FEBRUARY

At the request of our members this month's social activity is in the form of an information evening on gardening and horticulture! Our guest speaker is **Mr Sam Dukelow**, a member of Omagh Gardening Society, and a keen gardening enthusiast. Sam will demonstrate how easy it is to transform even the smallest desolate garden into a hive of colour and fragrance. With examples from his successful transformation of his own garden Sam will ensure your itching to become green figured! The information evening will be held on **Tuesday 15th February 2005, at 7.30pm,** in **McGinns (The Village Inn), Killyclogher, Omagh** (Refreshments will be provided.)

Please note this social evening is available and open to all our members, your family and friends, so please do come long. I ask that you telephone Sharon/Barbara at Omagh Support and Self Help Group Office 028 8225 9877 to confirm your attendance, this is so we have an approximate number to book refreshments for.

MARCH

Our March Social Activity for Ladies is a full day **Flower Arranging Course** at the Derrynoid Centre, Draperstown. The Derrynoid Centre is set in 250 acres of secluded forest woodland in the market village of Draperstown.

The Centre has an excellent reputation when it comes to offering first class courses in an attractive, comfortable setting.

The flower arranging day course entitled "Spring Flower Arranging" will be held on **Saturday 19th March 2005** and will be a full day course, (meals and transport will be provided.)

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The course will be taught by James Burnside who is a Traditional Floral designer. Topics James will cover include:- Traditional designs, contemporary designs, craft ideas, and designs to suit different settings within the home. He will also demonstrate a range of ideas for Christmas, Spring and Summer!

Don't worry we haven't forgotten about our male members!!!!!!

For all you budding fishermen we have a fun filled day course which will enable you to learn more about this fascinating sport. Also held at the Derrynoid Centre, the course will cover:-

Casting skills, perfecting the casting techniques, identifying flies, wet and dry, and a trip to the river to see what you can do!



If fishing isn't your thing you could try some **clay craft**. The clay craft course will include the art of hand building pots, model making and throwing pots on the potters wheel.

The fishing and clay craft course will both be held on **Saturday 12th March 2005**, and will be a full day course, (meals and transport will also be provided).

Please contact Sharon/Barbara at OSSHG office (0288225 9877) as soon as possible to book your place. (Please note subject to availability you are welcome to bring a friend along .)

**OMAGH SUPPORT AND SELF HELP
GROUP TO GO OFF—ROAD
DRIVING
ARE YOU BRAVE ENOUGH!!!!!!**

18 members of OSSHG are all set to roam on their quad bikes, let loose a few demons in the archery chamber and 'Go for Gold' in the obstacle course challenge! All these activities and many more are part of our Team Building Day at the **Todd's Leap Off Road Centre, Seskilgreen**. All the activities at Todd's Leap have been designed with teams in mind. The ethos is that when teams spend time together outside of their normal environment they have the time to think about their work and they can think of ways to do it better.

The Team Building Day will be held on Saturday 5th February 2005, from 10.00am—5.00pm, at the Toddsleap Centre, Seskilgreen, Omagh.

A small number of places are still available so if you want to join in the fun contact Sharon/Barbara on 028 8225 9877.

Please note the bus will leave Dunnes Car Park at 9.30am, and breakfast and lunch will be provided at the Centre.

**VICTIMS/SURVIVORS WEEKEND AT THE
GLENREE CENTRE FOR RECONCILIATION**

Glencree Centre for Reconciliation (Co Wicklow) are hosting their first **LIVE** weekend from **4th—6th February 2005**, the weekend will begin on **Friday 4th at 8.00pm** and finish on **Sunday lunch-time.**

As part of the weekend, plans will be set out for this Year's programme and a hoped—for Spring visit to Birmingham. If anyone is interested, please contact Helen at Glenree (003531 2829711) or alternatively contact Sharon at OSSHG office (**028 8225 9877**)

11th March - First European Remembrance Day of the Victims of Terrorism

The 11th March has been designated as the first European remembrance day of Victims of Terrorism. In recognition of all the innocent victims of terrorism Omagh Support and Self Help Group are planning to host a small intimate service in the Omagh Memorial garden. The service will include the erection of a permanent plaque/stone to mark the occasion. Timing of service to be confirmed.

Anyone requesting any further info please



NORTHERN IRELAND MEMORIAL FUND

As a result of recent consultation with victims/survivor groups the Memorial Fund have made some changes to the schemes which they offer.

The Small Grant Scheme which provides household grants of up to £500 for those experiencing financial difficulties will close on **30th June 2005**.. Therefore I encourage anyone who has not yet received a small grant to consider applying before the deadline.

The Short Break Scheme has been reopened by the Fund to those who had only received one short break in the past, these applicants will be granted one further short break from the Fund. The Short Break Scheme gives individuals and families that have been affected by the Troubles short breaks throughout the British Isles. The Scheme also offers respite care breaks.

Help for the Elderly - On 1st December 2004 the Fund introduced a winter assistance grant to help the over 60's. The Grant is designed to help victims over 60 with additional costs associated with the winter months. A grant of £150 is available to successful applicants.

Application forms for all of the above can be obtained from the OSSHG office. Please also note that Sharon can assist with the completion of forms for anyone who requires assistance.

Internal Funds

The Fund has decided with immediate effect to pay the families of those killed in internal funds.

DAAD Deaths

The Fund has decided to pay with immediate effect to pay the families of those killed by DAAD.

Please note that the Memorial Fund is now asking bereaved victims for documentation as proof of their relationship to the deceased due to audit requirements. For guidance as to acceptable forms of documentation contact Sharon at Support Office.

SUPPORT GROUP ARCHIVE PROJECT UP AND RUNNING! **IT COURES AVAILABLE**



The OSSHG archive project is well underway. Group members and volunteers are currently completing their CLAIT and EDCL training courses, and a team building day is planned for **Saturday 19th February, 2005 from 9.30—5.00pm**.

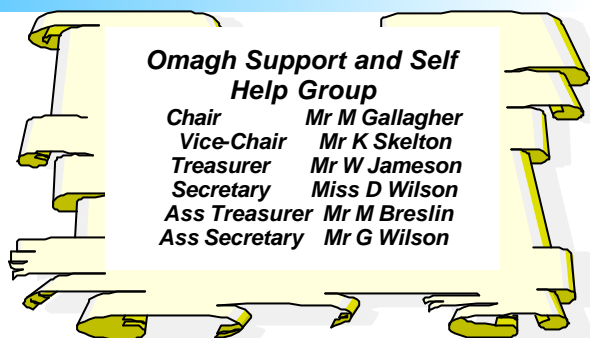
The team building day will afford all those involved in the archive project the opportunity to meet one another. All participants will explore essential team building skills and how to successfully employ them to the archive project, as well as the opportunity to take part in some fun based activities.

Two new I.T. courses will commence in mid February (dates to be confirmed), please note the training classes are open to everyone!

1. Internet, E-mail and Research:- this course is ideal for those who wish to learn more about using the internet and E-mail (6 weeks)

2. Preparation of materials for inclusion on the internet:- this course will explore using html, jpegs etc for the purpose of scanning the newspaper articles and photographs and storing them in the correct format in which they can be uploaded to the internet (10-12 weeks).

Both courses will be held on a **Thursday from 7.00—9.00pm** and will run consecutively. For further information or to enroll contact Sharon/Barbara at OSSHG office.



**Omagh Support and Self
Help Group**

Chair Mr M Gallagher
Vice-Chair Mr K Skelton
Treasurer Mr W Jameson
Secretary Miss D Wilson
Ass Treasurer Mr M Breslin
Ass Secretary Mr G Wilson

Mission Statement: "to promote, advocate, and address where possible the needs of victims of the conflict in Ireland in order to achieve health, peace of mind, security and the foundations for personal growth. We are committed to addressing the real and practical needs of those bereaved and injured as a result of terrorist activity, and ensuring that victims are afforded the respect and consideration they deserve".

**OMAGH SUPPORT AND SELF HELP GROUP TO CREATE PRACTICAL GUIDE
BOOK FOR VICTIMS/SURVIVORS**

OSSHG are currently compiling information in preparation for their creation of a practical Guide Book for victims. The Guide book will assist victims of terrorism in ensuring they are full conversant with their rights/entitlements and sources of support available to them. The content of the book will be based upon members feed back as to what services/support they benefited from. The book will be created in consultation with statutory bodies/organisations, and will also include some practical advice on emergency planning. If you have not yet received a form asking for your opinions please contact Sharon and we will be happy to send you one. Alternatively if you have received a form please return it into Sharon as soon as possible.

POINTS OF INTEREST FOR MEMBERS

Shankill Stress and Trauma Group are hosting an Intensive Anger Management Workshop entitled "Cooling The Flames". The Workshop will be held from **25th—27th February 2005, at Corrymeela Centre.**

"Cooling The Flames" is an intensive weekend programme designed for anyone interested in exploring and understanding their anger, as well as discovering the necessary tools to safely manage and transform their anger effectively.

Anyone interested in participating please contact Sharon at OSSHG office on:- **028 82325 9877**

**COMPASSION FATIGUE—'TAKING
CARE OF THE CARER'**

This is a 3-day accredited course for anyone with or caring for people who have experienced trauma. The course will be delivered by The Wave Trauma Centre, Belfast, in association with the Sperrin Lakeland Victims Programme, and will be held on 3rd, **10th and 16th March.** (Venue to be confirmed). The course costs £20, anyone interested in participating please contact **Sharon at OSSHG office (028 8225 9877).**

Benefits Advice

Anyone who requires any advice or information regarding benefits such as Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, or Carer's Allowance please do not hesitate to contact Sharon at the Support Group office on **028 8225 9877.**

HELP US TO HELP YOU

Anyone wishing to take a more active role with Omagh Support and Self Group please contact Sharon at the office (028 8225 9877). If you are interested in taking part in one of our sub-committees, or alternatively helping out with the office cleaning rota do not hesitate to give us a call.

**NORTHERN IRELAND AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE**

2 members of OSSHG were invited to travel to Westminster last week to make a presentation to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee regarding the Committee's inquiry into "Reconciliation: Ways of dealing with Northern Ireland's Past". The Affairs Committee will be traveling to Northern Ireland in late February to hear the views of victims/survivors of the conflict.