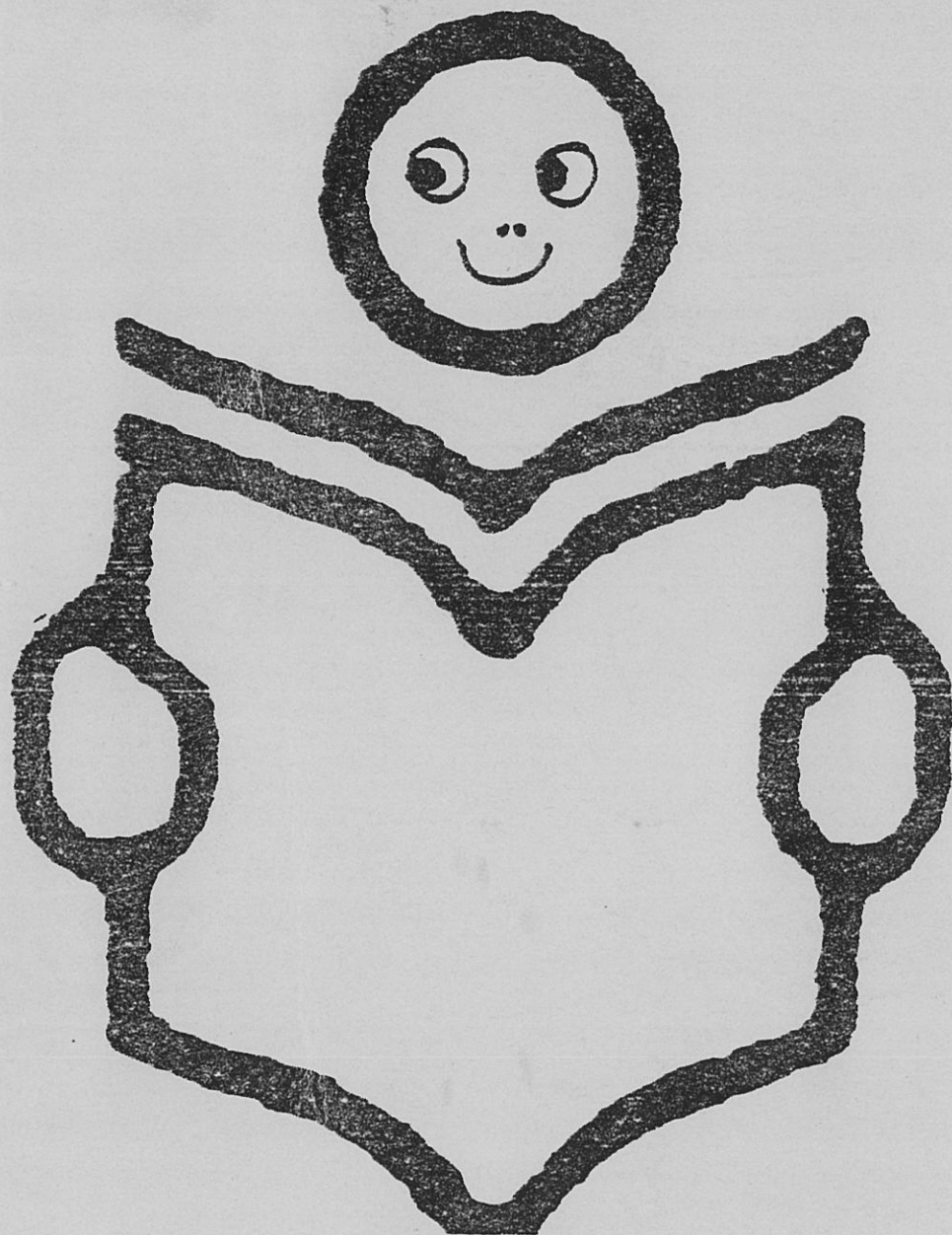


COUNTY CLARE READING AND WRITING SCHEME MAGAZINE

ISSUE 1



**1989**  
**ISSUE 1**

**Simply  
Said.**

## STUDENT SUPPORT GROUP

The Students Support Group was founded shortly after meeting Ernie Sweeney. Ernie is a former student from Castlebar who spoke about his difficulties before he learned to read and write, and what the Reading and Writing Scheme meant to him and how it changed his life. After meeting Ernie we decided to form a student support group at Springfield House, Adult Education Centre. The support group meets there the first Wednesday of every month at 7.30. At these meetings we discuss any problems that arise from our reading and writing difficulties, through this sharing we help, support and encourage each other.

Members of this group are all students within the Clare Reading and Writing Scheme; and students who attend these meetings use christian names only to protect the privacy of everyone. Students are not under pressure to speak at meetings and if they wish, they can sit in on the meeting and just listen.

The Student Support Group is a new one and has already held two meetings; we find these meetings very helpful for the first time we can share with each other our problems and discuss how we can solve them.

Any student who wishes to attend these meetings is warmly welcome; you can contact me in confidence at 24819.

---

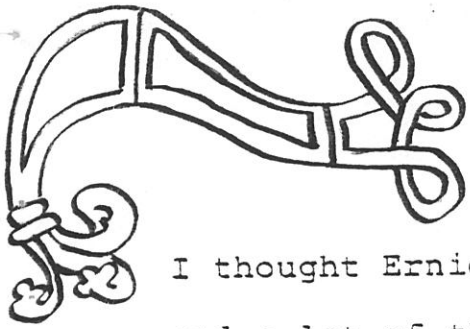
Noel S.

Chairman Student Support Group.

## SOUL RELEASED

My God if only I could stop  
These tears of which I cry,  
Flowing like some long forgotten song  
Bringing little comfort to me now.  
Floods just flowing away,  
Until I am left with a little  
Stream of tears and sobs.  
Coldness all over making me shake,  
I think my heart will break  
Oh! God if I even knew  
The quickest way to get to you.  
I had forgotten for a while,  
These hidden feelings locked inside.  
Now they have been unleashed once more.  
Calmly I will wait to reach your door,  
Drenched in tears, cold in my stream.  
A hot shower now to warm me  
A prayer to you today to help me to-morrow  
God we will see.

Emac



I thought Ernie was interesting  
and a lot of the things he said  
were true and made a lot of  
sense as well. He made me feel  
as if there was hope there.  
I would like to meet him again.



I like coming to this class  
because I am learning to read  
and write. It is some thing  
I should have done when I  
was little.

But better late than never.

KAY.

KAY.

Page Three



# MY LIFE

At about fifteen years of age I discovered I had great difficulty with reading and writing. My family was unaware of my problem, and I kept it hidden from them. At that time it didn't bother me too much as I felt safe living at home and my problem would not be found out.

However things changed. I got a job which involved being stationed in different parts of Ireland and living in digs and attending courses. Then my problem began to play on mind. I felt bitter that I could not read or write properly, all my family could, and all the lads that were in the digs with me could. I lived in fear of being found out. I always had to be a step ahead, making excuses and avoiding situations where I felt I might be caught out. However I did experience gross embarrassment on occasions when I had to fill in forms at work.

It was then I decided that I would look for help but where I couldn't go to family or friends. There was no help for people like me.

Luckily during the Summer of 1988 the Priest announced at Sunday Mass that the County Clare Reading and Writing Scheme were there to help people like me and their service was absolutely confidential. This put the bug in my ear and I kept thinking about it.

Would I have the courage to make contact? I knew I had to. It wasn't easy but I made that all important call and arranged a meeting. Let me tell you, I am now attending the scheme for about six months and I have made very good progress with my reading and writing. I am a much more confident person, and I feel more relaxed at my job and at home. I can read my newspaper in the company of the lads at lunch time and I can help my young son with his lessons.

I would encourage others that have a problem like mine to avail of this service. It's not easy to make the first step, but once you do, you will feel a more confident and better person.

Thomas

## THE WEEK-END BEFORE HILLSBOROUGH

I went to Shannon on Friday 31st April at 12.30. We were called at two o'clock. We changed at Dublin. We arrived in Manchester at about five o'clock. We got a taxi to our hotel and we went to our rooms to wash and change. We went for something to eat, and then we went for a few pints.

I got up at nine o'clock on Saturday; ate breakfast, then we went shopping in Manchester.

We went to Everton for a soccer match, they were playing Queen's Park Rangers at Goodison Park. It was a good game, Everton 4, Queen's Park Rangers 1.

We got back to our hotel about six o'clock, washed and had dinner at eight. We looked around the city. I went to bed at two in the morning. We got up at nine thirty. We went to Manchester United's home ground to look around - it was something else; it was so big! we then went to the museum, it was lovely there. Later we went to the souvenir shop to buy some presents.

We were getting ready for the big game. The crowd at the match was very big, about 57,000. The pitch was bad because it was raining all day. The game wasn't that good. Arsenal were not that impressive, because they played five across the back; the game ended with a score of Manchester 1, Arsenal 1. After the game we had a few pints in the Matt Busby Lounge.

Later we got the bus to the airport for the return journey home. It was a very good week-end. It was a pity what happened at Hillsborough the following week-end.

Art



## HELP

I attended a course in farming, I was in a class of 23 people, some were very well educated but some of them were of my own standard, and others were not as good. I was surprised I was as good as I was. I wouldn't be as good as I was but for I had got help from the reading and writing scheme.

One of the boys sticks in my mind, he could not write his name. He sat in a cold sweat and with a red face on him in class. He was very well able to talk about farming when we were on farm walks, and was well able to run his own farm, but would be gald to be able to read and write. I had a chat with him in his own country with reading and writing. He asked me to find the address in the book, which I did, and hope it was of help to him.

Patrick

# NORWAY

Working holiday in Norway. I left Ennis on the 29th of April. I travelled by bus to Limerick. Then I got the train to Dublin at 7 o'clock, and later that evening the boat to Liverpool. From Liverpool I had to get a train to Newcastle, the journey took about 4 hours. When I got to Newcastle I had to get my ticket for the boat, so off I went to buy my ticket in the travel agency. "I want to buy my ticket for the boat to Norway", and she said, "you have just missed it, it went two hours ago". "When is the next one going?" "In four days time". So I had to get a phone next. I stayed in Newcastle overnight. Next day I got the plane to Bergen in Norway. It was my first time on an aeroplane, it was a great experience for me. At last I had got to Norway, now I had to get to the farm. First I had to get a bus to Norheimsund, then a ferry up the Hardanger Fjord to Na.

The family I stayed with were very good to me. They had two children, a boy and a girl. The first month I was planting trees; the next month two girls came from Holland and one from America; for the next three months we were picking strawberries and cherries.

It is a very expensive country, it costs about £1.50 for ten cigarettes and £2 for a pint. But some farmers make their own wine and cider so you can buy it from the farm. You start work at about 8 o'clock to 5 o'clock and you have the week-end off.

I did a lot of hiking in Norway and met a lot of interesting people. I went to Oslo to see the Viking ships and I did a lot of walking in the mountains. It is a very beautiful country and they get good Summers. I made a lot of good friends there.

If you or a friend would like to go to Norway on a working holiday write to -

The Norwegian Youth Council (Inu)  
Rolf Hdfmos Gate 18, 0655 Oslo 6  
Telephone 02-670043.

Anon



## ROMANTIC MOMENTS

Again my thoughts stop me,  
From what I have to do.  
A hundred and one daily jobs.  
Well OK just a few!  
(Oh! how I love you)

We're at home here all alone,  
Just you and me together.  
Holding each other tight,  
Romantic music, curtains closed,  
Just a glimpse of daylight.

Quietly we speak, only of us,  
And of our future, stopping every  
now and then, to kiss.  
My heart beats in flutters like  
a butterflies wings.

Our thoughts and memories  
Flashing to when we exchanged rings.  
Oh, my! how lucky I am,  
To have been blessed with you for my man.  
(I need you)

Here I am at home, haven't yet,  
Finished washing the floor.  
Yeh, you and me pal.  
I can never be more happy, ever  
More secure, feeling protected,  
Just by thinking your name.  
To you I'm someone special,  
To me you mean the same.  
(Oh! how I want you)

Beds almost done, now.  
I really wish you were here.  
I'm a winter flower in full bloom,  
Standing waiting all alone.  
How about it love? Hurry Home x

## SEARCH FOR LEARNING

I was an orphan at two and went to school at five. From then on I helped to look after the other children in my new family. There was no time for learning.

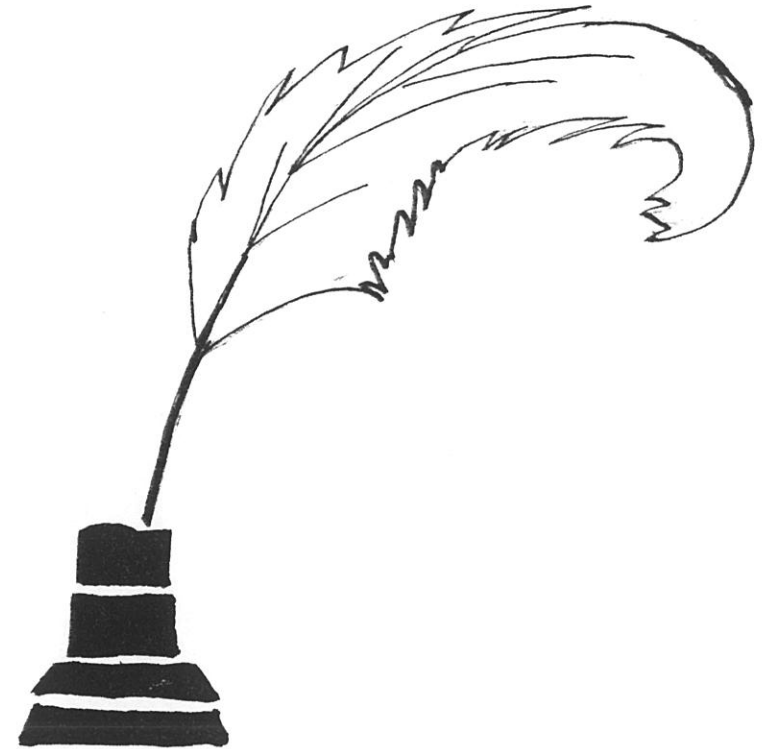
In my teens I realised I could not write or spell. While looking for a job I had to make excuses for being unable to fill out forms. My reasons were that I would be too slow. I felt no good and had no confidence. I could not help the children with their homework. Being an orphan I did not feel the need to learn and could not look ahead.

When I married and had my family, my husband wrote my letters for me. I had a long line of excuses. I felt a failure and could not get a proper job.

Years passed before I realised my situation was not my own fault. I had to put my pride from me and look for some help. I phoned the Reading and Writing Centre and a lady came to see me. We had a long talk and now I have the confidence to write my own letters.

My thanks to the Springfield Centre for being there when I needed help.

By EVELYN



## DON'T ASK

O, no child  
O don't, child, ask your father  
to read the book about Captain Cooke  
for he cannot read it for you.

O, no child  
O, don't child, cry  
for I cannot read it for you.  
O, child of mine, you know not my  
inner mind for if I could read  
I would gladly, oblige your wish.

So, please forgive me, for I cannot  
read. I dedicate it to Tara with  
love.

## ON MY WAY TO DUBLIN

In the train, on my way to Dublin  
I sat among my fellow travellers.  
On my faraway journey to Dublin I sat  
and watched them read their books.

One said to me, "Would you like to have  
a read".

"O, no thank you," God, if she knew how  
I would like to enjoy the written word.

I sat for many empty hours  
twigglng my thumbs in envy of my reading  
friends,

O, God, will you help me find some kind  
person to help me read,  
so I, too, can enjoy my journey to Dublin.

## HILLSBOROUGH

It was about 2.55 p.m. when I sat down to watch the FA Cup Semi-Final between Liverpool and Nottingham Forest.

At about six minutes past three the game was stopped. The terrace seemed to be very full, there were a lot of people spilling on to the pitch. After a while we got some reports that some people had been crushed to death at the Liverpool end.

There were four thousand fans trying to get in, the crush outside the grounds was so bad that we heard that the gate was either broken down or opened to avoid deaths outside the grounds.

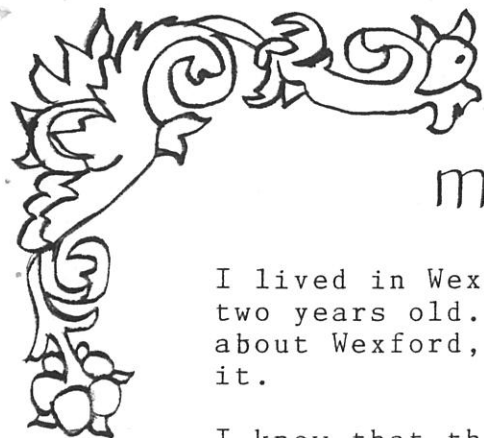
Then one thousand fans tried to push their way in and crushed the fans up against the barrier. 95 people were killed and a lot more injured. Within the next couple of days the papers were full with pictures and they were awful, you see I have supported Liverpool for the past 15 years and it was not easy to sink in, it was like a bad dream.

Well for days after I was hoping it was, but no it was true. I guess I just wanted to read some where it would say ok you can wake up now.. Each day I went to the shop to buy three or four papers to read all about it. Thousands of people turned up at the Anfield grounds to pay a tribute to the dead, day after day they kept on coming.

As I said I have supported Liverpool for the past 15 years and as I read the papers each day it used to bring tears to my eyes. It was like it was one of my own had died. But on Saturday April 22nd I just had to fight back the tears when I saw one half of the pitch covered in a floral tribute to the dead. Then there was the link of love which was made up of Liverpool and Everton scarves and tens of thousands of people there to pay tribute.

What a lot of people want to know is what went wrong. Well my own opinion is that the FA Committee is at fault. Well I will leave it at that because it is so sad that I cannot put it all in into words.

BY JOHN



## MY HISTORY

I lived in Wexford until I was almost two years old. I do not remember anything about Wexford, but I have been told about it.

I know that there was a deep well and furze and we had a horse and goats, a hundred hens and lots of chickens and goat kids. We had a vegetable garden and six bee hives.

We had an eight horse power rotavator and a tractor to bring things. The rotavator rotavated the garden for us.

We needed more land for the horse and cows. We had friends in Clare and they had neighbours who were selling their land and house. So we came to see the house. We did not know if we would be able to survive there but we bought the place.

We moved with a big lorry. We brought the horse, the goats, the bees and the rotavator and the other belongings came in barrels. The lorry came to the top of the hill and the neighbours helped to bring the things down to the house.

BY ANON

## MY BIRTHDAY

I had two Birthdays one on Thursday 20th (my real Birthday) and one on Saturday (not my real Birthday). On my real Birthday dad and my Aunty came for lunch. In the afternoon we went to Parliament Hill and flew our kites. We saw a rainbow, then we saw rain coming towards us it was amazing.

On my not so real Birthday I went to a disco and they had a parachute which they waved up and down and people sat under it. Then we went home.

BY REBEKEH - I live in London

Page twelve



# did you know

Did you know that 90 per cent of mental patients in England are Irish? So said a psychologist on a B.B.C., documentary one night.

Have you ever heard a person say "I have not heard a word from my brother in eighteen years" or a Mum to say that her daughter has not written in years.

Do you know where they are? Have you ever thought to go across the water and see the place they live in?

Did you ever think that they might need your help and are ashamed or too proud to ask?

Have you said to yourself "well if they want to write they eill write and that is that!"

Not giving them the benefit of the doubt. If you have never been abroad, remember, that it is very hard for some Irish away from their homes and loved ones, and things are not always what they are cracked up to be. If you want money in England you have to work very hard and if you have no Education it can be even harder.

Some young people go over across the water with the wrong idea. For most young men it can be wine, women and song.

For young women it is much the same, but this new freedom has a price and a high price at that. This is why so many Irish people are in mental homes.

They don't know where to go with their emotions after they have tasted this new kind of freedom.

Drugs and sex has a big part to play in their lives and it is expected when our young people go abroad that they will behave just like any other young person their age. There will always be someone who will say "come on don't be a spoil sport. Try some grass it won't harm you".

But we here in Ireland have a long tradition of good values. We are brought up on a diet of wrongs and rights and when we encounter other cultures in our lives we can become very confused and insecure. What is natural with one culture may not feel natural with an Irish person.

We here in Ireland need a new education for our young and old who may travel abroad. What is expected of them and the habits of others must be understood.

Before they travel abroad, the Irish Government should have Irish Centres, and lots of them, in Countries where there are Irish emigrants. Advice centres should be provided for anyone that might be sleeping on the street. These people are the most likely to land up in mental homes. If our Government were to help their own abroad they would be doing their Country an over due **service**.

BY NOREEN

# ANOREXIA

To be part of society is very important.  
Going to work and to dances - trying so  
hard to fit in. Look at yourself - look,  
so fat. All around are soslim!

Go on a diet, it will solve the problem.  
But the problem is only beginning. How  
to be part of society when you cna't work,  
can't go out with friends? Soon friends  
are gone because they don't understand.  
So confused and hurt. Cannot understand.

Marriage and freedom! Husbandly love,  
but eating is such a problem - one that  
will not go away. To a General Hospital  
with no friends - so terrified. Don't  
know where to turn. Mind and body nearly  
gone. So much pain and darkness. Change  
to Mental Hospital, THEY SAID. How can  
they? Confused woman's mind in body of  
a child.

So frightened. Large meals - but how to  
cope? Fool them, fool them. Tears, so  
many tears.

Eat, eat to get home and freedom. Home  
- but problems are great. A child prays  
to God - but adults? No. Try God, maybe  
He remembers. So much pain and confusion  
- but yes, yes - a light at last. Love,  
so much love and understanding. Pray and  
trust in God, my friend.

BY EVELYN

### MY DOWNFALL IN LIFE

The only down fall I had in life was reading and writing so I decided to contact the Reading and Writing centre in Ennis. It is really a great place for people who have that problem. My wife has been a great help to me as she herself is good at spelling. I am really delighted with my progress to write a letter or fill a form, it's getting easier every time.

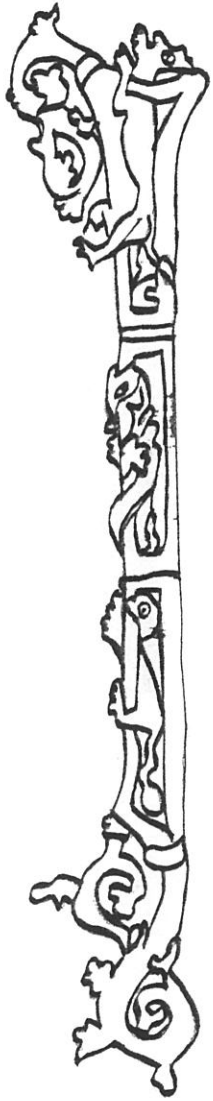
Signed :- THOMAS

### THE STORY BEHIND THE SHOW

Taking part in a big show is very hard work, but it's great fun too. The opening night of the show is very important to all the cast. It can be very tense for us all before we go on stage. Looking down from the stage at the people can cause some pressure to do our best as we see our friends and hope to give a good performance. After a week on the stage we are all feeling very tired and are glad when it's over for another year. The last night of the show we celebrate with a Dinner and Dance.

From :- MARK WHITE

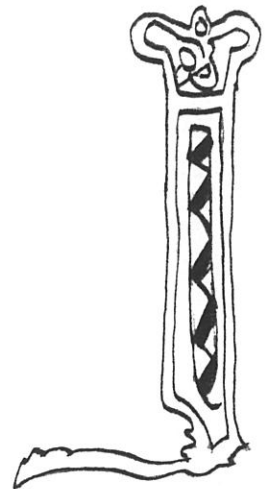




# UNHEARD PLEA

The Woman haunts me in my dreams  
Darkly waiting, dressed in black.  
Her grey hair covered with net  
A Lacy shawl draped around her head.  
She waits until I get close to her  
Then she dies, I'm left standing there shocked  
And sad that this woman is dead.  
This woman in my dreams I see,  
I never met, she means nothing to me.  
Yet when she dies, I wonder why,  
Her life had ended before we spoke.  
Was there something she wanted to say,  
Why wait for me to go to her,  
Only then to slip away.  
I don't want to see her die anymore,  
While I'm standing on her floor.  
The woman haunts me in my dreams,  
What's she trying to say to me.

BY EMAC



For Help with  
Reading and Writing

065 24819



PRODUCED BY CO. CLARE READING AND WRITING SCHEME AND ENNIS 750 FAS TRAINING PROJECT.

PRICE £1.50