Cairde Corcaí Newsletter

Issue 1, September 1999

Thanks to the commitment of the very gorgeous, talented and fabulous women of the Lesbian Community in Cork, we now have our very own Resource Centre.

In this first Newsletter, we'll give you an idea of what the Centre is all about, where it came from, how it works and what it can be used for.
In later issues, we'll be doing all sorts of fabulous things like features, quizzes, interviews, updates on things going on at the Centre and who knows, perhaps even horoscopes!

If you have any ideas or information for the Newsletter, please contact the Newsletter Group through the Centre.

Herstory of Cairde Corcaí

Lesbians in Cork have never had their own space. Over the years, dykes have become involved in - even helped set up - other projects and organisations in Cork, but these did not give the level of support to the Lesbian Community that they had hoped for.
There was a strong feeling that our own space was badly needed, a Resource Centre completely devoted to the issues and concerns relating to lesbians.

In November last year, after a rumour was heard that LEA (Lesbian Education & Awareness) had funding available for groups around the country, a community meeting was called, which was attended by about 40 women.

At this meeting, a **Steering Committee** was formed whose job it was to create and submit a proposal. This proposal was ratified by the Community at another meeting and submitted to LEA in January.

In February, we were told the good news. £10,000 was coming our way. This would pay our rent, insurance and some of the bills for one year - enough to get going! In March we found our premises and after a couple of hitches, moved in on 26th April.
The Steering Committee then called a membership meeting at which the first Administration Group was nominated. This was followed by a small launch party at the Centre. And that's it . Here we are!

Community Meeting

Sunday, 3rd October at 3pm, at the Centre
This is an important meeting to decide policy issues and get the focus groups focused after the Summer.
Also a good time come along and check us out to see if you would like to join!

Structure of Cairde Corcaí

Cairde Corcaí is a **Resource Centre**. It is set up as a **Membership Club** and is aimed at dykes in Cork city and county. This means that to join, you need to fill out a **Membership Form** and pay a small fee.

Membership gives you a say in the running of the Centre (a vote in the Admin Group election at the AGM and a voice in decision-making on policy issues).

As a member, you can nominate yourself for election onto the Admin Group, get involved in the Focus Groups, rent out the Centre to teach classes, lead workshops & training sessions and use the space for meetings, video nights and socials.

The **Administration Group** is a group of up to 9 women who have taken responsibility for two main things. Firstly, overseeing the day-to-day running of the Centre (organising the timetable, keeping the accounts, drafting policy documents, calling members meetings and so on), and secondly, sourcing funding so that the Centre can continue it's fabulous work.

The various projects and groups that operate under the umbrella of Cairde Corcaí are created by **Focus Groups** (see over for list of groups). If you are interested in joining any of the groups or creating new ones, please contact the Centre.

Aims of Cairde Corcaí

A full copy of the aims and objectives of Cairde Corcaí are available at the Centre. Here's a summary:

Cairde Corcaí aims to provide a safe space for dykes to come, drink coffee (or herb tea), chill out, chat, dance, work on political issues, learn things, make things, teach people things, be creative - whatever tickles your fancy.

It's a space for Focus to work from and also for classes, workshops, support groups and coming out groups.

A referral service is provided by Mary O'Leary at the Centre, so you can ring or drop in if you want help or information on anything from Social Welfare to Housing or Legal issues.

Logo Competition

We need a logo. Pens at the ready. Send your entries in to the Centre or to the Web Page Group:
Web Page email: cairde.corcai@oceanfree.net

Address: Cairde Corcaí, 14 George's Quay, Cork **Tel:** 021 316 449

Email: cairde.centre@oceanfree.net **Web Site:** http://members.tripod.co.uk/Cairde_Corcai/

Web Page Group email: cairde.corcai@oceanfree.net

Cairde Corcaí belongs to YOU

Cairde Corcaí was set up and is run voluntarily by the Lesbian Community in the broader Cork area.

Who it belongs to is YOU.
Who will make it a success or a failure is YOU.
Who will make things happen in it is YOU.

We have waited long enough for our own space and for an organisation working solely for US.
We can take this and make it into something great, something that supports us and supports all women who love women.

MAKE IT HAPPEN - GET INVOLVED!

What you can do

* Become a member
* Create or join a Focus Group (or two!)
* Volunteer to staff the Centre for Drop-In
* Use the space for classes, workshops or meetings
* Donate something from our needs list
* Take part in the events going on at the Centre

Needs List

The Centre needs things like stationery (paper, pens, stapler, puncher, scissors), office equipment and furniture (fax machine, computers, lockable filing cabinets, a safe), shelves, cups cutlery, fridge, hoover, In-trays and so on.

Skills Library

The idea behind the Skills Library is that women can add their skill or trade to a register which is kept at the Centre and on the Web Page. Skills can be anything: Hairdressing, Plumbing, Typing, Alternative Healing.
Anyone who needs something done has the option of hiring a dyke to do it. This way, we promote the skills and economy of the Community. If you want your skill or trade added to the register, contact the Centre and/or the Web Page Group.

How to contact people using the Centre

There is a message board at the Centre which is split into sections (one for each focus group, one for the Admin Group and one for the referral service).
If you come to the Centre, pin your message to the board.
You can also ring, write or email us and your messages will be pinned on the board for you.
If you want to check for your messages, ring or call in to the Centre during opening times.

Web Page Group

Congratulations to the Web Page Group who have created an amazing Web Site for Cairde Corcaí.
Check it out at http://members.tripod.co.uk/Cairde_Corcai/

Focus Groups

At the Centre, there is a sheet on the wall for every focus group. If you want to join one, you can add your name and phone number to the sheet, or contact the Centre and it will be done for you. One woman from each focus group has taken the responsibility for contacting the others and getting the group started.

Mary O'Leary is skilled in helping groups get themselves organised and has volunteered to work with people. Mary can be contacted on 087 679 2659 or at the centre during referral hours.

Below is a list of Focus Groups. If you'd like to see a focus group on any issue not mentioned here, why not start it up. That's what the Centre is all about.

Focus Groups - Already set up

* Women's Health
* Computers/Web Page
* Married Lesbian Group
* Mural /Wall Hanging for Centre
* Young Dykes/Lesbian Group
* Leather/Rubber Craft
* Lesbian Mothers
* Music/Singing
* Social Events
* Skills Library
* Newsletter
* Astrology
* Forty-Five
* Writing
* Sport
* D.I.Y.

Focus Groups - Not yet set up

* Coming out group for over 26's
* Lesbian & Mental Health
* Social Policy Lobbying
* Housing/Homelessness
* Lesbian Custody/Guardianship
* Lesbian Consciousness Raising /. Discussion Group

One last thing

A huge big THANK-YOU to everyone who has been involved in creating Cairde Corcaí.

Thanks to the women in the community who attended the meetings, came up with the ideas and got involved in the focus groups.
Thanks to the Steering Committee who put in hard work, long hours and not a little sweat & worry to get us the funding and the space.
Thanks to all the women in the background who gave their time, their skill and their advice.
Thanks to the Admin Group for taking on a huge commitment for the next year.

Thanks also to LEA for the funding to get us started.

PARTY! Friday 1st October, 9pm

Admission: £1.50. Bring your own food, booze, cards and games. This is going to be a good one!

Centre Opening Hours:

Drop-In: Saturdays 2-6pm **Referrals:** Thursdays 10am - 2pm