

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the first newsletter. I'd like to introduce ourselves, and explain our reasons for starting this newsletter and what we hope to achieve.

We are a diverse group of women loosely connected to the Women's Place, Quay Co-op. We came together with the aim of producing a newsletter because it was felt to be an effective way of presenting relevant news items and listings of coming events and activities, as well as providing an open forum for discussion and information exchange where any woman can share her views or ideas.

We felt that a newsletter like this could provide a useful service by reaching women more directly and providing a medium through which we can share in the resources discussions and ideas of other women living in this area.

It is also the intention of this newsletter to promote the Women's Library and Information Service situated in the Women's Place, Quay Co-op. To this end, every issue will include some reviews of books from the library which will hopefully interest more women in the large selection of factual and fictional books available on loan.

Our editorial policy is basically that we will print anything that you send us as long as it's not more than 350 words (due to space limitations), is not a personal attack on an individual, does not oppress any group, and it reflects the views of women in the Cork area and beyond. No editing will be done except for clarification purposes with the consent of the writer.

We therefore invite the participation of any woman who would like to contribute an article, a letter, a cartoon or a piece of poetry on any topic of interest. Please include name address and telephone number.

Due to a lack of distribution outlets, we are also asking women to subscribe on a yearly basis. A postal subscription will ensure you receive your up-to-date issue delivered to your door. (see back page for subscription rates). We hope you enjoy this issue, will support this newsletter and make it yours!

*Deirdre Walsh*



## A TALE OF WOMANTALET

Women, women everywhere!

So it seemed to me, as Cork's turn to play hostess to the Women's News (Belfast) Women's Place (Cork) Co-operation North Exchange coincided with a meeting of the Lesbian Line Collectives of Ireland, January 29 - 31.

The organisers of both events pooled their efforts to plan a joint social on the Saturday night for the entertainment of both host women and guest women.

Taking advantage of a newly varnished dance floor, our feet willy-nilly obeyed the magic of Mary O'Sullivan's (Dublin) ceillidh tunes on the box, until we collectively ran out of breath, at which point she relented and sang us some of her well-loved songs about our Irish foremothers.

Marie Mulholland (Belfast) followed with her wild and powerful renditions of "blues-type" ??? songs (I hesitate to type Marie's songs.) Just when we thought the evening was over, we were surprised and delighted to be treated to a display of fire-juggling by Jackie (Belfast). Which goes to show how much fun can be made when a group of women gets together!

AND, by the way, it also goes to show that it's high time for all Cork women to start polishing up all those talents rusting away in the back cupboards!

ISSUE  
1

MARCH '88

PRICE

20p

"Lack of opportunity" do I hear you explain? Never worry! How would you like to strut your stuff in the friendly atmosphere of a women's performance night, Three Ones Bar, Barrack Street (Tues. 8 March, and thereafter the first Tuesday of each month)?

Or, if your ambitions have a more international flavour, why not do a turn at the Women's Fun Weekend Cabaret, attended by women from all over Ireland as well as many parts of Britain and the Continent?

Contact Phil or Scotlyn at the Women's Place, 24 Sullivan's Quay, Cork. Tel. 317660.

Scotlyn Ruth

### COMING EVENTS

Saturday, 5th Mar. Videos on Women and Poetry Reading in the City Library 2.30-5.00pm. Stalls and Petitioning for peace in the streets.

Tuesday 8th Mar. INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY. Flag Day - for Women's Place. Events on the streets. Main Event will take place in Quinnsworth Plaza, 1-2pm. Videos, Poetry Reading, Book Exhibition at City Library. Information Stalls around the town. Seminar "Changing Role of Women in Ireland", Metropole 7.30pm. Social "The Three Ones" in Barrack Street from 9.30pm. Music & Craic.

Sunday 13th Mar. and the 1st Sunday of every month after that: WOMEN'S SELF-DEFENCE WORKSHOP: any women interested in sharing and practising self-defence skills for women come to Leevale Hall, off Paul Street, Cork 2.30-4.30pm Tel: (021) 317660.

Wednesday 30th Mar. BOOK PARTY, venue Women's Library, 24, Sullivan's Quay, Cork, bring a book and hear some readings.





## Co-OPERATION NORTH THE CO-OP NORTH EXCHANGE STORY

An intrepid explorer named Nikki, set off from Cork one day to seek friends and adventure in the wild unknown lands of the "North" ... and behold, she discovered both in the wise and wonderful women of the Women's News Collective in Belfast.

She entrusted them with the gathered lore and knowledge of many women's groups in Cork, which they magically transformed into The Centre Page Spread. Thereupon, with many sad good-byes and vows to return, the bold Nikki took leave of her newfound friends.

Upon her return to the witty and wild women of the Women's Place Collective in Cork she decided she had to find a way to bring the women of both collectives together.

So she thought and thought, researched and researched, proposed and proposed, until finally it was done. The Women's Place (Cork)/Women's Place (Belfast) Co-operation North exchange had been approved!

Women from both collectives met and decided that it would be a good thing if the women of Women's News could teach the Cork women the intricate skills of producing a newspaper so that the Cork women could start one; and that, likewise, it would be a good thing if the women of the Women's Place could teach the Belfast women the delicate art of running a library, so that they could start one.



And so it was done, the Cork women going to Belfast in June 1987, and the Belfast women returning the complement in January 1988. Newspaper workshops and library workshops were organised, areas of future co-operation were discussed, life-long vows of friendship were made and LOTS and LOTS of fun was had by all.

Scottish Ruth



## 'A NEW LINE'

January 30 was just another Saturday of shoppers and the promises of the week-end. It probably passed unnoticed by most people. But for a few it was a day to remember.

On Friday evening there was a steady trickle of women arriving to the City, all with the same motive. Under cover of scarves, hats and gloves (for it was a cold night) they made their way to the "Bar", where a welcome of old and new friendships awaited. There was a tangible excitement in the air.

By Saturday lunch-time a large group of these women had gathered in a room that had a fire blazing and chairs laid out. Pretty soon, things were in full swing, with discussion and anecdotes wafting around the room with the cigarette smoke.

"Remember that guy in Telecom? How do you spell Lusbin?"

"What about going in the Bank and the clerks gather twittering around the book, casting sidelong glances at 'one of them'."

"Its terrible not having funding, always depending on the same few for support."

"How do you deal with men on the Line?"

"What about silent calls?"

After a break of coffee and Custard Plan it was time for some decisions and assessment "So we'll place an advertisement and divide the cost between us."

"What about getting funding to arrange training sessions for us all?"

Then there was time given to working on some counselling skills, concentrating on "listening." They mixed around to pair with someone not so familiar.

"Remember not to look at or touch each other - as you're meant to be on the Telephone."

With thoughts of the evening ahead creeping in, it all wound down. Women drifted off in search of food, rest and drink.

"See you later. Eightish!"

So what was it? The first National Lesbian Line Conference. Who was there? Women from Cork, Belfast, Dublin and Galway Lesbian Lines.

It was definitely a success.

G. McCarthy  
C.L.L.C.

## FOSTERING

From media reports it would appear that there are many children requiring loving families, particularly teenagers and handicapped children. This has prompted me to write about my experience as foster mother.

I am an ordinary everyday mother of two boys and one girl. I thought it would be nice to foster a girl long-term as a sister for my own daughter. I applied to the Southern Health Board, was interviewed, assessed and accepted. I now have five years fostering experience.

We were very excited about a child coming to stay. We waited, finally the telephone rang, "Would we take two girls short-term, while their mother was in hospital?" Rooms were checked, beds made, two lovely red-headed girls arrived. Our very first foster children. I was a bit nervous but I soon got over it. It was a great experience for my family.

Our next arrivals were three children (my family doubled) to stay for three weeks, which turned out to be three months. Oh! The unpredictability of fostering! These children were very loving and were well accepted in the neighbourhood. We all experienced a mixture of sadness at their parting and gladness at their being re-united with their parents.

Next came my current long-term foster son of three years standing. An adorable blue-eyed baby boy. (Note: I had applied for a little girl). He was sick a lot

to begin with. At one stage himself and my youngest son were in the Regional Hospital together. "It never rains but it pours!" He is now a fine healthy child and very much part of the family.

The next girl was a real challenge, an advanced eleven-year-old, with a mind of her own, something akin to an unbroken pony! She had many real personal problems. Her constant desire was to be with her mother. She was lucky, after three months with my family, her mother was in a position to care for her.

If you love children and have room for one or two more why not become a foster parent?

Phil O'Regan

Details on Fostering:  
Phil O'Regan Tel. 502594 or  
Southern Health Board  
Tel. 965511

## HANDY WOMEN

"I didn't expect a woman..."  
How many of us have lived in grotty, badly converted flats or a quietly crumbling houses, and have learned all sorts of strange things while battling to sink the rising damp re-paper the steam-curved bathrooms, or replace the sash window that fell into the yard?

One thing you learn is that although you may be very good at one, two, even three essential home construction skills, have a working knowledge of another, and a passing acquaintance with yet another, there are always several that are out of your orbit. So you call in the expert in plumbing, upholstering or atomic physics (if you can afford him, it is almost always a him).

The plumber was great - did the job, didn't laugh at eccentric planning, didn't overcharge and didn't ask leading questions about my marital status. Not like the gas repair man. He created three to one in leaks, fired off a stream of sexual innuendo, and fell over his (repair) equipment in his anxiety to prove that he was a cross between Schwarzenegger and Casanova. He did himself a nasty injury on the corner of the kitchen unit and went off in a huff muttering things about "unnatural women".

The electrician who rewired the flat and blew an innocent E.S.B. man off his stool sticks in my mind too.

If all this sounds rather familiar, next question, have you ever found yourself wishing you could call on a woman to do the job you can't?

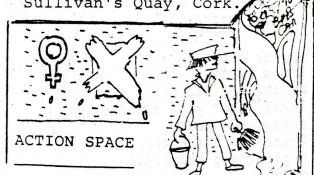
I think women have a better "feel" for living/working spaces than most men, a better eye for detail and more empathy with the harassed client. And they're less likely to ask said client, male or female, for a kiss on completion!

These women do exist, highly qualified, skilled or semi skilled. You may be one of them. Are you interested in getting a skills register together, exchanging experiences working together? If you are, contact the newsletter.

Jo Hamshire



If I needed my hair fixed, and you were a hairdresser with maybe a garden going wild and I was good at gardening, which isn't your thing, though you love flowers, and neither of us had much money, couldn't we simply exchange our skills/time and cut out the middlemoneymen? What do you need done? What can you do in exchange? Let us know. Contact: Women's Space, 24, Sullivan's Quay, Cork.



Have you ever seen something you really object to and wished you could publicise it. This is your space to let other people know and get them to complain to the relevant people. e.g.- advertising or attitudes in bars, clubs, businesses, that are objectionable to women.- food dumped in our markets that's banned in other countries.- anything you think needs highlighting. Write to: Women's Space now.

### SUBSCRIPTION RATES

20p Street Sales each.  
£2.00p Library Members.  
£2.50p Non Members per annum.

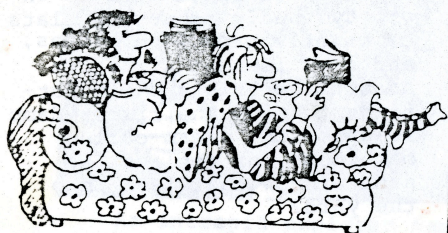
The newsletter costs approx. 20p per copy to produce, and 24p per copy to post out. So you lucky Women's Library Members are getting it on the cheap. It is proposed to publish WOMEN'S SPACE bi-monthly to begin with. Watch this space for further developments.

### ADVERTISING RATES

Box Column: £5.00p per issue.



# REVIEW



**MOTHERWIT - A Feminist Guide to Psychic Development.**  
by Diane Mariechild.

It's a really good book. I find myself constantly going to it for ideas for guided meditations, healing exercises, affirmations.

Diane Mariechild is a psychic and feminist psychotherapist. The book contains practical exercises to help develop your natural psychic and healing abilities. She asks you to try things out and decide for yourself what you want to take or leave. She writes in a personal and easy to read style.

There are some beautiful relaxation exercises, especially if you have someone to read them out to you. She has included lots of different guided meditations to enable us to get in touch with our own inner wisdom, and to increase our awareness of different aspects of ourselves. She writes about dreams, creative visualisations, witchcraft, psychic skills for children, auras, chakras and loads more.

The chapter on Healing lists some common ailments and their common associations which is useful in trying to discover what your sickness is related to eg. shoulder problems - feeling like you carry the weight of the world on your shoulders. She talks about healing as a process of discovering where your energy is blocked and learning ways to unblock it and she goes through different ways to do this.

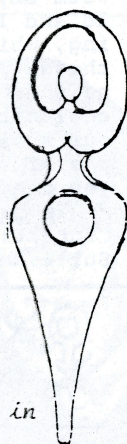
There's a chapter on using affirmations, symbols and creative visualisation to become more powerful in our own lives. Throughout the book she shows how we have

lots more power over our health and lives that we often think we have and at the same time she shows a good awareness of our experiences as women.

She talks of how western, patriarchal society has over-emphasised reason, logical thought, etc. "Today the ancient matriarchal principle is reasserting its power ... We must re-learn and re-member sources of information that patriarchal society has, for thousands of years, denied ... It is only when we re-connect with this female principle and affirm it within ourselves and within society that we come into our own power, womanpower."

I like this book a lot and it's available in the Women's Library.

Colette Egan



## THE BITCH

You're a bitch  
I'm a bitch  
We are all bitches.  
There's not just a witch in  
everywoman today,  
There's a bitch too,  
A great big beautiful  
bitch.  
I will keep her in my big  
soft round belly  
where she will be warm &  
safe & loved  
where she will be part of me.  
I can stick her out whenever  
I want & know  
that I am a beautiful, caring,  
Knowing loving Goddess with  
a beautiful bitch in my belly.

My mother also has a big fat  
belly. She keeps it inside her  
corset but I've seen it sometimes.  
So, from one big fat belly to  
another, Hi Mam.

Colette Egan

### FACILITIES AVAILABLE

WOMEN'S LIBRARY	memb: £3.00/£2.00p.
INFORMATION SERVICE	free.
DROP-IN-CENTRE	free.
ROOM HIRE (WOMEN'S GROUPS) per memb.	80p/40p.
OPEN: Mon-Fri. 10am-5pm.	Thurs. 10am-8pm.

### EVENTS FOR WOMEN

WOMEN'S MUSIC & CRAFT-1st Tues. of the Month.	venue "The Three Ones Bar" Barrack St. time 9pm.
WOMEN'S RUN WEEKEND	15th-15th May '88.
WOMEN'S SEPTEMBER EVENT	24th Sept. '88.

It is a base from which women's activities are organised by and for women.

### SOME USEFUL CONTACTS.

CENTRE FOR COUNSELLING, EDUCATION AND PSYCHOTHERAPY, 6, Cornmarket St., Cork.  
Tel: (021) 274950.

CHILDBIRTH TRUST, 'Glor na Glouse', Upper Clogher, Co. Cork (ante-natal, post-natal and breast-feeding education).  
Tel: (023) 862243.

CORK LESBIAN LINE. Thur. 8-10  
Tel: (021) 317026.

CORK PREGNANCY COUNSELLING HELPLINE. (information on abortion). Mon-Thur: 8-10.  
Tel: (021) 502848.

CORK RAPE CRISIS CENTRE, 27A, MacCurtain St., Cork.  
Tel: (021) 968086.

C.N.D. c/o Adi Roche, 8, Sidneyville, Bellevue Pk, St. Luke's  
Tel: (021) 506411.

CUANLEE, (Women's Refuge) Kyril St, Cork.  
Tel: (021) 509800.

CURA, Paul St., Cork (Free pregnancy testing).  
Tel: (021) 501444.

EARTHWATCH, Harbour View, Bantry, Co. Cork. (environmental pressure group).  
Tel: (027) 50968/51283.

EDEL HOUSE, 14, Dyke Parade, Cork.  
Tel: (021) 272075.

QUAY CO-OP. PRE-SCHOOL, Wallercoo, Old Blackrock Road, Cork.  
Tel: (021) 311581.

S.T.D. CLINIC, Victoria Hospital, Cork. Free smear testing Wed. 10-12noon (woman doctor) Mon. 5.30-7.30 (male doctor)  
Tel: (021) 966844.

WOMEN'S ACTION GROUP, 5, Churchfield Ave., Cork.  
Tel: (021) 307969.

WOMEN'S PLACE & LIBRARY, c/o Quay Co-op., 24, Sullivan's Quay, Cork.  
Tel: (021) 317660

WOMEN'S POETRY CIRCLE, c/o

Maire Bradshaw, 22, Mt. Oval Rochestown, Co. Cork.  
Tel: (021) 895046

WOMEN'S WRITING CIRCLE, c/o Women's Place as above  
Tel: (021) 317660.

IF YOU HAVE A SERVICE OR GROUP RELEVANT TO WOMEN NOT INCLUDED HERE, PLEASE SEND IN ADDRESS AND PHONE NO. FOR INCLUSION IN THE NEXT ISSUE.



Produced by Jo, Colette, Ger, Deirdre, Phil, Scottie et al, in the: WOMEN'S PLACE, Quay Co-op., 24, Sullivan's Quay, Cork.  
Tel: (021) 317660.

WOMEN'S PLACE