

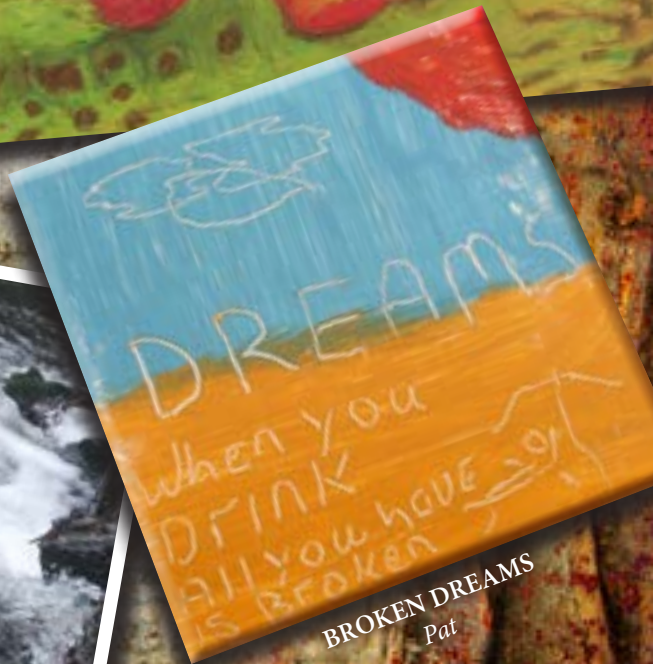
SCRAPPY BUT Happy³

A PRICELESS LIMITED
EDITION EXPRESSED IN
WORDS AND PICTURES
BY PEOPLE USING
SIMON SERVICES.



Dublin
Simon
Community

Artist: Margaret Rose



BROKEN DREAMS
Pat



FOREWORD

“Invention... does not consist in creating out of void but out of chaos.”

(Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, 1797-1851)

“Scrappy but Happy 3” is the third edition in the highly successful ***Scrappy but Happy*** series. This collection of artwork and creative writing further demonstrates the wonderful imagination of the people who access Dublin Simon Community services.

This edition contains a truly diverse selection of decorative and visual arts – coaster craft, drawing, floral art, jewellery making, mask making, painting, photography, pottery, pyrography and sketching. The creative writing comprises of personal reflections, poems, prose and short stories. We introduced poetic forms such as Limericks, Cinquains and Free Verse, making poetry accessible, fun and complementary to the Free Writing style of creative writing used.

Engagement in creative activity can inspire and motivate change, while being a positive channel for self-expression. This is particularly valuable for people who struggle with more conventional forms of communication or feel they have no voice.

Participating in the Art Therapy workshops facilitated the recovery of people who have experienced homelessness. It enabled them to express and manage feelings of pain and

anger, whilst providing a distraction from distressing thoughts. People found artwork and creativity unlocked their ability to think clearly and objectively.

Initially unaware, it was elating for individuals when they realised how capable and talented at writing or creating they were, increasing their self-esteem, confidence and social skills. Participants also realised that learning could be progressive and developmental yet interesting, exciting and fun.

We wish to sincerely thank our staff and volunteers; the tutors: Maria Carey for Floral Art, Ailbhe Creane and Róisín Keane for Creative Writing, Marianne Dignam for Pottery, Áine Lavelle for Jewellery, John O'Malley for Art Therapy and Gráinne Weldon for Photography; and especially, the participants for their candour, sincerity and contributions to this book.

Happy reading!

Dublin Simon Community

September 2013

PHOENIX PARK

Photography Group Project:

Gráinne, Jade, James F., Kathy, Leanne and Nele.

A HISTORY

I am a forty-eight year old man with a long history of mental illness. As many have said, the treatment of mental illness is often worse than the symptoms. However, modern holistic treatment and care is not always a viable alternative. The struggle, to put it quite bluntly, to find a suitable tablet, as part of a therapeutic regime, is ongoing. My first psychiatric admission was in 1986 just after completing exams for my BA. Estrangement, disaffection and alienation are often terms used to describe the experience of the “psychotic” patient. Subjectively, the experience of psychosis is as bizarre as the observation of the “psychotic” himself. One feels naked to the world and the only defence is a sequence of strange postures – a kind of mimicry of reality which is the only dignity in one long hour of shame.

I have to concede that anti-psychotic medication was never promised to be a cure or a means of healing the sufferer entirely, but if a tablet or injection which is bearable is found, there may be no joy in like but there is considerable relief from despair. Attitude, of course, is something the sufferer is responsible for and I have found that, with age, realism is not crushing but strangely liberating. In other words, I have ceased to chase “highs”.

Having said all that, however, psychiatrists speak of non-compliance a lot which is a rather harsh way of saying that

a patient is not willing to be well; the truth is that “wellness” is not always real when it appears to be. Like so many, I have chopped and changed medications, come off treatment myself and have had treatment changed, by my suggestions or by those of the doctors and carers. Wellness is an elusive term, and with training in philosophy, the term can conjure up for me, unreal images such as a prolonged Zen-balance. I always imagined I would struggle through life “ill” or “well”, but in many ways anti-psychotic medication takes the struggle itself away and as a result one merely “seems” well.

Being well is the struggle itself to be well. The struggle is paramount and typically most medicines fail, however the trick is not to give up. The battle is half-won when you realise, this is not an exact science and life is messy and hard anyway.

To say something of my experience of homelessness, which is the whole point of this, I would tell you that I never craved money or possessions much anyway and that what always motivated me was a willingness to understand my environment and to find a place within it, regardless of personal success or failure, in the end.

The loss of my father at a young age was difficult, as it was for all of my family. Life itself was cruel in small ways and it was these “small ways” which broke me.

DONAL



Artist: Michael



Artist: Mark O.

Dear Bob

Dear Mr. Bob Dylan,

My name is R.H. and I'm writing to tell you how much of an admirer of yours I am. I remember the first time I ever heard 'Mr. Tambourine Man'. The imagery the lyrics in that song conjured up in my head, the tambourine shakin' man with his trance-like leadership about the evening turning into sand. That is to name but a few of the many great lyrics.

The moment I heard you, that wailing harmonica and rhythmic chord runs, I knew I had to get a guitar and rack. I'm still very much the student.

I particularly like the way you developed your craft. And when you decided to pick up an electric guitar and hacked off all the folkies at the time.

As by way of a joke, I have enclosed a little first edition of Dylan Thomas' 'Under Milk Wood'. I know you've never admitted having him in mind when you changed your name but I think you'll find he has a bit of a flare for this writing lark, ha, ha!

Thanks for the music,

R.

- DRINKING -

Around the palate,
around the gums

Look out tummy,
here she comes.

VINCENT



LIMERICKS

TANGO

THERE WAS A MAN CALLED ANTO
HE WENT ON A TRIP TO ORLANDO
HE SURE GOT ON WELL
WE COULD ALL TELL
HE CAME BACK DANCING THE TANGO.

ANTO

PAT'S RAT

THERE WAS A MAN CALLED PAT
HE WAS ALWAYS WEARING A HAT
HE LIVED IN A HOUSE
WHICH HE SHARED WITH A MOUSE
BUT IT WAS IN FACT, A RAT!

PAT

ONLY GRAND
THERE WAS A MAN CALLED PAUL
HE HUNG AROUND IN THE HALL
SURE, HE WAS GRAND
WITH A FAG IN HIS HAND
HE STUBBED IT OUT ON THE WALL.

PAUL

THERE WAS AN OLD GUY FROM RINGSEND...

THERE WAS AN OLD GUY FROM RINGSEND
WHO WROTE TO THE PRESS FOR A FRIEND
HE SENT THEM A LETTER
BUT NO ONE WAS BETTER
AND NOW HE'S HIS OWN SPECIAL FRIEND!

RAY H.

My Friend, Joe

It was a bleak, cold wet day in London when I had run out of milk and ran to the local shop getting soaked on the way. The queue was a long one and I saw a figure bent down in the upright fridge that held all the alcohol. When the figure stood up, I saw that like me, he was soaking wet but that unlike me, he was so very obviously homeless. He held a dirty old wet blanket under his arm and his face was “black and blue”. I walked straight up to him and asked him if he was alright, when the answer should have been clearly obvious that he was not. That is when I heard his Celtic accent, like mine and we struck up a conversation. His left eye was very badly swollen and he had trouble seeing the price on the can of Carlsberg he held in his hand. He introduced himself as Joe and he told me that some local youths had decided he was their fun for that night and had given him a sound beating and had stolen his meagre belongings.

I offered to take Joe to the local police station or to Casualty but he declined. We continued chatting as the queue slowly got smaller in the shop and I decided that he was coming home with me for dinner. I told him I was a lousy cook but that I had a huge pot of stew on the boil and he was more than welcome to come and have

a bowl of it but I would need twenty minutes to inform the husband who would be more than used to me bringing home animals I found but never a fully grown man.

Joe arrived and was made welcome and he soon fell asleep after his meal on the chair he sat in. I covered him with a blanket and left him to it. When he awoke later, we chatted for hours. He was such an educated man and we put the world to rights via our own brand of politics. Despite the fact that Joe had only been invited to get out of the rain and have a meal, he stayed with us for almost a week until he asked me if I would call his brother to let him know that he was ok as the brother would be worrying about him by now. I was a bit worried as to the expense of the call as I presumed I was calling Ireland but when Joe gave me the number it was a local one and I was confused. He explained that he shared a flat with his brother “up the road” who always threw him out when he “went on the piss”.

To this day, I remember Joe with a smile on my face at the sheer cheek of him only living a mile away and getting free bed and board from me.

Anne



Artist: Amanda



Artist: Theresa



Artist: Theresa

These Cinquain Poems were created as a group.

A Cinquain is an unrhymed poem of five lines with a unique, symmetrical shape created from interesting, descriptive words.

Sun
Bright, hot
Shining, tiring, burning
The creator of life and death
Warmth



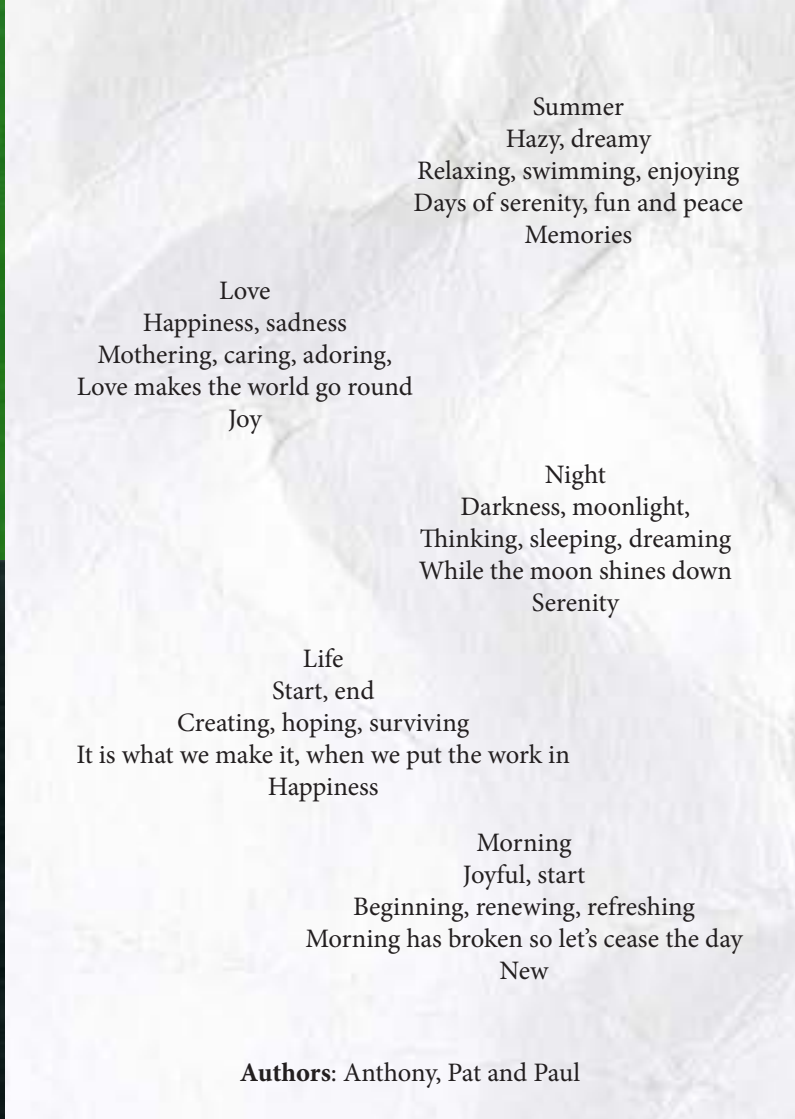
Artist: Paul



Artist: Martina C.



Artist: Pat



Summer
Hazy, dreamy
Relaxing, swimming, enjoying
Days of serenity, fun and peace
Memories

Love
Happiness, sadness
Mothering, caring, adoring,
Love makes the world go round
Joy

Night
Darkness, moonlight,
Thinking, sleeping, dreaming
While the moon shines down
Serenity

Life
Start, end
Creating, hoping, surviving
It is what we make it, when we put the work in
Happiness

Morning
Joyful, start
Beginning, renewing, refreshing
Morning has broken so let's cease the day
New

Authors: Anthony, Pat and Paul



Artist: Brian



Artist: Martina B.



Artist: Ailbhe

A Little Bit Of History

Patrick Sarsfield was born in Lucan in 1660; his father was also named Patrick Sarsfield and had married the daughter of Rory O'Moore who organised the Irish Rebellion of 1641.

Patrick Sarsfield Jr was the youngest son and joined Dongan's Regiment of Foot. In 1682/'83, while in London, Sarsfield took part in the abduction of an heiress to help his friend Captain Robert Clifford. They abducted Ann Siderlin, a wealthy widow, and luckily were not prosecuted.

During the last years of Charles II, he was in service in the English regiments attached to the army of Louis XIV of France. The accession of James II led to his return home.

He took part in suppressing the Monmouth Rebellion at the Battle of Sedgemoor on the 6th of July 1685. In the following year he was promoted to being a Colonel. King James had a policy of remodelling the Irish army, to turn it from being a Protestant-led one to a Catholic-led one.

Sarsfield, whose family were Roman Catholic, was chosen to assist in this remodelling.

In 1688, the death of his eldest brother put him in possession of the family estate, which didn't bring much money because he was on the losing side of the civil war. The King brought over Irish soldiers to fight William of Orange at the Battle of the Boyne on the 1st of July 1690, and after the battle King James fled to France. Sarsfield took command of the Irish army and retreated to Limerick in 1690 which led to the Siege of Limerick. Sarsfield, led by his scout man 'Gallopog Hogan', captured a convoy of military and artillery stores at Ballyneety in Limerick. This led to the Siege of Limerick being delayed until the winter which forced the English to sign the Treaty of Limerick in 1691. Patrick Sarsfield died from wounds he got at at the Battle of Landen on the 21st of August 1693.

Miles

Tea for Two



THE SANCTUARY

I was brought to the Sanctuary by Eleanor for the first time. They showed me around then I went by myself every week.

The Sanctuary is very pleasant. You do the meditation in a group. You learn breathing and they teach you meditation. You do it by the hour. When you finish, they give you a variety of teas which detox your system. You can stay there for half an hour.

There are gardens there which are landscaped. The gardens are very nice and quiet. There is a big black dog there which I am afraid of.

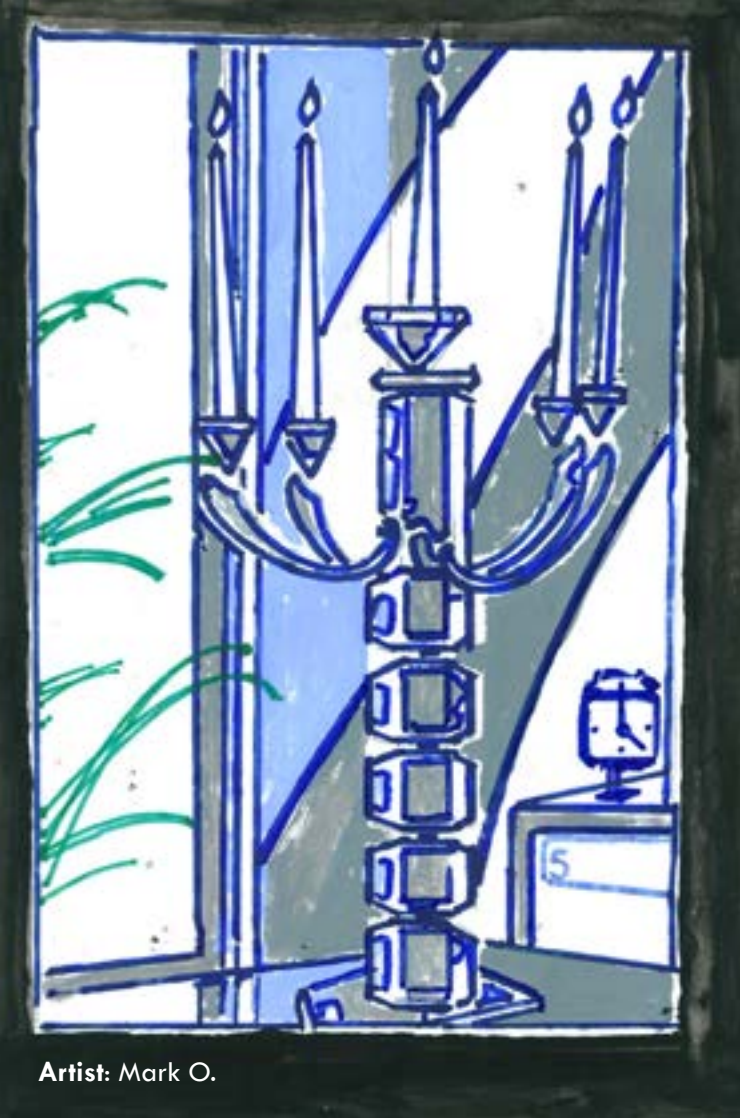
It is mainly for meditation but I also get reflexology when I go there. It has taught me to relax more and I sleep better.

Ray F.

Artist: Margaret Rose



Floral Art Group Project:
Ann, Carol, Gráinne, Imelda,
Leanne, Michael and Theresa.



Artist: Mark O.

THE SIMON COMMUNITY

The Simon Community is very good
We seem to get on well
We have a laugh, we have the craic
We have stories that we tell.
We have our dinner at 1 o'clock
We have our tea at 5
Then we simply take it easy
And the whole place comes alive.
There are lots of people
There's even me
There is much to do and say
There is even much to see.
People come and go here
Some people stay long term
People look on the network for flats
At the hope of having concern.
I hope that when I leave here
The staff will think of me
And I will think of them as well
And thank them don't you see.
I'll always remember Simon
For the work they've done for me
I have got my flat now so thank you!
I'm going to collect the key!

George



Artist: Eileen



THE ROAD TO HAPPY DAYS ISN'T PLAIN SAILING
Pat



APPLE TREE
Aibhe



BIRDS OF FREEDOM
Brian



DANCING LIGHTS
Paul

AFTERMATH

I'm dealing with the aftermath of a long session of drink.
Damage, my drinking has caused a lot of damage.
Bumper, I was so drunk at times, I was banging off the bumpers of parked cars.
Carrots are nice in stews. Flying high is a thing of the past for me.
Extension ladders are very useful.

ANTO

Where Did It All Go Wrong?

Here we are, two of us pushing buggies at our age.
Where did we go wrong?

We haven't nearly lived our own lives yet!
So two kids in buggies and two older kids to
look after. The storm is terrible and they don't
understand.

We have a two bedroom flat, but it's too small for six
of us. Oh how I wished I stayed in school and done
my leaving! Maybe I would have been able to buy
my own home - a three or four bedroom... drive a
car. It wouldn't be so bad on my wife and four kids.

I hate these flats. I hate my life right now.
What can I do to change my circumstances?

Help!

Alan

- Sanctuary -

You could call
a mental home a
sanctuary
- a place of
safety.

This place today
is a sanctuary.
Heaven is a
sanctuary.

Hell is a hole.
I'm in hell
sometimes.

Vincent

THIS RAMBLIN' MAN

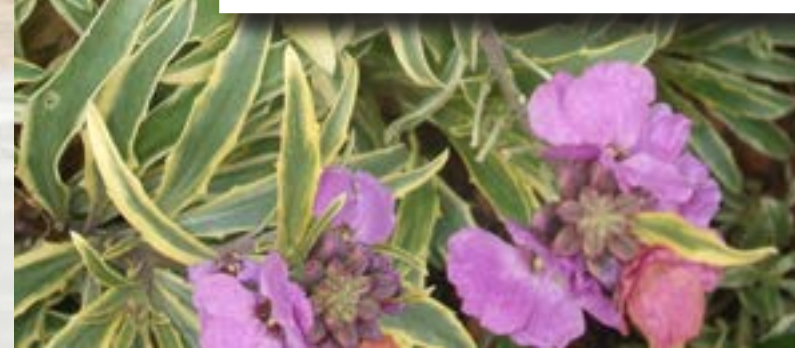
It's 2.30 in the morning and I'm walking home again,
And wouldn't it be my luck, here comes the wind blowing the rain.
Haven't got but one cent in this dirty overcoat,
Just got an eerie feeling that I might have missed my boat.

Yes it wouldn't be the first time that I missed my trusty craft,
Now I'm stuck here on this island's streets trying to build a raft.
But the elements are not on side neither this time,
I need a hand up, not a hand out, and I'll make it fine.

As I wind my way up through this dreary day in town,
I look around and realise I'm not all on my own.
I see there are many walks of life,
Battling away with their own woes and strife.

So I'm gonna try and be patient and not make such a fuss,
And forget all about that boat, I'm gonna catch a bus.

RAY H.



GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE

Photography Group Project:

Gráinne, Jade, James F., Kathy, Leanne and Nele.

HOPE

I, like you, like us, like we,
have had a somewhat pained history,
a complicated, hard life put to the test
is why I and we experience homelessness.

There is nothing we cannot overcome,
We've already been through a lot and then some
we are on a path to a happier life;
A home, kids, a husband or wife.

Hopes and dreams, baby steps and achieving goals
can be done but we're not on our own,
a Simon Community of staff, volunteers and peers
here to help us to help ourselves.

James

Artist: Margaret Rose



GHOST PHONE

Got on the early morning bus, it's full more than ever. No seats, just as well I'm not going too far. As I get off the bus, I put my hand in my pocket for a cigarette. I find a mobile phone; it's not mine, a full battery. There are no names or numbers on it. Sure I'll hang onto it; someone must have put it there by mistake. I'll ask the driver in the morning. The phone rings. "Hello", I say. A voice says, "I know who you are. I know what you're doing right now, you're smoking a cigarette". "Is this your phone? Who are you?", I say. "I am your mind, your body and your soul", he says. "Do as I say. Wait! Don't cross the road". As I step onto the road, a car just misses me. He said, "I told you not to cross the road". I looked behind me; no one is on a phone. "Look!", I say, "if you want your phone I'm going to leave it on this windowsill". "Do that", he says, "and you will die". "Piss off!", I say. I leave it on the windowsill and walk off. Suddenly a big truck comes towards me. I jump back and pick up the phone. "I told you", he said, "do as I say. If you let go of the phone, you will die".

Jimmy

This group piece, produced on 4 July (Independence Day in the USA), was inspired by John F Kennedy's visit to Ireland 50 years ago. In his address to the Irish people, Kennedy spoke of how Ireland has provided the world with much literary and artistic genius and he spoke of Ireland's future of peace and freedom which left us thinking about what freedom means to us as individuals...

WHAT FREEDOM MEANS TO ME

To run in the sand,
To have fun and be happy,
I have freedom of speech,
I have freedom and inner peace,
I have freedom of choice,
And the freedom of living,
Freedom is everything to me.

Anthony

Freedom to me is being able to make up my own mind,
To go where I want, being able to speak my mind
and walk out of my own door.

Pat



Artist: Thomas

Freedom to me means
having a choice of what
to do and being happy
doing it. Waking up in
the morning and looking
forward to the day.
Freedom is not having to
worry about doing the
things that don't make you
feel good. Being free is like
a bird in the sky, but not
like an animal in a cage,
like standing on a mountain
makes one feel free or
driving in the countryside
on a nice sunny day.

Paul



BECOMING
Terence



WHO AM I?
Paul



FACADE
Terry

INVINCIBLE

There is no time like the present. Just get going and the words should start to flow. If they don't, then think about going fishing, golf, holidays, going shopping for clothes and shoes, going to the pictures, out for a meal, an appointment with the doctor or dentist, going to see my family, playing football with friends in the park at dinner time and just thinking how invincible you are?

Ray M.

An Old Guy Living Alone

Lately, I don't have many friends calling to visit. One of my pet hates is labelling people. To label someone as a couch potato would be politically incorrect. Don't get me wrong, I am all for correctness. I think it is fair. Individuals get to be included - those groups of people living on the margins, the least represented, no one to speak up for them, those who were once excluded.

You know, some Dublin buses have got automatic ramps for wheelchair access fitted to buses. Some public buildings and shops allow certain dogs on their premises. A pensioner with a free travel pass can take the train or bus to the City Centre where they can have a choice of shopping malls. Or they can call into one of the libraries where they can relax, read a book or even the newspaper. In the cold winter months, maybe stay a tad while longer. This way they get to save money on electricity bills.

So, I believe it would be politically incorrect to label a person as a couch potato. Having said that, the last person to call round, Billy, who is not only a couch potato, he can have some trenchant views and can be very 'diplomatic'. Billy has a dog, a gorgeous

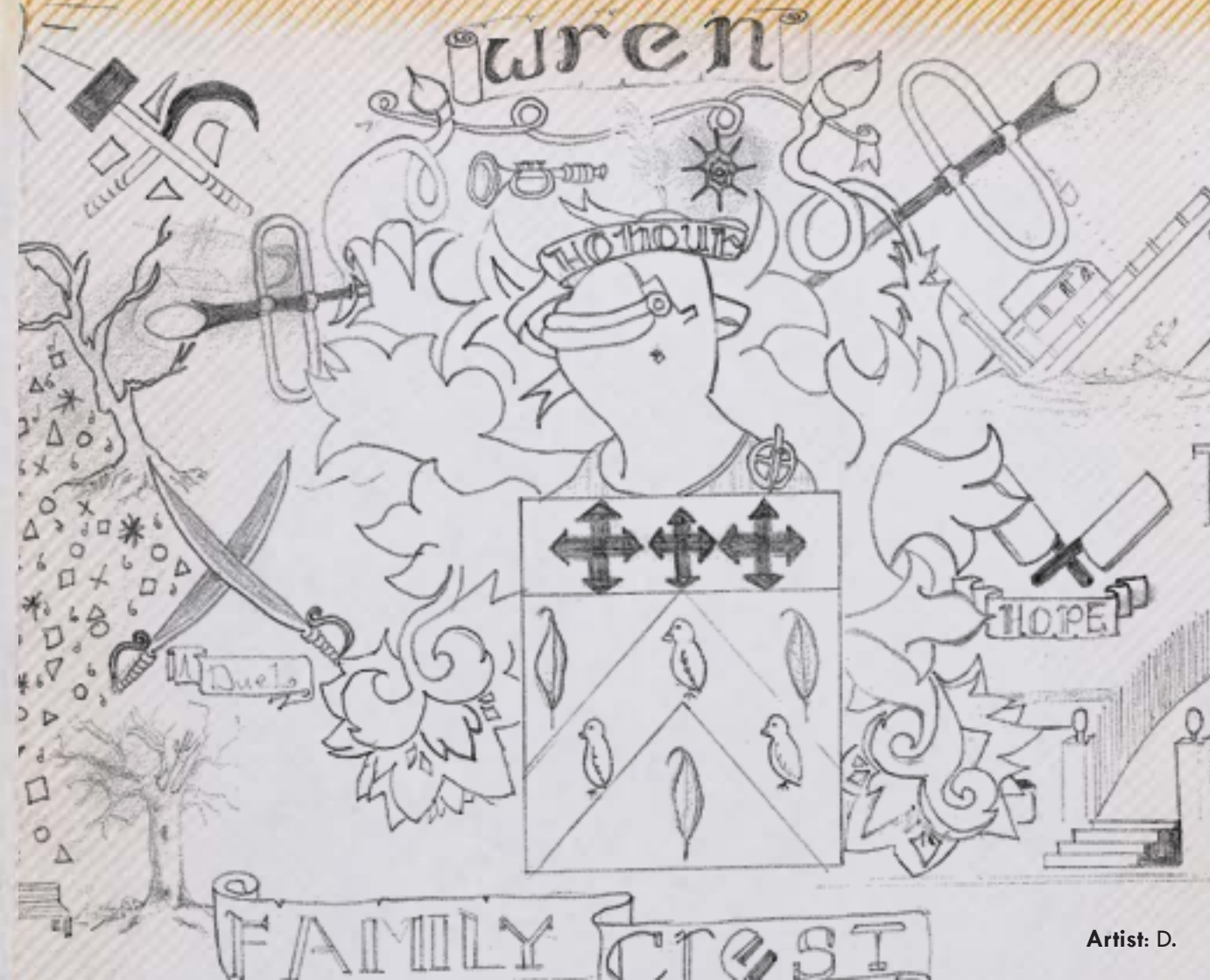
strawberry-blond coloured King Charles Spaniel. You could not take your eyes off him for a second for fear of someone making off with him, making him their own pet.

On one occasion, I asked Billy, "Are you getting ready to go to the mall to take a look around the shops?". He answered the question with a question, "When did you last see an unemployed person in the mall wearing a designer pair of Kickers (slacks) or having a half decent pair of ones and twos (shoes)?" He said he only ever dreamed of wearing a pair of Levi's 501°.

I never thought I'd hear myself saying this but there used to be value in the euro. And, like Billy, if shopped around and were penny-wise you might even save a few euros. That was then and this is now. Prices are exorbitant. Electricity never used to cost so much, tobacco close on six euros, bus fair two euros and a few trips a week close on a tenner.

So maybe I'll be travelling to the mall for cheap deals on food and clothes, and dream of wearing a half decent pair of ones and twos (shoes).

Tom



Artist: D.

Christmas Time

I believe that Christmas time in our home growing up was a really good place to be. I remember only good times, even though there was an occasional row. The atmosphere and mood always seemed to be different. I can't really explain it, but people seemed to be kinder to each other. Even friends and neighbours seemed to be in each other's homes a lot around Christmas and up to the New Year. People just seemed friendlier and happier. There was always ample food and drink for everyone. Home was always relaxed, comfortable and happy around Christmas time.

Tommy

- TRUTH -

BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF.

BE CERTAIN THAT YOUR SO
CALLED REASON IS NOT A
SELFISH EXCUSE.

Francis



Artist: Keith



Artist: Thomas

THEN AND NOW

This was a happy home once. I once lived here 25 years ago with my wife and four young children, but the recession in the '80s meant we all had to emigrate to Australia because there was no work for me and I could not support my family. We sold the house to a young couple before we left. Things had gone well for us; I got a good job in Australia and the children, now adults, were doing very well. Only my eldest had any memory of living in Ireland. I had returned alone for the funeral of my brother and decided to stay on for a further week. Two days before I alone was due to return home, I decided to drive to Carlow and take some photos of our old house to show to the children. What greeted me, as I rounded the bend in the road, hit me like a ton of bricks. Our old house was completely destroyed; it was boarded up and vandalised. There were children's toys discarded on the overgrown garden. What had become of that young couple? What trouble had befallen them? Perhaps I will never know! I drove away with a heavy heart, probably never to return again.

MARK 5.



Artist: Michael

- LIGHT AT THE END OF YOUR TROUBLES -

*I'd like to tell a story; one that's very close to my heart,
About a time in my life when my whole world was falling apart,
And then I heard about the Simon Community.
With the help of my keyworkers I was referred and assessed,
Taken in for treatment knowing it was for the best.
There's no point saying it was easy,
But the staff were great in more ways than one,
But for you to be able to make it,
It's the strength within that you need to get it done.
There was plenty of ups and downs,
Plenty of obstacles in the way,
But you need to keep the head up,
And remember it will get easier someday.
Tell yourself you're worth it and deserve a better life than that,
And keep on trying, however many times you get knocked down,
And if it's what you really want you can turn your life around.*

LOUISE



PHOENIX PARK
Photography Group Project:
Gráinne, Jade, James F., Kathy, Leanne and Nele.



Dublin
Simon
Community

Dublin Simon Community,
1-2 Cope Street,
Dublin 2.
Tel: (01) 6715551
Web: www.dubsimon.ie

Serving Dublin,
Kildare, Wicklow.

The thoughts and opinions
expressed in this publication
are not necessarily those of
Dublin Simon Community.

Copyright © 2013
Dublin Simon Community

Design and artwork
courtesy of Bonfire Ltd.
Art Direction: Johnny Rothwell

Bonfire

Jewellery Group Project: Amanda, Ann, Brendan,
Carol, Gráinne, James McD., Kathy, Leanne and Michael.