

Greater Shankill Senior Citizens Forum

Annual General Meeting - 25th June 2009

The Forum will be holding its annual general meeting at **11.00am on Thursday 25th June in Church of God, Conway Street, Belfast**. This will be an opportunity to hear about the work of the forum over the last year and to elect office-bearers. This is open to the wider community but places are limited and must be confirmed in advance by telephoning **Jean Kennedy, Chairperson on 028 90 238977**.

Upcoming Social Opportunities Tea Dances

Benview Community Centre

A tea dance is held on the first Wednesday in every month from 2.00pm-4.00pm in Benview

Community Centre, 80 Ballysillan Park - the next date will be Wednesday 3 June 2009. Please telephone **90 719271** for more information.

Closure of Shankill Mission Announced

Local older people have been shocked to hear about the imminent closure of the Shankill Mission which has been in existence for over 100 years. The Board of Mission in Ireland for the Presbyterian Church has made this decision which will affect local people in the Shankill through the loss of jobs and closure of a community resource that benefited those who are most vulnerable in the community. A key service has been the provision of the restaurant offering good quality food at an affordable price which has

been a resource for the elderly, the ill and the socially isolated.

The senior citizens forum has expressed concern that this resource will be lost on the Shankill. It has been of particular benefit to older people in the area and there would be a concern that those most in need will lose out. One of the biggest problems facing older people is social isolation and the closure of vital community resources sends out a very negative message to older people in the wider community.

Poets Corner

The Forum has been contacted by a number of people in the Greater Shankill area who have written poems or short stories with the theme of older people - please contact **Jean Kennedy on 028 90 238977** if you would like to include an item (Please do not send poems to the Shankill Mirror offices). This month's poem is by Albert Haslett from his collection called "Enjoy the Crack". Albert is available for talks for community and voluntary groups and can be contacted via the Spectrum Centre on **028 90 504555**.

The Tall Ships

BY ALBERT HASLETT

Something we may never see again
Happened in July
Ships from many countries
With masts high in the sky.

These ships were something different
No funnels to be seen
Instead, they sported massive sails
The greatest ever seen.

Cutting through the waves they came
Masters of the deep
Elegant in all their pride
A royal visit they would keep.

Thousands flocked to see them moored
And meet their youthful crews
Join the laughter and the fun
They didn't mind the queues.

Bands, singers and entertainers
Were non stop everyday
At the end of all this jolity
A mammoth fireworks display.

So when we look back in years to come
To those who are still around
There'll be some happy memories
The year the Tall Ships came to town.

Seniors Convention Talks Money

Money and how older people can make the most of it was the theme of a successful one day event at the Waterfront Hall on the 18th May 2009.

More than 100 older people attended the senior citizens convention which was addressed by both the Lord Mayor of Belfast, Councillor Tom Hartley, and the Finance Minister, Mr Nigel Dodds.

Finance was chosen as the topic for the 2009 Seniors Convention after consultations with older people's forums highlighted it as their main concern given the economic downturn. Among the organisations which took part in the event were the Financial Services Authority; Belfast Trust; Belfast Law Centre and the Citizens Advice Bureau. There is a wealth of information for older persons available on the Belfast City Council web-site in the seniors info section (www.belfastcity.gov.uk/seniorsinfo) with everything from information on city transport services to organisations that can provide financial support. Other topics include heating your home, preventing crime, safety in the home, income, benefits and money, housing, health and wellbeing, support organisations, rights and advocacy, learning and leisure and emergency numbers.



Lynda Bryans pictured with delegates at the senior citizens convention which was held on the 18th May in Belfast Waterfront Hall.

Older Men - Look after Yourself!

There will be an information session on techniques and tips for older men (50+) who want to look after themselves on Thursday 18th June 2009. This will take place in Farset Hotel, 466 Springfield Road from 11.00am to 1.00pm and

will include lunch.

This event will include information on diabetes, alzheimers, strokes etc delivered by NHS nurses. There will also be the opportunity to have your blood pressure and blood

sugar levels checked and have your questions answered followed by some light exercise.

Please telephone **Deirdre at Voluntary Service Bureau on 028 90 200863** to book your place.

Roselawn Bus - June 2009 Timetable

Don't forget to take advantage of the older persons bus service to Roselawn provided by Belfast City Council from pick-up points across Belfast and weekly from the city centre. To book a seat please telephone **028 90 270296**.

JUNE 2009 Timetable

Tuesday 9.45am pick-up:

2nd - **NORTH** Loughside Recreation Centre

9th - **EAST** Dee Street Community Centre

16th - **SOUTH** Donegall Pass Community Centre

23rd - **WEST & SHANKILL** Spectrum Centre (and on to Twin Spires 10am)

30th - **NORTH** Loughside Recreation Centre

Friday 2.00pm pick-up:

5th HSBC, 12th HSBC, 19th HSBC & 26th HSBC

Like to share your memories?

Louise McCreash would like to hear from you as part of a four part documentary on life in Northern Ireland in the early 60's. She would like to hear your memories or experiences on a range of topics including:

- The annual Twelfth celebrations
- The opening of Ireland's first motorway
- The Harland & Wolff shipyards in good times and bad

- The Balmoral Show
- Unemployment marches in Newry and Belfast
- Louis Armstrong's concert in Belfast in 1962

• Stormont elections
Please ring **Louise on 079 2307 7326** to chat about your memories of these events.

Computers For You

Why not sign up for some computing classes for the 50+ age group starting on Monday 7 September 2009 - a basic Introduction class or Digital Storytelling. Each class lasts 2 hours. Future classes will include basic computing, internet & e-mail and also digital photography. For more information and to sign up for a class, contact **Tracy Mawhinney at the Hammer Community Complex, Agnes Street (off Shankill Road) on 028 9033 2860**.

Elim Church opens Ballysillan Drop-in & Restaurant

Ballysillan Elim Pentecostal Church celebrated the opening of its new church on Saturday 23 May 2009. The church was opened by Tilly Armstrong and Kathleen Armstrong two of the oldest members of the church. Tilly's mother was the local midwife who would have delivered many residents in the local community. Her brother Dr Rolston would also have been the local doctor.

This heralds a new chapter for the church in the area with the opening of the Turning Point restaurant and drop-in facility on-site that can provide good and affordable breakfasts and lunches for senior citizens and the general public in the area. It is open from 9.00am to 2.00pm from Monday to Friday.

This facility is also open to organisations wishing to book outside catering for their own meetings and events - please contact **Sandra Fittis** for more information on **028 90 825788**.



Tilly Armstrong and Kathleen Armstrong two of the most senior members of Ballysillan Elim opening the new Elim Church on the 23 May 2009.

Outdoor Leisure Opportunities

You have the opportunity to get fit this summer in Belfast City Council parks in the city. This will involve a range of activities including Boxercise, tai chi and tennis which will be available from Monday 8th to Thursday 11th June. You do not have to register as long as you turn up 15 minutes before the class is due to begin.

Outdoor Leisure Classes

Monday 8th June 6.30pm

Falls Park (meet at Whiterock Leisure Centre)

Activity: Boxercise
Age Group: 18+

Tuesday 9th June 3.30pm

Avoniel Park (meet at Avoniel Leisure Centre)

Activity: Multi-skills
Age Group: 5-11

Wednesday 10th June 10.30am

Grove Wellbeing Park (meet at Grove Wellbeing Centre)

Activity: Tai Chi
Age Group: 55+

Thursday 11th June 6.30pm

Ormeau Park (meet at indoor tennis centre and ozone complex)

Activity: Tennis
Age Group: 12+

Please call **Andrew Steenson** for more information on **028 90 320202 (extension 3540)**.

Good Morning Lines

Are you an older person living on your own and need a reassuring call every day? The Good Morning Ballysillan service in North Belfast can help you - please telephone **9071 9200** for more information.