

# THE IRISH JOURNALIST



Newsletter of the National Union of Journalists in Ireland

Winter 2019



Bee Army CEO Abdulaziz Almoayyad addresses the recent vigil for Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi Arabian Embassy, Dublin. The Bee Army is an online media agency whose first supporter was Jamal Khashoggi. See page 5 for full report. Photo: Derek Spiers

## BDC 2019: Defending journalism

Delegates at the Biennial Delegate Conference in Dublin on November 16th will reflect on two years of significant challenges for the union in Ireland.

Jointly chaired by Gerry Carson and Bernie Mullen, the conference will debate a range of motions on employment rights, terms and conditions of employment, and media freedom.

While industrial and organisational issues are to the fore, sinister threats to media freedom and human rights will cast a shadow over proceedings.

Owen Reidy, Assistant General Secretary, Irish Congress of Trade Unions will join in paying tribute to Lyra McKee as delegates reflect on her murder and her legacy. BDC 2019 will be the first national gathering since her death and will

be marked by a formal presentation of books of condolences held by the union since her funeral.

In the introduction to his report Séamus Dooley, Irish Secretary, sets the tone for conference.

"The theme of BDC 2019, 'Defending Journalism in Times of Crisis', reflects the current state of the media in Ireland. The undermining of employment rights, threats to public service broadcasting, the devaluing of freelance workers, lack of editorial investment and the failure of government to tackle precarious employment practices have combined with technological innovations and dramatic changes in consumer preferences to exacerbate the sense of crisis within the Irish media."

*See pages 7-11 for conference preview.*

Pay claims in the pipeline, page 3; Members brought to book, pages 18-22; Media awards shortlist, pages 30,31;

## EDITOR'S NOTE

# Planning the future, celebrating the past

In a few days from now, delegates and other members from across the island will gather in Dublin for the NUJ's Biennial Delegate Conference, to highlight union actions for the coming two years.

More than that, the union that weekend will also honour and celebrate its newest Life Members, recognising 30 members for 40 years of active union membership.

These celebrations bring out the best of what we are, with a focus on issues of importance to our members, and a well-deserved recognition of those women and men who have kept the NUJ flag flying throughout their careers.

If you haven't yet had a chance to look through this year's motions, you will find them in this issue. They represent not just words but actions, and those motions that BDC adopts this month will form part of the workload for the

union in the years ahead.

We are all encouraged to play a part in our union, by working with our chapels and branches on the ground, by bringing motions to BDC and DM, and by following up to ensure adopted motions are acted on.

It's our union. More than that, we are the union.

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The Irish Journalist is your publication. We encourage you to get in touch with local events and actions, new books by members, and other matters of interest. Help us get your work and the work of your branches and chapels out to members. Send any correspondence to [irishjournalist@nuj.ie](mailto:irishjournalist@nuj.ie).

And, finally, thanks yet again to Brendan Carroll for his unstinting work on the production of The Irish Journalist.

Carolyn Farrar, editor



From left, Trevor Birney, Gerry Carson, President Michael D Higgins, Sabina Higgins, and Barry McCaffrey at Áras an Uachtaráin.

## 'No Stone Unturned' journalists attend president's reception

Journalists Trevor Birney and Barry McCaffrey were the guests of President Michael D Higgins and his wife, Sabina, at Áras an Uachtaráin in June.

They were joined at the Áras by Gerry Carson, joint cathaoirleach of the IEC, who presented President Higgins with a piece of Waterford crystal to recognise his support for journalists in the North.

Trevor and Barry produced the powerful documentary, 'No Stone Unturned' about the Loughinisland massacre.

## Holliman for Press Council



Siobhan Holliman

Siobhan Holliman, deputy editor of The Tuam Herald, is the new NUJ representative to the Press Council of Ireland.

Siobhan succeeds Deaglán de Bréadún as the NUJ representative on the council.

Siobhan has been a member of the IEC since 2013, when she job shared as a provincial newspaper representative. She held the position of leas cathaoirleach of the IEC during the 2017-2019 term and has represented the IEC on several occasions.

Siobhan has been with The Tuam Herald for the past 16 years. Prior to that she worked in broadcasting for several years, including Mid-West Radio and Galway Bay fm.

Siobhan is an active member of the West of Ireland branch.

# New pay claims are in the pipeline



The NUJ Irish Office, working with chapels at The Irish News, Belfast Telegraph/Sunday Life and JPI Media plans to bring further pay claims for staff at those titles for 2020.

The NUJ is already engaging with management in Galway Bay FM, seeking a new pay agreement, and has already secured a 2 per cent increase, backdated to July, at JPI Media for 2019-2020. JPI owns the Newsletter, Morton regional titles, and the Derry Journal.

Ian McGuinness, Irish Organiser, said: “Every chapel in the country should be lodging a pay claim for 2020 but it must come from the chapel. Inflation impacts every worker, be they staff or freelance, or whether they work in local or national media. If you don’t ask for an increase your boss is unlikely to give you one out of the goodness of their heart.

“The Irish Office and our members have been flexible in their approach and where companies couldn’t afford a stand-alone percentage or lump sum pay increase, we fought for – and frequently won – increased terms and conditions instead of a pay raise.

“For example, we can negotiate an increase to sick pay, more annual leave, better paternity or maternity payments, or any other issue that our members ask us to fight for an improvement on.

“So chapel reps should contact the Irish Office and ask for assistance in fighting for more pay, or better terms and conditions, or both, for them in 2020.”

Officers or members from any NUJ chapel who want assistance with lodging a pay claim can contact Ian at the Irish Office in Dublin on 01 8170340 or by email on [ianmcg@nuj.ie](mailto:ianmcg@nuj.ie).

## Storm over Achill meeting camera ban

The decision of a Fianna Fáil councillor to demand the ejection of a TG4 camera operator from a public meeting on proposals for a direct provision centre in Achill has been strongly criticised by the NUJ.

Fergal Sweeney had been assigned to cover the meeting last month. On arrival in the venue he was asked by Fianna Fáil councillor Paul McNamara to leave, although print journalists were allowed to stay.

Some of those present shouted “out, out, out” as Mr Sweeney was denied the right to cover the public meeting.

Séamus Dooley, Irish Secretary, NUJ, said: “This was a disturbing incident. Fergal Sweeney was assigned to cover a public meeting in Achill, the meeting had been widely publicised and was in no way a private event. I understand that Mr Sweeney was asked to leave by Cllr McNamara. He was also the subject of jeers and taunts of ‘out, out, out’ from some of those in attendance. Mr McNamara, as a public representative, had no right to challenge Mr Sweeney’s right to attend a meeting which was of enormous public interest.

“Mr McNamara’s action are deeply disturbing. No public representative should seek to limit media access to a public meeting in this fashion.

“The issue of direct provision is of national importance and we cannot tolerate a situation whereby local public representatives decide what journalists are allowed or not allowed to cover meetings of this type.

“There can be circumstances where individual speakers may wish not to speak in front of a camera or not wish to be identified, for legitimate interests.

“Journalists are well used to dealing with sensitive situations. There does not seem to have been any reason Mr Sweeney was excluded, other than a desire to manage the nature of media coverage.

“The presence of print and broadcast journalists at similar public meetings elsewhere has been extremely useful in helping to understand the context of local opinion and in at least one case, highlighted attempts from external forces to influence local opinion.”

Branch members intend to formally raise this issue at the next West of Ireland branch meeting.



# A guide to success and profit at the autumn freelance forum

By Therese Caherty

This autumn's Freelance Forum (October 21st), "A guide to success and profit", diverged from others that have come before. This seven-hour workshop had a single topic: instructing freelancers on journalism and its business side. And it was very interactive – seating arrangements conspired to ensure this.

Course tutor SA (Steven) Mathiesen provided a relaxed, non-threatening atmosphere, plenty of time for questions to share relevant personal experience, and sufficient role play to keep wandering minds on track. The forum also lent itself to catching up with old colleagues and networking with new ones. Ideal learning conditions.

His refrain was the need for utmost clarity and organisation – calculate a daily rate on the cash you need to survive and thrive and the number of days you want to work per year. Confirm the bona fides of any potential employer. Be clear whether you actually want a job or not. Be informed about copyright and legal liability. Above all, keep tabs on current and finished jobs, what you owe the taxman, and catalogue your work for future reference. There was practical how-to guidance for all the above.

On pitching for the job, we learned how to sell ourselves and our ideas more effectively. Work has value and there is a difference between gouging and a fair price. So we were advised to haggle and stand foursquare behind our get-out-of-bed rate with an argument handy to defend it. Helpful sites here are: [www.NUJ.org.uk](http://www.NUJ.org.uk), PayScale <https://www.payscale.com/research/IE/Job=Journalist/Salary> and the Association of Freelance Editors, Proofreaders and Indexers <http://www.afepi.ie/rates/>. A former commissioning editor and forum participant said a well thought-out rate had generally helped to argue for a budget increase. Food for thought.

Steven offered minutely detailed templates on follow-up commission letters, or contracts, as he termed them. On submitting identical ideas to multiple employers, he urged to opt for "serial monogamy" to avoid confusion.

Elsewhere the focus was on how to maintain cordial relations with employers, upskilling and keeping track of new technology, GDPR,



From left, Dublin Freelance branch members Glenda Cimino; Therese Caherty, branch secretary; Kieran Fagan, branch finance officer; and Mike Roddy.

copyright, finding new clients – with lots to mull over on where to find new skills and ideas.

The interactive element was refreshing, with 20-plus participants teasing out a variety of "problems", some acting as commissioning editor, others as freelancers, all gaining a rounder view of the tasks set. Responses were analysed collectively to spot things what worked and what didn't – useful knowledge for the real world.

The day's compendium of tips for profit and success in the freelance world provided timely updates and reminders for old hands and an omni-resource for newcomers to the trade.

Fair play to Freelance Branch chair Gerard Cunningham for organising another excellent way to start the week and to Steven Mathiesen for stimulating content and delivery. If he makes it back, be sure to attend.

Finally, the day was not without its politics. October 2019 marked the first anniversary of the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, Saudi Arabian journalist and human rights activist, and the forum tweeted its support for an NUJ-Amnesty co-sponsored commemorative vigil outside the Saudi consulate later that day.



Above: Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett stands in solidarity with members of the NUJ, Bee Army and Amnesty Ireland at the vigil.

Right: Nora Geraghty, Dublin branch, plays a traditional Irish lament in memory of Jamal Khashoggi.

Photos: Derek Spiers

## Music and passion at Khashoggi vigil

By Séamus Dooley

The strains of Anach Cuan, Antoine Ó Raifteirí's poignant lament, stilled Dublin's Fitzwilliam Square on Monday night October 22nd, as the first anniversary of the murder of Jamal Khashoggi was marked outside the Embassy of Saudi Arabia. It was a fitting choice by Dublin branch member Nora Geraghty, and as Nora played the haunting slow air on the stone steps of the impervious Georgian building, Ó Raifteirí's words came to mind:

*Full many the soul it has left in mourning,  
And left without hope of a bright day's dawn.*

Jamal's murder was not confirmed until October 21st and so it was decided to mark the anniversary this year with a public commemoration that week. No action has been taken against the perpetrators of the vicious killing at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul. There can be no doubt that the Saudi Arabian government has the blood of this brave journalist on its hands.

In a brief address, Bee Army CEO Abdulaziz Almoayyad pointed to the security cameras trained on the steps. "You speak for those who cannot speak, who are being watched in their own country," he said, commenting that Jamal

Khashoggi had a large circle of friends and family in his life. In death that "family" has grown across the world. It was important to him and to his colleagues that Jamal's murder should not be forgotten. Abdulaziz was in no doubt that the Dublin protest would help draw attention to the Saudi government's abject failure to respect human rights.

NUJ members, led by Irish Executive Council joint cathaoirleach Gerry Carson, were joined by co-organisers from the Bee Army and Amnesty Ireland in a moving vigil which was also attended by Richard Boyd Barrett TD. The ICTU was represented by David Joyce, Global Solidarity Officer. The Bee Army is a network of Saudi journalists and human rights activists which was supported by Jamal. The attendance also included many students from Griffith College and Dun Laoghaire Further Education Institute

Earlier at Buswells Hotel, across from parliament buildings on Kildare Street, NUJ members interrupted their Freelance Forum to mark the anniversary with a message of solidarity.

The vigil formed part of the NUJ's support for the #EndImpunity campaign and the union is grateful to Dublin P&PR branch for sponsorship of the specially designed poster "Murdered by Saudia Arabia for the crime of being a journalist".



# Lifelong activist Norma honoured

By Nick Rabbitts

Limerick Leader stalwart, and lifelong trade union activist Norma Prendiville has been afforded one of the city's highest honours.

Friends, family and colleagues of the Loughill East woman were at City Hall recently for a reception from Mayor Michael Sheahan.

It was held to honour her almost three decades at the Leader, plus her contribution to the National Union of Journalists (NUJ).

Ms Prendiville is currently the Limerick Leader's correspondent for the West Limerick area, and has also held a number of other positions in this newspaper, including news editor.

She is a former Mother of the Limerick Leader's NUJ chapel, a former chairperson of the Irish South West union branch, which covers the county, and also served as the chairperson of the Irish Executive Committee

Addressing a packed chamber, Ms Prendiville said she was "deeply honoured" to accept the recognition from Mayor Sheahan.

"I have been to loads of things like this, and people talk of being humbled. You kind of think – they have to say that. But actually when you are standing where I am now, there is no other word for it. I feel very proud, and very humbled."

On the same day as thousands of youngsters staged a climate strike in the city, Norma revealed she herself started a school strike when she was 16.

"My belief in the whole notion of collective action started early. We avoided what we didn't want, but we forgot to ask for what we really wanted. So it was a good first lesson," she laughed.

Norma said in the course of her role, she comes across some of the most "inspired people who do the most amazing things".

"Journalism isn't always about the hard news stories, even though they are exciting. Local journalism does go to the heart of the matter. You come across the most inspired people who do the most amazing things. It happens week in week out. It's one of the really nice parts of the job that I do," she added.

Norma was described by Séamus Dooley, the Irish secretary of the NUJ, as having a great sense of social solidarity in her work and trade union activism.

Earlier this year, she hosted a vigil in the wake of the tragic slaying of journalist Lyra McKee, bringing journalists from across the region together.

"I'm very conscious here in Ireland that



Mayor Michael Sheahan presents Norma Prendiville with a scroll recognising her contribution to journalism. Photo: Liam Burke/Press 22

journalism isn't always easy," she said. She said that in the course of her membership of the NUJ, three journalists had been murdered – Veronica Guerin in Dublin, Martin O'Hagan in Belfast, and Lyra McKee in Derry.

"I'm honoured at what's been done here this evening. It's something I will remember and cherish, but in doing so, I'd like to also remember those who have died in the name of truth and justice."

Among the Limerick politicians present were Deputies Niall Collins and Tom Neville, plus Senators Paul Gavan and Kieran O'Donnell. They were joined by a number of councillors, while the NUJ was represented by Mr Dooley and current co-chairperson of the IEC, Gerry Carson.

Limerick Leader editor Eugene Phelan, who could not be present, wrote a letter congratulating Norma.

It read: "We are so fortunate to have Norma working for us for all those years.

"She could easily have got a job with any of the national papers but has made her home in West Limerick and gives great coverage to the different communities in the west. She is a wonderfully talented writer, who has a great sense of humour and is not afraid to tell you what is on her mind."

Clare Champion journalist and Norma's successor as chairman of the local branch of the NUJ Carol Byrne said Norma gave her her first flavour of trade unionism.

"Norma has been a tower of strength to so many journalists over the years in fighting for workers' rights and entitlements and ensuring conditions have not been eroded.

"It has been a very challenging road for the media industry and those battles have always been hard fought. Even when many in the industry felt those battles were already lost, Norma would never let the side down and would fight on regardless," she said.



*A message from the joint  
cathaoirligh of the IEC*

## Attacks on press freedom dominate busy NUJ agenda

The main tasks of the NUJ remain advocating for members' pay and working conditions, but it is often the unexpected and terrible that pushes the work of the NUJ into the headlines.

The past two years have been dominated by two key events in Northern Ireland – the shameful arrest in Belfast of two documentary film-makers and later, the shocking killing in Derry of a 29-year-old journalist, shot dead while simply doing her job.

The response was swift when the PSNI arrested Belfast and District members Barry Mc Caffrey and Trevor Birney, the journalists behind the documentary film “No Stone Unturned,” and confiscated their material and equipment.

Condemnation from NUJ members and sister unions worldwide was followed by protests outside police stations, and subsequently outside Belfast High Court. The arrest? An allegation that the journalists had access to documents stolen from the NI Police Ombudsman’s office in the making of their powerful film about the collusion of police and security forces in the shootings 25 years ago of six men, murdered while watching a football match in a pub in Loughinisland, Co Down.

The arrest saga continued for months. Activists turned out consistently in support of Trevor and Barry. Finally, in a decision that vindicated the film-makers, the Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland ruled that the police action was wrong and unjustifiable.

The Lord Chief Justice, Declan Morgan, said the journalists were acting in “nothing other than a perfectly appropriate way in doing what the NUJ required of them, which was to protect their



sources.”

Earlier this year, the shock which followed the killing by a New IRA gunman in Derry of Lyra McKee while covering a riot was instant and universal. Books of condolences were swiftly opened in Belfast, Derry, and many other cities.

There was widespread condemnation of the shooting, with calls from all quarters to end the violence. Representatives of all political parties attended Lyra’s funeral in Belfast, as well as UK Prime Minister Theresa May, Taoiseach Leo Varadkar, and President Michael D. Higgins; officials and activists from the NUJ and other trade unions, the mayors of Belfast and Derry and countless other dignitaries, united in the grief of having lost such a shining star to the bullets of a yet unnamed killer.

It is our earnest wish that the PSNI bring Lyra’s killer to justice, and that the failure to find the killers of Belfast NUJ Secretary Martin O’Hagan, shot dead 18 years ago, will not be repeated.

**Gerry Carson and Bernie Mullen  
Joint Cathaoirligh, IEC**



## IRISH BIENNIAL DELEGATE CONFERENCE 2019

The Biennial Delegates Conference this month will consider 10 motions from branches across the country, addressing a range of issues including union recognition, training for members, low-paid workers, and a lasting memorial to the late journalist Lyra McKee.

Under the theme, “Defending Journalism in Times of Crisis”, the conference will draw delegates and other members to the Gresham Dublin on Saturday, November 16th.

The BDC comes the day after the union celebrates its most recent lifetime members at a Dublin event on Friday evening, November 15th.

### THE MOTIONS

Here are the motions:

**(1) Timetable:** This conference/ instructs the incoming IEC to re-examine the timetable for the BDM including submission of motions, and confirmation of delegates. (Irish South West)

**(2) Pensions:** This delegate conference recognises that action is needed now to recover the ground lost in the financial collapse of 2007-08. It notes that some progress has been made on restoring pay cuts and instructs the Irish Executive Council to make completion of this process a priority.

This delegate conference also notes with regret that some chapels accepted cuts in pension entitlements without consulting retired colleagues in receipt of those pensions.

In doing so, they allowed employers to represent such cuts as having been agreed with the National Union of Journalists, when in fact more than half of those affected had no say, and few of them are able to work again to replace the loss of income. Throwing pensioners’ rights overboard when times get rough is contrary to the spirit and ethos of trade union solidarity.

This delegate conference instructs the Irish Executive Council to mount a vigorous and public campaign for the restoration of

pension cuts, including restoring cost of living increases, naming and shaming those employers, particularly those who entered into a formal process of restoring cuts with the Pensions Authority and then failed to honour their obligations, and conference calls on members not to support such shoddy dealing. (Dublin Freelance)

**(3) Union Recognition:** This conference/BDM notes that refusals by management to recognise unions are becoming more common place and are proving more and more problematic when it comes to collective bargaining. This conference requests the incoming IEC to seek the backing of ICTU for a campaign to highlight this practice - including a naming and shaming campaign. (Irish South West)

**(4) Serving Low Paid Workers:** This Biennial Delegate Conference, conscious of the need to address the difficulties faced by union members and potential union members working as freelancers or in precarious and low income jobs in online in online publishing, social media, and similar sectors, calls upon the Irish Executive Council to prioritise taking effective action to address the problems in this relatively new sector which is growing at the same time as employment opportunities and conditions are under attack as never before. In calling for effective action, this BDC recognises that action is required on a variety of fronts, including the following, but not ruling out others which may arise.

1. This BDC calls on the IEC to ascertain the extent of union membership in the online journalism & social media sector and to consider running a 32-county survey NUJ members to ascertain their experience of the online journalism & social media sector; and their ideas on how the NUJ might defend their rights more relevantly and also suggestions on how their co-workers who are not



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NUJ members might be encouraged to join the NUJ.

2. This BDC calls on the IEC to campaign for government and EU action to protect the rights and working conditions of those in the so called ‘gig economy’ while also protecting those in the traditional sector whose pay and conditions are under attack from competitors availing of low cost technology to disrupt their businesses.

3. This BDC calls on the IEC to instruct chapels and branches to seek the national minimum wage be paid to interns, as cheap labour is being used to undermine workers’ pay and conditions.

4. This BDC accepts that the very welcome gains made by the 2017 amendment to the Competition Act have not fed through to any measurable improvement in the conditions of freelance journalists, and instructs branches and chapels to promote the rights of freelancers vigorously when negotiating house agreements, and to resist cuts in freelance budgets proposed by employers.

5. This BDC also calls on the IEC to initiate a debate within the union on priorities in the face of falling membership and the withering away of traditional centres of organisational strength such as the large newspaper chapels. Specifically, it calls for a cost-benefit analysis of the continuation of publication of *The Journalist*, and a feasibility study on replacing it with a daily online publication with greater reach and relevance to working in present day conditions. In making this call, there is no criticism of what is recognised as a lively and highly professional and lively publication. The question raised is about priorities at a time of stagnant or falling income. (Dublin Freelance)

**(5) Murder of Lyra McKee:** This Biennial Delegate Conference commends the strong stand taken by the people of Derry, the LGBTQ+ community, trade unions, political parties and others throughout Ireland, Britain and beyond, in condemning the senseless and cowardly murder of Lyra McKee.

We acknowledge the efforts of trades councils, NUJ branches, chapels and committees, local authorities, and activists in sister unions in organising vigils, books of condolence and other initiatives to mark their solidarity with Lyra’s family, and to express the labour movement’s utter rejection of the anti-democratic politics of those seeking a return to the violence of the past.

Trade unions have a proud record of standing against violence and sectarianism, and this conference instructs the incoming Irish Executive Council to liaise with the Irish Congress of Trade Unions to call action as necessary against sectarian violence and the activities of paramilitary groups.

Conference further instructs the IEC to work for the establishment and promotion by the NUJ of a charitable fund that will commemorate Lyra McKee’s life and work by providing training, grants or other practical assistance to young journalists. (Belfast and District)

**(6) No Stone Unturned:** This Biennial Delegate Conference condemns the wrongful arrests of NUJ members Trevor Birney and Barry McCaffrey as a consequence of their legitimate investigation of state involvement in terrorist atrocities during the Troubles. Conference welcomes the decision by the High Court in Belfast to quash the warrants used to raid the homes and offices of our members, and to return all of the seized material.

In particular, the recognition by the Lord Chief Justice and his fellow judges of the right of journalists to protect their confidential sources, and of the imperative force in this regard of the NUJ Code of Conduct, constitutes a major advance in official recognition of the importance of a free press to protecting rights and freedoms in a democratic society. Conference salutes Barry McCaffrey, Trevor Birney, their work colleagues, their trade union comrades and all who stood by them in their hour of need



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and calls for truth and justice for the families of the victims of the Loughinisland massacre of 18 June 1994: Patsy O'Hare, Barney Green, Adrian Rogan, Eamon Byrne, Daniel McCreanor and Malcom Jenkinson. (Belfast and District)

**(7) Student Recruitment:** This Biennial Delegate Conference calls on the incoming IEC to instigate a focused, strategic campaign in third-level journalism courses to promote the benefits of union membership and to seek assistance from the NEC to help provide resources for this as part of a long-term strategy to recruit new members and future proof the NUJ in Ireland. (West of Ireland)

**(8) Conflict and Trauma Training:** This Biennial Delegate Conference calls for the organisation of expert training for NUJ members in Ireland around personal safety in conflict zones, public order situations and other scenarios where they might be at risk, and specialist support for those who have experienced violence, threats or trauma as a consequence of their work. (Belfast and District)

**(9) Professional Training:** It is disappointing that the pledge made by the NUJ General Secretary at the 2015 BDC to allocate resources for training of Irish members and offer online training options to Irish members has not been acted upon.

The pledge was made following the branch's request for similar skills training courses offered to members in England, Scotland and Wales to be made available to members in Ireland. This BDC calls on the incoming IEC to seek information from the General Secretary with regard to training options for members in Ireland who continue to be disadvantaged in this regard. (West of Ireland)

**(10)** The West of Ireland Branch congratulates Brendan Carroll and Carolyn Farrar on their excellent work on the Irish Journalist. This BDC asks the IEC to continue to support the production of the Irish Journalist and liaise with and seek assistance from the NEC if additional support for its continued production is needed, including allocating further financial support in order to retain, enhance and promote its valuable communication with Irish members.

## Honouring Life Members

On Friday, November 15th, the NUJ will honour its most recent Life Members for their 40 years of union service.

The presentation will take place at an informal reception in the Riu Plaza Gresham Hotel. Dublin branch will also host a reception from 7.15pm to 9.30pm.

Coming from branches across the country and a broad range of sectors, these members represent the fierce dedication to trade unionism and to their trade that underscores the best of the NUJ.













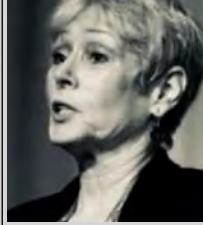





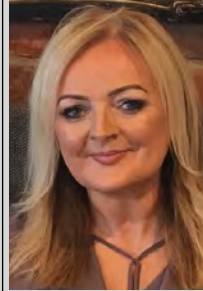



This year's life members include Jim Aughney (Dublin branch), Michael Bance (Irish South Eastern branch), Joe Breen (Dublin branch), Raymond Burke (Dublin Broadcasting branch), Carol Coulter (Dublin Freelance branch), Deaglán De Breadún (Dublin

Freelance branch), Kieran Fagan (Dublin Freelance branch), Prof Michael Foley (Dublin branch), Charles Foster (Dublin P&PR branch), Mary Glennon (Dublin Freelance branch), Patrick Hickey (Dublin branch), Margaret Jennings (Cork Freelance branch), Conor Kavanagh (Dublin Broadcasting branch), Sally Kerr-Davis (Dublin Freelance branch), Robert Lester (Cork branch), Joseph Little (Dublin Broadcasting branch), Eric Luke (Dublin Freelance branch), Darach MacDonald (Derry and North West branch), Trevor McBride (Derry and North West branch), Nell McCafferty (Dublin Freelance branch), Felicity McCall (Derry and North West branch), John Melvin (West of Ireland branch), Anthony Mulvey (Irish South West branch), Pól Ó Gallchoir (Dublin Broadcasting branch), Anthony (Tony) O'Gorman (Dublin P&PR branch), Alan O'Keefe (Dublin branch), Thomas O'Mahony (Cork branch), Rose Howard (Dublin P&PR branch), Derek Speirs (Dublin Freelance branch), and Brendan Wright (Belfast & District branch).

## IRISH BIENNIAL DELEGATE CONFERENCE 2019



# Your new Irish Executive Council, 2019-2021

<p><b>Broadcasting sector (2 vacancies)</b> Cearbhall Ó Síocháin</p>  <p>Cearbhall Ó Síocháin</p>	<p><b>Magazine and book (1 seat)</b> Ronan Brady</p>  <p>Ronan Brady</p>	<p><b>National Newspapers (2 seats)</b> Susan O'Shea/Noel Baker (job share), Bimpe Archer</p>    <p>Susan O'Shea      Noel Baker      Bimpe Archer</p>	<p><b>NEC representatives Republic of Ireland (2 seats)</b> Michael Fisher, Gerry Curran</p>  <p>Michael Fisher</p>		
<p><b>Regional Newspapers (3 seats)</b> Connie Duffy, Carol Byrne/Norma Prendiville (job share), Siobhan Holliman/Dara Bradley (job share)</p>					<p><b>Black Members (1 seat)</b> Meraj Abid Mahmood</p>  <p>Meraj Abid Mahmood</p>
 <p>Connie Duffy</p>	 <p>Carol Byrne</p>	 <p>Norma Prendiville</p>	 <p>Siobhan Holliman</p>	 <p>Dara Bradley</p>	
<p><b>Freelance (4 seats)</b> Kathryn Johnston, Gerard Cunningham, Carolyn Farrar, Lorna Siggins</p>     <p>Kathryn Johnston      Gerard Cunningham      Carolyn Farrar      Lorna Siggins</p>				<p><b>NEC representative, Northern Ireland</b> Anton McCabe/Ciarán Ó Maoláin (job share)</p>   <p>Anton McCabe      Ciarán Ó Maoláin</p>	
 <p><b>Reserved seat for Northern Ireland (1 seat)</b> Bernie Mullen, left /Gerry Carson, right (job share)</p>		<p><b>PR &amp; Information (1 seat)</b> Gerry Curran</p> 	<p><b>New Media (Observer)</b> Phil Mac Giolla Bháin</p>  <p><b>Retired Members (Observer)</b> Vacancy</p>		



# NUJ Finance Chair: Subs increase vital to survival of independent union

Chris Frost is an NEC member and chair of the union's Finance Committee. Here he explains why the NEC will be seeking a subs increase at the next Delegate Meeting

By Chris Frost

The NUJ is facing a grave financial challenge that threatens its future, a challenge that is the product of three unrelated factors.

The first is the decision of the 2018 Delegate Meeting not to increase subscriptions, with the result that by 2020, the earliest time the NEC can seek a subs increase, subscription rates will have been static for six years while costs have risen by more than 16 per cent.

Secondly, a slight decline in paying membership exacerbated the subs freeze and despite significant efforts to recruit, we have not managed to keep pace with the reductions facing the traditional media.

The third factor is a change of policy by the UK Pensions' Regulator requiring an increase in the rate at which pension deficits are paid down. The NUJ is in a significantly stronger position than it might have been because its defined benefits staff pension scheme is now closed, but the annual cost of paying off the deficit is expected to rise from €242,400 to €415,500 in the next and subsequent years.

Whilst efforts to recruit new members must continue, the only plausible solution to protect the union and therefore our members lies in a significant rise in subscriptions over a relatively short period and an acceptance that subs will need to keep pace with inflation in the future.

Protecting and benefitting its members in their working lives, their employment and their personal life is the union's sole purpose. The

union gives voice to members' concerns over issues such as media freedom, government policy on media, training, education and international issues to government, other authorities and institutions such as universities, NGOs and international organisations.

The union is central to members' employment, campaigning to safeguard their working conditions including hours of work, holidays, health and safety, and of course pay through collective workplace strength – the stronger a workplace chapel, the more likely it is to get better pay. Freelances also benefit with better fees, earlier and more efficient payment and support when things go wrong. The union won more than €10.4m for members last year alone in legal settlements, including copyright infringements.

The union is far more than just an insurance policy; it is a lifeline to a decent working life. Yet people who are prepared to pay at least €40 a month for gym membership, €45 for their phone contract, €42 a month for pet insurance or €90 a month to insure their car are often unwilling to pay €18-€30 a month to the NUJ to provide protection for their livelihood.

But the union and its collective strength is at risk if we can no longer provide the standard of service members have come to expect, service

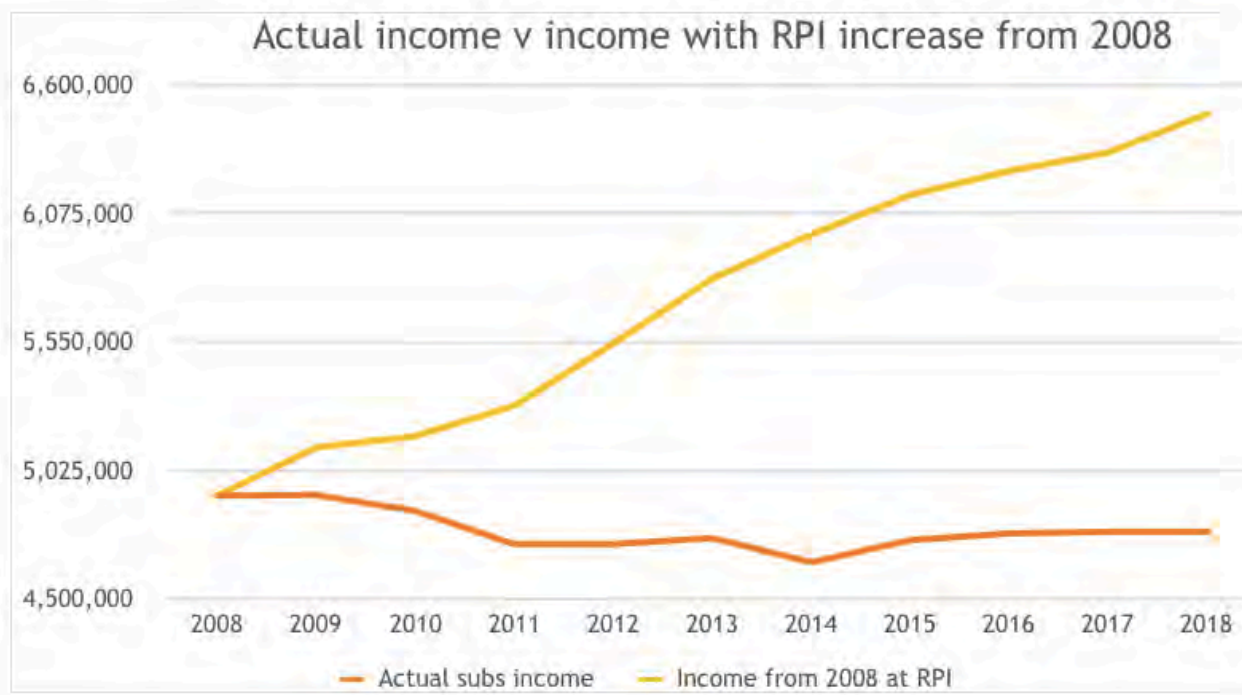
that is significantly in excess of most unions. All of our organiser staff, from the General Secretary downwards, undertake personal casework. But this is at risk if we have to make more cuts. Already we

have been unable to fill all vacancies for lack of funds.

Without a sharp increase in income, it will be necessary to make further and more draconian reductions in costs; cuts in staff and, in all probability the closure of one or more offices. Even that, however, would provide only a stop-gap before we would have to seek a protective merger with a union that had the resources to absorb our pension debts, but would only provide a basic service.

Our present subs income is projected to be €5.3m by the end of this financial year. Had subscription income maintained its RPI value

***Paying membership has fallen by 21.8 per cent over the last ten years***



from 2008 our income would be €7.8m, about €2.5m higher than now, provided we had maintained the same number of members.

However, our numbers are not the same. Despite significant efforts by officials and members, membership has declined and paying membership has fallen by 21.8 per cent over the last ten years, from 28,170 to 22,027. Yet while membership in traditional recruitment areas where staff cuts have been deep and cruel is declining, membership in broadcasting, freelance and new media has been increasing slowly over the past 20 years.

The UK's Office of National Statistics shows that journalism and PR jobs are growing overall in the UK, and this is probably matched in Ireland. We must find ways to recruit in new areas of growth, such as social media and content management, whilst most of our activists still work in traditional areas that are probably now close to maximum potential recruitment. But it would be foolish to imagine that we will find it easy or instant to recruit the 9,259 full members we now need at current subs rates to make up the income shortfall we have built for ourselves.

We also need to continue supporting our members; encouraging them to fight for better workplace conditions, the key purposes of the union. To do that we rely heavily on our hard-working organisers and other union staff but

### ***We must find ways to recruit in new areas of growth, such as social media and content***

staff cost money and whilst we all would like more of them out there in workplaces with our members doing what they do best, without a subs increase that would simply build our deficit.

If subscriptions are not increased by at least 15 per cent in 2020 and a further 10 per cent in 2021, alongside strategies such as a targeted change in membership categories and recruitment areas and a serious activist-led membership recruitment campaign, significant further cuts in union spending will be required.

This will reduce our capacity to assist our members that will reduce our effectiveness as a union leading to further resignations and a vicious downward spiral. No one likes to pay more, and it is an understandable concern that an increase in subs will lead to a fall-off in recruitment, but this is not consistent with the facts.

Membership patterns in the wake of previous increases in subs in April 2014, and the change to earnings-related subs, April 2016, show there was a rise in the number of people joining the union in the three-month period following the change. The numbers lapsing or deciding to leave the union was relatively unchanged, in the same before and after periods.

So the NEC believes that whilst a subs increase is unpalatable, the alternative is unacceptable. We need to be building the union not destroying it.

# Ethics and the Newstalk reporter ban

By Michael Foley

The ongoing ban on Irish Times journalists and those working for the new online publication, *The Currency*, from appearing on Newstalk, and other Communicorp-owned radio stations has raised important issues relating to broadcasting regulation and media ethics.

The initial ban followed the response to George Hook ending comments on rape with the question: 'Is there no blame now to the person who puts themselves in danger?', a reference to women whom Hook believed put themselves in danger by virtue of what they wear or how they behave. Irish Times journalist, Fintan O'Toole, published a column, accusing Newstalk of being "the most flagrantly sexist public organisation in Ireland". Newstalk was given a right of reply, but it also wanted an apology, which was refused.

That was nearly two years ago. More recently a new media venture, *The Currency*, found its journalists facing a similar ban. This case is more problematic. *The Currency* was recently launched by journalists Tom Lyons and Ian Kehoe. Earlier this year, Denis O'Brien, the owner of Newstalk and the other Communicorp stations, lost a high-profile defamation case over an article written by Lyons for the *Sunday Business Post*, then edited by Kehoe. There is no evidence O'Brien had anything to do with this decision which is, officially, because *The Currency* is deemed to be offering similar products to Communicorp products – podcasts, events and news stories, and therefore a direct competitor. Of course, all other media outlets also offer podcasts, events and news stories, but are not banned by Communicorp.

NUJ's Deputy General Secretary, Séamus Dooley, has challenged the BAI's non-intervention, saying in a letter: "The current ban on editorial contributors to *The Currency* is, like The Irish Times ban, based on commercial not editorial considerations, and is therefore a matter for the BAI. It is accepted that the BAI has no remit in determining direct editorial content, but the BAI does have a direct role in



Michael Foley

regulating to achieve 'a responsible and accountable broadcasting sector,' said Dooley.

Meanwhile, the Green Party's Eamon Ryan, supported by the Taoiseach and other party leaders, wrote to Communicorp stating in part that 2009 Broadcasting Act was clear on the need for fairness on the part of radio stations. He said section 39b provided for fairness and impartiality, while section 42f provided for independent editorial control over programme content.

But while we might not like Communicorp's action, are those bans unethical, or simply mean spirited and vindictive? Using the NUJ's Code of Conduct as our guideline, there is no doubt Communicorp's decision would be contrary to clause one, which gives a blanket defence of media freedom and the right of the public to be informed. The ban on *The Currency*, for instance, was issued 30 minutes before Tom Lyons was due on Newstalk to talk about his extraordinary investigation into the Quinn family finances and share it with listeners. They were denied this.

Banning particular voices might also be contrary to clause two, which asks that all journalists strives to ensure information is honestly conveyed, accurate and fair. Can you do that if there is a list of whom you can or cannot invite on?



There are other problems as well. One of the reasons journalists from print outlets are invited onto radio programmes is because broadcasting legislations insists on the impartiality of broadcast journalists. Newspaper journalists have no such requirement and so can voice an opinion. It also means the journalist who has secured the story is given full credit by being interviewed about his or her story.

Séamus Dooley, in his letter to the BAI, raised the important ethical issue of this being a ban on editorial contributors and is based on commercial not editorial considerations. At the same time the letter from TDs say no one should be banned from the airwaves or excluded from public discourse based on who their employer is. The Ryan letter also said the ban puts an “unacceptable constraint on editors”, in other words producers have to see who is banned by the chief executive before inviting someone to contribute to a programme.

The controversy raises a number of issues,

such as the degree to which private commercial radio is a public trust, in that licences are granted by a public body with the public interest in the forefront of that decision.

It is tempting to call for a ban on contributors, journalists and politicians from appearing on Communicorp radio stations, but it probably wouldn't work, especially with the prospect of an election. What might be more useful is for a debate, or an inquiry into the media, the role of public service, and the public interest, how far publicly licenced radio can reflect the views of one concern. It might investigate the dissolving boundaries between different elements of media, online, print, broadcast and what impact this is having. It could include ownership. Such an inquiry should also include the ethical context in which the media operates.

*Michael Foley is vice chair of the NUJ's Ethics Council, where he represents the Republic of Ireland.*



Norma Prendiville (right) pictured with Anna Nolan and Nick Rabbitts after she was honoured at City Hall in Limerick for her work as a journalist over almost three decades at the Limerick Leader, and her contribution to the National Union of Journalists.

# Martin Fitzpatrick looks back on a lifetime at the Indo

***Martin Fitzpatrick worked for Independent News & Media for some 35 years. In that time he served as a Chapel officer and as an elected trustee of the Independent pension scheme. He was also a member of the Irish Executive Council of the NUJ and was the union's nominee to the Press Council of Ireland for six years. Like so many journalists, he has witnessed with unutterable sadness the decline of the numbers employed by the company he served and, sadder still, the decline in prestige at the Independent titles. With any luck the new owners of the titles, Mediahuis will create a platform where the status of the papers will be reinstated. But it promises to be a long way back to the good times, which Martin Fitzpatrick remembers...***

I'm afraid that foolishness rather than sentiment persuaded me to hold on to the shares I owned in Independent Newspapers despite the share price collapse.

But that was all sorted out for me last August, almost 50 years to the day after I first joined the Indo and 13 years after my retirement. I got a cheque for €21.94 from Mediahuis, the new owners of the organisation. These were the same shares that once had been worth more than €700, which may explain why a cynical friend asked if I might simply frame the cheque? But then he was the same smart-ass who rang me eight or nine years back to ask what it felt like to be richer than Tony O'Reilly?

Like many ex-Indo people, I experienced an odd 'end-of-era' feeling as I padded into the supermarket to spend my windfall on a 'nice red.' Given all that has happened in and about the 'Indo' in the past few years there was little room for nostalgia and even less for sentiment. But as anyone who has been there knows, the

newspaper industry has more glorious ghosts than even William Shakespeare could have invented. In my time alone at the Independent it saw perhaps the greatest promise for Irish journalism and also a decline that would have taxed the great tragedian from Stratford-Upon-Avon.

At the Indo in the past half century, we were the biggest and very often the best newspaper group in the country, setting the pace of editorial as well as newspaper industry change and importantly the first in Ireland to recognise that good journalism had a value and was well worth the money invested.

The NUJ was a vital partner in making good things happen at the 'Indo' when the 'buzz' was greatest in the '70s and '80s but goodwill turned out to be something that couldn't be banked. Nevertheless the union and the fine journalists who worked there can take pride in a significant and highly important contribution to Irish life. Hopefully something similar will happen in the unpredictable future.

The first NUJ meeting I attended after I joined the paper was held in an upper room in the Oval Bar in Middle Abbey Street. Only Salvador Dali could do justice to the image of sports sub (Arthur Bateman) posing for the duration of the meeting in the lotus position, surrounded by scores of suited men (no women that I can remember) all smoking cigarettes, and listening to the 'Father of the Chapel' Maurice Hickey telling them that we would all be properly paid 'when the workers gain the means of production.'

Fortunately we did not have to wait that long. The Indo at the end of the 1960s was controlled by the founding Murphy family which was conservative in most things, especially investing in editorial content. When Ireland's most feted and famous businessman, Tony O'Reilly, expressed an interest in the group, there was hope, great expectation and considerable apprehension. The NUJ Chapel Committee, fearful of the editorial course that might be taken, organised a sit-in. While the spirit may not have been Paris '68, O'Reilly was put through the ringer by some determined people. Promises of many sorts were extracted but the most telling one was that journalism





Independent House on Middle Abbey Street, constructed in 1924 and home to the Irish Independent until 2004, when Independent News and Media moved to Talbot Street. The copper-framed clock in the centre of the façade – “Set your watch by it”, as the line used to go – appears to have stopped in the years since.

should be valued and be invested in.

If memory serves, my first pay packet from the Indo was less than £15 a week, which was appreciably more than the money I was paid for my previous job in the Irish Press.

But after 1973 O'Reilly called in the Chapel Committee, which included people like John Devine, Frank Downey, Tony Jones and Paul Hayes, and agreed the 'House Agreement.' The world suddenly changed for newspaper journalists and 20-30 per cent pay rises were on the cards. It is very often forgotten that newspaper boats all over the country began to float higher – including the provincial papers. That wonderful catch-all word 'conditions' vastly improved.

There were plenty of vigorous NUJ voices keeping O'Reilly's managers with their feet to the fire. My former colleague Colm Rapple was certainly one, Kevin Moore was another, but in fairness to the O'Reilly regime of that

time, it was as good as its word and one spin-off effect was that a better class of journalist was attracted by the improved salaries, pensions and prospects.

The net effect was a string of titles that produced some outstanding stories (the Kerry Babies saga was just one). When the Indo spoke people, but also governments, took notice.

Having seen the 'good times,' has made the decline and fall of Indo circulations hard to bear, though ever mindful of technological changes that are killing the industry I once knew.

If for any reason, or because of the difficulties in the past few years, it was forgotten that the Indo was powerful, ambitious and successful news-gathering institution full of talented, often brilliant people, it would be a total shame.





## Remembering children of the Troubles



Joe Duffy, Freya McClements, and former president, Mary McAleese, at the Dublin launch of 'Children of the Troubles'.

The new book, 'Children of the Troubles: The Untold Story of the Children Killed in the Northern Ireland Conflict', remembers the lives of all 186 children whose lives were cut short in those years.

The book, by RTÉ broadcaster and 'Liveline' host Joe Duffy and Freya McClements, Northern Correspondent for The Irish Times, was based on original interviews with almost 100 families, as well as extensive archival research. It was launched last month at events in Dublin, Belfast, and Derry.

In her remarks at the Dublin launch, former president, Mary McAleese, said Joe and Freya have honored the children, respected them, and deeply loved them in the book.

She said 'Children of the Troubles' is a difficult read, but we need to read it, "to remind ourselves over and over and over of the outrageous cost of this peace we enjoy, that it is priceless, that it is as vulnerable as these children were and we have to protect and defend it for them and the innocent children of

today who are entitled to have their lives sustained by peace and not interrupted permanently by the death culture of conflict.

"Let their stories be heard in Westminster especially this week, for dead though they are, these children's lives are invested in the Good Friday Agreement and in all the good it has wrought, all the deaths it has avoided, all the healthy relationships it has promoted and all the stable future it has let in," she said. "We hope their memory will help the reality check and the compromise needed at this time of intense dialogue between the UK and the EU which we pray will become an agreement that will hold."

'Children of the Troubles' recounts the previously untold story of Northern Ireland's lost children -- and those who died in the Republic, the UK and as far afield as West Germany -- and the lives that might have been.

Published in hardback by Hachette Ireland, 'Children of the Troubles' was recently shortlisted for TheJournal.ie Best Irish Published Book of the Year award in the An Post Irish Book Awards 2019.



# DUP anger fuels the interest in Sam's sizzler

The naked anger of the Democratic Unionist Party at the investigative work of NUJ member Sam McBride has merely fuelled interest in 'Burned', the inside story of the Cash for Ash story in Northern Ireland.

Sold out on launch day, 'Burned' immediately went in to reprint. Within days the author was inundated with complaints from those anxious to get their hands on the book.

The Belfast Newsletter Political Editor had been attacked in a Facebook rant by Ian Paisley MP for his analysis of the consequences for Northern Ireland of the DUP's support for Boris Johnson.

Paisley was forced to issue a public apology after the NUJ led a campaign in defence of the union member.

Irish Secretary Séamus Dooley described the attack on Sam as "a clear attempt to smear the professional reputation of a conscientious journalist."

As it happens, McBride's analysis proved to be correct, as abortion was decriminalised and same sex marriage introduced in the absence of the Stormont Assembly.



Sam McBride at Stormont with his new book 'Burned'.  
Photo: Laura Davison/Pacemaker Press.

The attempted smear backfired as Paisley's statement led to a spike in demand for pre-orders of the book. There was a further spike when it was revealed that Arlene Foster and four other senior DUP figures had threatened legal proceedings over the book's publication.

## Sam says thanks

Sam McBride was supported by his own newspaper when fiercely attacked by Ian Paisley. However Sam chiefly attributes the DUP climbdown to the stand taken by his union over a weekend before he had time to consult company lawyers over the undoubted defamatory comments.

In an email to the Irish Secretary he wrote:

"I've been a union member since I started in journalism and, probably like most people, usually don't think that much about it. It's a

cliché to say that one appreciates a union in difficult times, but that is nonetheless true and I have been deeply appreciative of what you did in speaking intelligently on my behalf and kicking off the process which led to last night's retraction.

"You were the first person to raise the issue publicly and that is what precipitated all of the opposition to what he [Paisley] had done and support for not just me but for the principle of journalistic freedom."





# New book restores place of trade union movement in Decade of Centenaries

Liam Cahill, a 40-year member of the NUJ, has published a new book telling the forgotten story of the deep involvement of workers and their trade unions in the struggle for Irish independence in the years 1916-21.

'Forgotten Revolution [The Centenary Edition] The Limerick Soviet 1919' takes as its starting point the Limerick General Strike, or Limerick Soviet, of April 1919, when 14,000 workers protested the imposition of military law on the city.

Limerick United Trades and Labour Council rejected the harsh government-imposed restrictions and took over the running of the city for a fortnight, including printing their own currency and newspaper. The strike received worldwide media coverage.

Liam presented a copy of his book to President Michael D Higgins at Áras an Uachtaráin in Dublin earlier this year. The author said the book goes beyond the story of the Limerick Soviet and contains intriguing new information from military archives in Dublin that shows events and developments in 1919 in a new light.

Recalling comments by President Higgins at a history seminar in Cork, Liam Cahill said, "A highlight of the Decade of Centenaries has been the recover and honouring of the role of women in the fight for our freedom. However, in the remaining years of the decade, it is imperative that historians and researchers actively redress the similar neglect of Labour's role. Otherwise, the rest of the decade is in danger of becoming a monotonous parade of ambushes, assassinations and raids, with the role of workers and their trade unions continuing to be airbrushed out of our history."

He said: "That was my intention, to write not just history but if I may say 'his story' and 'her story' as well – that is to say, the story of people."

His new book revisits his 1990 book on the subject by placing the events in Ireland in the context of larger world events. "What I've been arguing in the book is the Limerick Soviet of 1919 is the first significant Irish example of the wave of soviets and general strikes that swept



Liam Cahill with President Michael D Higgins after he presented him with a copy of his new book.

across Europe after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917," he said.

Liam also explores his view that "there were really two wars going on in parallel", conventional wars and a class war led by the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, though he said that by 1923 economic and political conditions had turned against workers: Trade union growth based on the war economy collapsed, followed by a severe recession.

"It ended up by 1923, when everybody else who had struggled to move Britain out of Ireland had either fully or partially achieved what they wanted," he said.

This new book has provided "a good opportunity to gather together all these strands," he said.

Liam will be at the Newry City Library at 6.30pm on Nov. 28th to discuss, "Forgotten Revolution? Workers and the War of Independence, 1916-1921."

*'Forgotten Revolution' is available in some independent bookshops as well as online as a paperback or e-book from Amazon and other internet booksellers.*





## Remembering the GAA's lost icon



Anglo-Celt Sports Editor and Chapel FoC Paul Fitzpatrick's new book, 'Charlie: The Story of Charlie Gallagher, the GAA's Lost Icon', (Ballpoint Press) has been earning very good reviews. Paul is pictured here at the launch in Cavan, with Cavan and Ulster football star of the 1960s, Ray Carolan.

## Byline bytes

NUJ Life Member Fr Brian Darcy has written a second memoir, 'A Different Journey'. It's published by Sliabh Ban Productions.

Sunday World columnist Fr Brian was the first priest to join the NUJ.

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Former RTÉ newsroom MOC Caitriona Perry is back in the headlines.

Her new book, 'The Tribe', is published by Gill Books and is described as the inside story of Irish power and influence in US politics. It has hit the shelves in time for the Christmas market.

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*On the 40th anniversary of the Dublin Marathon, Sunday World marathon man Sean McGoldrick has written a lavishly illustrated history of one of the most enduring fixtures on Ireland's crowded sports calendar.*

*'The Dublin Marathon' is published by O'Brien Press. Sports journalist Sean has 30 marathons to his credit.*

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Watch out for Fiona Gartland's second novel, 'Now That You've Gone', published by Fiona Gartland. Fiona works on The Irish

Times news desk, and her reporting days inform this gripping tale. Featuring a court stenographer, it follows her debut crime novel, 'In the Court's Hands'.

\*\*\*

Irish Times chapel member and former committee member Rosita Boland has enjoyed critical acclaim with her new book.

Rosita is an accomplished independent and intrepid traveller, as reflected in her aptly entitled book, 'Elsewhere, One Woman, One Rucksack, One Lifetime of Travel', published by Doubleday Ireland.



## NEW PUBLICATIONS

# The human stories behind the small ads

There was a large turnout in Waterstones Cork on October 3rd for the launch of RTÉ reporter Brian O'Connell's latest book: 'The Personals - The Human Stories Behind the Small Ads', published by HarperCollins.

The book is partly based on a series of radio reports Brian has been doing on the Today With Sean O'Rourke show in recent years, telling the

stories behind the classified ads, both in print and online.

Launched by RTÉ's Sean O'Rourke, the turnout included many friends, colleagues and NUJ members, such as former Irish Examiner editors Brian Looney and Tim Vaughan, Echo editor Maurice Gubbins and many others. The book is available in all good bookstores.



Brian O'Connell with his son Luke at the launch of his book, 'The Personals', at Waterstones, Patrick Street, Cork. Photo: Jim Coughlan.



## AROUND THE HOUSES

# The fight for pay increases continues

The NUJ is continuing to fight for pay increases for freelances in newsrooms throughout Ireland this year and in 2020.

The Irish News has already conceded, in previous pay rounds, that increases granted to its staff should also be given to freelances who work shifts in the newsroom, although efforts by the NUJ to apply these raises to columnists who are union members has not yet borne fruit.

Equally, the union argued at the Belfast

Telegraph and Sunday Life that pay increases should be given to freelances there too, though without success as yet.

However, Irish Organiser, Ian McGuinness pointed out that in the months to come pay claims will be lodged by chapels at many media organisations, and he said that freelances will not be forgotten, especially as there is no longer any legislation preventing unions in the Republic of Ireland collectively negotiating on their behalf.

## Clare People closed

The Clare People published its last edition on August 13th of this year.

Thirteen employees were made redundant, including seven NUJ members. The Irish Office gave assistance to those who needed it when the paper closed and went into liquidation.

The Clare People was established in 2004.



## Stage 2 reps training held; further training planned

Members were in Dublin last month for the second stage of NUJ reps' training.

Caroline Holmes delivered the Stage Two session, which followed Stage One training that was offered in May of this year.

Anton McCabe, freelance journalist and member of the Derry and North West branch and the NEC, attended the October session.

"This is excellent preparation for one of the most important jobs any active member has to do - representing members," Anton said. "I'd say to any member, when this comes up again in Ireland, do it if you can at all."

Caroline is liaising with the Irish Office to deliver more reps' training next year. Health and safety is one of the areas being considered for coming training sessions.





Frances O'Grady, General Secretary of the Trades Union Congress, with Kathryn Johnston. Photo: Copyright © Kevin Cooper Photoline

## TUC GS pays tribute to late Lyra McKee

Frances O'Grady, General Secretary of the Trades Union Congress (TUC), paid tribute to the late Lyra McKee at a recent conference in Belfast, where she warned that a no-deal Brexit does not mean a clean break.

"We know from the murder of our NUJ sister Lyra McKee; peace should never be taken for granted. We've known from the outset that a hard Brexit means a hard border," she said.

The meeting – a conference on Labour and the Foundation and Development of NI - was part of the Irish Congress of Trades Unions' contribution to the Decade of Centenaries.

Speaking to a crowded Factory Room in Belfast's Metropolitan Arts Centre, Ms O'Grady also brought a stark message about Brexit.

"No deal doesn't mean a clean break. It's not as if it's going to be a short, sharp shock. The fall-out will poison our political life for years to come. We've seen what the neofascists are capable of – in Britain, the memory of the murder of Labour MP Jo Cox is still raw," she said.

Also speaking were leading historians Emmet

O'Connor, Henry Patterson, Theresa Moriarty, Christopher Loughlin and Eliza McKee, with reflections on the present state of the trade union movement from ICTU's Owen Reidy and organised by the distinguished labour historian Padraig Yeates.

Ms O'Grady brought solidarity from the TUC, especially to those workers fighting for their jobs, livelihoods and communities.

"Last month the TUC was proud to welcome workers from Harland & Wolff to our Congress.

"An iconic firm with a proud workforce – they refused to give up and let their yard die. That's the difference trades unionism makes. Those trade unionists have not sat on their laurels and basked in the glory.

"Instead, they have brought support to the workforce at Wrightbus in Ballymena - a viable manufacturing business, with a union determined to save that site too," she said.

- Adapted from Kathryn Johnston's blog, *Peace Should Never Be Taken for Granted*, October 19th, 2019. at [kathrynjohnston.org](http://kathrynjohnston.org)

# NUJ, ICTU, stand in solidarity with Lyra



Delegates to the ICTU biennial delegate conference from SIPTU (above) and Unison (below) stand in solidarity for the moment of silence in memory of Lyra McKee. Photo: Kevin Cooper Photoline.

Trade unionists from across the country stood in silence and solidarity with the late journalist Lyra McKee at the biennial delegate conference of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions in Dublin in July.

In remarks to the conference before calling for the moment of silence, Séamus Dooley, Irish Secretary, moved a special motion calling on ICTU to champion the issues Lyra cherished, including mental health and the provision of adequate funds to tackle the growing problem of suicide in Northern Ireland.

“In her short life Lyra sought new horizons, refusing to accept that change is impossible. A pioneering and inveterate user of social media, Lyra represented the new, modern face of Northern Ireland; a prophetic voice who rose above tribal differences and sought to promote a more inclusive society, free of sectarianism, bigotry and intolerance,” Séamus said.

Séamus, a Congress executive council member, also called on the politicians who attended Lyra’s funeral in Belfast to end the political impasse in Northern Ireland.

He said, “Leadership means more than the politics of the last photo opportunity. We should



by now have moved beyond the politics of the last atrocity.”

Calling for a more inclusive approach to politics in Northern Ireland, Séamus said, “The voice of workers, of victims, of long-suffering communities deserve to be treated with respect. We in the trade union movement have been shunted to the sidelines for too long and our voice must be heard.”

The motion was seconded by Alison Millar, vice president of ICTU and general secretary of NIPSA.





Sheila Nunan, President, ICTU leads the ICTU BDC in tribute to Lyra McKee. Pictured, from left: Grahame Smith General Secretary, STUC, Patricia King, General Secretary, ICTU, Sheila Nunan, Kevin Callinan, Alison Millar, Vice Presidents, ICTU, Joe O'Flynn, Treasurer, Owen Reidy, Assistant General Secretary. Photo: Kevin Cooper, Photoline.

## Celebrating 100 years of the ILO

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions biennial delegate conference unanimously endorsed a National Union of Journalists motion to strengthen the International Labour Organisation.

Marking the centenary of the foundation of the ILO, the NUJ motion called on Congress, in conjunction with the International Trade Union Confederation and affiliates to campaign for reforms to allow the ILO to make determinations in respect of employers and not only governments; to examine how best the ILO may be used to further campaigns for the achievement of gender equality and the elimination of workplace discrimination; to support the ITUC and European Trade Union Congress campaign for inclusion of health and safety standards in the list of labour rights; and to campaign for ILO action on the outcome of the ILO Global Dialogue Forum 2014, with special reference to the abuse of unpaid workers and interns in the media industry.

Addressing the motion, Gerry Carson, joint cathaoirleach of the Irish Executive Committee, told the conference, "As storm clouds gather, the global trade union movement fights to protect and develop

institutions which are rooted in the ethical values of social justice and solidarity."

Séamus Dooley, Irish Secretary and Congress executive council member, said that while the ILO has played a significant role in seeking to defend workers, the parameters within which it operates undermine its ability to hold to account multinational companies with vast resources who exercise far greater economic power than most world governments.

He said that in celebrating the centenary of the ILO, "we note with alarm the growing threat to social justice from the rise of extreme right parties and those who seek to undermine human rights, including the rights of all workers".

Noting the ongoing war against media, and the frequent dismissal of legitimate news stories as mainstream media propaganda, Séamus said, "The fact is, the way to defeat the far right is by ammunition, by the most powerful ammunition of all, by facts."

Mistruths and propaganda must be challenged, he said.

"As trade unionists we all know the power of small steps, of unity, of solidarity," Séamus said.



## NUJ renews appeal for O'Hagan investigation

The National Union of Journalists in the UK and Ireland has made a renewed call for an independent investigation into the murder of Sunday World journalist and union activist Martin O'Hagan.

In a joint statement marking the anniversary of Martin's murder on 28 September 2001, Michelle Stanistreet, NUJ general secretary, and Seamus Dooley, NUJ assistant general secretary, called for the appointment of an external investigator to carry out an independent inquiry into the murder and the subsequent failure of the police to secure a conviction for the murder.

The statement said: "The NUJ remains gravely concerned at the failure to apprehend those responsible for the murder of Martin O'Hagan. The cold-blooded killing of a courageous investigative journalist should be investigated by an independent body. The failure to adequately investigate the murder serves to undermine

confidence in the rule of law. There are so many unanswered questions about the murder of Martin that the case should be urgently reviewed. There has long been a belief that those responsible for Martin's killing may be protected because of their role as police informers. This issue must be independently investigated.

"The family, colleagues, and friends of Martin continue to mourn a journalist of integrity and bravery. It is not good enough that his killing should simply be regarded as an 'unsolved murder'. There is an onus on the UK government, as part of its commitment to global press freedom, to show political leadership on this issue. We call on the Irish government, as co-guarantors of the Good Friday Agreement, to support our demand."

Martin O'Hagan was murdered by the LVF on 28 September 2001 while returning to his home with his wife, Marie.

## Bruton must examine sale of Offaly papers

The NUJ has called on Communications minister Richard Bruton to fully investigate the bid by Iconic newspapers to purchase Offaly newspapers, the Midland Tribune and the Tullamore Tribune.

The Tullamore Tribune is edited and produced in Tullamore and primarily serves North Offaly and neighbouring towns in Westmeath and Laois. The Midland Tribune is headquartered in Birr with a satellite office in Roscrea. It primarily serves West Offaly, South Offaly, North Tipperary and parts of adjoining counties.

Irish Secretary Séamus Dooley explained that following consultation with the Tribune chapel, the Irish Organiser Ian McGuinness and himself have written to Mr Bruton asking him to "use his investigatory powers to the fullest extent in accordance with the Competition Act".

The Minister can ask the BAI to investigate the proposed acquisition.

Highlighting the issue of media diversity the NUJ pointed out that Iconic's company, Form Press, currently owns 23 titles in the Republic

of Ireland.

They are: The Donegal Democrat, The Leinster Leader, The Kilkenny People, The Limerick Leader, The Longford Leader, The Tipperary Star, The Leinster Express, The Leitrim Observer, The Clonmel Nationalist, The Dundalk Democrat, The Donegal People's Press, The Limerick Chronicle, The Letterkenny People, The Offaly Express, The South Tipp People, The Leader, The Letterkenny Post, The Finn Valley Post, The Kildare Post, The Inish Times, The Donegal Post, Donegal Now and Kildare Now.

In the letter to Mr Bruton, they said that in the event of the merger being approved the NUJ believes that, at a minimum, the two newspaper titles should remain independent of each other and must not be merged. They added that the Midland Tribune and the Tullamore Tribune should remain independent from all other titles owned or run by Form Press, to ensure media diversity, plurality, and editorial independence.

The two officials point to a considerable overlap between areas covered by the Tribune and Form Press titles.

# Sorry We Missed You, a film by Ken Loach

A review by Gerry Curran

There is a huge human story every time you get delivery of a package from a delivery company – and in this day and age who doesn't?

We are all familiar with the arguments that buying online and having goods delivered is killing the centre of towns and shopping centres. But less often told are the stories of those who get the goods to our doors within tight deadlines. Theirs is the story of the unregulated workplace, the torment of pretend self-employment, the stand a distance from responsibility of a less than transparent management system. It is the story of the Gig Economy.

Director Ken Loach and writer Paul Laverty bring us a painful, black-humoured, searing insight into how the world of the paid per job, per delivery model works: of its effect on those who rely upon it for income, and of the selfish attitude of saving a few euros which may bring us all to cause it to be so harsh.

It is a great movie; yes it is replete with its own take and ideology of how the world of commerce and capitalism works; but it is brilliantly honest and poignant. There are moments of lightness, humour, humanity; others of spite, mistrust and abuse: all laced with accuracy when it comes to the struggle to make ends meet – when all the ducks simply won't line up.

The step away from employment to bogus self-employment is laid bare, as all the risk is transferred to the worker / self-employed.

Starring Kris Hitchen, Debbie Honeywood as Ricky and Abby – parents to children played by Rhys Stone and Katie Proctor - *Sorry We Missed You* tells the story of Ricky and his family who have been fighting an uphill struggle against debt since the 2008 financial crash.

An opportunity to wrestle back some independence appears with a shiny new van and



the chance to run a franchise as a self-employed delivery driver.

Beautifully written, honestly acted, and daring to show the side of commerce which shiny signs, logos and slogans hide or excuse: It depicts the freedoms commercial liberalism brings; alongside the dank and dark side-effects of it all. It is a kick in the groin take on our workplaces returning to bonded labour – to the 19th century.

The risk of this arrangement of selling labour is transferred to this family in total. It wreaks havoc and the film reflects that reality. It is a great watch and an even better conversation starter.

*Sorry We Missed You* is in cinemas from November.

# Annual NewsBrands Media awards shortlist announced

The annual NewsBrands Media awards will be announced in the Mansion House Dublin on November 14th.

A large number of NUJ members are in the running, while the adjudication panel also includes longstanding union members.

This year's shortlist includes:

**Business Story of the Year:** Donal O' Donovan, Irish Independent; Fearghal O'Connor, Sunday Independent; Barry J Whyte, The Sunday Business Post; Jack Power, The Irish Times; Michael O' Farrell, The Irish Mail on Sunday; Samantha McCaughren, Sunday Independent.

**Business Journalist of the Year:** Donal O' Donovan, Irish Independent; Joe Brennan, The Irish Times; Lorcan Allen, Irish Farmers' Journal; Fearghal O' Connor, Sunday Independent; Michael O' Farrell, The Irish Mail on Sunday; Samantha McCaughren, Sunday Independent.

**Campaigning Journalism:** The Sunday Times (FAI); Irish Examiner (Illegal Adoptions); The Irish Times (No Child); Irish Daily Mail (Protect our Kids Online); Irish Independent (Insurance costs); The Irish Mail on Sunday ( Bishop Casey).

**Columnist Broadsheet:** Hilary Fannin, The Irish Times; Fintan O'Toole, The Irish Times; Mick Clifford, Irish Examiner; Colin Murphy, The Sunday Business Post; Declan Lynch, Sunday Independent; Larissa Nolan, The Sunday Times.

**Columnist Popular:** Larissa Nolan, Irish Daily Mirror; Roslyn Dee, Irish Daily Mail; Billy Scanlon, Irish Daily Star; Philip Nolan, Irish Daily Mail; Neil Cotter, The Irish Sun; Pat Flanagan, Irish Daily Mirror.

**Crime Journalist of the Year:** Robin Schiller, The Herald; Ken Foy, The Herald; Patrick O'Connell, Sunday World; Paul Healy, Irish Daily Star; Nicola Tallant, Sunday World; Stephen Breen, The Irish Sun.

**Crime Story of the Year:** Gary Meneely, The Irish Sun; Robin Schiller, The Herald; Paul Healy, Irish Daily Star; Nicola Tallant Sunday World; Stephen Breen, The Irish Sun; Norma Costello, The Irish Mail on Sunday.

**Critic of the Year:** Catherine Cleary, The Irish Times; Pat Stacey, The Herald; Patrick Freyne, The Irish Times; Liam Fay, The Sunday Times; Fintan O'Toole, The Irish Times; Niamh Donnelly, The Irish Times | .

**Features Broadsheet Writer of the Year:** Kim Bielenberg, Irish Independent; Rosita Boland, The Irish Times; Conor Gallagher, The Irish Times; Conor Pope, The Irish Times; Maeve Sheehan, Sunday Independent; Barry J Whyte, The Sunday Business Post.

**Features Popular:** Catherine Fegan, Irish Daily Mail; Eoin Murphy, Irish Daily Mail; Jenny Friel, Irish Daily Mail; Aoife Bannon, The Irish Sun; Nicola Bardon, The Irish Sun; Kayla Walsh, Irish Mirror.

**Foreign Coverage:** Sally Hayden, The Irish Times; Marion McKeone, Sunday Business Post; Patrick Freyne, The Irish Times; Derek Scally, The Irish Times; Suzanne Lynch, The Irish Times; Lara Marlowe, The Irish Times |

**Front Page of the Year:** The Irish Sun: Bludgeoned to Death; Irish Daily Mirror: Ex-soldier's hell living in a car; Irish Daily Star: Fly me to the moon; The Irish Sun: Inside the Regency; Irish Examiner: Lyra; The Irish Sun: Fr Cleary's homeless son.

**Headline of the Year:** Irish Daily Star: Pot Noodles; The Irish Sun: Fairy Tale of New Walk; Irish Daily Mirror: Ballybrack from the Dead; Irish Daily Mirror: Meth the Lord be with you; Irish Daily Star: Arís an Uachtaráin; The Irish Sun: One Footie in the Grave.

**Investigative Journalism:** Mark Tighe, Colin Coyle, and Paul Rowan, The Sunday Times; Jack Power, The Irish Times; Ellen Coyne and Katie O' Neill, The Times, Ireland edition; Carl O' Brien, The Irish Times; Craig Farrell and Neil Cotter, The Irish Sun; Irish Independent political team; Anne Sheridan, Irish Mail on Sunday.

**News Reporter of the Year:** Mark Tighe, Sunday Times; Shane Phelan, Irish Independent; Michael O'Farrell, Irish Mail on Sunday; Eilish O'Regan, Irish Independent; Joe Leogue, Irish Examiner; Stephen Breen, The Irish Sun.





**NewsBrands**  
Ireland

# JOURNALISM AWARDS 2019



**News Website/News App of the Year:**

IrishTimes.com; Irishexaminer.com; TheSun.ie; Independent.ie; Extra.ie; IrishMirror.ie

**Podcast of the Year:** The Floating Voter, Independent.ie; Atlantic, The Irish Times; Karl Henry Real Health, Independent.ie; The Left Wing, Independent.ie; Inside Politics, The Irish Times; The Women's Podcast, The Irish Times.

**Political Journalist of the Year:** Kevin Doyle, Irish Independent; Peter O'Dwyer, The Times, Ireland Edition; Philip Ryan, Sunday Independent; Michael Brennan, Sunday Business Post; John Lee, The Irish Mail on Sunday; Pat Leahy, The Irish Times.

**Political Story of the Year**

Peter O'Dwyer, The Times, Ireland Edition; Michael O'Farrell, The Irish Mail on Sunday; Mark Tighe, The Sunday Times; Kevin Doyle, Irish Independent; Jennifer Bray, The Irish Times; Cormac McQuinn, Shane Phelan, Kevin Doyle, Irish Independent

**Scoop of the Year:** Mark Tighe, The Sunday Times; Kevin Doyle/Tom Brady/Robin Schiller, Irish Independent; Peter O' Dwyer, The Times, Ireland Edition; Paul Byrne, Irish Daily Mirror; Ali Bracken, Irish Daily Mail; Kevin Doyle, Irish Independent.

**Showbiz Journalist of the Year:** Eddie Rowley, Sunday World; Barry Moran, The Irish Sun; Jenny Friel, The Irish Daily Mail; Barry Egan,

The Sunday Independent; Paul Healy, The Irish Daily Star; Gary Meneely, The Irish Sun.

**Showbiz Story of the Year:** Gary Meneely, The Irish Sun; Barry Moran, The Irish Sun; Eddie Rowley, The Sunday World; Paul Byrne, The Irish Mirror; Craig Hughes, The Irish Mail on Sunday; Paul Healy, The Irish Daily Star.

**Sports Journalist Broadsheet:** Vincent Hogan, Irish Independent; Keith Duggan, The Irish Times; Cathal Dennehy, freelance (Irish Examiner/Irish Independent); Malachy Clerkin, The Irish Times; Shane McGrath, The Irish Mail on Sunday; Declan Bogue, Irish Examiner.

**Sports Journalist Popular:** Roy Curtis, Sunday World/The Herald; Dave Coughlan, Irish Daily Star; Gary Meneely, The Irish Sun; Derek Foley, Irish Daily Star; Philip Lanigan, Irish Daily Mail; Brian Flanagan, Irish Daily Star.

**Best Use of Video:** Simon Carswell and Enda O' Dowd, The Irish Times; Kathleen Harris, The Irish Times; Anne O'Donoghue, Irish Farmer's Journal; Johnny Brew, Kyran O' Brien, Mick Carolan, Independent; Enda O'Dowd, The Irish Times; Bryan O' Brien and Colm Keena, The Irish Times.

**Young Journalist of the Year:** Shauna Bowers, The Times, Ireland edition; Sarah Burns, The Irish Times; Catherine Devine, Irish Independent; Jack Power, The Irish Times; Robin Schiller, The Herald; Will Slattery, Independent.ie.



## Happy birthday, Jim and Tim

To mark Jim Eadie's 90th birthday, the IEC hosted a party in Liberty Hall.

IEC joint Cathaoirleach Gerry Carson and Séamus Dooley, Irish Secretary, are pictured above, presenting Jim with a specially commissioned caricature by NUJ member Tom Halliday. The illustration reflects Jim's great passions: journalism, the NUJ, and Roscommon football.

At the party, the former Irish Secretary asked

if there was anyone older than himself in the hall.

Step forward NUJ stalwart Jim Magennis, former Bord Fáilte Information Officer and round-the-world sailor who served with Jim on the good ship NUJ over many years.

Jim (pictured below with Jim Eadie), will be 91 on November 17th and his many friends in the NUJ wish him well.

*Photos: Kevin Cooper, Photoline.*



# Dooley v Dooley clash over RTÉ

In one of his last acts before his removal as Fianna Fáil spokesperson on communications, Timmy Dooley incurred the wrath of the NUJ and sister unions when he called for compulsory redundancies at RTÉ.

In an interview with Laura Slattery of The Irish Times, the Clare TD also claimed that many RTÉ staff were doing what he termed “unnecessary tasks” and called on RTÉ unions and workers to “step up to the plate”.

Dooley’s sweeping support for compulsory redundancies, made before RTÉ had presented proposals for the restructuring of the organisation, angered Trade Union Group officers.

They availed of the coincidental opportunity of a visit by Timmy to the Sean O’Rourke Show to challenge his comments at an informal meeting in the Radio Centre.

Irish Secretary Séamus Dooley (no relation) took to Twitter to challenge the basis for Timmy’s assertions and had already written to the TD before his Radio Centre encounter.

In his letter the Irish Secretary acknowledged Fianna Fáil’s support for additional funding for RTÉ but challenged Dooley’s assertions in relation to redundancies and productivity.

He told Dooley: “RTÉ employees, including NUJ members, are currently awaiting proposals from RTÉ on reorganisation and possible job cuts. We have seen no plan and received no timeline for any restructuring.

“In that context it seems strange that the Fianna Fáil spokesperson on Communications should appear to publicly support the concept of compulsory redundancies. You have also

done so without seeking a meeting or input from the RTÉ Trade Union Group.

“As far as I can establish this is a new departure for Fianna Fáil and is inconsistent with the approach to commercial semi state companies within your brief, such as Bord na Mona. Please feel free to correct me if I am wrong on this point. “

Pointing out that he had been involved in negotiating a number of agreements in RTÉ on behalf of the NUJ, including the landmark ‘Guiding Principles’ agreement which provide the foundation for managing change in RTÉ, Séamus strongly disputed the claim of “unnecessary talks”.

The 2013 agreement, he explained, includes clauses on teamwork and cooperation, facilitating change and improvements and flexibility, mobility and multi-tasking.

He added: “Where agreements have not been fully utilised or the flexibilities not exploited it has been due to management

decisions so your call for unions to ‘step up to the plate’ is difficult to comprehend.

“The agreement stands the test of time. So too does the internal mechanism, the Industrial Relations Tribunal,

a model which reflects a partnership approach to IR which has served RTÉ well.”

Deputy Dooley responded by text, offering to meet the NUJ official and insisting that the “balance” of his comments should be considered.

Timmy Dooley was subsequently demoted for delegating the necessary task of voting in the Dáil.

The NUJ will now seek a meeting with his replacement, Deputy Jack Chambers.

***“This is a new departure for Fianna Fáil and is inconsistent with the approach to commercial semi state companies within your brief”***



# Gay Byrne, public service broadcaster to the core

## AN APPRECIATION

By Séamus Dooley

Louis Armstrong once said of jazz, "If you have to ask what jazz is, you'll never know." Gay Byrne loved jazz and he held a special place in his heart for Satchmo. They shared a sunny disposition, a wonderful ability to look on the bright side of life, even in dark days, and an ability to bring joy to large audiences.

When I think of public service broadcasting I think of Gaybo. It's hard to describe exactly what it is but when we think of the very best of public service broadcasting we think of programmes which challenge, which provoke, which entertain, and which frequently make a difference. In his long career Gay Byrne did all that, and so much more.

His death, after a long illness, really does mark the end of an era and comes at a difficult time for RTÉ, which he served so faithfully but never uncritically.

Gay was in many ways the father of public service broadcasting in Ireland. A broadcaster of courage, vision and boundless energy he helped shape modern Ireland and used his talents to help create a more caring, compassionate, and inclusive society.

He was often infuriating, annoying, and provocative, but Gay was never dull. In his career he brought light, laughter, and humanity to television and radio debates. It would be impossible to agree with everything he said or did – he was innately conservative and he rode a few hobby horses – but you could never doubt the sincerity of his convictions.

Gay believed in the precepts of public service broadcasting and his passion for RTÉ was reflected in every aspect of his career: from his early radio career, to the Late Late Show, his pioneering morning radio programme to his



Never dull: the late Gay Byrne

wonderful Sunday music and musings on Lyric FM. He especially enjoyed Lyric FM and the opportunity to share his love and knowledge of his beloved jazz.

In his biography, *The Time of My Life*, he wrote tongue-in-cheek about RTÉ head honchos in the administration block (which he referred to as *The Hilton*), who seemed to feel everything would be all right if only they did not have to deal with programme makers and the like! He was also a strong advocate for public funding of public servicing broadcasting while respecting commercial competitors.

We in the NUJ were proud of his membership of the union – he remained a fully paid up member throughout his life. He encountered opposition when he first set about joining the union and there were those who viewed him as an entertainer rather than a serious journalist. Gaybo was a man for all seasons and made a fine contribution to print journalism as a newspaper columnist.

The best way to salute Gay's legacy is to protect public service broadcasting. He was, above all else, a public service broadcaster to the core.

We extend condolences to Kathleen, daughters Suzy, Crona, grandson Cian and to his many friends and colleagues.