

Reaching Out

June – Anne and Wm attended AAIF Conference, Louisville, Kentucky.

15th June – NIMMA annual BBQ, Killough

August – Anne and Wm attended AIF 40th Anniversary Conference, Swanwick

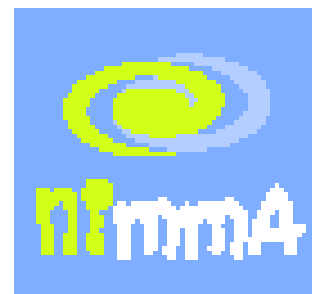
19th Aug – Anne attended Launch of Shared Neighbourhood Programme, Springfarm Community House, Antrim.

■ **Accord Interchurch Courses
20th & 23rd November,
Comfort Inn, Antrim**

Northern Ireland Mixed Marriage Association

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(Evening appointments available, 24 hour answer machine
service)*



News

Autumn 2008

Funding Secured

The summer period has been a busy one for the committee. We were delighted to discover that we had again been funded for another year by the Dublin Department of Foreign Affairs Reconciliation Fund. This enabled us to advertise for a Development Officer. We received a large number of applications and after much interviewing were delighted to appoint Paul McLaughlin to the post. He brings a different background to the Association (see later) and we wish him well in his new post.

Thanks

The international aspect of mixed marriage was well-catered for this summer and reports of two

conferences follow. Our thanks to Anne and William for attending both.

Reminder

I would also remind readers that the annual meeting of the Irish Inter-Church Meeting standing committee on Mixed Marriage is in November and any relevant complaint about the local churches and clergy re. mixed marriage should be forwarded to me.

Ken
Chair

NIMMA names new Development Officer

Belfastman Paul McLaughlin has been appointed Development Officer for NIMMA. Paul is the former Media Relations Manager of BT Northern Ireland and has been involved in community work in the city’s docklands since 1999. He is a regular, short story contributor to the Ireland’s Own magazine and, in the past two years, has edited three books of reminiscences and stories about people from right across the community in North Belfast.

Challenge

He is a member of the National Union of Journalists and is looking forward to using a variety of skills honed in the public, private and charity sectors to meet the challenge ahead. Paul sees his role as a proactive ambassador for the association on a number of fronts including funding, public relations and lobbying.



He said: “NIMMA is a good news story that deserves to be spread across the country and its membership should be developed and encouraged. “ I will do all that I can to ensure that NIMMA reaches both its internal and external audiences with as much success as possible. Paul can be reached on Belfast 90 235444 weekday mornings and on (mobile) 07706285042.

Warm welcome for Anne and William in US and East Midlands

The Association of Interchurch Families 40th Anniversary Conference – August 23rd-25th 2008.

A Belleek Parian Cross, a gift from NIMMA to the Association of Interchurch Families to mark its 40th anniversary conference, took centre stage at closing worship at the Swanwick Conference Centre in Derbyshire. Anne and William Odling-Smee, attending on behalf of NIMMA, described the three day conference, which included both Anglican and Catholic services and addresses by theologians and clergy, as “very interesting and encouraging”. William said: “Once again, we were struck by the fact that while NIMMA has the extra problem of community relationships as well as church relationships, it is very much part of the international scene”.

American Association of Interchurch Families Conference – June 2008.

Anne and William were warmly welcomed by their American counterparts in Louisville, Kentucky for a “well-rounded and extremely well-organised conference. They met friends, old and new, many from an Irish background, at a series of talks put together by one of the driving forces behind the international groups and the American association, Fr George Kilcourse. The conference focussed on domestic churches and relationships with clergy and Anne and William met many Christian groups who were concerned at the segregation, sectarianism and bigotry still prevalent in Northern Ireland. Anne said: “Our community problem, as ever, was the difference when much of what we discussed about spirituality, relationships between churches and the raising of children was very similar”.