



Community Fair Trade Organic

co-op news

June/ July 2007

newsletter of the Dublin Food Co-op

Editorial

This issue of the Co-op News is the last before our move to Newmarket Square. The first market will take place on the 14th July and we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in the new venue. The new premises is shaping up nicely at this stage and will offer members much more than there has been in Pearse st. As we develop and grow in to Newmarket, we will be able to offer more days of trading, a wider range of products and generally provide much more to members . The consultation process planned for September will help us dovetail our services to meet the needs of members and shape further the growth of the Co-op

In this newsletter we are focussing on Newmarket and have included some photos of the work going on there twice weekly. Do think about offering a few hours to paint or clean as its great fun and very worthwhile. If you'd like to help out in the ongoing work in Newmarket we'd be delighted to hear from you –please contact Mary Mullally at 087 2870555 or Pauric Cannon at 8730451 or just call in any wed evening or Saturday any time.

We are also looking for a few people to help with doing some focussed leafleting door to door for one or two evenings prior to the move. If you'd like to help distribute our new leaflet please contact myself at St. Andrews on Saturdays or give me a ring at 086 601015.

Alongside our focus on Newmarket, Kevin O' Rourke has included some more profiles of the new members of the Co-ordinating Body. He has then promised to broaden the series out to others who are involved in different capacities in the running of the Co-op. All suggestions welcome!

Larry Gordon has given us details of his annual walking trip to Donegal –this looks to be a very enjoyable trip and should be great fun.

Why not take a trip over to the new premises before we open so as you can see exactly where it is and if you'd like to help with the ongoing work or with the leaflet drop even better!

Monica Haughey (Editor / Co-Ordinating Body)

Word From the Chair

Word From The Chair / Premises News

I'm writing this on the longest day of the year, but for the meitheal working at Newmarket, the longest day so far was last Saturday (June 16th), when 17 people did a total of 93 hours of productive work.

In the last five weeks, a total of 66 members have directly contributed labour to the refurbishment, and there are another dozen or so doing background work. So far, at just over the halfway mark since the meitheal began, we have clocked up more than 600 hours of work. We have been able to achieve great changes in a short time, though there is still a lot to be done. The main internal structures – doors, ramps, toilets, servery units - are now in place and decoration has started on them. The large storage area is painted and almost ready for occupation now, with just the floors to finish. Brave volunteers have mounted high scaffolds to hand-wash the ceiling – 7 metres at the apex – and beams so that the room is clean and ready for food handling.

The entry yard has had its first application of colour, in a palette to be echoed throughout the building, and so far everyone says they like it. But we have more planned for this area, to entice people into the building.



Newmarket volunteers photos by Graeme Howard

The smaller of the two offices is now ready for finish colour and locking off as our exclusive canteen and store-room for tools. The safety and escape doors are now in place, and a heroic job of refurbishment is in progress to restore the glazed wooden doors leading onto the deck. The deck itself will be

continued overleaf



smaller than we would like, but the budget only allowed for a start to be made. Perhaps we can continue the meitheal on a different scale, maybe as a routine part of the help rota, to extend the decking, and to do other improvements which are desirable but not immediately necessary.

Most of the market space has now got at least some paint on it, and tiling of the service stalls has begun. Major work ahead of us includes the rear yard, which will be painted in a strong colour; the toilets; the application of colour to the market space and entry; and the painting of the floors. And of course cleaning, cleaning all the time! We have two industrial vacuum cleaners, and if the foreman hears one of them switching off, he gets worried.

The meitheal work is turning out to be an interesting social event. Almost 30% of volunteers are non-Irish born, and it is fascinating to hear how things are done elsewhere. People from the most varied walks of life are working together, discussing the Co-op and other matters of mutual interest. There is a resident DJ, who has to compete with machines and the need to be able to talk. There's tea and coffee and biscuits for the short breaks, and the St Andrew's traders, and especially Blazing Salads, have been supplying food on Saturdays.

The meitheal is creating the new Co-op. Come along and help us bring your Co-op into being.

Aodhagan O' Brion (Chair person and Premises Co-ordinator)



Who's who in the Co-op

Kevin O Rourke continues his series of profiles of Co-op members. In this issue he has three profiles of Cb members (we are still missing Arthur Duignan and Fionnuala Ward.) In future issues we promise Tim Cookson and Pauric Cannon and are very open to further suggestions.

Siraj Zaidi believes that we should strive to find the "alternative side" to life in order to make a difference in a world driven by commerce and figures. Born in Lucknow, India, in November 1961, he lives in Terenure and has been a member of the Co-op for the past three years. He describes his occupation as actor/cook/film and TV and Radio Producer, and ran for election to the coordinating body in order to be a part of the decision-making process. He likes the spirit of community and the voluntary aspects of the Coop, as well as the focus on organic and healthy food and fair trading, and he believes that the Co-op should become known to the wider Dublin public. He likes to educate people about the differences in food and cultures from different parts of the world, and he can be seen at the Co-op every Saturday at his stand which sells Indian foods.



Ciaran Moore (above) originally joined the Co-op in 1994 through a Workers' Co-operative he was involved with at that time, but his membership subsequently lapsed until he rejoined last year. He was born in Dublin in June 1969 (he currently lives in Crumlin), is a freelance IT consultant, and spent six months working for the Co-op recently. At the end of this time he realized that didn't want to leave, as he was excited by the potential and the mix of skills and attitudes in the Co-op: 'it struck me as an organization that could be reaching a critical mass'. He likes the community and the tradition of getting things done, that there is 'more doing than talking'. 'I suppose I come to the Co-op from a political rather than a dietary motivation' he says. 'I believe in Co-operatives as a way to change our society'.

Ann Byrne is a food technologist by profession, and has worked for twelve years in the food industry in the areas of dairy, bakery, confectionary, chilled foods and fresh produce. The Co-op's move to bigger premises prompted her to stand for election to the CB, as she felt that her skills and experience could be of use. In addition to the good quality organic produce and the ethos of fair trade and local supply (and therefore

minimum packaging and advertising), she enjoys the friendly atmosphere of market shopping at the Co-op. As she currently works most Saturdays, she's looking forward to increased trading hours at Newmarket. She would like to see the Co-op expanding its range of products (including chilled and frozen) in a manner that will attract new members. Above all, she says that she loves food: 'growing it, cooking it and eating it! '.

The Move to Newmarket

They say time flies when you are having fun but it seems to fly even faster when you have a deadline to meet. The first market in Newmarket is almost upon us and while there will be eleventh hour issues and problems to iron out and resolve we are all very confident that everything will be "alright on the night".

The Co-op has been in Pearse Street for 15 years. I am informed that the original arrangement was temporary and that it was never intended to be a permanent home for the Co-op. All would agree that the Co-op has been well served by Pearse Street and I for one found shopping there a most enjoyable experience. No doubt you will all join me in thanking our landlord, The St. Andrew's Community Centre and the staff and management of same for their hospitality and help over the past 15 years.

In the last few years there has been a surge in the buying of organic products and products which are eco friendly and also Fairtrade products. To provide the members of the Co-op with top quality products and to offer an improved range of products at competitive prices it was necessary to locate to larger premises. The move to Newmarket is the first step in the process of finding a permanent home for the Co-op and gives us the opportunity to meet our members' expectations in providing keenly priced quality fresh products and also improving the range and choice of products for the members.

Organic Food sales in the US have grown between 17 and 21 percent each year since 1997. While sales growth statistics of organic foods in the EU are similar, growth in Ireland has been much slower but is expected to catch up with the rest of the EU with anticipated average growth of 25 to 30 percent per annum in the years ahead. The effects of this growth is evident from

the increasing shelf space being made available in the multiples for organic foods. There may be a perception that we cannot compete with the multiples on price but we can and we



can also compete most favourably on freshness and quality. Tesco and M & S import all their organic foods while the Dublin Food Co-op gives preference to local Irish producers. That is one of our main objectives and we will continue to make every effort to source local Irish Organically produced foods.

We will in the coming months review our entire purchasing procedures and methods and also improve the range of products. Newmarket provides us with an excellent opportunity to develop the Co-op in the members interest. We look forward to your continuing support and if you have the opportunity please introduce a friend to the Co-op.

Finally on behalf of the Co-ordinating Board and you the members I would like to thank all the staff and volunteers who over the years have made the experience of shopping in Pearse Street a most enjoyable one. I would also like to thank everyone for the cooperation and consideration given in relation to the move to Newmarket. Lets all work together to make it a huge success.

John Lindsay (18th June 2007).



Volunteers wanted

for painting and general preparation. Join a very enthusiastic group of volunteers who are transforming the Newmarket premises. We have two weeks to go to make the building ready -come and have a look and bring your old clothes. We are there every wednesday from 6.30pm and every saturday from 9.30.

GIVE A RING IF YOU NEED FURTHER DETAILS TO Aodhagan O Brion at 087 20545734 or Mary Mulally at 087 2870555 or Pauric Cannon at the office at 8730451

Volunteers also wanted for leaflet dropping for a few nights in early July. If you d like to spend a few evenings targeting neighbouring houses please give Monica Haughey a ring at 086 6061015.

WALKING TRIP TO DONEGAL

The Food Co-op walking group will be heading to Donegal, like previous years, for a walking holiday from Saturday 21st to Sunday 29th of July. We have the use of two refurbished authentic cottages in the countryside between Glenties and Ardara for a reasonable cost. The cottages are together and fully furnished. We will be close to many spectacular walks in the county such as Errigal, Slieve League and Glenveagh National Park.

There are only 12 places so if you are interested in coming for all or some of the week you need to let me know sooner rather than later. First come first served and preference will be given to those intending to spend a whole week.

For more info. or to book your place ring Larry Gordon at 087-6832827(Mobile) or at 01-2882957(Home).

As we will be away there will be no regular Food Co-op walk from Dublin on Sunday 29th July.



Letter To Editor

Dear Editor,

I would like to take this opportunity to express my good wishes and gratitude to all of you who have worked so hard to bring this move about.

Yes, this is a great move for the Co-op and all of us who are part of it. This project to find new premises for our Co-op has been a work in progress for a few years now and much dedication, hard work, good spirit and seeking for the best has gone into this. Our heartfelt thanks to all those on the committees who have been part of this big work.

A few possibilities were considered along the way and they didn't work out but now it is different. The doors have opened - the right building has been found, the AGM went very well and there is general good feeling that this is the right move for us to make. No obstacles - there is a flow to this.

There is our fear of change and the new and unfamiliar. We grow accustomed to the way things are, the way we do things and we convince ourselves there is safety in this. Our fear is perhaps our greatest obstacle. But with movement, and change, there is creativity.

Lets embrace the new and celebrate the vision and work of the Co-op and open up to the challenge and all the potential for growth and inclusion.

All the best,

Gill Riordan (Co-op member & Spiritual Counsellor)

Gill has been a Co-op member for the past ten years and is moving to Cork over the next few weeks. Best wishes from all at the Co-op.. She sees it as a place where people can come to work, shop, learn and participate.

Help Rota Dates

Help Rota members please note that reminders (where needed) are now being sent by email or text message rather than individual phone calls; please ensure your email address or mobile no. is on record with the Help Rota Co-ordinator also specifying by which way you prefer to be reminded (if at all).

A		4 Aug	22 Sept
B		11 Aug	29 Sept
C	30 June	18 Aug	06 Oct
D	7 July	25 Aug	13 Oct
E	14 July	1 Sept	20 Oct
F	21 July	8 Sept	27 Oct
G	28 July	15 Sept	03 Nov

Co-Op News Team

Any articles or letters to the Members Forum for inclusion in next newsheet should be forwarded to editor@dublinfoodcoop.com Any members interested in helping with the newsletter please also get in touch.

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