



Quon Stothers Journey

Berkeley / Los Angeles / Ireland

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Newsletter May 2009

Widening Circles of Influence . .

We are back into the full swing of things for our new life in Belfast. Ward is visiting folks monthly, and taking a Belfast History class at the Shankill Women's Center. This week he learned about the flourishing linen industry which died in the 1970s. Flax is easily grown in this soil and climate but the industry fell apart because of competition from lower waged countries and the advent of easy care/no iron fabrics. A retired teacher who loves Belfast history brings the past to life. Marda continues cooking for the Drennans on Wednesdays, and completing her European Computer Driving License (ECDL), which has nothing to do with "driving", emphasis on computer. She also followed up her class entitled Who Me? For Community Transformation, and followed that with the Epilogues class exploring the root causes of the conflict in Northern Ireland. More about this, next month, after I complete my reflections



Ronnie and parents at the school Fun Day

papers. Our involvement with the Shankill Women's Center has given us wonderful connections with women and issues in the community.

We continue our Tea Talk and Pray at the school. Despite the fact that none of the parents have come to join us, we continue to meet and pray for the school, showing our faithfulness to the principal, the school secretary, and the caretaker. Our minister, Jack,

has encouraged the church members to reach out, love the community, and join the Stothers at the school. Today we met the special needs teacher and received a list of concerns. She suggested that we meet monthly for updated concerns. After seven months pursuing this initiative, this is a major breakthrough!

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Belfast Home Address:
42 Glenbank Place
Belfast BT14 8AN
Northern Ireland

Berkeley Address:
2600 Warring Street
Berkeley Ca 94704 USA

Donations/Address corrections: CTEN
PO Box 291307
Kerrville, TX 78029-1307

Crumlin Road
Presbyterian Church
292 Crumlin Road
Belfast BT 13

Hm ph: (028) 90.291986
from US 01144.2890.291986
Mobile ph: (075) 99.852567
from US 01144.7599.852567

Email:
wardstothers@cten.org
Email:
mQstothers@gmail.com

continued "Tea Talk and Pray"

The types of concerns that were shared are: disappointments for some graduating P-7 students regarding acceptance to preferred secondary schools, parental concerns of perceived bullying, harassment of a family for sports flags whereby the flag was set on fire and stuffed through the letterbox, diagnosis of a

mentally ill parent, a child custody issue, and a boyfriend returning from Iraq as a double amputee. These are today's concerns.

Ward has joined Marda at the Friday night Boy's Club and is using his rusty physical education training. The boys want to do football (which is soccer), and tumbling. We get



Parents' Room at the school

Special prayer points

PRAISE FOR our children, Jerem, then Alaina visiting

Praise that Ms. Perry from the school was forthright and articulate. Pray as we continue to encourage.

Pray for our weekly involvement with many women through the Shankill Women's Center.

Pray: Cross community openings for dialogue are dormant. but on our hearts.

Pray for us as we continue to "come alongside" May, Dorothy, and Alison.

Desmond and Roberta have moved into a bungalow, a one story house

Crumlin Road missionaries: Mark, Peter, and Rachel

College Avenue Presbyterian Church, in Oakland, leadership and Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC)

PRAY for sustained support in 2009 and sweet tenants for Warring Street.

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Stothers' Ministry: to come alongside the people, to impact the community, and to enliven faith.

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about a dozen neighborhood boys who come in to kick a ball about, eat sweets from a "tuck shop", and chat a little with the leaders. Earlier this week as we were approaching our parked car, a gang of about 14 boys in school uniforms were crossing the street approaching us. I am always a little apprehensive when seeing a bunch of kids so I worried a bit. Then as they passed us one of the boys yells out "Hey Ward". I was pleasantly surprised that this boy, a 13 year old from the boys club, had the courage to greet an adult, even when amongst his mates.

We continue to seek ways to do "cross

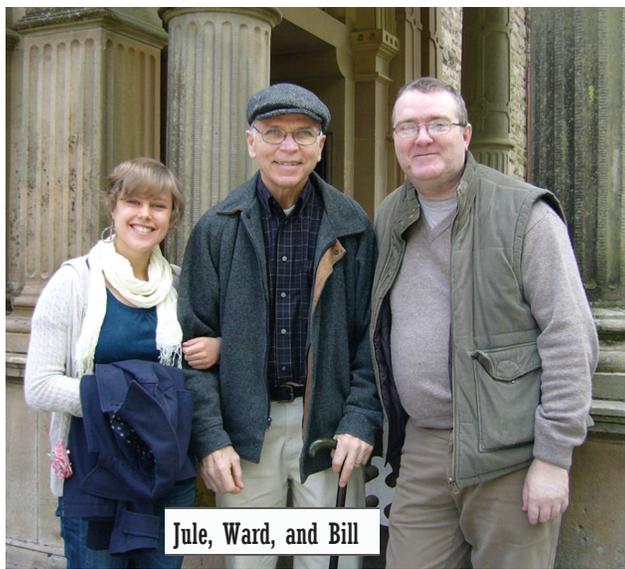
community" work. Ward mentioned his interest to his poet friend and Bill arranged for us to meet with Jule. It turns out Jule knows Lydia since they are both from east Germany and did volunteer work at the same center. Lydia coincidentally is the person who introduced Ward and Bill to each other! So we continue to pursue more avenues to have an impact in our community through meeting and supporting other community workers. Since Bill went door to door collecting for Gift Aid Day this year, he advised us that there is another American couple here as volunteers just up the street. We will try to meet them soon.

Our circle grows.

Last Sunday Ward conducted the evening worship and preached his sermon on the Widow's Mite which we have posted on the website. Marda thought it would be a good idea to show the photos and give our perspective of our year at the church and in the community. Fifteen people came and we got good feedback. You can see the American version of our Year in Review which we used on furlough, posted on the website www.quonstothers.com/photo_archive.html.



Ward watching tumblers



Jule, Ward, and Bill