

HAPPY EASTER TO ALL
OUR READERS

LURGAN SPADE

THE LURGAN SPADE

APRIL 2011

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Peter Mathews at the recent Pearl Ball with Joe O'Neill and Brian McCready

Peter plays at the Pearl Ball

Peter Mathews rolled back the years recently when he played Piano at the Praxis Care Pearl Ball. Peter is a very talented musician and has had a very distinguished career played Obo in a touring band. Praxis Care were very privileged to have him play Piano at the anniversary event.

The anniversary event was to celebrate 30 years since the

foundation of Praxis Care.

The event was held in the Le Mon Hotel and Country club just outside Belfast. Part of this event was to celebrate the Praxis Care staff awards which is now an annual event. Along with Peter there were many other distinguished guest. These included David Trimble, former first minister, The Lord Mayor of Belfast Councillor Pat Convery, The three

Priests, Mary Peters and May McFettridge who was MC for the evening.

Peter entertained guests as they arrived for the event. He is pictured above with an old friend of the Lurgan Spade Brain McCready who is now assistant director for Praxis and Joe O'Neill who is manager of Praxis services in Portadown. Well done Peter.

Christmas at the town hall



It took more than the worst snow storm in years to stop the Christmas celebrations in the Town Hall.

Tables were set, decorations were hung and staff weaved in and out the kitchen as the basement room in Lurgan Town Hall was transformed into a setting worthy of a five star hotel.



Peter samples the dessert



Michael smiles for the camera

Armed with enough turkey and tinsel to feed an army, the staff from Union street braved the elements to ensure the Service users were treated to a sumptuous Christmas Lunch.



Audrey and Austin wait to be served

The team would like to thank the staff of the Town Hall for all their efforts and to everyone who attended for making the event such a success.

Everyone had a lovely time.



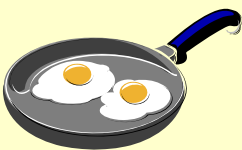
Sean gets set to enjoy the feast



Sandra and her friend get into the spirit of the things



The Gang's All Here



The Brunch Club



Alison has been spending a lot of time in the kitchen of late, practicing for the Brunch Club.

Not that she needs much practice if the numbers attending are anything to go by.

Every Tuesday morning the tempting aroma of bacon and sausage fill the office.

You can hear the sizzle of the eggs competing with the noise of the door bell as Service Users arrive.

Usually the guests can fit easily around the solid table and chairs set in the Conservatory but just sometimes, there are just too many and the late comers find themselves using the office desks as makeshift tables.

Not that makeshift tables deter our Service Users.

Hot buttered toast and copious quantities of tea and coffee complete the menu.

There certainly is not a lot of conversation at these brunches but this is supposed to be a compliment to the culinary skills of the chef.

At the more relaxed tea and coffee stage, the conversation certainly picks up with "Football" high on the agenda . Topical issues also feature.

Why not come along and join us from 10.30 next Tuesday?

Face to Face with *Martina Ferris*

What is the hardest part of your job?

9am on a Monday Morning

What is the best part?

Interaction and Praxis social events with Service Users and staff

Where do you see yourself in ten years time?

Filling in the same form in 2021

What is your favourite film?

Pretty Woman

What is your favourite song?

Rod Stewart "Tonight's the Night"

Who would be your dream Dinner Party guests?

Peter Kay, Rod Stewart, Liam Neeson

If you were trapped on a desert island what three things would you want with you?

Nothing. The next answer is all I'd need.

Who would you want to be trapped with?

Liam Neeson



Martina is a Project Worker on our team here in Union Street. As well as helping out with all the Scheme activities, Martina is best known for her "Green Fingers" as she runs the Gardening Group which is based here, in Union Street

If you could pass one law, what would it be?

All Praxis staff are supplied with company cars

What would you do with a million pounds?

I'd give some to charity and treat my family and friends

Running Scared

*Why do we run away from each other?
What are we frightened of?*

*Is it what we see in each other—tells us a story about ourselves;
and things we don't want to face up to*

To be free—we have to face the things for now and eternity



By Caroline McAvoy



Praxis Care Lurgan Service Users and staff enjoyed a great night out on the 17th February at the Waterfront Hall been entertained by Dr Hook.

These included "Sylvia's Mother Said" to a relaxed but excited audience.

The comments about the Concert included:



Clare, Sean and Sean let the train take the strain

The concert goes made there way to Belfast by train and once in Belfast, there was a short detour to enjoy a "snack" at Robinsons bar near Victoria train station.

"A brilliant Night Out", (Sean), while Sandra reckoned it was a "Great Night".



Dr Hook featuring Ray Sawyer



It was Audrey and Sean's first experience of a Concert and they had a great time.

Audrey is hoping to repeat the experience again and has her eye on the Neil Diamond concert in May.

One step from the station and there was the bar, back to the station and off at the Waterfront.

Collecting the tickets it was a climb heavenwards for the seats which were at the top of the arena.

Unfortunately, this view of heaven was too daunting for some.

They felt as if they were in imminent danger of tipping onto the stage. Martina was sent to work some magic, and was able to get the whole group moved to seats five rows from the front of the stage.



Service Users and staff had a great time and are quite keen to repeat the experience and are currently scouring the Waterfront Website for suitable dates.



Dr Hook and his backing band performed many of his famous hits.

Audrey, Sandra and both Sean Campbell and Sean Donnelly were quite insistent that the efforts of the staff was recognised and we are happy to pass on their thanks to Clare, Josephine and Martina.

"A brilliant night out"
Said Sean Donnelly



"A great night and a big "Thank You" to Martina, Clare and Josephine. They made my night".

Said
Sandra Breen

Farewell to Phillippa

All the staff and Service Users of Praxis Care Lurgan were very sad to hear of the recent death of Phillippa McCann. Phillippa died on Thursday 31st of March peacefully after an illness. Phillippa was a service user with Praxis Care for many years and was very well thought of by all staff and service users alike.

Phillippa was a great character and really enjoyed getting involved in various Praxis activities and events throughout the year. She especially enjoyed gardening and was a keen member of the Praxis Lurgan Gardening group. Her own garden was a joy to behold at any time throughout the year.

We extend our deepest sympathy to all her family and her extended circle of friends. She will never be forgotten.



Don't Quit

by
Phillippa McCann

When things go wrong, as they sometimes will,
When the road you're trudging seems all up hill,
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh,
When care is pressing you down a bit,
Rest, if you must – but don't quit.

Life is queer with it's twists and turns,
As everyone of us sometimes learns,
And many a failure turns about
When he might have won had he stuck it out;
Don't give up, though the pace seems slow -
You might succeed with another blow.

Often the goal is nearer than
It seems to a faint and faltering man,
Often the struggler has given up
When he might have captured the victor's cup.
And he learned too late, when the
Night slipped down,
How close he was to the golden crown.

Success is failure turned inside out-
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt-
And you never can tell how close you are,
It may be near when it seems afar;
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit -
It's when things seem worst that you mustn't quit.

*First published in the Lurgan Spade
November 2007*



Phillipa McCann

May 1962—March 2011

R. I. P.

The Gardening Club



The Gardening Group is expected to start up soon again in April. All who have been involved in the past are invited to come along and help out and any new people who are interested are also invited. Last year was a very busy year with Martina and other members giving the Garden a major overhaul. As of yet we are unsure what plans Martina has but all will be revealed when the group reconvenes. After another very cold winter there sure will be a lot of work needing to be done. It is hoped to have the Garden whipped into shape for the annual barbeque in June.



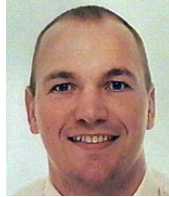
Recent break ins at 179 Union St



Monday mornings are bad enough without coming to work to find that the office has been ransacked : and not for the first time.

Resisting the urge to put bars on all the windows and electrify the door knobs, common sense prevailed and we asked an expert.

Chief Inspector Jason Murphy, Area



Chief Inspector Murphy Commander for the Craigavon area, which includes Lurgan, Portadown and Brownlow, took time out of his busy schedule to calm our fears and suggest some simple measures which would also serve to keep us on the right side of the law.

He told us that the majority of theft is a result of opportunity rather than a planned event.

In the home, there are several simple steps you can take to safeguard your property.

- Lock doors and close windows before you go out, and that includes the garage and garden shed.
- Always check a callers ID before you open the door. Use the "Quick Check" number to verify callers who claim they are from the Gas board, Water Board, Housing executive etc, particularly if their call is unexpected. (See the enclosed leaflet for more details of the scheme).
- Make sure your back door is locked before opening the front door.

- Use your safety chain. If your door does not have one, consider having one fitted along with a spy hole. You may be eligible for help with this.
- Ask the caller to pass their ID through your letter box. If they are genuine they will not mind doing this. If you are still not sure, then you can phone the "Quick Check" number. If they are insistent or if they will not let you see their ID, DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR, but phone the Police. Dial 999 and the operator will help you. You will need to give your name and address to the operator and the nearest Police vehicle will be notified, the operator can also give you advice on what to do until the PSNI arrive.

In your car, you should never leave keys in the ignition or the vehicle unlocked. Secondly, you should not leave anything on display which is, or looks valuable: cash, laptops, cameras, briefcases, handbags, sat navs, MP3 players etc.



If you do have concerns, or if you see something which arouses your suspicions, please do not leave it to someone else, pick up the phone and let the PSNI know.

The number to ring is:

0845 600 8000.

Chief Inspector Murphy also took time to assure us that Craigavon was really a safe place to live.



Last year, the statistics show that;

- the Police responded to 18,500 calls from the public
- Craigavon recorded 5,800 crimes of which 397 were house burglaries.
- 14 offenders who were committing burglaries were targeted of which 11 spent time in prison as a result.
- Only one in five burglary victims in Craigavon were aged 65+,

Chief Inspector Murphy estimates that 50% of car crime and 40% of burglaries could have been prevented by taking the simple steps he has detailed here.

Thieves still do not like locked doors and windows. Finally, if you see something suspicious, or have any concerns, then report it.

Emergency
999

Lurgan PSNI Station
0845 600 8000

Crimestoppers
0800 555 111

Quick Check
0800 013 22 90



Neil's Trip to Florida, USA

Neil Harland likes to travel and he went on his first trip to Orlando Florida back five years ago, and enjoyed the place so much he has been going every year since. Here Neil will give a review of his experiences in the sunshine state.

I stay at the same resort each year in the family apartment, in a gated community named 'Vista Cay'. The resort is lovely, with everything you need within walking distance, including supermarket, chemist, gym, pool, cinema room, internet cafe, Chinese restaurant and Pizza parlour. The resort is located in central Orlando, although you still need a car to get about, as there aren't many footpaths along the wide 3-4 lane roads – too dangerous to walk, and the taxis are expensive.



We went to all the major theme parks including Disney World, Universal Studios, SeaWorld, Kennedy Space Centre and Busch Gardens. My favourite was Busch Gardens in Tampa, around 200 miles from Orlando. A free bus runs daily to it. I liked it the best because it has lots of fast roller coasters, built around a landscape based on an African jungle, with lots of wild animals among the rides. My favourite ride is called the 'Sheikra', a 200 foot high, 90 degree vertical drop rollercoaster.

As for the weather – can be quite volatile at times – one minute sun is shining brightly, next heavy rain and thunder. It can ruin the day out at the parks sometimes, as most outdoor rides close down for health and safety reasons. One day we got the free shuttle bus to Disney and got caught in heavy rain – the next bus home wasn't for another four hours and we got soaked and had to wait about feeling miserable. This is the downside about visiting Florida during the summer months, as that is the hurricane season there.



For eating out in the evenings, we tried out somewhere different each time. My favourite was the 'Outback Steakhouse'. They are an Australian restaurant, and in my opinion serve the



best steak around. It is cooked with their unique peppered seasoning. A two course meal there costs \$16 (£11), including unlimited soft drinks. My least favourite eating out experience was the 'Great Western Buffet' – only \$10 for all you can eat, but the meat is low grade and the vegetables are from tins.

All in all I would definitely recommend Florida for holiday at anytime and I will hopefully be going back soon.

Some pictures of Neil's most recent trip to Florida.

Included are a picture of 'Sheikra' the 200ft high vertical drop rollercoaster.



Many thanks Neil for your thoughts.

Praxis Care,
179 Union Street,
Lurgan,



Happy Easter to all
our Readers



Upcoming events for your diary

It's a busy time of the year at 179 Union Street with various events and groups getting back together.

The Brunch club will continue throughout the Spring into the Summer at its usual time on Tuesdays at 10.30. Remember if you have any special preferences for breakfast please get in touch with Alison or any of the staff.

Just to remind you also that Service Users meetings will continue on the first Tuesday of the month just after Breakfast club. If you have any ideas on anything please feel free to bring them to this meeting or get in touch with Stanley. From time to time we will be discussing various draft policy and procedures in relation to how Praxis Cares works and seeking your opinions. This is great way for you to be involved in the shaping of these policy and been involved in the running of the service. I recently send out some stuff on Professional Boundaries and I would welcome your thoughts on this policy.

The Gardening group will recommence in April. Martina will be getting in touch with you sometime very soon with dates.

The annual summer holiday is planned for the end of June. It is planned to go to Fermanagh for four nights. Its still not to late to get your name down if you are interested.

With Easter fast approaching Alison has some events planned to mark the occasion with a Lunch in the office for all on Thursday 21st.

Alison wins staff award at the Pearl Ball

Eoin Martin is a very excited young man and rightfully so. He has been telling all his school friends that his mummy is the best Nurse for Praxis in the British Isles.

At the recent Praxis Care Pearl Ball and Staff awards Alison won the award for 'The most positive member of staff who has a good attitude to their work and demonstrates commitment over and above the call of duty'

This award is the equivalent of the best actress award at the Oscars in Praxis Care. Considering over 1,100 people work for Praxis Care throughout the four jurisdictions (Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Isle of Man and England) this is a great achievement by Alison. Well done Alison and yes Eoin Martin is right she is the best.





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Co. Down, BT26 6DU
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Contact Number: 028 9268 8886
Contact Email: info.secretgarden@praxiscare.org.uk
Opening times: Monday - Sat 9.30-4pm
Disability access/ample parking

is charity at the centre of caring

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SECRET GARDEN
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A NICE WALK
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WALLED GARDEN**

- **SPECIAL OFFER:**
Full Breakfast and
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for only £3.50
EVERY SATURDAY
- **DAILY SPECIALS**
- Home made jams, soups,
deserts, garden ornaments
and seasonal plants on sale
- **DISCOUNTS** available for
groups of 10+

