



YAG Activity Day Makes Big Splash

Dear YAG members,

The Cruse Youth Advisory Group (YAG) started back in April, 2006, with just 3 people. It has now grown to 13 members and is still growing.

THANK YOU to all of you who have helped out and taken part in YAG in any way.

This is the 1st of hopefully many newsletters to keep you up to date on what's going on with the Youth Advisory Group. We are aiming to send it out a few times a year and any help writing it would be greatly appreciated.

If anyone can come up with a better name, suggestions are very welcome!!

-- Amy Stubbings
(Temporary Editor)

Friday 24th July was scheduled for a day of fun activities, recruiting more YAG members, and generally meeting some new people who have been through the same experience of bereavement.

The YAG activity day started off with a few team building games, name games and making up jingles for our teams. The groups then split off into 2 teams – Team Jill and Derek.

Team Jill went off to do some kayaking, while Derek had a go at some Robin Hood style archery. Throughout the day we earned food and cooking utensils, for completing and winning various tasks, and at

the end of the day both teams came together to cook chicken curry (and a vegetable curry).

Lucky for us the weather stayed fairly dry, although some people still managed to get wet, but that was more from splashing when kayaking! "It was a really fun day and great to meet new people."

Thank you to Mobile Team Adventure for a great day, everyone who organised the event and to those who came along! To those new to YAG, we hope you enjoyed the day and will come join us again! I am sure we are all "looking forward to the next event."

Royal Visit Celebrates Queens Award to Cruse

YAG MAG August 2009

As part of the Cruse Golden Jubilee celebrations, HRH Princess Ann visited Cruse in Northern Ireland at Malone House on the 3rd June.

YAG members Bridget Molloy and Patrick O'Hare (along with Elaine and Andrea) were amongst the 120 volunteers and staff there to greet the "surprise guest".

For the hard work of volunteers, staff and YAG, Cruse had been presented in 2008 with the Queens Award for Voluntary Service.

At the event in Malone House, Bridget presented HRH The Princess Royal (apparently that is her formal title), with a posy of flowers and the book "Voices of Cruse".

Bridget said, "The Princess was lovely and knew all about Cruse. She took the time to speak with everyone there."

Memorial Service at Fleming Fulton

by Bridget Molloy



The short day we spent at Fleming Fulton School was one to be remembered. Elaine, Patrick and I were there to speak at the annual Memorial Service on behalf of the Youth Advisory Group. We had met with some of the senior students earlier to help them plan the service.

All the pupils and teachers from the school were there to remember someone they had loved and lost over the years. It was a beautiful sunny morning and a brilliant start to the day.

Patrick and I had been asked to speak about our own experiences and how our membership in the Youth Advisory Group had helped us through our own bereavements. It was a bit nerve-wracking on my part but the reception we received was warm and welcoming so that made it a little bit easier.

The part I enjoyed most was at the end of the Service when small bulbs were given out to the pupils to plant in the gardens of the school or at home to remind them of whomever they had lost in their lives. Each year group was then taken out to the Memorial Garden at the front of the school to plant the flowers.

Recently at YAG we had been trying to incorporate new members into the group especially children with disabilities. The day at Fleming Fulton made me see that there is no difference in grief whether you're disabled or not. The same "rules" apply to everyone when it comes to losing a loved one.

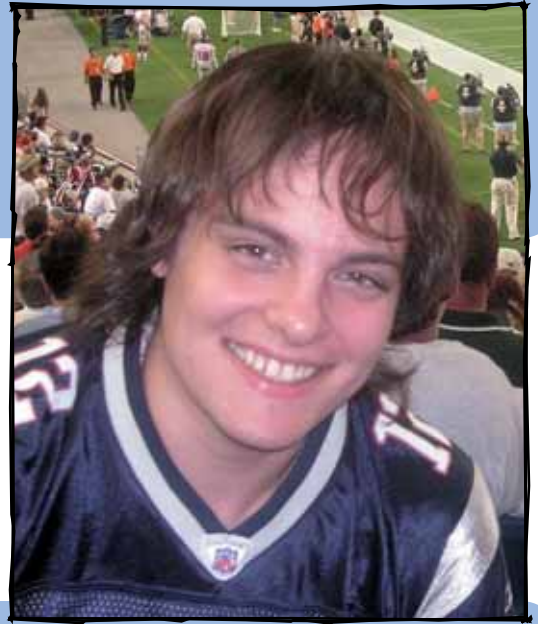


Fleming Fulton teacher Paul Jeffers commented that, "This was the most moving and most inspirational assembly we ever had."



Left: Christopher Murray, Sarah Dane, & Amy Stubbings at the annual Cruse conference at Warwick University.

Below: James Cullen



James Cullen flies the coop

We have sad news! James Cullen, who is one of the founding members of the Cruse Youth Advisory Group, has gone off to the US to do his Masters in Law at the University of Chicago, and so won't be joining us again for a while (except by electronic participation!).

Reflecting on his time with YAG, James stated, "I am incredibly proud of the work we've done and feel that we've really made a difference. I got involved in YAG because Cruse had been so useful to me and I wanted other

young people in a similar position to have access to it. When I went to Cruse it wasn't something that would have been widely known or accepted by young people; I think YAG is helping to change that."

James commented that he is really looking forward to going to the US to specialise in constitutional law, something he really enjoys. We would all like to thank James for all his efforts over the past years, and wish him luck on his new adventure. Keep in touch, James!

Annual Cruse Bereavement Conference

On Thursday 16th July Amy, Sarah and Christopher (along with Elaine and Andrea) headed to Warwick University for the Annual Cruse Conference. We went to the Conference to present the DVD to volunteers and staff from Cruse, and to speak about our personal experiences of bereavement. We also led some group memory activities, giving examples to the volunteers and staff for them to take away and use when dealing with children and young

people. The group activities provided an opportunity for the volunteers and staff to chat with us and ask any questions they may have or ask our opinion on things (which we of course gave with gusto). Apart from the workshop that we ran, we all attended various other workshops and seminars, (some very interesting, some not so)! All in all the conference was a really great experience, and we had a lot of positive feedback from those who attended our workshop.

Wanted – YAG members for various events

Saturday 15th August Panel members for volunteer induction day

We are looking for some YAG members to attend a volunteer induction day for an hour or so and to sit on a panel with a few fellow YAGers. It would involve sharing a bit about your story and your gained experience and knowledge, with the possibility of answering a few questions. The panel has proved invaluable to the volunteers to help them gain further insight into how to deal with bereaved children and young people.

Thursday 10th September St Ciarans College, Ballygawley

YAG have been asked to conduct a morning assembly for final year students, on youth bereavement. Assistance is need from YAG members 17+ to share their story and coping mechanisms. The morning will involve some group activities and leading some memory making exercises, (as well as at least a morning off school)!!!!

Saturday 19th September YAG Gathering

We are hoping to have another get together on Saturday 19th September. It will most likely be in the afternoon in and around Belfast. Any suggestions for an activity would be appreciated greatly appreciated. We are thinking something along the lines of a “Memory Activity”, such as memory jars.

Thursday 8th October

Anyone fancy a trip to the palace?

We are looking for one YAG member (aged 18+) to attend St James Palace, in London, on Thursday 8th October. It is to recognise the Jubilee Anniversary of Cruse Bereavement Care. In order to put your name forward to attend, please email Elaine, explaining in a few sentences why you feel you should be selected to go.

If you are interested in any of the activities, please contact Elaine ASAP (See contact details.)

DVD Award

On 6th May 2009, Bridget, Adam, and Lauren, together with Ann McGuigan from Marie Curie, and Andrea attended the Youth Council for Northern Ireland Awards. We were presented a certificate for our work on the ‘Ask the Experts’ DVD. Well done everyone!!



Above: Adam Kelly Bridget Molloy, alongside Lauren Spence, at the Youth Council for N.I. Awards.

Below: YAG members loving the Lagan.



Comments? Questions?

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