

JCD During the 1970's - Hugh Cassidy

The 1970's were an eventful period for Junior Chamber Dublin. Notwithstanding the appalling carnage in the North, which reached a peak, during that decade, the Dublin Chapter continued to maintain excellent relations with the Belfast Chapter.

The earlier part of the decade witnessed the largest project in the history of the Chapter, with the hosting of the World Congress in 1971.

The planning of such a large event was spread over two years, with most of the members involved. The event was acclaimed as the best organised World Congress ever presented.

Further on in the decade, a big drive was made to increase the membership. The internal training of members continued as a priority, on a year to year basis. Chapter finances were good, after the World Congress and it was agreed to purchase a building in Upper Gardiner Street, where all meetings and functions would take place. However the membership was not enthused at the location and within three years, the building was sold and meeting etc., returned to Jury's.

About that period, new satellite chapters were formed in Clondalkin, Malahide, Castlenock and Leopardstown, under a Metropolitan structure. The new groupings brought the membership to 450. Some members joined one of the new Chapters nearer to home. Notwithstanding the change, Dublin maintained a membership of 150 - 180.

On-going projects continued each year. School Debating commenced in the mid '70's and was such a success, that it has continued ever since. Inter chapter Debating, on a National scale was promoted and was very successful. Also the chapter published a news letter 'Flash Point', which kept the members up to-date with all events and gossip. The monthly luncheons in Jury's, were well attended, and attracted good media comment, with guest speakers from political and commercial

life in the City. Other projects which should be mentioned included, Lord Mayor's Ball on St. Patrick's Day, Easter Eggs for children in our hospitals and poorer areas of the city and of course, the Annual Beach clean-up at Dollymount Strand.

During the later part of the '70's many inter chapter projects were organised. The annual children's day from/to Limerick brought 100 deprived young people to either city. It should also be mentioned that Coolmine Drug Centre, the first centre of its kind in the country, was started by this Chapter, it was latterly taken over by the Eastern Health Board.

The annual visit to Belfast for the Lord Mayor's Parade and Ball was a highlight, as was their visit to Dublin for St. Patrick's Day. The annual soccer match between the two chapters was a spectacle to be witnessed.

New projects were brought forward each year and in many cases, were the highlight of the year. During the latter part of the '70's major International Conferences were organised by the Chapter on such diverse topics, as 'products Liability' 'Investment into 1980's', and the most controversial subject of the period, 'Trade Unionism versus Management'. This later conference was held in Trinity College and during the afternoon session, the guest speaker was shot and injured, by a maverick group.

Junior Chamber Dublin was always to the fore when it came to fashion and the European Fashion Show was considered to be the largest and best show held in Ireland, each year.

Twenty years ago, the condition of our canals, particularly in the Dublin area, was indeed a sorry-mess. The chapter highlighted the state of affairs by bringing a barge to Baggot Street bridge, on the Grand Canal. The chapter invited many dignitaries to a reception on board. The lack of electricity during the event caused a few 'eyes to blink', notwithstanding the stoning of the barge at Ballyfermot bridge, on its return to Carbury, after the event.