

The Ireland Funds are assisting Springboard, a Belfast-based organization that works with Protestant and Catholic unemployed young people from areas that were at the heart of the conflict, as well as with young people from inner city areas of Dublin.

SPRINGBOARD

Celebrating an International Day of Peace in Northern Ireland

“It is particularly meaningful that, on this United Nations International Day of Peace, we are unveiling this mural linking the Shankill and Falls on the very site of some of the very worst rioting that kicked off ‘the troubles’ in 1969.”—*Jackie Redpath, Chair of Springboard*



The Shankill & Falls communities meet under Peace Day mural



“We are enormously grateful to The Ireland Funds for supporting this ‘Imagine’ mural which links the Falls and Shankill communities and affirms the interdependence of its people as they move towards a shared future. Springboard looks forward to continuing its crucial role in peace-building in Ireland, north and south...” –*Angila Chada, Executive Director of Springboard*

“The Peace Day mural is a symbol of how far our two communities have travelled. We share the same hopes as we continue our journey and working together for a better future for all.”

–*Stuart Kennedy – Manager, Upper Springfield Development Trust Youth Team*

Jackie Redpath welcomes audience to unveiling of the Peace Day mural



The Directions Project is a key Springboard program which targets young people, often struggling with issues such as substance abuse, family breakdown, violence, self-harm, and dislocation from society, compounded by the legacy of conflict. The Ireland Funds, provided a grant to their Art in Diversity project. The special initiative brought together Protestant and Catholic youth from areas impacted heavily by sectarian conflict to create a platform for engagement and dialogue through art, sculpture and music.

Workshops were held with over 100 young people who came from the disadvantaged areas, including the Unionist Shankill and the Nationalist Falls communities that are often in sectarian conflict with each other. The young people discussed the upcoming United Nations International Day of Peace and debated what peace meant to them both visually and through words. This feedback was then brought into the design of the mural.

In September of 2011, on the United Nations’ International Day of Peace, thousands of people around the world paused to observe a day of nonviolence. It was on this day that the result of The Ireland Funds’ support was unveiled. The Peace Day Mural that is now located between the peace-line gates in Northumberland Street was designed by Springboard. The mural contains past and present images of the Shankill and Falls, as well as general images on peace and conflict. The centerpiece, which is a mosaic of smaller images, makes up the word IMAGINE. The central message of the mural affirms the interdependence of the Shankill and Falls communities as they move forward into the future.

The Ireland Funds salute the work of Springboard as they continue to bring opportunities to the young people of Northern Ireland and work towards strengthening the mutual understanding that will be the core of Northern Ireland’s future.