**28th September 2018**

On Friday September 28th, Reach UK hosted what is thought to be an inaugural event between a Loyalist Community Group and members of the LGBT community. Held in the Reach office, Newtownards Road, Belfast. As part of their ethos of an inclusive Britishness for all, Reach UK invited members of the PUL and LGBT communities to come together in a spirit of inclusivity and diversity



About 50 guests including youth workers from the Ulster Unionist Party filled the premises to attend the event which had two themes, Ulster Scots Translations and a Life Time Achievement award ,

First up was the presentation of Ulster Scots translations in both electronic / PDF format and framed posters for the offices of Cara Friend , A series of framed posters relating to bullying, suicide awareness, safe school space and the youth work provided by Cara Friend were presented to members of Cara Friend by the renowned author , historian, past MLA , Doctor Ian Adamson OBE, we are very grateful for the translation of the literature into Ulster Scots which Dr Adamson kindly carried out for us via his Pretani Associates community initiative . Cara Friend provides a unique youth service in N. Ireland which supports LGBT young people through one to one support sessions and the provision of safe-space groups. They have over 500 service users with more than 1000 people in receipt of training.

Secondly , to mark the date, Ulster Day , Reach UK launched its inaugural Lifetime Achievement award which will now take place on September 28th each year , the first recipient was Belfast Councillor Jeffrey Dudgeon MBE, a member of NIGRA since 1975, with a background in the Department of Health , Jeffrey won a 1981 landmark case in the European Court of Human Rights which decriminalised homosexual behaviour. This case also set a president in the USA . He is a Unionist Councillor for Balmoral area where he represents all members of the community without fear or favour. A copy of his book on Montgomery Hyde , the Unionist gay rights reformer in the 1950s was presented to the members of Cara Friend. Reach Chairman Jim Wilson presented Jeffrey with a cut glass trophy award inscribed “ for a lifetimes outstanding achievement , promoting the rights of all “ . Jim also highlighted the work of the PUL community through the years in the promotion of rights and a proud arts and cultural tradition we can all be proud of.

It was with sadness that , as referenced by Finola Meredith in her Belfast Telegraph article , a group of Nationalist , Republican and neutral(?) Councillors in Belfast City Hall prepare to celebrate the LGBT community in the form of a stain glass window, that, perhaps the greatest champion of the LGBT community, Jeffrey Dudgeon MBE has been deliberately and cruelly excluded and written out of history by those protesting the most about discrimination and inequality , this simply because he is a Protestant and Unionist , the PUP Councillor Julie Ann Corr-Johnston also is excluded because of her religion — shame , shame, shame .

Ian Adamson funeral

The news story in the Belfast Telegraph by Ivan Little gives very good coverage to every aspect of Ian Adamson’s funeral at Conlig Presbyterian. The oration from Wesley Hutchinson was very effective and informative followed by a genuinely emotional tribute from Sonia Irvine (whose brother Eddie was a pall bearer). Somebody said it was the nearest equivalent to a state funeral anyone in Northern Ireland will get. I spoke later to Ian's father-in-law Douglas Carson and Marie Carson along with Brian Garrett and Erskine and Sally Holmes plus Robin Swann, Esmond Birnie, Bobby Stoker, Peter Weir and Gavin Robinson. From City Hall, Mary Houston and Gareth Graham were present plus the Lord Mayor Deirdre Hargey. Also conversed at the Culloden with Michael Hall, Rab Williamson, Robert Adair, Jonathon Kennedy and Helen Brooker.

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/a-moving-song-from-van-morrison-at-a-remarkable-gathering-to-say-farewell-to-ian-adamson-37711476.html>