

SPRING 2023 Vol 20 Issue 1

# THE SURVIVOR

Irish Polio News

Polio  
Survivors  
Ireland



*Mena and Bridie  
with Davy Crockett Star Fess Parker*

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**General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)** To facilitate your membership with us, Polio Survivors Ireland will process personal and, if applicable, especially if you use any of our services, possibly sensitive information relating to you both digitally and in manual format for the duration of your membership. **You have the right to access this information at any time by calling 01 889 8920 or emailing [info@polio.ie](mailto:info@polio.ie).** This information will be destroyed if, or when, your membership of the organisation ceases.

# From the Chair

*I hope you all had a lovely joyful Easter.*

Spring, thank God, is definitely in the air now. After the long chilly winter, it is great to see the spring bulbs and fresh shoots on the trees, encouraging us to get out and about again and meet up with friends.

Thank you to all those who participated in our EGM, either with your proxy votes, voting via Zoom and attending in person. Your votes were essential in enabling the Board to appoint BMOL as our auditors for the 2022 accounts. They can now begin their work and have our financial accounts ready to be adopted by you the members at our AGM in June.

Work is ongoing to develop our new strategic plan. We've completed a survey of a representative sample of members and this will be the foundation for the new plan. The feedback we got is helping us to make informed plans for our new Strategic Plan as to what

you would like the Board and staff to concentrate on for the next 3-5 years. We will present more information at the annual conference.

I am delighted to tell you that we have recently appointed two Membership Engagement Officers: Órna Maddock and Nuala McLaughlin. We hope



Órna Maddock



Nuala McLaughlin

they will be very happy working with our members and I know they have been in touch with some of you already.

We are currently recruiting an Advocacy & Policy Officer who will represent the needs and interests of polio survivors to Government, public representatives and State Agencies.

I would like to encourage members to come forward and

seek election to the Board at this year's AGM. More information will be in the Conference/AGM mailing papers. We are looking for one or two of you with some financial background to go on our Finance and Audit committee. The committee meets three or four times a year to review our financial policies and procedures, etc. Anyone who would be interested in getting involved please contact our CEO, Fran Brennan, in the office for more information.

It is very important that polio survivors continue to be active on committees and on the Board in order to ensure that the organisation continues and grows in strength. We all owe a

huge debt of gratitude to those members who are serving on committees and to those members who in the past have so tirelessly worked for polio survivors. I hope that the spirit of "for polio survivors by polio survivors" continues for a long time to come.

Last, but not by no means least, this year is the 30th anniversary of the founding of Polio Survivors Ireland. So our AGM will be a very special occasion and I look forward to seeing a great crowd of you there to celebrate together.

*Macrina Clancy*  
**Macrina Clancy**

**Cathaoirleach**



## Do you have an URGENT NEED?

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**to help**



Contact Kerrie in the office at  
01 889 89 20

Or by email [sic@polio.ie](mailto:sic@polio.ie)

Contact Ciara in the office at  
01 889 89 20

Or by email [asic@polio.ie](mailto:asic@polio.ie)



# 30th Annual CONFERENCE & AGM

Thursday 22nd June 2023



*Mount Wolseley Hotel, Tullow, Co. Carlow*

*Further details on the Conference agenda will come in the next Conference mailing, including speakers etc., in May.*

*If you wish to stay over, we strongly advise that you book soon as rooms are limited.*

## Room Rates:

*You can call the hotel on 059 918 0100.*

Ask for Polio Survivors Ireland special packages, for 1 night B&B or for 2 nights B&B plus one evening meal.

If you need a wheelchair accessible room, please contact Kerrie in the Polio Survivors Ireland office on 01 889 8920, as soon as possible.



## How to get there...

**Train:** Carlow Train Station is 17 kms from Mount Wolseley  
There is a train from Dublin Heuston that departs at 10.15am and arrives in Carlow at 11.11am

There is a return train to Dublin at 4.10pm that arrives back at 5.12pm.  
There is an evening train also.

We can arrange transport from Carlow Station if it's booked with our office at a minimum of 1 week in advance.

**Road:** Directions to Mount Wolseley, which is located just 20 minutes from Carlow and 90 minutes from Dublin.  
We have included directions from the main two approaches below, however further directions can be found at <https://www.mountwolseley.ie/location.html>

### Directions from Dublin

From Newlands Cross, take the N7 (signposted Limerick), then M9 (signposted Waterford). Leave the M9 at junction 4 signposted Castledermot, Carlow North & Tullow, at roundabout take the 1st exit onto the R418.

\*\*\*Continue following this road for approximately 10mins (12KM) and you come into Tullow. At the first roundabout take the 2nd Exit for the Town Centre. Take a left over the bridge and an immediate right (signposted for Mount Wolseley). At the next T-Junction take a right. Continue following the road for approximately 1KM and Mount Wolseley is on the right-hand side.

### Directions from Waterford

Take M9 the whole way to Carlow, Leave the M9 at Junction 5, then at roundabout take the 1st exit onto the N80 (signposted Carlow). Continue following the road for approximately 2KM and at the roundabout take the second exit signposted for Tullow. Follow \*\*\* local directions in panel above



## **AGM– Minutes of Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Thursday, 16th June, 2022 at the Louis Fitzgerald Hotel, Naas Rd, Dublin 22**

### **Minutes of 2021 AGM**

The minutes of the 2021 AGM which were circulated to the members in advance were adopted on a proposal by Anne Shanahan, seconded by Terry Fairtlough.

### **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

### **Chairperson's Report: Macrina Clancy**

The Chair outlined some of the highlights of 2021. The organisation recorded a surplus of just over €13K, it finalised a new four year Fundraising Strategy, a new Membership & Volunteer Recruitment Officer (MVRO), Mags Lovett, was appointed and 303 people directly sought help from office. In respect of the Fundraising Strategy, the Chair asked members to approach any family and friends who work in large companies to assist the organisation in securing a donation from these companies. The Chair encouraged social support groups to meet again, if safe to do so, while taking precautions to minimise infection. She also announced that an online social support group would be

established for those who could not attend meetings in person.

Other developments included full implementation of Charity Regulator's Code, a project contacting 50 members who hadn't been in touch with us for a long time, the recruitment of 10 new Telephone Support Service Leaders and the updating and republishing of Polio & Us. The Chair then updated the meeting on the final year's implementation of the strategic plan reporting that 68 members received aids & appliances, 41 members benefitted from therapies and 242 members received the winter heating grant during the year. The organisation also recruited 21 new members and the number of people who signed the Polio Register reached 412 by the year end.

The Chair thanked Pat McGillion who was stepping down as a Board Director. She described the enormous contribution Pat made to the organisation as Chair, Board Director and Committee member over many years and how the organisation was much stronger as a result of his

efforts. Finally she described how Board appointed Directors, Fintan Foy & Miriam Kavanagh, had been a huge support since they joined the Board, and she urged members to ratify their appointment for another 3 years. The Chair concluded her report and the meeting adopted it on a proposal by Pat Ryan, seconded by Charlie Smith.

### **Company Secretary's Report: Fintan Foy**

The Co. Secretary reported to the meeting that the company & its officers have made all returns required to the regulatory authorities. He went on to say that company officers and Directors have as far as we are aware complied with all necessary statutory provisions. There were 8 meetings of the Board of Directors in 2021 and 15 meetings of the four Board Sub-committees i.e. the Service, Quality & Safety Committee, the Governance & Compliance Committee, the Audit & Finance Committee and the Board Nominations Committee. The Co. Secretary advised the members that the organisation fully implemented the Charities Regulator's Governance Code by the deadline of October 2021. This required a major effort and the Board, Board Sub-Committees and staff worked tirelessly to draft, amend and adopt the many policies & procedures required. There were no nominations received this year for new

Elected Directors. In accordance with the Constitution three Elected Directors were standing down, Frank Mitchell and Mary Byrne are seeking re-election, while Pat McGillion is not seeking re-election. As the number of nominations are equal to, or less than, the number of vacancies in each region, Frank & Mary are deemed elected without the need for a ballot. The Elected Directors for 2021 – 2022 are Macrina Clancy, Mary Byrne, Zaynab Salman, Charlie Smith and Frank Mitchell. There are five Elected Directors which means there are three vacancies. Board Nominated Director Elaine Twomey resigned in 2021 and Fintan thanked her for her important work for the organisation. Miriam Kavanagh and Fintan had both completed their three year terms as Board Nominated Directors. The Board agreed to appoint them for another three year term subject to the approval of the members at this year's AGM, reference Resolutions 3a & 3b.

Finally the Co. Secretary referred to Resolution 4, the proposed amendments to the constitution removing the need for Elected Directors to be elected in five regions. While the intention of these regions was to ensure greater regional representation on the Board it never really worked and two regions never elected a Director.

The Board believed they might actually discourage people seeking election in regions where all the elected Director spaces are taken and therefore was proposing to remove these regions so that all Directors will be elected on a national basis. This concluded the Co. Secretary's report and the report was approved by the meeting on a proposal by Monica McGowan, seconded by Robert Alcorn.

### ► Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer, Miriam Kavanagh, delivered a presentation with slides detailing income and expenditure in 2021 under different headings. Income was €449,747 last year compared to €427,995 for 2020. Expenditure was €436,599 resulting in a surplus of €13,148 versus a loss of €16,554 the previous year. The main income highlights were the HSE, which accounted for € 371,268 of the income, fundraising receipts at €45,147 and other grants income of €26,987. On the expenditure side the Treasurer outlined in detail expenditure on services to members, organisation costs, staffing and administration. Finally Miriam showed a graph that illustrated the evolution of income and expenditure over the past 6 years and commented that the organisation kept income and expenditure broadly in line and with less income there was less

scope for expenditure on supports to members. She reinforced the Chair's comments on the importance of the new fundraising strategy and how this needed the support of the membership if it was to be successful. The Treasurer's report was then adopted by the meeting on a proposal by Hugh McHugh, seconded by Monica Sheehan.

### ► Resolutions

*Resolution 1:* To approve the Financial Statements for 2021. Proposed by Alice Crowe and Joyce Henderson, passed by 188 votes for, 3 abstentions and 0 votes against.

*Resolution 2:* That Nolan & Assocs be appointed Auditors for 2022. Proposed by Pat Ryan and Susan Dowling and passed by 188 votes for, 5 abstentions and 0 votes against.

*Resolution 3a:* That Fintan Foy be ratified as a Director. Approved by 188 votes in favour, 5 abstentions and no votes against.

*Resolution 3b:* That Miriam Kavanagh be ratified as a Director. Approved by 187 vote in favour, 3 abstentions and 2 votes against.

*Resolution 4:* Amendments to the Constitution. Proposed by Hugh McHugh and Terry Fairtlough and carried by 184 votes in favour, 9 abstentions and 1 vote against.

### ► Any Other Business

Hugh McHugh highlighted that despite the huge increase in the cost of fuel, the Fuel Grant Refund hasn't been increased for many years. The Chair & CEO agreed to follow this up.

Josephine O'Reilly asked was there any news on the Justice for Polio Survivors Campaign. The Chair asked Susan Dowling to respond. Susan reported that they had met the Minister for Disabilities, Anne Rabbitte, who suggested they take the issue to the Charities Regulator. The campaign has now sought free legal advice on preparing a case for the Regulator and the solicitors have proposed sending a

letter of warning to Rehab/PFI before referring the matter to the Regulator.

Charlie Smith expressed concern about the geographic balance of Board Elected Directors and encouraged members from the West and other regions outside Dublin to go forward for election next year.

Anne Shanahan expressed her appreciation to Emma and the team behind the Survivor Magazine.

Anne Burns thanked the staff and volunteers who organised the conference.

The Chair then thanked everyone for participating and concluded the AGM.

# HOLOHAN LANE

## Are you making a will?

Please consider leaving a Legacy to Polio Survivors Ireland in your will.

Leaving a gift to the charity in your Will can help us greatly to continue providing support to polio survivors.

You can alternatively request donations to the charity in lieu of flowers.

Contact Alan Raftery at 01 872 7120  
or email [legal@holohanlaw.ie](mailto:legal@holohanlaw.ie) and Alan will  
explain everything you need to know to draft your will.

# Fuel Allowance Expansion

A new Over 70s Means Test for Fuel Allowance is being introduced. If you are 70 or over and didn't qualify for Fuel Allowance before, you may now qualify.

Fuel Allowance is a payment to help with the cost of heating your home during the winter months. It is paid to only one person in a household.

Applications are now open as part of this expanded Fuel Allowance scheme, which will benefit over 80,000 households.

## Under the 2023 Means Test guidelines:

- A single person over 70 can have income of €500 per week
- A couple can have income of €1,000 per week
- People over 70 do not need to be receiving a qualifying social welfare payment to be eligible for the allowance
- For couples where one person is over 70 and one is under 70, the Over 70s Means Test criteria will be used
- Your capital (savings, property and investments) are also assessed. The first €50,000 of your capital is not included in the means test.



Payments from Disablement Benefit and Half Rate Carers payments will no longer be included in the means assessment for Fuel Allowance.

The weekly means threshold for those aged under 70 has increased by €80 per week. Those who qualify for the new threshold will have their payments backdated, as appropriate, to 2nd January 2023. If you have already qualified previously you should not need to reapply.

There is a new Online Application System at [MyWelfare.ie](http://MyWelfare.ie). This is the quickest and easiest way to apply. However, if you cannot apply online an application form is available on [www.gov.ie/fuelallowance](http://www.gov.ie/fuelallowance) or by contacting 081 820 0400.

Fuel Allowance season normally begins in late September of each year and ends in April. The current Fuel Allowance season started on Monday, 26 September 2022. It will be paid for 28 weeks (until 10 April 2023).

## To get Fuel Allowance you must:

- Live alone (or with a spouse, partner or cohabitant)
- If **under 70** you must be getting a qualifying payment
- Satisfy a means test

You must also live in Ireland. You cannot get Fuel Allowance if your heating costs are provided in full as

part of your accommodation.

Fuel Allowance is a means-tested payment. This means that the Department of Social Protection (DSP) examines all your sources of income. Your gross weekly income must be below a certain amount to pass the means test.

You are usually accepted as passing the means test for Fuel Allowance, if you are getting a qualifying social assistance (means-tested) payment.

If you get a means-tested payment, you have already satisfied the means test and it does not need to be done again.



Public Expenditure Minister Michael McGrath and Social Protection Minister Heather Humphrey. Photo: Maxwells



# HSE - COVID-19 ADVICE

Keeping up to date with your vaccines is the most important thing you can do to avoid serious illness from COVID-19. Talk to your GP if you have any questions about vaccination.

You can get your third booster dose if you are:

- age 65 or older
- age 12 or older with a weak immune system
- 12 to 64 with a condition that puts you at high risk of serious illness from COVID-19 - only if your second booster dose was not a \*bivalent vaccine

New bivalent COVID-19 vaccines are expected to give better protection against COVID-19. If you received your booster after October 2022, it was a bivalent

vaccine. If you are not sure which vaccine you had, call HSE Live on 1800 700 700.

## General advice:

- try to avoid crowded indoor spaces, if possible
- wear a mask in indoor or outdoor crowded places, including public transport
- wash or sanitise your hands often
- continue to use the healthcare services you need - remind healthcare workers if you are high risk
- If you have symptoms of COVID-19, stay at home. At home tests can be useful to see if you are positive so you can take precautions and prevent spreading the virus.



**Keep hands clean**



**Stay at home if you are sick**



**Wear a mask**



**Open windows for ventilation**

# NEW STAFF MEMBERS



Rialtas na hÉireann Government of Ireland



*We are delighted to welcome a number of new part-time staff members to Polio Survivors Ireland.*



**Órna Maddock - Membership Engagement Officer** - Órna's background is in teaching - children and adults, as well as information giving and working with unemployed people - helping them back into training or work.

Órna looks forward to supporting members in the Southern half of the country, to engage with Polio Survivors Ireland in a way that suits them and helps them to get more from the membership.



**Nuala McLaughlin - Membership Engagement Officer** - Nuala, who hails from Donegal, has been working in the community and voluntary sector for over 20 years, work she loves and is very committed to. She has many years' experience of volunteering herself. Nuala has a strong background in training, development and education.

Nuala is delighted to be working as one of our Membership Engagement Officers and looking forward to getting out on the road, meeting members from the Northern half of the country.

The new Membership Engagement Officers are funded by the Scheme to Support National Organisations.



**Megan Saunders Smith - Communications & Fundraising Assistant** - Megan joined us in January, to work with Emma on promotion and fundraising. Megan has previously worked as Social Media Coordinator for a children's trust in the UK. She has made her home in Ireland and is studying part-time for a Masters in Children's Literature at Trinity College Dublin.



**Kathy Toolin - Administrator** - Kathy joined us in January also, on a temporary basis to support the daily work of the office helping Gill, particularly during a busy period with surveys, the EGM and now the upcoming AGM.

Kathy has previously worked in auctioneering, the Eastern Health Board, a Dutch Stockbrokers/Bank and an English Bank. Kathy has a Diploma in Public Relations and much experience in administration.

# Past Times

*Recollections, historical articles  
and personal stories*

## *Kindness Remembered Never Forgotten*

*Anne Shanahan as told to  
Jackie Minnock*

*At a recent meeting of Polio Survivors Ireland in Dundalk, I met with Anne Shanahan. It was some time since I had last seen Anne, and the story she told me that day made heading to that meeting worth the time and effort it took to get there.*

Anne, who contracted polio when she was three years old, spent many years going back and forth to the Orthopaedic Hospital, Clontarf, in Dublin, until she was fourteen years old. As we can all appreciate; this was hard, not alone on Anne, but on her family back home in Limerick.

The spark of light and happiness that made those years bearable for Anne was her meeting with two great nurses – Mena and Bridie Mohan. Not alone were Mena and Bridie great nurses, they were twins who worked on the same ward in the Orthopaedic Hospital in Clontarf!

Anne had such a bond with both sisters that they gave her a signed photo of themselves with the inscription 'To Anne with all our love Mena and Bridie' dated 25th October 1956. The photo shows Mena and Bridie with 'Davy

Crockett' film star, Fess Parker, who visited the hospital on that day.

Anne recalls how these twin nurses brought laughter, fun, comfort and joy, not alone to her, but to all the children under their care. The signed photo was just tangible evidence of that. She has treasured this photo for sixty-six years!

Anne knew that the sisters came, originally, from Monaghan. She always wanted to trace them and tell them how much she appreciated their kindness to her. Life somehow got in the way and Anne never got around to doing this.

In 2022, Anne did an interview for RTE radio about being a polio survivor. When the interview was finished Anne mentioned that 'not everything was doom and gloom' and showed the picture of Mena and Bridie to the interviewer, Evelyn O'Rourke. She explained that she had wanted to trace these women but never got around to it. As the result of all good conversations, Anne was offered some help in tracing Mena and Bridie.

A very short time later she received word to say that they had been traced. Bridie had passed away some years ago, however, by the strangest coincidence Anne discovered that Mena had just recently passed away and her funeral Mass was being held at the exact time that she and the interviewer were discussing the photo!

Anne is sure that somehow Mena heard her say "thank you Mena and Bridie". It just goes to show how good it is to remember the joy and happiness that they brought to Anne. They were a ray of sunshine - dispelling her loneliness for home - bringing light and happiness to all the children in their care.

After sixty-six years, Anne can still feel their wonderful happy presence.

Anne was also able to write to Mena's family by way of the Funeral Directors, to express her condolences and thanks for the care she received, not alone from Mena but also from Bridie. On foot of this letter, Anne received a call from Mena's daughter, Angela Murphy, who assured Anne of the family's thanks for her letter. Mena had married and lived in Dundalk and her daughter extended an invitation to Anne to call to see her if she was ever in Dundalk.

As luck would have it, Anne accepted that invitation the day of our meeting in Dundalk and was delighted to be able to enlighten Mena's family as to their mother and aunt's wonderful work in Clontarf. This was actually a part of their mother's nursing history they knew little of.

Their years of service in Clontarf hospital is testament to their kindness, which has never been forgotten, nor taken for granted all these years later.



*Angela Murphy and Anne Shanahan*



## The LEGACY of Jeff Hall

*On the 4th of April, 1959, 29 year old Birmingham City footballer Jeff Hall died of polio.*

He had played for England, and reached the FA cup final in 1955/56. After playing in Portsmouth on the 21st March, Jeff got extremely ill, and within two days was diagnosed with polio. He died just two weeks later.

Dr Jonas Salk's vaccine existed and had been available in Britain since 1956, but uptake was low. By 1958, only 53% of children eligible had received their vaccine. The vaccine was also offered to those between 18 and 26 for the first time that year, but many did not sign up.

Although strenuous exercise helped spread the disease around the host's body, making attacks significantly more serious, no football club had considered vaccinating their team.

The shock death of Hall brought home how dangerous polio could be, striking even the young and fit.

The Health Minister, Jeff's teammates and his widow, Dawn Clements all campaigned to encourage young people to get their polio vaccine.

The BBC reported in May 1959 that there was "a sharp rise in the demand for the (polio) vaccine following the death from the disease of Birmingham City fullback Jeff Hall last month", with an extra million doses ordered from America.

Dawn continued to campaign for polio vaccination, and in her later years supported

the British Polio Fellowship and their work raising awareness of post-polio syndrome. She passed away in 2016 and was posthumously celebrated in the Queen's birthday honours.

Over 60 years later, the shocking death of Jeff Hall and the tireless efforts of his widow are considered "the deciding factor in Britain's battle with polio," according to Gareth Williams, emeritus professor of medicine at Bristol University and author of the 2013 book *Paralysed with Fear: The Story of Polio*. (Gareth spoke about his book at our Conference in Tullamore in 2018).

Thanks to successful vaccination campaigns, polio has been eradicated from the Western world. What happened to Jeff Hall is tragic, but we can only be grateful to his widow Dawn and those who tirelessly campaigned for uptake of the vaccine.

As we know, from the detection of the poliovirus in London waste-water last year, vaccination is essential to keep this disease at bay. Thankfully, that situation is improving in London, with top up vaccines being offered to all children under ten.

In Ireland, we continue to encourage parents to get their young children vaccinated and ensure this dreadful disease does not return to our shores.



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# Shall We Dance

By Jackie Minnock

Tula Ellice Finklea was born in Amarillo, Texas in 1922. You are probably wondering who that is. She is more commonly known by the name Cyd Charisse, the beautiful dancer of the MGM Hollywood musicals of the 1950's. Some might remember her as the dancer who was very tall and had really long legs.

In 1934, at age 12, she contracted polio. It was, in her own words, a slight case which affected her shoulder and shoulder blade. In order to build the muscles of her shoulder and around her shoulder blade her Doctor advised she take ballet lessons. Her father put a ballet practice bar into their home. She took her practice and ballet very seriously. At age 14 she was accepted into the prestigious Ballet Russe de Monte-Carlo company. She travelled across Europe with the Company. She met her first husband, Nico Charisse, who was also a dancer with the Ballet. They married in 1939 and had their son, Nicky, in 1942.

Shortly after this she was signed to M.G.M. Movie Company, 1944, and signed a seven year contract with them. She started as a backing dancer in the Ziegfeld Follies series of films. It was through these films that she came to the notice of Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly.



1952 saw her dancing 'do all the talking' when she appeared in *Singin' in the Rain* with Gene Kelly. After that she appeared in other musicals *The Band Wagon* (1953); *Brigadoon* (1954); *Silk Stockings* (1957) to name a few. Charisse divorced Nico in 1947 and a year later married singer Tony Martin. Following the end of her musicals career, they worked together travelling all over the world.

Polio obviously did not hold this dancer back and possibly it was the instigator for her great dancing career. She worked her way back from what she did say was a mild case of polio. Mild or not it was polio and surely that is the important point in the story of any polio survivor. In her career she was nominated for a Golden Globe award and was honoured with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. In a private ceremony in the White House she was awarded the National Medal of the Arts and Humanities in 2006.

Her films are regularly on TV, especially at Christmas. Next time you see her just remember she is one of us. She died in 2008 aged 86.

CORK  
FOLKLORE  
PROJECT

sfi  
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Da bhlaí níos feara  
Science Foundation Ireland  
For what's next

## CATCHING STORIES

*The Cork Folklore Project's 'Catching Stories' has launched*

The Cork Folklore Project's 'Catching Stories' exhibition and online resource featuring the memories and testimonials of Evelyn Wainwright (pictured) and other polio survivors, has launched.



Running in University College Cork's Boole Library from the 16th of February to the 25th of June 2023, the project showcases personal stories and memories of infectious disease in Ireland.

Dr Cliona O'Carroll, from the Cork Folklore Project and Department of Folklore and Ethnology, UCC, says, "It is important to acknowledge how listening to communities can inform our understanding of public health developments. The impact of the project will live on for years, as this valuable testimony will be safeguarded in the archives of the Cork Folklore Project."

Find out more on their website: [www.catchingstories.org](http://www.catchingstories.org).

The project centres on the human experience and features audio installations, links to interviews, and interactions with physical objects. Many people have been interviewed and their stories captured ensuring they are not forgotten.

Interviewees recall manually ventilating a child with polio throughout the night in 1956, or moving along a waiting-room bench when facing vaccination by the dreaded 'Branding Iron'. Project coordinator James Foley thanked Polio Survivors Ireland for our contributions, saying, "The project was strengthened with the inclusion of people like Evelyn."



## Memories - Anonymous

I recall those childhood days  
 Such a joy to be alive  
 Learning all the country ways  
 Watching bees around the hives  
  
 Carefree romps down country lanes  
 Picking blueberries in the glade  
 Threading stems for daisy chains  
 Hearing skylarks serenade  
  
 Jumping puddles getting wet  
 Finding easy trees to climb  
 Sticklebacks caught with a net  
 Losing sense of time!  
  
 Watching spiders catching flies  
 Chasing butterflies in flight  
 Sounds of rushing pheasants cry  
 Rabbits bounding out of sight  
  
 Knocking conkers from a tree  
 Damming streams with twigs and rocks  
 Hollow stems for shooting peas  
 Blowing the dandelion docks  
  
 All those things and a thousand more  
 Memories from days gone by  
 Precious memories held in store  
 Memories that never die

## The Autumn Ghost Book Review

by Anika Patychuk

Hannah Wunsch, a Professor of Anesthesiology and Critical Care Medicine at the University of Toronto, has forwarded her book *The Autumn Ghost* to us, and we are delighted to share a bit about it. The book tells the story of the polio epidemic and particularly how it led to significant innovations in medical care.

*The Autumn Ghost* is a collection of stories from survivors of polio, but different to our own publications, such as *'Polio & Us'*, is also a tale of over a thousand medical and dental students who put their own lives on hold to help patients breathe. The book shares the stories of those who sadly passed away from polio, and those who fought for rehabilitation and disability rights.

One of the book's most striking features is how it highlights the importance of community and the strength of survivors and those around them. The stories about the impact that medical students had on children in polio wards were particularly moving. The book also explores how polio organisations started and gained traction, which



is incredibly inspiring. The stories of people worldwide working together to transform the legacy of polio were both uplifting and gratifying.

Overall, *The Autumn Ghost* serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of community and working together. I would recommend this book to anyone who is interested in learning about the history of polio. Certainly one for our younger generations, so that this important piece of social history and its impact on medicine and society is not forgotten.



## DUBLIN NORTH CITY SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUP WESTPORT TRIP

It was fantastic to be back with our dear friends in the Clew Bay Hotel, Westport in February of this year. Our group of thirty people was a representation of five counties. We really had a ball enjoying daily tours and nightly sing songs.

The staff of the hotel were fantastic, as was the accommodation and food. The hotel is right in the heart of the town, close to bars and shops, so variety was plentiful. The weather was good and we took advantage of tours that were arranged at reception.

We look forward to visit our friends in Westport in 2024. Anyone is welcome to join our group for these trips.



*Pictured are members from around the country, enjoying the craic with friends in the Clew Bay Hotel, Westport*

## DUBLIN SOUTH WEST SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUP



*Pictured are members of the Dublin South West Social Support Group at their Christmas lunch in the Clayton Hotel, Dublin.*

## SLIGO SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUP - SPRING BREAK

Members and friends gathered in Castle Court and Plaza Hotels Westport for their spring break.

It was lovely to meet up with old friends and new after three long years. We welcomed a new member to the group Trish Silke.

There were people from Sligo, Mayo, Galway, Donegal, Cork and Roscommon. As our numbers have diminished year on year, we do hope to revitalise the groups and encourage more people to join.

Conveners from Sligo and Mayo are planning a joint summer outing in June and our Christmas lunch will take place in November. (Dates to be confirmed.)

*Monica McGowan – Convenor*





## NOTICE BOARD

### Cycle for All

by Anika Patychuk



A new initiative in Ireland provides people with mobility issues the opportunity to experience the sensation of wind in their hair!

An Irish Social enterprise, Cycling Without Age has developed a community-based trishaw scheme modified to accommodate people with disabilities, allowing them to enjoy the open road and feel the wind. The article highlights the importance of such initiatives in improving the quality of life for people with disabilities.

As mobility can be an issue for many polio survivors, those who miss the simple pleasure of feeling the wind in their hair can type in this link to view locations:

<https://cyclingwithoutage.ie/local-chapters/>.

Members in Dublin City, Dun Laoghaire and Fingal can call 01 2641000.

### A shout out to anyone who was featured in *The School Around the Corner*, on Christmas Day 1962.



One of our members, Ben Shine, was interviewed at age 13, by host Paddy Crosbie and he played the mouth organ. Ben remembers being shot at Cappagh Hospital a few weeks before Christmas. He recalls, "It was a selection of inmates and was mostly Polio and some TB sufferers. The nurses were in their best uniforms with Blue capes and they sang Carols."

It was filmed in Black & White and Ben, now turning 74, is looking for a copy of the programme. Between us we've trawled through the RTE Archives and Ben contacted TG4, but they say it may have been deleted or even sent to UTV. There are some 'stills' photos online, but none featuring Ben himself.

If anyone happens to have come across this programme, even a repeat of it captured on an old videotape at home, do let us know. Or if you were there that day and recall the filming we can put you in touch with Ben to reminisce.

## NOTICE BOARD

### Good to Know

Heritage Ireland offers **FREE ENTRY** for those with disabilities and any accompanying carers at all of their sites with an admission charge! You can find information about individual accessibility on the Heritage Ireland website, but here are some examples of places with an admission charge that can be waived:

- ◆ Cahir Castle, Co. Tipperary
- ◆ Carlingford Castle, Co. Louth
- ◆ Castletown House, Co. Kildare
- ◆ Charles Fort, Co. Cork
- ◆ Clonmacnoise Monastery, Co. Offaly
- ◆ Céide Fields, Mayo
- ◆ Dublin Castle, Co. Dublin
- ◆ Farmleigh House and Estate Co. Dublin
- ◆ Glebe House and Gardens, Co. Donegal
- ◆ Kilkenny Castle, Co. Kilkenny
- ◆ Rathfarnham Castle, Co. Dublin

### Area Meetings

We are delighted to have been able to hold three Area Meetings so far this year, meeting members and friends across the country in Athlone, Arklow and Tralee.

Area Meetings are an opportunity for staff of Polio Survivors Ireland to meet and eat with members, in an information session about our work. These have also taken place in Limerick, Dundalk and Kilkenny over the past year, with more planned in the coming months.

We are inviting members, a guest and people on our Polio Register to attend these meetings. If there is an area meeting coming up in your vicinity, we will send you a letter and a reminder text message

to invite you to attend. Lunch is included and it is a lovely opportunity to chat with polio survivors and to exchange tips and information, outside of Social Support.

The Area Meetings are a chance for us to highlight our services and supports – sometimes members might not know about all of the ways in which we can assist them. We also use these meetings as an opportunity to talk about ways that polio survivors can become active members with us, should they wish to. This is important to keep the organisation For Polio Survivors By Polio Survivors.

*We look forward to meeting many more of you as the year goes on.*

## FUNDRAISING NEWS

### New Donation from Hospital Saturday Fund

*Twenty-eight Irish charities received donations from The Hospital Saturday Fund including Polio Survivors Ireland.*

At a Special Reception in Dublin recently, twenty-eight Irish charities received donations from the Hospital Saturday Fund. In total, €136,000 was donated to the medical charities and organisations at the event, which was hosted by the Lord Mayor of Dublin Caroline Conroy. Our Communications & Development Officer, Emma Clarke Conway was delighted to receive a cheque for €4,000 from HSF Charity's CEO Paul Jackson and the Lord Mayor.

Speaking at the reception, The Lord Mayor celebrated the extraordinary work of all the charities receiving donations from the Hospital Saturday Fund. Paul Jackson, Chief Executive of the Hospital Saturday Fund said: "We are delighted to continue the tradition of supporting many wide-ranging charities in Ireland, many of



which are less well-known. The Hospital Saturday Fund is honoured to support the efforts of such deserving charities and help in some way towards the exceptional, tireless work that they do in making such a huge and positive difference to people's lives."

The reception also celebrated HSF health plan, a type of medical insurance product, and the 150th Anniversary of the founding of The Hospital Saturday Fund.

Mr Jackson commented, "With all of our profits going to our parent charity, The Hospital Saturday Fund, which then makes donations to medical charities, hospitals and hospices, everyone who takes out a policy with us is really helping to make a difference to their local community".

"It is also reassuring to know that since 1949 we have been helping families and individuals in Ireland with the cost of their everyday medical bills. Our wide range of benefits are valued by our policyholders and their dependents, with some people using our benefits in conjunction with their Private Medical Insurance, whilst others use HSF health plan as a stand-alone product. Regardless of what cover people have, we offer outstanding value for money". For more information on these Health Plans, see [www.hsf.ie](http://www.hsf.ie) or call 0818 451 451.

In 2023 the Hospital Saturday Fund will give €2.5 million in donations and grants to medical charities for care and research, hospices and hospitals across Ireland and the UK. Assistance will also be given to individuals whose illness or disability has caused financial difficulties.

Polio Survivors Ireland is thrilled to once again be a beneficiary of this wonderful fund and is very grateful to HSF for its support and recognition of the needs of polio survivors in Ireland.



[creditunion.ie](http://creditunion.ie)



Pictured are Dundalk Credit Union's Victoria Prendergast, with our member Brendan Moore, receiving a cheque for €200 from the Credit Union, to help support polio survivors. We are very grateful to Victoria and indeed to Brendan for pursuing this donation.

If you are a member of a Credit Union and think you would be willing to submit a letter seeking support, please contact Emma in the office and we will send the letter on your behalf.



## FUNDRAISING NEWS

### Survivor Sweepstakes Spring 2023 Members Draw



**Pay €5 for 1 row, or €10 for 3 rows**

**€1,000 Prize**

**PLUS 3 chances to win €50**

Our SPRING draw gives YOU the opportunity to win cash and raise vital funds, helping us to ensure provision of services to polio survivors. Thank you for supporting us in our winter draw.

*We hope you will support us once again.*

**We have a permit that opens this outside the membership.** We are enclosing **two** entry envelopes in case you wish to ask family or friends to enter.

**Pick 4 numbers from  
1 to 25 inclusive**

Place €5 for 1 row, or €10 for 3 rows inside the reply envelope. Make sure you pick 4 different numbers in each row.

2	4	9	24
1	16	18	25
2	5	10	11

**Please return entries by  
Thursday 1st June  
2023**

We will announce the winners at the 2023 Conference & AGM in June.

Please provide a phone number (or address) so we can contact you if you win.

Permit granted by:  
Supt., Jonathan O'Brien,  
Bridewell Garda Station.

**Match 4 numbers €1,000  
plus 3 chances to win €50**

*You can request more envelopes if you wish to increase your chances!*

All funds raised go directly to supporting polio survivors. If you are interested in additional entry envelopes to sell, please contact Emma at 01 889 8920. **Please note: there is no obligation to enter, but if you are able to do so, we wish you the best of luck!**

*Terms & Conditions on page 31*

## FUNDRAISING NEWS

### Survivor Sweepstakes Winter 2022 Draw Results

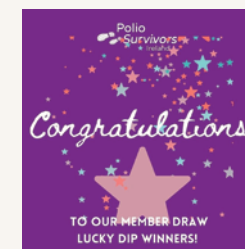
Our Survivor Sweepstakes Winter Draw has finally taken place – in January! We didn't run the draw before Christmas, because the post was so busy and it gave us time to get everything processed on our return in the New Year, ensuring no-one was left out. The draw took place on Friday 20th January 2023, in the office in Capel Building, witnessed by Barry Maguire, Holohan Lane Solicitors.

The four numbers drawn were **9, 12, 16** and **25**.  
No-one matched four numbers on this occasion.

**However**

we are delighted to announce that our **€50 lucky dip winners** are: **Jacinta Hammond, Tom Culloty and Helen McDevitt.**

You can check this link for Match 4 proof:  
<https://www.randomresult.com/ticket.php?t=3256788QC9XF85HEJ>



**€50 lucky dip winner's link:** <https://www.randomresult.com/ticket.php?t=3256789NTWSZGQJJP>

Congratulations to our winners – it's always nice to have a little good news on a cold January day. We would like to also thank all our members and friends who supported this draw once again, which is such an important contribution to our fundraising.

We are so very grateful.

**Our next draw is with this issue.**



**R.I.P.** Polio Survivors Ireland was saddened to hear of the passing of these members recently:

Mary Murphy, John Joseph Scanlan, Anthony Boyd

Laurence Guerin, Ellen Coffey, Patrick Moyles

Maurice Perry, Michael Stritch, Bridget Flanagan

Ann Darcy and Brigid Brennan

We acknowledge the contribution these members have made to the work of Polio Survivors Ireland – our thoughts are with their family and friends.

### Thought of the day

The most beautiful things in life, are not things.

They are people, places, memories, pictures.

They are feelings, moments and mostly laughter.

B. Moore 2023

**YOUR FEEDBACK-** Your opinion counts! Polio Survivors Ireland is your charity, your support organisation, your service and we are always eager to hear your ideas on how we can improve our services and supports and our organisation! You don't have to wait until a conference or meeting to feedback information, opinion, or tell us about your experiences that might help us to help you. Feel free to contact Fran Brennan at [ceo@polio.ie](mailto:ceo@polio.ie) or on 01 889 89 20.

If you have any suggestions or contributions to make to the Survivor Magazine, please contact Emma on [cdo@polio.ie](mailto:cdo@polio.ie) or call the office. It is your magazine and we want to hear from you.

## Survivor Sweepstakes

### TERMS & CONDITIONS:

Subject to change. Name and phone or email must be included or prize is redrawn. Where a number is repeated on a row, or a number entered outside 1 – 25, then next consecutive number will be entered. Numbers drawn using [www.randomresult.com](http://www.randomresult.com) – winning numbers can be checked each draw by using an assigned ticket number, to be advertised on [www.polio.ie](http://www.polio.ie) and in The Survivor magazine. Judges' decision is final.

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**COMPANY SECRETARY** Fintan Foy

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**OTHER DIRECTORS** James Doorley, Charlie Smith, Zaynab Salman, Pat Ryan  
Board members can be contacted via the office on 01 8898920, or [info@polio.ie](mailto:info@polio.ie)

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Macrina Clancy (Chair), Fintan Foy, Pat McGillion, James Doorley, Marie Hyland.

### SURVIVOR EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

**MEMBERS** Una Lyons, Jackie Minnock - Contact via Emma [cdo@polio.ie](mailto:cdo@polio.ie)

## WILLS

*Please remember Polio Survivors Ireland in your Will, or request donations to Polio Survivors Ireland in lieu of flowers.*

*Be assured all bequests and donations will be put to good use.*

*Thank You*

## MISSION STATEMENT

*To create awareness and to provide information regarding the late effects of polio among polio survivors, statutory agencies and the wider medical profession, and to ensure that the needs of polio survivors relating to their condition are met to enable them to live with dignity.*

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**DISCLAIMER:** While every care is taken to ensure accuracy, neither the Editor nor the Board can accept liability. The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily their views or the views of the charity. Neither the charity, nor the Editor, endorses any product or service mentioned in 'THE SURVIVOR'.

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