

AUTUMN 2023 Vol 20 Issue 2

# THE SURVIVOR

## Irish Polio News



For Polio Survivors By Polio Survivors since 1993



*Pictured (l to r) are Niamh Farrelly-Brown, Anne Shanahan, award winner Anne Burns and Delia Donovan, at Conference 2023, at the presentation of the inaugural Jim Costello Polio Hero Award.*



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# From the Chair

## What a summer!

Whenever I want to grumble about the weather I have to stop and thank God I don't live in a region that is sweltering in excessive heat. Some of my friends cancelled their holidays abroad and decided to stay at home.

So, what's been happening since the spring issue?

### Disability Federation of Ireland

In May, the Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI) led a delegation from Ireland to attend the 5th European Parliament for Persons with Disabilities in Brussels. The Irish delegation consisted of 13 delegates, some with carers, and staff from DFI. It was a great honour to be selected to attend on behalf of Polio Survivors Ireland. The number of delegates a country could bring equalled the number of MEP's that country has in the European Parliament. Catherine Naughton, one of the Executive Directors of the European Disability Forum,

joined us for dinner on the night of our arrival in Brussels. The highlight of the event was the launch of the Manifesto directed at EU parliamentarians who will be seeking election/re-election. Next year on 9th June, there will be European Elections and the idea is that we all target those going forward for election on issues relating to disability.

The other very interesting outcome was the announcement that in September the European Parliament will endorse the introduction of the Disability Card throughout the whole of the European Union. The Disability Card has been trialled for the past three years in eight EU countries and now it is to be rolled out across the EU. It will be up to our government to get it rolling out in Ireland as soon as possible. Go to [www.edg-feph.org](http://www.edg-feph.org) and listen to the day's proceedings. If you press the pause button - II - you can listen to it over time.

### European Polio Union

Following on from Brussels, I travelled to Nancy, France to attend Polio France's Congress and the European Polio Union's AGM. The Congress was really interesting and informative, with talks from Belgium, Germany and France on facilities for polio survivors in their countries.

### Conference and AGM

June saw our Conference & AGM in Mount Wolseley, celebrating 30 years of Polio Survivors Ireland. As well as attending in person, members could join us online via Zoom and it was great to see members avail of this facility. It will be a feature of our Conferences in the years ahead to facilitate those who cannot travel and want to participate.

### Polio Hero Award

It was a fitting occasion to launch our Polio Hero Award - named after Jim Costello to honour one of our volunteers. Without Jim we would not have the organisation we



Jim Costello

have today. His volunteerism for polio survivors was tremendous and he kept a keen interest in all aspects of our organisation to the end. So it is fitting that the award is named in his memory. Congratulations to Anne Burns, this year's recipient, and a big thank you, for your contribution to Polio Survivors Ireland and your continued involvement in the organisation. It is all the members like Anne who are the backbone of the organisation and without whom it would not exist.

After the Conference the staff started the mammoth task of shredding, packing boxes, making lists of all that needed to be done for the move from Capel Street to Coleraine House, part of the Carmichael Centre. It is back to where the organisation first had

offices, as we move forward again to work together for our fellow polio members. Once the dust has settled, I hope all the staff will be happy in their new office setting.

**Strategic Plan** - Work continues on our Strategic Plan for the next three to five years as Fran outlined to you at the Conference. There are ongoing consultations and meetings. We hope to finalise it by the year end; however, it is more important to get it right than to complete it at a particular time. While we would like to do everything our members request, this will not be possible and the board will have to weigh up and decide what is feasible and will benefit the majority of our members.

As we move towards autumn, I would like to remind you that, like polio survivors, covid is still here! Get your autumn booster

along with your flu booster, wash your hands and wear a mask in crowded settings. It is useful to have a covid test kit at home to test yourself if feeling unwell, protecting yourself and others.

Hopefully we will get some more sunny days, a good September would be marvellous! Do take care and remember Polio Survivors Ireland is here to advise, help and listen.

*Slán go foill.*

*Macrina Clancy*

**Macrina Clancy**  
**Cathaoirleach**



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01 889 89 20

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01 889 89 20

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

## Conference 2023 30th Anniversary

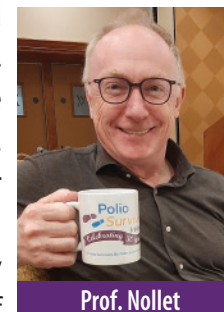


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*This year's Conference and AGM was a very special one, as Polio Survivors Ireland marked its 30th year, with this year's event in the Mount Wolseley Hotel on Thursday 22nd June.*

### Joan Bradley Memorial Address

We were delighted to be joined by Prof. Frans Nollet of the Netherlands. Prof. Nollet is Professor of Rehabilitation Medicine, Deputy Chair, Dept of Rehabilitation Medicine and Head Post-Polio Expert Center, Amsterdam UMC.



Prof. Nollet

Professor Nollet gave the Joan Bradley Memorial Address with a presentation on Ageing with Polio, talking about how to preserve physical functioning and different aspects of ageing with polio/post-polio syndrome. He reported on long term studies on muscle function in post polio patients, noting that walking performance declined in both studies by 6% (over 10 years) and 10% (over 15 years). Loss of muscle tissue, for various reasons,

increases the risk of falling. Professor Nollet noted that Osteoarthritis is more common in polio, with careful rehabilitation required following any treatment. Osteoporosis is also more common with bone density measurement important (DEXA scan), as well as prevention through Vitamin D, calcium, weight bearing exercise and limited alcohol.

Ageing and (life-style) chronic diseases are further issues for survivors, with mention of comorbidities and weight gain as issues. Declining function can prevent polio survivors from participating in their usual activities, meaning psychological supports are needed.

Professor Nollet recommended trying to do exercise that would help cardio fitness, strengthening exercises and weight bearing exercise, which of course has to be done according to the abilities of the individual.

A lively Q&A followed, with some members wondering if they could visit The Netherlands and avail of Professor Nollet's excellent rehabilitation programme!



## ► Jim Costello Polio Hero Award

The late Jim Costello was the last of our founder members and made an untold contribution to the development and success of our organisation. Jim passed away in July 2022 and to honour his memory, we have developed an annual award called the Jim Costello Polio Hero Award, to be presented to a worthy recipient at the Annual Conference. The inaugural award was due to be presented by retired RTE Presenter, Eileen Dunne. Unfortunately, Eileen was unable to join us.

Member Anne Shanahan, stepped in and spoke of how Jim was the embodiment of a polio survivor - independent, determined and selfless in the time and efforts he devoted to the running of the organisation for many years, still helping up to his passing. We were thrilled to have Jim's wife Delia, still a member and stalwart supporter, at the Conference with Jim's godchild, Niamh. Both ladies assisted in presenting the Jim Costello Polio Hero Award to our worthy winner Anne Burns.

For many years, Anne has been a constant and reliable support to the organisation and is always available to provide background history to incoming staff or volunteers. She helps

us with events and makes sure that people wanting to be active members of Polio Survivors Ireland have the opportunity to do so, while tirelessly working to support the development of the organisation, in the same spirit that Jim had done.

Anne has also represented the charity in the media countless times, helping to raise awareness of polio survivors and Post Polio Syndrome. As we know, a hero is someone admired for their courage, outstanding achievements or noble qualities. For dedication and tenacity in improving the lives of polio survivors, the inaugural Jim Costello Polio Hero Award 2023 was presented to Anne Burns.

## ► Congratulations Anne

We are very grateful to Delia and Niamh for assisting in the presentation of the award and for Delia's lovely tribute to Jim. He continues to be missed.



## ► Reflections on 30 Years – John Dolan

Polio Survivors Ireland member and CEO of the Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI), John Dolan spoke of his memories through the years and the development of the organisation. John fondly remembered Joan Bradley (as a mother figure), Jim Costello (always on the ball), Rosaleen Gallagher and many others who significantly contributed to the work that started from Joan's kitchen table and Jim's hospital room which Anne Shanahan said was like his office.

John's address brought back many memories and some laughs from the audience and was a fitting way to celebrate our 30th anniversary.

## ► Strategic Plan Survey Results

Fran Brennan, CEO, concluded the Conference with a short presentation on the recent Strategic Plan Survey Results. Every member was sent a Members' Needs Questionnaire last autumn and from this data we selected



a representative sample of members for the survey. This was based on Age, Level of Disability, Income, Gender and Migrant Status. Here is an overview of the results:

## Greatest needs identified by members:

Top 5: Aids and Appliances, Free Medical Care, Staying Driving, Help in Sourcing Social Welfare Entitlements and Home Adaptation.

**Challenges/Barriers** that prevent living a fuller life: Top 5: Mobility, Isolation and Loneliness, Accessibility, Old Age and Pain.

**Anxieties about the future:** Top 5: Mobility, Future Health, Other Health Issues, Loneliness/Not Going Out and Pain.

## Most important of our current services and supports:

Top 5: Aids and Appliances, Support in Sourcing Entitlements from the State, Advice and Information from the PSI Office, Heating Grant and Telephone Support.

**Issues the organisation should raise with the government and government agencies:** Top 5: Financial Support e.g., grants, Medical Cards, Social Welfare Entitlements, Education on Polio and Public Access.

**Service or support we don't currently provide that we should offer:** Top 5: Home Visits, Community Support Workers, Home Helps/PAs, Financial Assistance and Assistance with Car Purchasing and Adaptation.

**One thing the organisation should do over the next 5 years:** Top 5: Lobby government for better services, supports and better recognition, home care and home support, regular phone contact, mental health support.

**Next steps:** A small representative group of polio survivors will consider the survey findings. Social support groups will be asked for input and a steering group will summarise the report. Staff will give their views on what the organisation can do and the board will decide what the organisation will prioritise in the next strategic plan to be finalised in the autumn.

The Conference concluded with the distribution of the last of our raffle prizes.

Huge thanks to all involved, particularly the volunteers who helped us – greeters, fundraising table helpers, stewards, presenters and anyone who played a hand in

## 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.

**HOLOHAN LANE**

## EU Report

Our Cathaoirleach, Macrina Clancy visited Brussels as part of the Irish delegation to the Fifth European Parliament of Persons with Disabilities (EPPD). The theme for the event was "Building an inclusive future for persons with disabilities in the EU." The 13-strong Irish delegation emphasised that disability rights are everyone's concern. We are so proud of Macrina for representing Polio Survivors Ireland in the famous hemicycle of the European Parliament! Many thanks to the European Disability Forum and the Disability Federation of Ireland for coordinating the delegation throughout the visit.



Macrina Clancy at the European Disability Forum



Attendees at the European Parliament of Persons with Disabilities



# Airline Tips

by Maria Grazia Buompane



When it comes to travelling by air, people with disabilities face many challenges. As many of you know barriers can include a lack of information, or appropriate services, and the general sense of confusion often experienced when buying an airline ticket!

Different airlines offer varying services to offset difficulties faced travelling by air. Here is a snapshot of these services from some of the well known airlines:

**Aer Lingus:** Most airlines, such as Aer Lingus, provide wheelchair assistance in both departure and arrival airports from check in to the aircraft. They will also notify the airport if you've requested a carry-on service, designed for passengers who are completely immobile. Furthermore, passengers with disabilities and/or reduced mobility can travel with up to two pieces of mobility equipment at no charge.

- Aer Lingus accepts wheelchairs and other mobility aids weighing over 120kg (or where the heaviest individual part weighs more than 120kg) at all of their airports. They require advance notice for any device heavier than 120kg to ensure there is suitable lifting equipment available.
- If you need to travel with a battery operated wheelchair or other mobility device, you will need to check it in and the staff will carry it in the aircraft hold.
- If you must travel with a carer, Aer Lingus

will make all reasonable efforts to seat them next to you.

- If you use walking aids, such as a cane, walker, rollator, crutches, or prosthetic devices, you do not need to inform the airline in advance. However, you might consider requesting a wheelchair to bring you to your gate.
- In addition, Aer Lingus accepts trained service dogs for travel with passengers with a disability or reduced mobility.

**Ryanair:** Each Ryanair aircraft has an onboard aisle wheelchair which the crew use to assist reduced mobility passengers getting to and from the aircraft toilet.

- Wheelchairs/Mobility Scooters weighing more than 150kg require pre authorisation and will not be accepted for carriage without this. Also check with them that the dimensions are suitable.
- Ryanair aircrafts have three toilets all equipped with a grip bar.

**Delta:** offers wheelchair assistants who will guide you through the Terminal, security and to your gate. A gate agent will then provide assistance in boarding. Request this wheelchair service in My Trips after you have booked your flight.

- Most Delta aircraft have an onboard wheelchair for use to and from the toilet.

- Delta transports all types of personal assistive devices, including manual and battery-powered wheelchairs, scooters and any accompanying prosthetic devices.
- Some wheelchairs may not fit into the cargo compartment, but the airline is committed to finding the best solution to safely transport your personal wheelchair.
- To assist in the disassembly of your wheelchair (joystick, seat cushion, headrest, armrests and footrests) safely, Delta employees may need your instructions. You can provide these on their Mobility Device Handling Form.

**Lufthansa:** People with disabilities can opt for a Lufthansa wheelchair to get to the gate, or take your own foldable wheelchair, until you reach the departure gate, when it can be stowed in the hold.

- All aircrafts have a specially developed on-board wheelchair which can be used to access the toilets.
- All long-haul aircraft are fitted with disabled toilets. Lufthansa cabin crew will assist you throughout your journey.

**British Airways:** will assist you to and from the aircraft and getting around the airport for all or part of your journey, including accessing stairs. You can travel with your own wheelchair and or check it in and use a BA wheelchair to the gate.

- The crew may be able to store one collapsible manual wheelchair in the cabin, depending on available space.

This is allocated on a 'first come, first served' basis.

- British Airways has wheelchairs on the aircrafts to assist you on board. You'll need to be able to lift yourself from your seat onto the wheelchair, or travel with a carer who can help you do that.
- If you can't use stairs, BA can arrange for step-free access with the airport operator.

**Air France:** Depending on your disability, special assistance is available at all airports for all parts of the journey. Passengers can transport the following in the hold at no extra cost:

- Two personal mobility devices (wheelchair, electric scooter, personal transporter, etc.).
- One additional baggage item up to 23 kg / 50lb to transport your medical equipment.

Most airlines offer a priority boarding service to passengers who need more time to board, or help in doing so.

As you can see, the services offered by airlines are very similar to each other. We hope this information helps, bearing in mind that the destination can sometimes dictate the airline you use. Always check their website, or try to call customer service if at all possible. Travel should be a pleasant experience, but can be challenging. As with everything in life, preparation is key!



## Advocacy Update

We've noticed our members are facing increased difficulties using public spaces across the country, which are causing some serious injuries. Many roads and pavements are missing important features like lowered curbs and smooth paths. This is making it difficult for people using mobility aids like wheelchairs, walkers and scooters to get around.

Our Advocacy and Policy Officer, Ciara Power, is engaging with all local councils to express concerns and draw attention to issues faced by polio survivors who are experiencing challenges in accessing public spaces. Specifically, we want to know:

- Whether the councils have conducted accessibility audits to improve areas lacking accessible features.
- If councils are investing in creating dropped curbs, smooth pathways and other accessible facilities to promote safe mobility.
- Information on the regulations councils are enforcing to prevent parking on paths and ensure pedestrian access

## Accessing Public Space

- How councils are engaging with people with disabilities and mobility challenges
- The best ways to stay informed about accessibility improvements and reporting incidents.

We're hoping this initial engagement will help us make a case for change in the future and get more attention on these issues. We're also working on some templates for letters and emails, so you can let your local council know about any problems you face. Please do get in touch with the office if you've any concerns or thoughts on public space accessibility.



This year's Make Way Day 2023 is on Friday 22 September.

Make Way Day, coordinated by the Disability Federation of Ireland, highlights the issue of people parking their cars in places where people should be walking - even more dangerous for those with mobility aids. Not just cars, but sandwich boards, bins and other such obstacles are targeted every #MakeWayDay to remind the general public of the consequences of blocking people's access when you have a disability.

This annual campaign raises public

The DFI's online survey tool is on the website  
[www.makewayday.com](http://www.makewayday.com).

## Make Way Day 2023

awareness about problems caused by obstacles blocking footpaths, with lots of our members having been involved over the years. Many of you will remember the late Joan Bradley out videoing pathways that were blocked.

DFI is asking people to go out in their local areas and using the Make Way Day stickers, take photos of things blocking their way. Get in touch with us if this is something you'd like to do and we will help coordinate with you.





## Area Meetings 2023

*Our new Member Engagement Officers, Nuala McLaughlin and Órna Maddock, are settling into the organisation having by now met many of our members.*

In August, they each held an Area Meeting, or Meet & Eat as we like to call them, in Navan and in Portlaoise. The idea behind the Area Meetings, which have been ongoing for the past number of years, (covid excepted), is to travel around the country meeting members, ensuring they are aware of our services. We also use these as an opportunity to encourage members to become active members and help us in our work. This keeps us 'For polio survivors, by polio survivors'.



Members at the Navan Area Meeting

### Navan

Despite an issue with the post, we had a good turn out in the Ardboyne Hotel, Navan. Fran gave the presentation, and the meeting was attended by our Advocacy & Policy Officer, Ciara Power and MEO Nuala Mc Laughlin. Some of the attendees have never come to our meetings before. There was a lively discussion on primary medical certs, plus supports available via Polio Survivors Ireland, with all attendees being strongly encouraged to contact the office if they need support. We also discussed membership of the organisation and the fact that of the estimated 5,000 people in Ireland with polio, less than 1,000 are members, so there is still great potential to grow and develop the organisation. We discussed reestablishing the Social Support Group for Meath, and Nuala will work with members locally on this.

### Portlaoise

The Portlaoise meeting went well with eight members attending. Most knew each other, yet two had not attended social support before. Both will attend them now and Bernie, the Laois-Offaly SSG Convenor, has their details. One member also signed up for telephone support, which we are delighted about. There were lots of conversations and we learned from one member that he only contracted polio in 1994!

## New Online Social Support

*What better way to meet other polio survivors than through a social support group!*

In the coming weeks and months, we are looking for members not currently in a Social Support Group, to take part in ONLINE Social Support Groups (SSG). In-person SSG are already held around the country, with attendees benefitting greatly from involvement. Therefore, we want everyone to have the opportunity to benefit from SSG. However, we understand that not everyone can attend in person, whether it's distance, mobility or transport that makes it a challenge.

We are now looking for members to take part in our new online SSGs. For the first group, participants would need to be familiar with the use of computers, have an email account, internet access, a device with a camera and microphone, and be able (with support) to connect to Zoom. We do know using technology can be daunting, scary, and confusing and are here to help.

We can talk you through everything you need to do to join in. We will be sending out info and setting up practice workshops for those not quite sure, so if you are interested, but a little concerned, please give us a call. If some members require training to get

involved, we hope to link them in with supports to make that possible, so they can join one of our future groups.

To find out more, please contact the Member Engagement Officers, Nuala or Órna.



### New online support groups

Join fellow polio survivors in a new online support group!

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

Contact Órna or Nuala to join in

#### Órna is Member Engagement Officer for:

Galway, Clare, Limerick, Kerry, Cork, Tipperary, Waterford, Wexford, Wicklow, Carlow, Kilkenny, Kildare, Laois, Offaly.

Órna's contact details:  
ornameo@polio.ie or 086 1526944

#### Nuala is Member Engagement Officer for:

Dublin, Monaghan, Cavan, Leitrim & Longford, Louth, Meath, Westmeath, Roscommon, Sligo, Mayo, Donegal.

Nuala's contact details:  
nualameo@polio.ie or 086 1672036

# National Disability Authority **NDA**

by Anika Patychuk

On Tuesday 31st January 2023, I had the privilege of attending the launch and consultation of **'How's it Going? A Survey on Wellbeing and Social Inclusion'** conducted by the National Disability Authority (NDA). The event was an eye-opener and I learned a lot about the daily struggles that people with disabilities face. It was a humbling experience to gain insight into the barriers that many people encounter in their daily lives.

## **Findings were quite disheartening**

The survey found that people with disabilities find it challenging to access basic amenities and services such as public transport, banking, post office facilities, GP and primary healthcare services. These are services that most of us take for granted. The survey revealed that the things I had done that morning, like taking the Luas or walking from the bus stop to the event, were not possible for many people. It is unacceptable that people with disabilities face such barriers to accessing basic services and amenities.

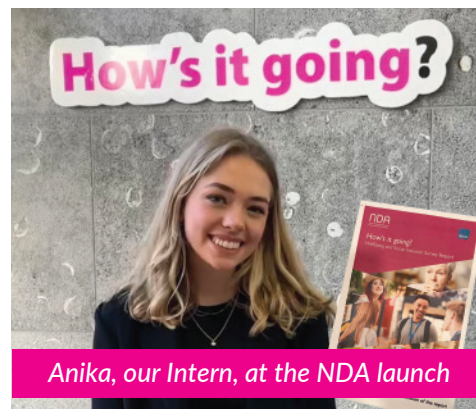
## **It's not all doom and gloom**

The results of the survey are being presented to people in positions of power who can make changes. The findings will help to inform and create changes in the accessibility of services. This will consequently improve the

wellbeing of people living with disabilities in Ireland and the event gave hope that things would improve so that such barriers will not have to be faced in the future.

## **A humbling experience**

Attending the NDA event was both an enlightening and humbling experience. It helped me to realise and learn about the daily struggles faced every day by people living with disabilities. The survey clearly showed the barriers endured when accessing basic amenities and services. This is unacceptable. However, as mentioned above, the survey results will help to create much needed change and to improve ease of access to services and amenities in Ireland, as well as improving the wellbeing of people with disabilities. This NDA event has given hope that things would improve and that more needs to be done to make accessibility a reality for all.



Anika, our Intern, at the NDA launch

## Justice for Polio Survivors Campaign

We began the campaign in 2018 in response to Rehab/Polio Fellowship of Ireland's withdrawal of funding to provide services and supports to people with disabilities arising from polio.

Rehab/PFI have been asked to reinstate this funding, but have refused to do so and deny any responsibility to support people with polio. We therefore requested that an independent person be appointed who would look at the situation and decide what should happen. Rehab/PFI refused to accept this course of action.

We therefore approached TDs, Ministers, Oireachtas Committees, the Ombudsman, other disability organisations, the media etc., in order to engage with someone who would facilitate our request for the appointment of an independent person to resolve this issue. Sadly, nobody was prepared to support us.

The Minister for People with Disabilities has recommended that we refer our case to the Charity Regulator. We have been fortunate to engage with a firm of solicitors on a pro-bono basis. They have

## An update on the progress of the campaign by Susan Dowling

sought advice from a barrister who has made a number of recommendations as to how we should proceed with our case, also free of charge.

The solicitor will present our case to the Charity Regulator but we need your support to assist in this process. We have compiled a list of Campaign Supporters and would appreciate it if you would sign up to this as it will strengthen the campaign.

We also require evidence of fundraising for the Polio Fellowship of Ireland and Park House. If you have any experience of this, one of the Campaign Coordinators would be delighted to hear from you.

**Anne Shanahan (M) 086 883 2892**

(E) [anneshan20@gmail.com](mailto:anneshan20@gmail.com)

**Anne Burns (M) 087 417 5237**

(E) [abu20boyne@gmail.com](mailto:abu20boyne@gmail.com)

**Susan Dowling (P) 059 972 6998**

(E) [susan.dowling53@gmail.com](mailto:susan.dowling53@gmail.com)

*Thank you!*



# AT THE PRESIDENT'S GARDEN PARTY



While President Michael D. Higgins was unable to join us at our recent Conference, he did send a message of congratulations on the occasion of our 30th anniversary. Later, an invitation was received at short notice, for a group of representatives to attend a Garden Party at Áras an Uachtaráin on Sunday 2nd July.

Along with Board members Charlie Smith, Zaynab Salman and Cathaoirleach Macrina Clancy, were members Anne Shanahan, Anne Burns and myself, staff member, Emma Clarke Conway.



On arriving at the Áras, guests were greeted most graciously by Sabina Higgins and with thanks to Macrina, we stole an opportunity to nab a photo! Passing through the various reception rooms of the Áras felt like a stroll through history, with tour guides on hand to answer questions. Then on to the beautiful gardens. Although the weather was a little uncertain, the rain held off while guests took in the endless lawns, stunning flowers and assorted entertainment.

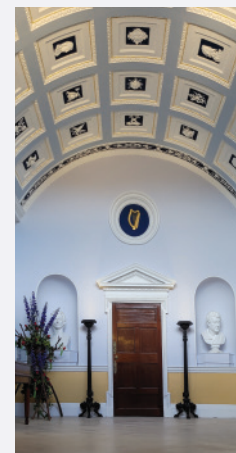


Inside an impressive marquee, we were seated at round tables filled with an array of food. There were tasty sandwiches such as chicken and pesto or ham with mustard mayonnaise; savory treats such as smoked salmon with herb butter on tomato bread and prawns in tartlets, and for sweet treats, scones with jam, raspberries and cream, iced orange cake and later, chocolate dipped strawberries.

A tour guide mentioned how the Áras gardens are managed sustainably and how fruit, vegetables and flowers are often given to guests from the gardens. We certainly appreciated how juicy the strawberries were and how fresh the raspberries tasted. We were well fed and watered!



We were then treated to entertainment by balladeer, Lisa O'Neill, award winning rapper, God Knows, the Havana Club Trio and traditional music band, Shaskeen. There was a wonderful party atmosphere which concluded this most enjoyable day.





## CORK SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUP

On Saturday afternoon, 29th April, the Cork Social Support Group met up for a late lunch and a meeting at a venue in Togher, in Cork City, called Route Fourteen. There were thirty two persons in attendance and a pleasant afternoon was had by all.

It was heartening to meet up with our old stalwarts, some of whom we hadn't seen since the start of covid. Equally heartening was to see some new faces among our members. There was time to catch up on all the news and to greet the new members before we sat down to our meal. There was a good selection to choose from with beef, chicken, fish and a vegetarian option on the menu. I think everyone enjoyed the meal and the staff were welcoming and helpful.

When we'd had our tea and coffee, it was time to mingle again and some interesting conversation ensued. The event was as always ably organised by our Convenor, Evelyn Wainwright, and she filled us in on some matters of interest, including the (then) upcoming Annual Conference in Tullow, Co. Carlow. Another matter she dealt with was the questionnaire sent out from Head Office last year and its importance to future planning. She asked that anyone who hadn't yet returned it, to please do so. Evelyn also said that

anyone who might need assistance with any matter should get in touch with the Office.

There was a little bit of sad news in that our Chill Out Day would not be going ahead this year, as the venue where it was usually held has been sold. But that won't deter us from meeting up and Evelyn asked for suggestions as to what we might do for our next get together later in the summer.

All too soon it was time for home, well fed and happy to have had a pleasant afternoon with all the members. Again we owe a great thanks to Evelyn for her organisational skills and her warmth and genuine concern for everyone. Geraldine, Angela and Finbarr were on hand as usual to help out. Our group is lucky to have them and long may they, and indeed all of us, continue to flourish. *Vincent McDonnell*



## DUBLIN SOUTH WEST SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUP

The Dublin South West Social Support Group enjoyed a lovely day at the Irish Emigration Museum (EPIC), Custom House Quay, Dublin 1, followed by lunch and a meeting. It was wonderful getting everyone together post-covid.

They had a great day out - everyone seemed to enjoy the venue and the wide choice of cafes in the arcade. They had a long chat about their visit and how helpful the staff were. Pictured are members enjoying the day, taken by Convenor Pat McCabe – our official photographer!

Note: EPIC do group discounts for seniors' groups of 10+ and Carers go free.

The museum was said to be like taking a walk through history. It was well laid out and well worth the visit.





## BRAY SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUP

The Bray Social Support Group met up to congratulate Anne Burns on winning the Jim Costello Polio Hero Award 2023. They are very proud of her- as are we all! Well done Anne, hope you enjoyed the celebration.



Pictured are members of the Bray Social Support Group

## HSE - COVID Update

**Covid** seems to be rearing its head again, with a number of hospitalisations recently reported.

You may hear about a new sub-variant of COVID-19 called **Eris**. This variant is one reason why covid cases seem to be rising again, as it is very easily spread. It is important to keep taking precautions if you are vulnerable: wash your hands frequently, wear a mask in crowds, and stay home if you feel ill.



**The next set of COVID-19 boosters are due to be available over the Autumn**

## NOTICE BOARD

### We have Moved.....



Polio Survivors Ireland has moved to a new home over the summer! After a long time in the surroundings of Capel Building, we have moved to Coleraine House on Coleraine Street, Dublin 7.

Coleraine House is part of the Carmichael Centre, which many of our members may recall was our original home, back before we moved to Capel. We now have an office in Coleraine House, but are part of the Centre, benefiting from its shared services. It will be wonderful to be based in the same place as so many other charities, who are doing similar work and hopefully we can learn from each other.

Our former office in the Capel Building will have our forwarding address, so any post sent to that office will still reach us.

Our phone number will be staying the same – 01 889 8920. We will still be available Monday to Friday, 9am - 5pm, continuing to support our members across Ireland. We ask for a little patience while we get settled in to our new office. We are excited about this new move, with a little more desk space and to be part of Carmichael once again.

**The new address is: Polio Survivors Ireland, Coleraine House, Coleraine Street, Dublin 7, D07 E8XF.**



## Living Well

Learning how to manage your condition may help you feel better, stay active and live well. To do this, a person needs to have the right information, education, support and services. The HSE has put together some tips to help you self-manage your health.

**1.** Learn about your condition: what it is, how to manage it and how it may affect your life.

**2.** While healthcare professionals might be experts on your condition, you are the expert on you. Nobody knows more than you do about your body, your feelings, your actions and how your health affects you.

**3.** Support can come from many sources - your GP, your family or friends. Some people find it helpful to join a support group and talk with other people who have the same condition.

**4.** When you attend your GP and hospital appointments, bring a list of your questions to get the best out of your time. Take notes during the appointment and bring someone with you for support if you wish.

## Management of long-term health conditions

By Megan Saunders Smith



[www.hse.ie/livingwell](http://www.hse.ie/livingwell)

**5.** Learn about the medication prescribed for you. Know why you are taking it, when to take it and how to take it. Ask your GP or Pharmacist for a list of the medications you are taking.

**6.** Pacing is carrying out activities over time and not carrying them out all out at once. It's better to do a smaller amount every day than tiring yourself out by doing too much at one time.

**7.** Preventing covid, flu, pneumonia and other infections is an important step in self-management. People with long-term health conditions are more at risk if they catch infections.

**8.** The emotional effects of a long-term health condition can be difficult. Managing your condition can increase the stress of everyday life. It is important to talk about your feelings. Call **ALONE** on 0818 222 024 for support or a listening ear.

**9.** Remember to eat well. It can help you to feel good and also gives you more energy and helps you to stay healthy. Try to plan for three good meals a day and include snacks if necessary. Also, try to get outside for fresh air every day.

**10. Stop smoking** and reduce or cut out alcohol. You can call the Quit Line on 1800 201 203 or visit [www.quit.ie](http://www.quit.ie) to stop smoking.

**11.** The Department of Health recommends that all adults aged 65 and older take a vitamin D supplement of 15 micrograms (15µg) every day. Ask your GP or pharmacist for more advice.

## Living Well Programme

Try the Living Well programme. This is a free group self-management programme for adults aged 18 years

and over, with long-term or chronic health conditions. It runs online for six weeks, with one workshop each week, which runs for 2.5 hours. Two trained leaders run the workshops. At least one of the leaders lives with a long-term health condition.

- People taking part in the workshops may have polio or they may have different health conditions. There will be up to 12 people taking part in each workshop.

- The workshops are delivered in a relaxed and friendly way so that all participants can learn from each other. You can also share experiences of living with your condition.

- Each person who takes part is given a book about self-management.



See <https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/hl/selfmanagement/living-well-programme/> for more information.



## FUNDRAISING NEWS

### Survivor Sweepstakes Spring 2023 Draw Results

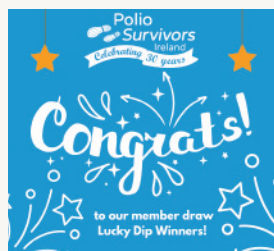
Our Survivor Sweepstakes Spring Draw has taken place! We held off on this announcement so that the results of the draw could first be revealed at the 30th Anniversary Conference and AGM. The draw took place on Monday 19th June 2023, in the office in Capel Building.

The four numbers drawn were **1, 6, 9 and 21**.  
No-one matched four numbers on this occasion.

#### However

We ran our €50 lucky dip and the three winners were **Ita Murphy, Nigel Warburton and Sean Donlon**.

You can check this link for Match 4 proof:  
<https://www.randomresult.com/ticket.php?t=3398780MLEN4CFQGT>



€50 lucky dip winner's link: <https://www.randomresult.com/ticket.php?t=3398786RZKKCRSF2G>

The draw was witnessed by Alan Raftery,  
Holohan Lane Solicitors, with thanks.

Huge congratulations to our winners and a massive thank you to all our members and friends who supported this draw which is so important to our fundraising. We are very grateful.

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

## FUNDRAISING NEWS

### Survivor Sweepstakes AUTUMN 2023 Members Draw



**Pay €5 for 1 row, or €10 for 3 rows**  
**€1,000 Prize - if 4 numbers are matched!**  
**PLUS 3 chances to win €50**

Our AUTUMN draw gives YOU the opportunity to win cash and raise vital funds for polio survivors.  
Thank you for your support so far. We are very grateful to members who are able to support us again.

We enclose two entry envelopes in case you wish to ask family or friends to enter. There is however, no obligation.

- Pick 4 numbers from 1 to 25 inclusive.
- Cost €5 for 1 row – OR – €10 for 3 rows, to be placed in draw envelope.
- Make sure you pick 4 different numbers in each row.
- Match 4 numbers to win €1,000, plus 3 lucky dips of €50.

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

Please return all entries by Tuesday 3rd October 2023 – and make sure to provide a phone number (or address), so we can contact you if you win.

We will run the draw on Monday 9th October 2023.

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

All funds raised go directly to supporting polio survivors. If you are interested in additional entry envelopes to sell, please contact Megan 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 30*

## FUNDRAISING NEWS

### Tesco Extra Presentation Dundalk



Pictured is *Brendan Moore*, with Tesco Extra Dundalk staff members *Agnes Uglis*, Store Manager and *Michaela Woods*, Community Officer, presenting a cheque for €700 from the Tesco Community Fund.

We are very grateful to Tesco for this fantastic amount and to their staff and customers for nominating us with Blue Tokens. Well done to Brendan for another excellent fundraising activity on our behalf.



### Castle Vintage Club Presentation

Pictured are *David Maher*, Secretary, Castle Vintage Club, Taghmon, Co. Wexford, *Pat Monaghan*, Chairman, and Polio Survivors Ireland member, *Tony Jeffers*, Wexford.

Huge thanks to the Castle Vintage Club, Taghmon, Co. Wexford, who raise monies by organising

tractor runs all over the south of Ireland every year. Tony secured a very generous donation of €1,000, as presented in the photo. We are very grateful to Tony and to the members of Castle Vintage Club for their efforts. All funds raised go to supporting polio survivors who need our help.

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

*Batt Hegarty, Brendan Sugrue, Teresa McBride,*

*Noirin Uí Bheollain, Paula Leech, Norma Cronin,*

*Brian O'Sheehan, Sean McMahon,*

*Martin Griffin and Patrick Joyce.*

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

**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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