

WINTER 2023 Vol 20 Issue 3

THE SURVIVOR

Irish Polio News

 Polio
Survivors
Ireland



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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. This information will be destroyed if, or when, your membership of the organisation ceases.

From the Chair



Dear Members,

A truly happy, peaceful and joyous Christmas to you, your families and friends. Let us be truly grateful, at this time, that we live in this lovely little island of ours.

I don't know about you, but as I write, 2023 seems to me to have flown by faster than any other year.

Nuala and Órna, our Member Engagement Officers (supported by funding from Pobal), have been busy visiting our Social Support Groups and I am delighted that some of the groups, which had not met for a few years, are now up and running again. It is a great way for members to get together for the craic, to exchange information and support one another, meet new people and make new friendships. I encourage all of you to join a Social Support Group, if at all possible, – the emphasis being on social. A new initiative has just been launched – a Zoom Social Support Group. This means that no matter where you live you can join in. Don't know how to join a Zoom meeting? I only learned when Covid struck and we couldn't have in-person board meetings. Just give Nuala or Órna a call and they will do their best to get you up and running with Zoom. Then

you will know how to connect with relatives abroad, for example. Great to chat to loved ones in Australia, Canada, the USA, and for me, my brother in Mexico! Why not have your favourite tippie and a mince pie with you as you wish each other a Happy Christmas and New Year. A big "Thank You" to Nuala and Órna, your work is truly appreciated.

In addition to her role as Membership Engagement Officer (MEO), Nuala has been appointed temporarily to take on the role of Membership and Volunteer Recruitment Officer (MVRO). Nuala is looking for members and relatives to volunteer for roles within Polio Survivors Ireland. We have a wonderful tradition of members helping out in all sorts of ways. One gets a real sense of satisfaction in doing something worthwhile. Families in the past have contributed their time and energy, and continue to do so today. We are asking others to step forward and share in this great endeavour. Please, please offer to volunteer and encourage family and friends to do the same. Just call the office and leave your name and contact details for Nuala and she will get in touch. There's a job waiting for everyone. Sometimes it is a group getting together to fill envelopes – such as sending out the notices for the Conference/AGM.

It's a time to meet other members, have a chat, a cuppa and a laugh. As the saying goes, "Many hands make light work."

As you know, we unexpectedly had to move office early in the summer (our landlord decided to sell). All the staff are well settled now in Coleraine House and I thank them for the extra work and energy which they expended to make the move run smoothly.

We are reminding members, about the importance of making a will. We all should make a will, and indeed review and change it, from time to time. After all, the second we die, what we own immediately belongs to someone else! I would ask you to avail of the opportunity to make or review your will with Holohan Lane Solicitors, who offer a free will service to our members. Nowadays people usually leave a donation to a charity in their will. It would be really wonderful, if at the same time you left some money, once your loved ones are taken care of, to Polio Survivors Ireland, as others have done. Leaving a legacy is a powerful way to help your fellow polio survivors in the future..

One of the things that make a good Board is fresh blood joining the board. This brings new views, ideas and fresh energy. It is a very important and vital contribution. Currently there is one place available on the Board for

a polio survivor member to join. So, I ask you to put yourself forward. If several apply then we will have to have an election at the AGM! For those who think the AGM part of the day is a bit of a bore, then this might just spice it up! So do put your hat in the ring. After all, next year there are local elections and for MEPs to the European Parliament, so it would put us "on trend".

While this year has flown, we are also thinking about next year and our Conference/Annual General Meeting. Elsewhere in this magazine I will give you details of a resolution the Board recently proposed and which we would like you to adopt at the Annual General Meeting. So do look out for that spot. I would encourage as many of you as possible to come to our Conference/AGM next June. It is a day when we can all come together and it gives us a sense of who we are. It's also an opportunity to catch up with friends, meet new people and be part a wonderful group with a common cause.

We are working on our New Strategic Plan and we hope to finalise it early in the New Year. The Board may have to make hard choices as we may not be able to do all the things we wish we could for our members. We will do our very utmost to make decisions that are feasible within our resources for the betterment of our members.

Christmas is a time when we like to thank people for all they do for polio survivors. This year I would like to single out one group in particular – the Justice for Polio Survivors Campaign, for their inspiring tenaciousness and perseverance in what can only be described as a really frustrating situation. To my hardworking and dedicated Board members, I say thank you so much. To our wonderful staff, a big thank you, your commitment is truly appreciated by the board and all our members.

'May you all have a blessed Christmas and good health throughout 2024.'

**Nollaig shona agus
Athbhliain faoi
mhaise daoibh.'**



Macrina Clancy
Cathaoirleach

Do you have an URGENT NEED?

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INFORMATION
SUPPORT
ADVOCACY
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Contact Ciara in the office at
01 889 89 20
Or by email asic@polio.ie

Contact Kathy in the office at
01 889 89 20
Or by email sic@polio.ie

Leave more than a Legacy – leave a lifeline

By Aidan Doyle

A will is a legal document in which you can personally choose how and where your assets are distributed after your death. It is a very important document that everyone should have. In a will, after looking after your family and friends, you also have the option to leave a legacy gift. This is a sum of money that can be left to a charity that focuses on a cause you care about and that is close to your heart. A legacy is a very generous way to benefit people far into the future, beyond your death. It is tax free and can be of any amount of money.

Polio Survivors Ireland relies on donations to put towards the expenses

that a charity like ours encounters. We do not receive any funding towards our Winter Heating Grant that we give those on low incomes to help towards energy costs. You could leave a legacy of €125 to keep one survivor warm. If you can leave €500 that would help us give four heating grants. A legacy of €5,000 would help us keep as many as forty polio survivors warm in winter. These are just some examples of the expenses a legacy might support.

If you would like further information on making a will, our friends at Holohan Lane would be happy to help you. If you have any questions, contact our office, 01 889 8920.

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 and Alan will
explain everything you need to know to draft your will.**



World Polio Day 2023

World Polio Day takes place on the 24th of October every year. It was established on this day to commemorate the birth of Dr Jonas Salk, who led the first team to develop a vaccine against poliomyelitis. While there is no cure for polio, it is preventable through vaccination.

Every year on this date, polio survivors remind the world that “we’re still here!” It is so important that we celebrate the availability of the polio vaccine, and also that we support those who were unfortunate enough to have contracted polio when babies or young children. Polio Survivors Ireland is the only organisation providing practical support to polio survivors in Ireland, all of whom will have increasing needs as they age.

Celebrating with Rotary

To celebrate and mark this year’s World Polio Day, the Rotary Club, Dublin invited a speaker from Polio Survivors Ireland to their meeting in the Grand Canal Hotel, on Monday 23rd October.

The meeting was opened with a video message from Rotary International President Gordon McNally regarding Rotary’s End Polio Now campaign.

Before introducing our speaker, the late Nuala Harnett was mentioned by a fellow Rotarian. Nuala had been a member of this club and was fondly remembered as an active participant and wonderful contributor to their work. Just as Nuala

is remembered by our own members, having been the driving force behind Polio & Us, the book she edited and helped produce in 2007.

Following a tasty lunch, our staff member, Emma Clarke Conway was invited to speak about the work of Polio Survivors Ireland and the challenges and issues faced by polio survivors. A show of hands demonstrated that nearly everyone in the room had known or knew a polio survivor. Following Emma’s talk, there were some interesting questions and recollections from the floor.

It was a lovely opportunity to celebrate World Polio Day with Rotarians and to remember past members and also to speak about the issues facing polio survivors now. We are very grateful to the Rotary Club Dublin for inviting us to be part of this day.



Pictured are Emma Clarke Conway, Polio Survivors Ireland and Rotary Club Dublin’s President Dr Delma Sweeney.

Media Activity – WPD & Budget 2024

Ahead of World Polio Day (WPD) we sent out a press release regarding our reaction to Budget 2024. We were very disappointed with the lack of adequate financial supports to combat energy poverty, inflation and cost-of-living for polio survivors. We outlined the issue of energy poverty and its impact on polio survivors, suffering a severe intolerance to cold. We had urged the government to automatically provide Fuel Allowance to polio survivors, who rely on heating their homes all-year round. The return of energy credit payments is welcomed, however this payment is at a reduced rate compared to the previous budget. Once-off measures are not the solution for tackling the cost-of living crisis. It is unacceptable that many polio survivors still face another winter of enduring cold intolerance, severe burning pains, pins and needles, and the risk of hypothermia. A staggering 78% of Polio Survivors Ireland’s membership lives in consistent poverty or is at risk of falling into poverty. Our membership is a prime example of income disparity across aging individuals with disabilities. Polio survivors and other aging individuals with disabilities should not be expected to manage on the same income as those without a disability.

On foot of the press release, we secured media coverage in the Irish Times, featuring Evelyn Wainwright, and the Irish Independent, with Mick Keegan interviewed. Both painted the picture of what life is like for those who are struggling with the high cost of heat during the winter. The articles were published around World Polio Day, once again reminding the public ‘*we’re still here*’.



Zoom Café event

On 26th October 2023, we were delighted to be invited to be part of a panel of speakers, by the British Polio Fellowship for their World Polio Day Zoom Café, marking the occasion with different polio organisations from across the world, speaking about how they support the polio community in their respective countries. The event was in a Q&A format, with questions on the challenges faced by the Polio community and what organisations such as ourselves can do to meet those challenges. There was a lively discussion, including around the definition of Post Polio Syndrome and it was very interesting to hear what is going on around the world, while we all face similar issues in different environments.

A Services Story *By Aidan Doyle*

At Polio Survivors Ireland, each of our members has a story. Sometimes by sharing these stories, we can show you how we can help and how you can benefit from our services.

In this case, our member is a woman who contracted the poliovirus as a child in her home country. Since then, she has been living with muscular atrophy, a long lasting effect of polio. She struggles to bear her own body weight, requiring the use of crutches.

She came to Ireland as a refugee, to a direct provision reception centre in Dublin. She learned that there are some college scholarships for people in similar situations. She wanted to qualify in the humanities or social work sector to help people in situations like herself. She received a four-year scholarship. However, this meant she had to get two buses to college and two buses back again, while on crutches. Despite the difficulties she faced, college motivated her. She reached out to us and we knew we had to help.

Firstly, we provided her with a raincoat to keep her dry when waiting for the bus. In terms of mobility, a powered wheelchair would make a significant impact on her life. Unfortunately, the HSE did not have funding for this. We funded an assessment with an Occupational Therapist. This assessment

recommended that it was necessary for her to have a powered wheelchair. The cost of this was approximately ten thousand euro. It was impossible for her to afford this. We were able to fund a chair that addressed her specific need, i.e., when using public bus services. This wheelchair is her lifeline. Upon leaving direct provision, she was put on a waiting list for housing in the local area. From a travel point of view, she needed to be based nearer to college. We advocated to get her accommodated on the housing list closer to the university. Eventually, we got her accommodation in a more suitable area, making her journey much shorter.

She is now in year three of college and is living independently. Her life has been significantly changed, due to reaching out for support. She tells us that while we were invaluable with the tangible support, i.e., winter clothing and the powered wheelchair, it was the positive experience she had with the organisation that benefited her and keeps her motivated today. She found a safe environment to discuss her fears and her aspirations. She felt listened to and still relies on the close relationships and secure support network she found at the office, to enable her to change and achieve things. She is just one of the many polio survivors that we are inspired by and who we are delighted to have been able to help.

Telephone Support

By Mya O'Reilly

If you are one of our members looking for a friendly chat with someone and opportunities to connect with others, Telephone Support could benefit you greatly.

At Polio Survivors Ireland we provide a service called Telephone Support. It is a great service for our members to connect with one another and to get social support.

There are two different services available to use in telephone support. RingRing which is a one-to-one contact service and PhoneChat, which is a type of telephone conferencing so members can chat in a group.

Member, Susan Dowling, who was the past co-ordinator of Telephone Support, has shared a great story of two ladies who she paired up to meet through Telephone Support.

The two ladies enjoyed talking to one another over the phone and became friends. One of the ladies told Susan that she would love to meet the lady she talked with in person.

At the time the annual Conference was coming up, and Susan thought that these two members might meet there.

While at the Conference, Susan was sitting with one of the ladies at a table.

"Little did this lady know that her friend from telephone support was sitting at the table right next to us," said Susan.

Susan had a quick word to make sure it was alright to introduce them, as confidentiality is an important aspect for those giving and receiving the support.

After Susan introduced them, these ladies swung their arms around each other. They then spent the rest of the day together.

Through telephone support they have made great friends. What a difference a listening ear can make.



***This service is available to you
through Polio Survivors Ireland.
Contact 01 889 8920
to find out more.***

Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland Energy Upgrade Scheme



The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) provides free home energy upgrades for people who meet certain criteria. These upgrades help improve the energy efficiency and warmth of your home and can also be known as the Warmer Homes Scheme. The aim of the Scheme is to make eligible homes warmer, healthier and cheaper to run. The scheme prioritises the oldest and least energy efficient homes.

Liam Sweeney, who is a member of Polio Survivors Ireland, spotted an article about the scheme in the Winter 2021 edition of Survivor and made an application. He was approved and his home has now received upgraded insulation, a heating system, and an upgraded boiler - all for free! Liam wanted to raise awareness among other polio survivors about the scheme, since he has found the upgrades make a huge difference in keeping his home warm. It's easy to apply and the rewards are worth it!

You need to meet these 3 criteria to apply for the Fully Funded Energy Upgrade Scheme.

1. You must own and occupy your home.
2. Your home was built and occupied before 2006.
3. You receive one of the following welfare payments:
 - Fuel Allowance as part of the National Fuel Scheme.
 - Job Seekers Allowance for over six months and have a child under 7.
 - Working Family Payment

- One-Parent Family Payment
- Domiciliary Carers Allowance
- Carers Allowance (and live with the person you are caring for)
- Disability Allowance for over six months and have a child under 7.



You can apply online or contact the Polio Survivors Ireland office to get the form printed and sent to you. SEAI is now partnering with the Department of Social Protection to make verification of your welfare payment easy, so you will need to share your PPSN and date of birth in your application, so that SEAI can determine whether or not you are eligible.

If you qualify for the scheme because you are getting Carers Allowance, you must also complete the Carers Allowance Confirmation Form.



Other evidence you will need:

- MPRN – the 11-digit number located on your electricity bill.
- Proof of owning your home, for example a copy of your Home Insurance Policy (or) a copy of the title deed (or) a recent Local Property Tax Letter.

*The SEAI website has more information at www.seai.ie under grants.
You can also apply online from there.*

The Last Step By Macrina Clancy

Cast your mind back to 2017! That was the year when we asked you, the members, to change our operating/brand name to Polio Survivors Ireland. By now it is very well established, and the name change has been very successful in supporting new member recruitment. At that time, we chose not to change our registered name in the company's office.

At a recent board meeting, it was agreed that now is the time to fully complete the change, and so, we will be calling on you at our next AGM to adopt a resolution to change our registered company name from Post Polio Support Group to Polio Survivors Ireland.

Why bother? Well, potential donors nowadays regularly go to the Charities Regulators website to check on a charity before deciding to donate. If one does and enters the name Polio Survivors Ireland, the answer comes up as "not registered" because this is not our registered name in the company's office. We cannot apply to funders under Polio Survivors Ireland for the same reason. This can cause confusion with funders and could give rise to unfounded questions about us to potential donors, as a charity. It is the view of the board that the time has come to make it easier for both funders and donors to know us as Polio Survivors Ireland, which is now known by our families, friends, and the media.

Make Way Day 2023

The 22nd September was
#MakeWayDay23!

#MakeWayDay is about raising awareness about the obstacles that people with disabilities come across while using the public spaces which we all share.

The Disability Federation of Ireland asked supporters to take pictures of the obstacles they encountered in their daily journeys, such as parked cars on footpaths, bikes chained to railings, sandwich boards and overhanging branches.



Below are some examples of obstacles sent in to us by our members.

If you have any photos of obstacles you'd like us to post to social media, it can help DFI to continue to highlight all the ways in which people should "make way" all year round.



Area Meetings

Area Meetings are ongoing around the country, with our Member Engagement Officers, Nuala and Órna, meeting with members and people on our Polio Register. They are being joined by Aidan Gleeson, who is assisting us with a number of projects, including Active Member Development, Fundraising and some training.

Nenagh

Pictured below is the North Tipperary Area Meeting, which took place in the Abbey Court hotel, Nenagh on 14th November with eleven members and their partners in attendance.

Órna and Aidan report that there was a very good discussion on Active membership. Two of the attendees had never been to a meeting with Polio Survivors Ireland before. It was a very vibrant meeting, with lots of chat over lunch!



Drogheda & Cavan

MEO Nuala is pictured with members who attended the Area Meeting in Glenside Hotel, in the Glenside Hotel, Drogheda, on October 16th. Another meeting was held on the 17th October in the Hotel Kilmore.

Nuala and Aidan felt that both meetings went really well, and there was great energy and enthusiasm from those who attended, with a strong interest in re-establishing the SSGs. Given the time of year, one of the topics people were most interested in was what cost of energy supports are available.

We are ten months into our Member Engagement Officer (MEO) roles and to say it's been hectic is an understatement! However, it has also been interesting, inspirational, enlightening and enjoyable.

Over the past ten months, we have been organising and hosting Area Meetings and assisting the Social Support Groups. After a rocky, but encouraging start, we are delighted that our very first Online Social Support Group (OSSG) takes place on 5th December, and with lots more to come in 2024. We hope these new online groups will offer a new lease of life and interest for many members. The online option can open doors in all sorts of ways, and we intend to help groups explore new and enjoyable ways to engage. We are always interested in hearing from those who might like to join in. Please get in touch and we can tell you what it's all about and provide any assistance you may need to get involved.

Every time we meet a group, or an individual member, we experience a growth-spurt - in both our understanding of the daily lives of polio survivors, and our admiration for polio survivors. We have learned that 'survivor' is indeed a very accurate term. You are a unique community and we have learned so much from you in a short time.

Along with encouragement and

guidance from the members, we are enjoying a very supportive working relationship with our colleagues. Without both members and colleagues, we simply couldn't do our job. We believe that this support has helped us to feel part of this busy, ambitious, and passionate member-led organisation. The welcomes we receive, time and again, allows us to develop strong and meaningful connections and will help us foster further positive growth and developments in 2024.

The new year will see us back out on the road, helping to re-establish and support our fantastic SSGs, hosting Area Meetings, meeting Members, attending events, looking and planning forward, working hard and learning more.

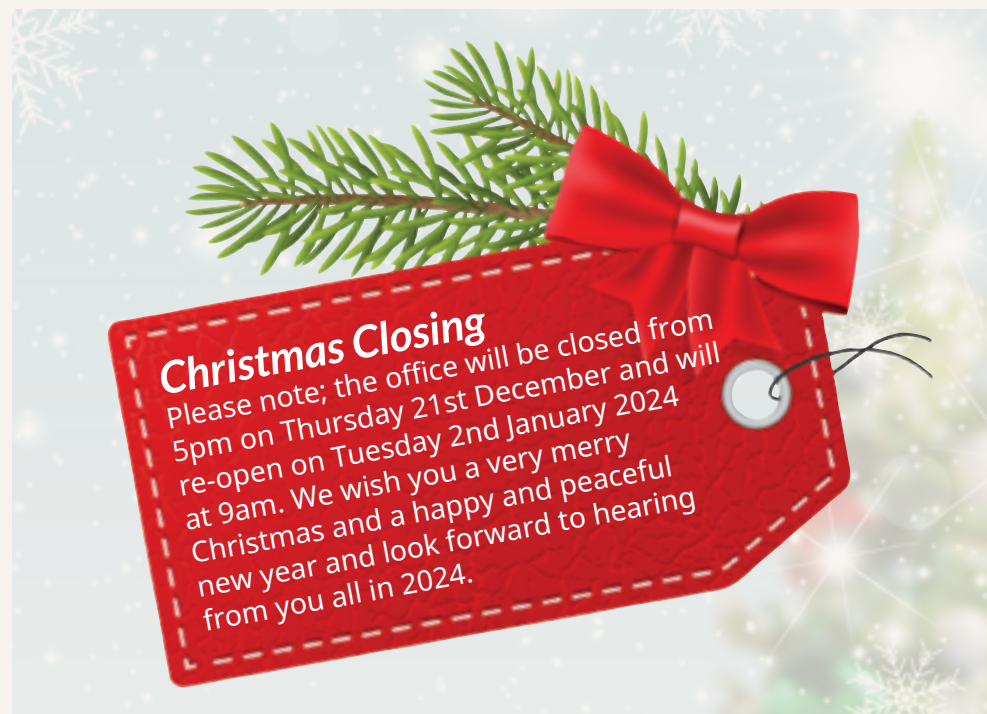
Now that we have many SSGs up and running again, a main focus will be on engaging with individual members of the organisation. With approximately 1,000 members in the country, there is a lot to do and many members we have yet to link in with. As each week passes, we feel that we are getting closer to our goal of supporting members more, and in a better way. It is taking time, but we ARE getting there. So, please bear with us and do not hesitate to get in touch if you feel that we can help in any way. We are only a phone call away, and we can assure you, we will do our utmost to assist you.

SEND US YOUR HELPFUL TIPS

Do you have a 'simple but effective' tip that could help your fellow polio survivors, on how to cope with reduced mobility or everyday challenges around the house?

An example of what we are looking for: a member was struggling while standing at the sink to peel potatoes. Someone suggested sitting down while peeling. It has made a world of difference.

Send your tips to Megan and we will feature a selection in the next Survivor! Email cfa@polio.ie, call 01 889 8920 or write to Polio Survivors Ireland, Coleraine House, Coleraine Street, Dublin 7.



Pioneer in Science

Jean Goulding

By Jackie Minnock

I often listen to the podcast Desert Island Discs the well-known show from BBC Radio 4. While listening to a recent episode I came across Jean Golding. She is a British Epidemiologist and founder of the ground-breaking, Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children; also known as Children of the Nineties. Jean is also Emeritus Professor of Paediatric and Perinatal Epidemiology at Bristol University, UK.

Born in Cornwall in 1939, Jean spent short periods of time in hospital as a young child due to recurrent tuberculosis. Her family moved to Chester and when she was thirteen, she contracted polio. She spent three months in hospital, and was off school for one year.

She speaks of both her hospitalisations as being formidable and formative periods of her life. As a very young child she vividly remembers there being no Children's Ward in the hospital where she was. Children were placed in cots and put in the centre of the Women's Ward and there were no parental hospital visits allowed due to T.B. This had a lasting effect. She never liked being the centre of attention, or having people look at her. Being solitary was her preferred option.



When she contracted polio hospitalisation was familiar to her. She felt she was more interested in listening and looking at what was happening around her; yet still preferring her solitude.

Despite the absences she quickly caught up at school. She always felt different from the other pupils, not alone because she was disabled, but there was also a 'class' difference. On Desert Island Discs she recalls how all the pupils wore plimsolls shoes and therefore there was no noise on the corridors as pupils moved about. Because she wore a calliper she could be heard walking on the corridors no matter where she was. This is a lasting memory for her of school days. She never really made friends and knew that the teachers had told the pupils to 'be nice' to her. She just wanted to be treated 'as normal'.

Despite all this she went on to do a mathematics degree at Oxford University in 1958. She achieved a B.A. and followed this with an M.A. At the failure of her marriage in 1964 she was looking for work that could be done from home as she had children to look after. She answered an advert which was looking for "someone who could do calculations and work for a research group from home". This work was looking at still-births and their causes in a particular area over a set period of time. This work would lead Jean to her eventual profession as an Epidemiologist.

In 1970 she continued research work in Oxford. She recounts being a woman, and a disabled woman, in those days was a hindrance but she was stubborn and decided to show them that she was not equal to a male scientist but better! This was not the first or last time that she would encounter difficulties in her professional life.

Her breakthrough work took place in 1989 – details on Desert Island Discs & www.bristol.ac.uk/alspac - centred on the area of Avon in UK. The impact of her study has reached far and wide and continues to do so today.



Her joys, in recent years, have been listed as:

- *a powered wheelchair to assist her in getting around*
- *2012 being awarded an OBE for services to medical science*
- *2016 Bristol University created a Jean Golding Institute for data science and data intensive research unit*
- *2018 for the 70th anniversary of the NHS she was named as one of seven NHS Research Legends*

At the age of 65 retirement was very difficult for her. She was allowed to remain as part of her research work rather than heading it. This option gave her the choice to continue what she loved. In a similar way as many polio survivors, she continues to offer her gifts and they are being readily accepted.

Resulting from her polio her parents and family said she was stubborn. She rose to every challenge that came, and comes, her way. When she encountered obstacles she went through them rather than round them – does that sound familiar?

Check out the Podcast – Desert Island Discs – wherever you get your podcasts or a Google search: Desert Island Discs and look for the episode on Jean Golding.

Gifts

Cathryn Duane

Oh, to feel the wind on my face,
Touch your hand and feel your warm embrace.

Oh, to taste the food and wine
To aid my health and growth in time.

Oh, the smell of fragrant flowers
New mown hay and summer showers.

Oh, to see a smiling face,
A new born baby full of grace.

Oh, to hear the sound of music
That soothes and heals our souls.

The sound of the breaking waves
On the sea shore.

The birds' dawn chorus,
The joy, the laughter.

Life is a gift with all these senses
Could one ask for more?

Taken from our publication, The Arts & Us, 2009

Constant

Brendan Moore

I know someone who is constant
Who has stood by me through good and bad
Who is always there in times of need
That person is my friend!



Social
Support
Groups

CORK

CORK SOCIAL SUPPORT
SUMMER GET TOGETHER



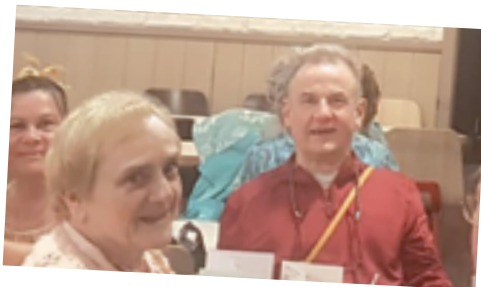
The Cork Social Support Group met up on the 26th August, in the Route 14 restaurant. They had a lovely private room and bar and over thirty members and friends attended, including Member Engagement Office, Órna Maddock. The food was great, with lots of chat. So many of us were delighted to be able to get together and catch up. Our next meeting is just before Christmas.



Photos of the Cork Social Support Group enjoying their day.

DUBLIN NORTH

DUBLIN NORTH CITY NIGHT OUT



The Dublin North City group decided this year to have an evening outing for their annual get together, rather than meeting up in the day. This change turned out to be a big success. They met in the Blanchardstown Shopping Centre at half four and had something to eat, before heading across the road to the Theatre. Eleven members went to the Furey Brothers show, which

started at eight o'clock. It was most enjoyable. The theatre caters very well for wheelchairs. The secret is to book when the tickets come on sale and buy in bulk so you have a good choice of seating and can bring as many people as you wish. The group also managed to celebrate three birthdays! Brigid and Tom provided the cake.

◆ GALWAY TRIP

DUBLIN NORTH CITY

A great time was had by all, with compliments to our organiser, on our three day trip to the Clybaun Hotel, Galway, a four star venue with swimming pool facilities. We had a wonderful time, people getting to know each other and enjoying the fun.

We were a group of thirty seven, which was really good and the weather was kind to us. A public bus runs every thirty minutes from outside the grounds of the hotel, with one space for a wheelchair or scooter, which was a big bonus as it gave wheelchair users independence.

Our official photographer, Thomas, managed to take a photo representing one person from Kildare, Cork, Bray, Laois/Offaly, Dublin North and Dublin South (see the photo in the garden). This will encourage more people to join us on our next trip.

We are blessed that we had Marty and Jimmy running the sing song nightly as they are very gifted guitar players. We had a few comedians also along with the singers.



NOTICE BOARD

What is the Senior Alert Scheme?

The purpose of the scheme is to enable older people to continue to live securely in their homes with confidence, independence and peace of mind by providing them with a personal monitored alarm. If the person is in difficulty, they can just press the alarm and help will be on the way.

The alarm can be worn as a pendant or around the wrist like a watch. When pressed, it connects wirelessly to a base unit, usually attached to a phone. This immediately sends a call to a 24-hour monitoring centre, which will try to communicate with you. If you are unable to answer or respond, they will contact a pre-chosen family member/neighbour or contact person.

How can you get an alarm?

- ▶ If you live in the Dublin Northwest area, simply contact Yvonne 01 8361666 (Option 3 for Ballymun Office) and she will apply on your behalf.
- ▶ If you live outside this area contact Pobal on 01 5117 222 for information.



Who is eligible to apply for an alarm?

- ▶ You need to be over 65. If two people over 65 live in the same home you can both get a pendant.
- ▶ You need to be able to benefit from the equipment supplied.
- ▶ You can apply on behalf of a loved one or neighbour, however, the application must be in their name.

How much will it cost?

- ▶ If you have a landline, you get the equipment and first year's monitoring free, after that, it costs €66 per year for monitoring.
- ▶ If you do NOT have a landline, you will be charged €6 per month for a GSM Sim from the beginning. ➡

NOTICE BOARD

How long does it take?

- ▶ Once your application has been approved it takes approximately 2 – 3 weeks for it to be installed.
- ▶ It is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and administered by Pobal.

The Senior Alarm gives you peace of mind, reassurance and confidence knowing that help is just the press of a button away.

Come to Westport

February 2024 - Dublin North City Social Support Group

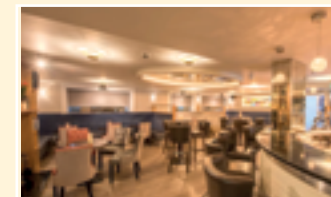
Any members (from any part of the country) who would like to join us on our three day trip to Westport in February 2024, are welcome. We stay in the **Clew Bay Hotel, Westport**, which is family run. We have lots of time to spend chatting and we have a sing song at night. During the day, feel free to go up the town, as the hotel is located in the of Westport.

Cost: Per person sharing is €240, incl., three dinners. **Single rooms** will cost €340, including three dinners.

They do not have disability accessible rooms left, but if you have a walking stick or crutches, the hotel is very manageable.

Ring the Clew Bay Hotel direct and tell them you are travelling with the Polio Survivors on the following dates:

18th 19th and 20th February, 2024.
Call 098 28088.



CLEWBAYHOTEL

...in the heart of Westport

NOTICE BOARD

European Health Insurance Card

We have put together some helpful information about the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) and how to apply for one. Applying for and receiving an EHIC is free.



Where can I use it?

You can use your European Health Insurance Card in any EU state, and in Switzerland, Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein. You can't use the card in Andorra or Monaco.

What does it cover?

Your EHIC covers free or reduced cost public healthcare over a temporary period of up to 3 months. It also covers healthcare for pre-existing medical conditions while you are in the country.

What does it not cover?

- ▶ The EHIC can't be used to fly you home to Ireland, even for a medical reason.
- ▶ It can't cover any private healthcare or lost/stolen property.
- ▶ It won't cover your expenses if you are only travelling to obtain medical treatment.
- ▶ It can't be used if you move to that country permanently.

Will I have to pay anything for healthcare with my EHIC?

It depends on the country and the service. The EHIC card does not guarantee free services. It simply makes sure that you can access healthcare at the same cost as people insured in that country.

How to apply

If you are an Irish citizen or an EU citizen living in Ireland, you can apply for an EHIC:

- ▶ In person
- ▶ Online - if you have a medical card or drug payment scheme card and you live in Ireland

How do I renew my card?

Renewing your EHIC is free. You must apply to renew your Card as they are not reissued automatically when they expire. You will need your old EHIC number and your PPS number.

NOTICE BOARD

Auto Advice - by Brendan Moore

Are you hiring a car, or getting a loan of a car via your insurance company, while yours is being repaired? Here are some tips:

- ▶ Generally, you need a valid driving license, photo ID and to get your insurance transferred to the hired/loaned car.
- ▶ Check there are no hidden faults!
- ▶ Leave the car in the same state you picked it up.
- ▶ Refuel the car before returning it and keep the receipt for your reference, so you can prove that you did.



What should I look for when I collect the car?

- ▶ Have a good look around the vehicle interior and exterior.
- ▶ Make sure every mark or blemish is noted on the contract of hire, otherwise you could be liable for pre-existing ones when you return the vehicle.
- ▶ Take some photos and videos of the car from every possible angle before you leave.
- ▶ Ensure you get the agreement signed by a representative of the hire company and do the same when you return the car.

Tips for hitting the road!

- ▶ Always make sure you are familiar with the spare tyre mechanism. Some cars don't have spare tyres so it's worth checking.
- ▶ Familiarise yourself with the controls.
- ▶ Expect the unexpected on the roads.
- ▶ Above all, ensure you park your hire car somewhere secure - a well-lit location with all valuables out of the vehicle.
- ▶ You will be charged for damage to the vehicle, no matter if you didn't do it.
- ▶ The vehicle is your responsibility as long as it is in your possession.

Be safe on the road: obey speed signs, indicate correctly, and keep your distance. Happy Driving!

FUNDRAISING NEWS

Survivor Sweepstakes Winter 2024 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 Winter 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 Autumn 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

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

**Please return entries by
Thursday 5th January
2024**

– and make sure to provide a phone number (or address), so we can contact you if you win.

**We will run the draw on
Friday 13th January 2024**

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

Match 4 numbers to win €1,000 plus 3 Lucky Dips of €50

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 30

FUNDRAISING NEWS

Survivor Sweepstakes Autumn Draw Results



Our Survivor Sweepstakes Autumn Draw has taken place. The draw took place on Tuesday 17th October 2023, in the office in Coleraine House, witnessed by Julia Corey, Research Officer, Mental Health Reform.

The four numbers drawn were 12, 18, 19 and 25.

No-one matched four numbers on this occasion.

However, we are delighted to announce that our €50 lucky dip winners are Anne Pepper, John O'Donnell and John Dooley.

You can check this link for Match 4 proof:

<https://www.randomresult.com/ticket.php?t=3515937LM5VQ39BN6>

€50 lucky dip winners:

<https://www.randomresult.com/ticket.php?t=3515938GMJW6JHLXM>

Congratulations to our winners – we love ringing with good news!

We would like to thank all our members and friends who supported this draw again, which is such an important contribution to our fundraising. We are so very grateful. Money raised by the Survivor Sweepstakes Member Draw goes directly to helping polio survivors.

Our next draw is with this issue.

FUNDRAISING NEWS

Gino's Diner donation to Polio charity

Polio Survivors Ireland was delighted to receive over €400 from the staff and customers at Gino's Diner.



Pictured are one of the staff members with the presentation of the cheque to our member, Brendan Moore.

With two locations in Clanbrassil Street and Blackrock, Gino's Diner has two Polio Survivors Ireland collection boxes at their tills. Despite the move from cash to 'tap' in recent times, this is a fantastic amount of money to have raised from the generosity of the customers coming into the two premises. We are very grateful to all the customers of these establishments, who have shown such great support over the years. Donations go directly to helping people who might need help maintaining their mobility, preventing falls and staying independent, despite their disabilities caused by polio.

Covid Top-up

Unfortunately, covid is doing the rounds once again. Please top-up your immunity with the COVID-19 and flu vaccines to make sure you're protected in the months ahead. Many pharmacies are offering this service now. If you are 65 or over, book an appointment for your COVID-19 and flu vaccines. Call HSELive to find out where is offering vaccines near you, or to find out which dose you are due. Freephone: 1800 700 700.

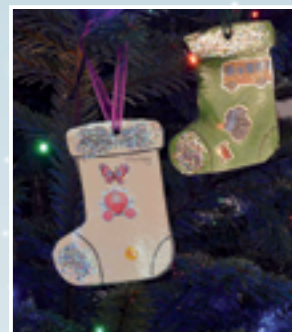


Freephone:
1800 700 700.

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

Olive Haslam, Catherine (Dolly) Lawlor, Patrick Moyles, Bridie McGill, Evelyn Rose Devereux, Michael Cawley, William Nugent, Phyllis Pike, Tom Shanagher and Stephanie Blake-Ryan.

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



Christmas Images by Edwin Bailey

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 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 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 – winning numbers can be checked each draw by using an assigned ticket number, to be advertised on www.polio.ie and in The Survivor magazine. Judges' decision is final.



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advice through our comprehensive combination of product
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We are a leading provider of mobility solutions throughout Dublin, Leinster, and all over Ireland. Since 1999, we have been dedicated to improving the lives of our customers by providing top-quality stairlifts, home lifts, wetrooms, mobility scooters, powerchairs, and more.



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