

SPRING 2024 Vol 21 Issue 1

THE SURVIVOR

Irish Polio News

Polio
Survivors
Ireland



Spring - Phoenix Park - Dublin

Megan Saunders Smith

Tuttys

Shoemakers since 1946

At Tuttys we design
footwear that works for you.



CONTACT US TODAY!

Call: 045-876879 • Email: info@tuttys.ie

www.tuttys.ie

Contents

From the Chair – <i>Chairperson's Address</i>	3
AGM Minutes 2023	5
Conference	8
Everyday Tips	10
Ottobok & Orthotics	11
Rotary Talk	12
Member Engagement	13
MVRO Update	14
Assisted Decision Making	15
Public Service Friendly Society	16
Past Times	17
Poetry Corner	19
Social Support Groups	20
Notice Board	24
Fundraising News	27

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,

It is lovely to see the daffodils, "fluttering and dancing in the breeze"

as Wordsworth said, putting a smile on our faces and hope in our hearts for a lovely spring and summer ahead.

What's happening at the moment? The development of our new Strategic Plan for the next few years is now coming together. The surveys are completed, as are the consultations with focus groups, staff and board members. All this has taken time, so now the task is to draw all these together and then for the Board to make decisions as to what are priorities and which we consider are feasible to implement. It is always very difficult to make these decisions, as naturally, we would love to do everything our members suggested. However, we must be mindful of our resources, both personnel and financial and arrive at what we

hope is practical and realistic. Bear in mind that there is always a willing, listening ear from our dedicated staff, so even if your individual need does not appear in the plan, make contact all the same - there could be a solution or suggestion that will help, and it is good to talk things through.

Ciara Power, our Advocacy officer, is currently on maternity leave. We offer her our congratulations. We are looking to appoint a researcher to take on research work during her leave.

Some sad news, we have lost Gill from the office at Easter. Gill has been a stalwart on the administrative side and she will be sorely missed. On behalf of the board and all our members, we wish her every happiness for the future.

On a happier note, you will be delighted to know that Kerrie has returned to us from her maternity leave. A big "thank you" to Kathy for covering for her during her leave.



Plans for our Conference and AGM are coming together with details elsewhere in the magazine. More information on the Conference and our speakers, will follow in our next mailing.

One of the items on the AGM agenda will be the proposal to change our legal name "Post Polio Support Group" to the same as our operational name "Polio Survivors Ireland". The reason for this is because, now that we are known as "Polio Survivors Ireland" we have to explain to funders and potential funders, that actually our legal name is Post Polio Support Group". Also, if anyone looks us up on the Charities Regulator's website Polio Survivors Ireland comes up "not registered" and of course we are, but under our legal name. So, this does not look good.

Overall, it is the firm opinion of the Board that now is the time to simplify matters and change our legal name so that our legal name is the same as our operational name – Polio Survivors Ireland. We therefore ask you to vote "Yes" in favour of the change – our very own referendum!

Recently Mary Byrne, one of our directors, decided to stand down from the Board due to ill-health. On behalf of all the board, I want to say a big thank you to Mary for her wise council and hard work as board director, we shall miss you. We wish Mary a speedy recovery and good health going forward.

Macrina Clancy
Cathaoirleach



Annual AGM 2023

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Post Polio Support Group CLG

Thursday, 22nd June 2023 in the Mount Wolseley Hotel, Tullow, Co. Carlow

The Chair, Macrina Clancy, opened the meeting at 2:15pm. She welcomed the members present in person and those attending via Zoom. She declared that the required quorum of 20 members present or by proxy was met.

Minutes of last year's AGM

The minutes of the 2022 AGM were circulated to members in advance. Joan Gargan proposed, and Terry Fairtlough seconded the adoption of the minutes.

Matters Arising

No matters arising were raised.

Chair's Report

The Chairperson then delivered her report. Macrina highlighted some key figures from last year. The organisation recorded a loss of just over €13,000 reflecting increasing costs coming out of Covid. 338 people directly sought help from the office for a variety of services and supports with 68 members provided with an Aid or Appliance, 53 members supported with therapies and separately 386 members benefitted from the Winter Heating Grant. A major milestone was securing funding from Pobal under the

SSNO programme for 2½ years. This funding is supporting the appointment of three new staff. Macrina introduced the two new part-time Member Engagement Officers, Órna Maddock and Nuala McLaughlin, and the new part-time Advocacy Officer, Ciara Power. With the threat from Covid receding, the Chair was delighted to report that most social support groups resumed in-person meetings and events. Finally, the Chair updated the meeting on the European Parliament of Persons with Disabilities in May 2023 that she attended as part of a delegation organised by DFI. She drew members attention to two issues that arose, a manifesto for disability issues for the next European Election and the European Disability Card.

The Chair's report was adopted by the meeting on a proposal by Pat Ryan, seconded by Peter Barron.

Company Secretary's Report

The Company Secretary, Fintan Foy, updated the meeting on the number of Board and Board Sub-committee meetings that took place in 2022 and confirmed that the organisation had made all the required returns to the regulatory bodies. Fintan advised the AGM that James Doorley had completed his three year term as a Board Nominated Director but that the Board had nominated him for a further three year term subject to ratification by this AGM.

He also described how, in accordance with the constitution, Zaynab Salman, Charlie Smith & Macrina Clancy were stepping down from the Board at this year's AGM but were offering themselves for re-election. Pat Ryan was co-opted by the Board during the previous year and was also standing for election to the Board, along with former Board Director Pat McGillion. As the number of vacancies was greater than the number of nominations for Elected Director, Fintan declared all these candidates duly elected. Finally, Fintan explained that the Charities Regulator had asked the organisation to make some changes to clauses in its constitution to bring it more in line with the Regulator's guidelines. The Board was recommending that the members approve these amendments to the constitution. The Company Secretary's report was then adopted on a proposal by Susan Dowling, seconded by Mary Byrne.

Treasurer's Presentation

The Treasurer, Miriam Kavanagh, presented a series of slides summarising key data from the Financial Statements for 2022. These included a breakdown of the main sources of income. On the expenditure side the Treasurer's presentation contained graphs illustrating expenditure across all the main headings in the accounts and provided a breakdown of expenditure

within these headings with a particular focus on service delivery expenditure. She reported that overall, the organisation recorded a loss of €13,073 for 2022. Finally, Miriam displayed a chart on income & expenditure trends that showed how income increased in 2022 for the first time in many years reflecting the securing of the SSNO grant. The Treasurer then called for any questions. Peter Barron asked why all the presentation was in graphs and could there not be a slide showing all the expenditure in a list as they would appear in the accounts. Miriam asked the CEO, Fran Brennan, to respond. Fran explained that all the members received a set of accounts in the post and there were further copies available at the conference. Therefore, there did not appear to be any need to repeat this format in the presentation and the use of charts and graphics was purely to make the figures more user friendly. However, he agreed that such a slide could be included next year if there was a demand for it.

The Treasurer's report was then adopted by the meeting on a proposal by Peter Barron seconded by Pat Skehan.

Annual AGM 2023

Resolutions

The Chair then introduced the four resolutions to be considered. She advised delegates that a significant number of proxy votes had been received by post and would be added to those votes cast by members present in person and online.

Resolution 1, approval of the audited accounts for 2022 was proposed by James Doorley, seconded by Mary Byrne and passed by 163 votes in favour, 1 abstention and 1 vote against.

Resolution 2, the appointment of BMOL Accountants as auditors for 2023 was proposed by Pat Ryan, seconded by Mick Keegan and passed by 170 votes in favour, 1 abstention and 1 vote against.

Resolution 3, the ratification of James Doorley as a Board Nominated Director for another three year term was proposed by Zaynab Salman, seconded by Robert Alcorn and approved by 174 votes in favour, 1 abstention and 1 vote against.

Finally, **Resolution 4**, amendments to the Constitution in accordance with guidance from the Charities Regulator was proposed by Pat Skehan, seconded by Mary Byrne and carried by 169 voted in favour, 3 abstentions and 2 votes against.

The Chair then declared all the resolutions adopted and thanked all the members who voted.

AOB

The Chair asked the members present and online if anyone wished to raise anything under Any Other Business. Susan Dowling asked for a few minutes to update members on the Justice for Polio Survivors campaign. She explained that the campaign was receiving pro bono legal advice and was preparing a complaint to be submitted to the Charities Regulator. She asked any members who wished to help the campaign to speak to her in the foyer after the AGM.

Anne Shanahan welcomed the appointment of new staff in recent months and asked these staff members to stand up and introduce themselves to the members. The staff then all did so and briefly outlined their roles.

As no other matters were raised the Chair declared the meeting closed and thanked all those who attended in person and online and those who voted by proxy.

Conference & AGM 2024

We are delighted to announce that the 2024 Conference & AGM will take place in the Tullamore Court Hotel, on Thursday 13th June, from 11am. We include hotel rates and directions in this edition of Survivor magazine.

The Conference is a key event in our calendar every year, being an opportunity to report on the work of the organisation. It is also an important time for members old and new to come together and share experiences. Staff are always delighted to put faces to names and the involvement of our many volunteers, makes it a convivial and enjoyable day for all.

We will have plenty to look forward to this year – our Keynote Speaker giving the Joan Bradley Memorial Address,

Presentation of the Jim Costello Award, followed by lunch and in the afternoon our Annual General Meeting. We will have another talk, plus the results of our Spring Survivor Sweepstakes Draw, followed by a raffle – and we have a host of exciting prizes to give out.

If you plan to stay over, arrange your booking without delay and in the meantime return your forms to us in the office as soon as possible. We will have Zoom links for those who cannot attend in person. We do encourage as many members as possible to attend – particularly new members. Come and meet us.

We look forward to seeing you in Tullamore in June.

Annual Conference & AGM 2024 Accommodation in the Tullamore Court Hotel 13th June 2024 Agreed rates for Polio Survivors Ireland:

1 night BB: Single €140 Twin or Double €155

2 night dinner + BB: Single €314 Twin or Double €378

Please note, if you need one of the accessible bedrooms please let the reservations staff know when booking.

As accessible rooms are very limited we cannot guarantee that one will be available for everyone who needs one.

To make a reservation, please call 057 934 6666 between 9am and 5pm and mention that you are attending the Polio Survivors Ireland Conference to obtain these rates.

Conference & AGM 2024



Directions to Tullamore Court Hotel

By Car The Hotel is on O'Moore St in Tullamore. Tullamore is located between the M6 Galway Motorway (Take Exit 5 off M6 and follow N52 to Tullamore) and the M7 Cork/Limerick Motorway (Take Exit 15 follow R422 and N80 via Mountmellick to Tullamore).

By Train Tullamore is served by both the Galway and Westport trains from Dublin Heuston.

By Bus Some private operators provide services to and from Tullamore but please check with them first as they may not be accessible for people with limited mobility.

There are a number of buses with Kearns Transport, but please note these are not wheelchair accessible: www.kearnstransport.com so only suitable for those who can manage non-accessible transport options.

Transport Assistance If you are taking public transport to the Conference and need transport from Tullamore train station, or the bus stop in the town to the Tullamore Court Hotel, please contact Kerrie in our Head Office on 01 889 89 20 no later than Friday 31st May.

Above is all correct at time of going to print. Please cross check transport in advance of travel.

Brain Awareness Week 2024



This year's Brain Awareness Week 2024 run by the Neurological Alliance of Ireland (NAI), along with over 35 other patient organisations and research groups, focused on raising awareness of the brain and brain conditions. NAI are calling for more funding for services that will allow us to research and learn how to prevent neurological conditions.

Polio Survivors Ireland was delighted to support the campaign on social media through the week of the 11th March. NAI are also calling for more investment in services, research and prevention.

Their campaign for regional neurology services launched on March 12th with calls for Consultant Neurologists to be put in place around the country. To find out more about these campaigns, visit www.patientsdeservebetter.ie.

Everyday Tips for Polio Survivors

1. Add raised dot stickers to key phone and remote control buttons. Adding bumps to the important buttons on phones and remote controls can make it easier to find them quickly and make them easier to use.
2. When on calls, use the speaker setting to conserve your arms/wrists rather than holding the phone.
3. Add a turntable to the top shelf of the fridge and high shelves. That way, hard to reach items at the back can easily be spun around the front without difficulty. You can also use a walking stick to pull items closer to the front of the shelves.
4. Use a grabber tool to pick up clutter and put things away. Less bending over saves your back! If the grabber has a magnet at its tip, it can be used to pick up dropped coins etc.
5. Buy a toilet tablet: A sanitizing tablet can help you maintain the toilet clean, disinfected, and odourless. This way, you won't need to clean it that often.
6. Paint a dot on your keys with nail varnish to help you remember which one is which – red for the front door, blue for the garage etc. Instead of trying 10 different keys to get into the house, you will know exactly which one to use.
7. Use your rollator to bring washing to the line or inside the house for household chores. Sit on it while at the cooker or preparing food.
8. When showering, make sure to have a chair or stool outside the shower at easy reach to assist in getting out of the shower. You can also sit on a chair/stool to reach countertops/raised flower beds more easily.
9. Always remember to take your mobile with you when going out into the garden in case of accident or falls.
10. Use a book stand to hold a book when reading, so you can rest your arms/wrists.

With thanks to Anne Burns and Jackie Minnock for their input.

Have a tip to share?

Call 01 889 8920 or email [Megan, cfa@polio.ie](mailto:cfa@polio.ie).

Ottobock and Yayuk

We've had a lovely message from our member Yayuk, who we were able to help get fitted with a new KAFO (knee ankle foot orthosis) from Ottobock. She is thrilled!



"Thank you is not enough, but please kindly accept my highest gratitude to the entire team of Ottobock Ireland and Polio Survivors Ireland for making it happen for me. Alastair - that happens to be the name of my new KAFO now - has been so excellent! It (KAFO) fits me perfectly, is much better and lighter than I ever imagined. My crutches, Bob and Ben, now can enjoy their restful moments after they walked me through the world for years."

We are delighted to have been able to help Yayuk to maintain her independence and mobility. If you need help or want to find out more about available orthotics, please contact the polio office on 01 889 8920.

What is a KAFO?

by an Ottobock Orthotist

Knee-Ankle-Foot-Orthoses (KAFO's) are custom made devices used to control the knee and ankle joints and are generally prescribed for issues such as muscle weakness at the ankle/knee/hip, knee contractures/hyperextension, or to provide support and control for the foot/ankle/hip.

KAFOs may be prescribed for polio, nerve damage or knee instability. During your assessment your clinician will perform a variety of tests to determine your range of motion, muscle strength and balance, among other things.

A cast will be taken of your leg to custom manufacture your KAFO. This

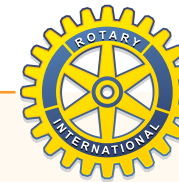
could be out of plastic or carbon fibre and will be discussed together with your clinician.

During the fitting appointment, your clinician will check the fit and function of the KAFO, placement and function of the joints, and make adjustments as needed.

At your final delivery appointment everything will be checked again before you take the KAFO home.



Rotary Club Dun Laoghaire



Our Cathaoirleach, Macrina Clancy was delighted to be invited to speak at the Rotary Club of Dun Laoghaire recently, with another of our members in support, Tony O'Connor. It was Tony who instigated the invitation to have Polio Survivors Ireland speak. We are very grateful to Martin Cowley, Eamon Rahilly, plus Rotary Club Dun Laoghaire's President, Bridget Ayler, and all those who facilitated Macrina's talk and gave so much of their attention to hearing about our work.



Our friends in Rotary Dun Laoghaire kindly commented: "A most informative presentation by Macrina Clancy from Polio Survivors Ireland tonight reinforcing why we must continue to help eradicate polio from the world."

Member Engagement

I work as Member Engagement Officer (MEO) for the Northern half of the country, and I've been enjoying meeting many of you through Social Support Groups (SSG) and Area Meetings. Over the past year, I have helped some of our SSGs get back up and running, some areas to reform or form new groups, while assisting other areas to plan for 2024 and beyond. The groups are at all stages of development and we have also set up our very first online SSG, so please let us know if you'd like to join an online SSG. There's a lot to be gained by attending SSG online or in person, with mutually beneficial support, understanding and 'connection', in addition having a catch up and some craic. My aims are to help build on the quality of meetings, remove barriers to attending, grow attendance, and promote the positive impact they have on members' lives.

As you may know we have held a number of Area Meetings, around the country, giving us a chance to meet and inform members about our work, the supports available, opportunities to volunteer and, for those on the Polio Register, how they can become full members of the organisation. I am currently looking at locations and venues for these for 2024.

In addition to this work, I will be engaging with Members individually, so never be afraid to give me a call or drop me an email.

This year, we also plan to help members link with services to develop their digital/computer skills, so that more of you can attend online SSGs or the Conference. You can learn to use online platforms such as Zoom and Teams, follow us on social media and attend training or information events, etc. In addition, these services can help you to learn the skills most important to you, for example, how pay a bill online, or set up an email account, make an appointment, or do video calls, etc., making sure you get help in the way that will best suit you.

Nuala McLaughlin.



MVRO Update

Membership & Volunteer Recruitment Officer (MVRO)

In recent months, I have also been helping out with aspects of the (vacant) MVRO role. This gave me the opportunity to speak with many more members, learning more about their priorities, challenges and lives. Understanding what truly makes a difference to you is so important to the work we do as an organisation.

Being a member-led organisation with a proud and rich history of volunteerism, my main task has been to help refresh our Active Member (volunteer) lists. I've been speaking with those who wish to help build and develop volunteerism within the organisation further.

Over the coming months, we will see Active Member Training for our Telephone Support services and a mobilisation of those who have put their hand up to help with our Fundraising and Publicity & Campaigning Networks.

We also plan to reactivate the Recruitment Network, so that we can begin again to encourage those on the Polio Register to become full and active members. We recognise the importance of 'power in numbers' and keeping our organisation strong for when you may need us, both now and in the future, because, after all 'We are still here!'

Without our volunteers, very little of this meaningful and essential work would be possible, so we thank all those who have volunteered and those who are in the process of joining us as volunteers/Active Members. Please feel free to contact me if you are reading this and wondering, '[How can I get involved?](#)' We can chat about the various roles and what may suit you best.

Nuala McLaughlin: 0876172036, nualameo@polio.ie



Pictured are the members who recently took part in the Telephone Support Training, held on Thursday 21st March in Dublin, with Maeve Halpin and our CEO Fran Brennan. Well done to all who participated for taking part. Active members are the lifeblood of this organisation and help us to continue to offer vital services to survivors who need them.

Assisted Decision Making - How to Learn More

HOLOHAN | LANE LLP SOLICITORS

The Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 was introduced on 26th April 2023. The act establishes a new legal framework for supported decision-making in Ireland. Under the act, a person can now make legal agreements on how they can be supported to make decisions about their personal welfare, property and affairs.

These new regulations may help you if you don't have the capacity to make decisions without help, now or in the future.

The Act also allows you to plan for a time when you might lose your capacity in two types of future planning arrangements, known as

Advance Healthcare Directive (AHD) and Enduring Power of Attorney (EPA).

Holohan Lane LLP have significant experience in dealing with applications under the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015. In order to raise awareness about this important piece of legislation, we are covering a number of seminars around the country that are free of charge. If you or a family member have any queries in relation to the act, please do not hesitate to contact Alan Raftery of our Dublin office on alan@holohanlaw.ie or on mobile 087 212 0945.



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.

HOLOHAN | LANE
LLP SOLICITORS

Public Service Friendly Society (PSFS)

Public Service Friendly Society (PSFS) is a non-profit organisation founded in 1927. They provide confidential assistance to members, including those retired and their dependents, who were employed in the Civil Service and other approved bodies.

They help by giving advice and support to people who are struggling financially. They also provide financial support in the form of cash grants.

Benefits of being a member of PSFS are cash grants/interest free repayable loans (up to €3,174), educational grants, financial advice and support, financial help for legal services, up to €2000 funeral grant and support for retired members.

Other benefits for members include: Income protection plan, specified



illness cover, discounted life insurance, complete mortgage and discounted mortgage protection, home, car and travel insurance, private health insurance including dental, pension review service and investment advice service.

Possibly some Polio Survivors Ireland members may have been employed by the civil service, or other approved bodies, who as a result might be able to apply for assistance from the PSFS.

CONTACT DETAILS:

PSFS, 1st Floor West
The Plaza Centre
Belgard Road Tallaght D24 XFCC
Tel: 01 4212990 / 1800 778 787
Email: info@psfs.ie

Do you have an URGENT NEED?

ADVICE
INFORMATION
SUPPORT
ADVOCACY
A LISTENING EAR

Confidentiality Assured



Talk to us. We are here to help

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

Contact Ciara in the office at
01 889 89 20 or by email asic@polio.ie

PAST TIMES

Life's Twists and Turns

By Michael Sheehan

(Originally published in QSO, June 2008, and sent to us by Michael's wife, Angela, after he passed away).

Michael contracted polio at twenty eight months old. At the age of three, he was carried to school on his older brother's back for months until he was able to get a wheelchair. However, he preferred to ride on his tricycle without the need of someone pushing him. He hated the wheelchair. After about nine years in and out of hospitals, and after four operations, he was able to walk with the help of iron splints.

Michael attended the Cork Radio College after being inspired by his brother Peter's notebook which contained morse code. Peter got these notes from attending the Radio Telegraph Institute night classes. The principal was initially reluctant to accept Michael because of his physical disability but the dropout rate of the college was so high that he accepted him, thinking that Michael would drop out after a while.



Halfway through an exam Michael was feeling sick and had to go home. He found out later that he had appendicitis; he would not recover from the operation for this for quite some time. While recovering, some students from the College came to visit and told him that some foreign shipping company was looking for a Radio Officer urgently. Michael was very interested in this and two days later was out of the hospital.

The Principal of the Radio College, Mr. O'Regan, encouraged him to take the job. This was his chance to see the world.

He successfully got the job on the ship named S/T WANMAS/ELFQ in Chester, Philadelphia. The flight over was long and difficult for Michael, especially since he was still getting better but, in the end, he made it in one piece.

On board the ship, Michael travelled to many places such as Jamaica, Aruba, Mexico, Germany and across the Atlantic Sea. He had many adventures on board. One day he and the captain were robbed. All his clothes were taken including his special boots, so for a while he was hobbling around in ordinary shoes until he was able to get a pair of new boots.

His duties as a Radio Officer were receiving weather reports twice daily, looking out for storm warnings, listening for distress calls and emergency radio traffic and other tasks.

Later on his journey, the ship was sent to a shipyard in Hamburg to be repaired. The boilers were shut down and there was snow on deck. This made it very cold for Michael especially having had polio. To keep himself warm he stole a toaster from the pantry. This worked well and kept his cabin warm.

He was never caught and he returned the toaster once the boilers came on again.

Near the end of his career, all the officers were replaced with Greek officers. Michael felt completely out of place with them and isolated because of language differences. He decided to leave his job. A man named Epifaniadis, who was the owner of the ship, tried to persuade him to stay by offering an increase in salary. However, Michael wouldn't be swayed saying 'My state of health is more important to me than any increase in salary.' He thanked Epifaniadis and left immediately to begin the journey back home to Cork for a well-deserved rest. That was the end of Michael's first job at sea as a Radio Officer.

Summarised from the original by Mya O'Reilly

Thank you Heritage Credit Union!



Huge thanks to the Heritage Credit Union, who donated a very generous €500 to Polio Survivors Ireland. Pictured are Laura Cahill, Marketing Officer from Heritage CU with member Bridget Quigley O'Brien and staff member, Emma Clarke Conway in the gardens of Carmichael Centre.

Dandelion

Cathy Conlon

The physic of the wild green field,
so many times, is cast aside.
Uprooted and denounced a weed.

For while its worth is unrevealed,
the foolish world will still deride
the physic of the wild green field.

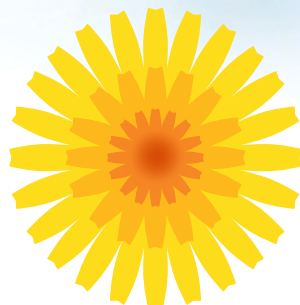
And see no value in its yield,
and fling it carelessly aside.
Uprooted and denounced a weed.

But there's mystery in its yellow shield.
Medicaments that lie inside
the physic of the wild green field.

For many ailments has it healed,
though its merits be denied.
Uprooted and denounced a weed.

Modest bloom so ill-perceived,
with fortitude it does abide.
The physic of the wild green field.
Uprooted and denounced a weed.

Cathy Conlon, from Kildare, won second prize in The Waterford Poetry Prize 2020 and was shortlisted for the Trim Poetry Festival 2020 and Seventh Bangor Poetry Competition 2019. She has kindly allowed us to print this lovely poem in the Survivor magazine.



The SURVIVOR

SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUPS

WESTPORT TRIP

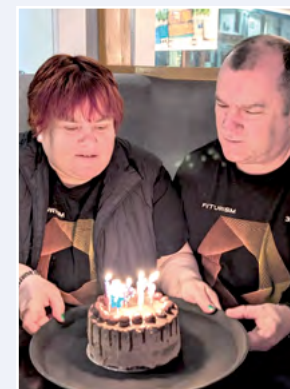
Our annual trip to Westport in February went really well. We had a nice group of thirty two people from the following groups: Dublin North, Bray, Cork, Athlone, Laois and Kildare. We were blessed with the weather. The three days were lovely and we made the most of it.

This year, we hired three mini buses so we could go on an afternoon outing. We were able bring the wheelchair users, as each mini bus had special seating for one wheelchair. Our outing was to the Country Museum in Castlebar. It is well worth a visit - not only is it free in, it had everything you could imagine from times gone by.

The displays were incredible. The short house tour was included and some visited it, while others sat in the restaurant and had a nice coffee and cake. We spent a good three hours looking around and plan to revisit it again at a later date.

We stayed in the Clew Bay Hotel in Westport, which is very central for shopping. The food is exceptionally good and we can understand how they got awards in the past. They run the hotel to a very high standard. If you are in Westport, you will always get a great welcome from the staff if you call in for a meal.

DUBLIN NORTH CITY



Darren is so kind, giving us a band for two nights so we can have a good sing song.

One member, Tom O'Reilly said, "It went really well - everyone can't wait for next year. We couldn't fault the hotel, excellent service throughout, from accommodation, to service and the food. We're all in recovery! Our organiser did a super job."

SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUPS



We know Christmas is coming when we head to Cork for the Cork Social Support Group Christmas Dinner, organised by Evelyn Wainwright. This year it took place on 26th November at the Cork International Hotel. Great four course meals were available with four choices of starters, mains and deserts. It was a lovely venue and all very accessible. Of course, Geraldine, Finbarr, Angela and Caroline were all there to help out if and when necessary. Jim provided the music to get us into the Christmas spirit as well as a nice selection of ABBA.

There were complimentary tickets for everyone and loads of prizes for the raffle. There must have been a prize for everyone in the audience!

A lovely evening was had by all. It was great to catch up and have the chat. It all passed too quickly.

It was great to have the use of the COPE bus and Noel to do the driving, collecting, loading up and unloading of everybody. This year the weather



obliged by being a lovely pleasant day. Hotel staff were all very helpful and friendly.

Well done once again to Evelyn and all her helpers. A lot of work and well worth it.

Our Thanks to Cork City Partnership SICAP for their grant which funded the Cork Social Support Group Christmas dinner event.



CORK

SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUPS



The Bray Wicklow Social Support Group held their Christmas lunch on Wednesday 6th December. They had a great time with nineteen members able to attend. The Bray Golf club were very good to the attendees and ensured they had a lovely event.



DUBLIN NORTH CITY



The Dublin North City Social Support Group were looked after really well by staff of the Coolquay Lodge, in North County Dublin. We had a very nice dinner, lots of turkey and ham and lovely desserts. There were seventeen of us and a big thank you from all to Eddie for organising a great afternoon. One of our members, Jimmy, had a great day as he celebrated his birthday among all his friends.

SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUPS

NORTH EAST



Pictured are members from the North East who got together for a Christmas Gathering at the Gateway Hotel. Everyone had a great time.

KILKENNY



Pictured are members of the Kilkenny Social Support Group at their Christmas dinner in the Hoban Hotel, Kilkenny, on Saturday 2nd December. They enjoyed a lovely time, with gifts, fun and plenty of chat.

NAVAN



Members from Navan at a Christmas Gathering in the Ardboyne Hotel, Navan. The Navan SSG will be meeting again on Wednesday 15th May 2024.

NOTICE BOARD

Think Measles

Measles is a highly infectious viral illness. Measles starts with cold-like symptoms that develop about 10 days after you get infected.

The first symptoms of measles are:

- + *aches and pains, a runny nose, sneezing and a cough.*
- + *sore, red eyes that may be sensitive to light.*
- + *a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or above (fever)*
- + *small grey-white spots in your mouth*
- + *loss of appetite*
- + *tiredness, irritability, and a general lack of energy*

You will then get a measles rash a few days later. The illness usually lasts 7 to 10 days. You're unlikely to have measles if you had:

- + *2 doses of the MMR vaccine*
- + *measles in the past*

If you were born in Ireland before 1978, you may not need the MMR vaccine. You are likely to have some immunity against measles. However, the HSE says if you cannot find your vaccination records, it will not harm you to have the MMR vaccine again. Speak to your GP if you are not sure.

For more information, or to find out how to get the MMR vaccine, you can call the HSELive helpline on 1800 700 700.



NOTICE BOARD

Did you work for CIÉ

(Dublin Bus, Irish Rail, Bus Éireann)?



The Chairperson of the CIÉ Welfare Association is a polio survivor, Conor Murphy. Conor is recommending that any members of Polio Survivors Ireland who previously worked for CIÉ and have fallen on hard times, get in touch with him.

The CIÉ Welfare Association may be able to provide some kind of support or assistance, as they try

to help former employees who are experiencing difficulty in their lives.

You can see testimonials about the CIÉ Welfare Association on their website at <https://www.ciewelfare.ie/>

If you are a past CIÉ employee who would like to speak to Conor, please call the office to be put in touch, or email cfa@polio.ie.

Dublin North City Social Support Group is having another trip away and members can join them from any part of the country.



Our next trip is to Galway on the **15th, 16th and 17th September 2024**. We will be staying at the 4-star **Clybaun Hotel, Knocknacarra**, for three nights. Bed, breakfast and 3 evening meals. **Cost:** €250 per person sharing.

If you wish to join us, we book under the name 'Post Polio Group'.

The phone number is **091 588088**.

If you have any difficulties, speak to Lorraine.

There is a swimming pool in the hotel, if you wish to swim.

All Welcome Dublin North Group

NOTICE BOARD

Daily Mail Award

Congratulations to Brendan Moore who is a runner up in the Daily Mail Community Nationwide Awards 2023, sponsored by Neutrogena Cream.

Brendan was very surprised by the nomination and thanks the Louth members of Polio Survivors Ireland, who nominated him.

Brendan tells us that he was invited by these members to the Conference over fifteen years ago in Sligo. "My inspiration was my meeting with the then chairperson, the late Hugh Hamilton." He also met Anne Burns, to whom he is very grateful for her help over all the years, and, "to my partner who offered me assistance and advice in planning things", recalling the various fundraising endeavours, such as church gate collections, pop up shops, dart functions, national appeals and so on.

Brendan has been nominated for various awards over the years and always thanks those who nominated him. He also mentions his guardian angel, Betty, and thanks the various office staff who supported his work.

The person who nominated Brendan wrote this:

'Thank you for keeping us together, for keeping in touch when the world was apart and keeping the name, Polio Survivors Ireland, in our local community. You're our local hero.'

Brendan reminds everyone that they can help raise funds very easily through their local Tesco/ Aldi Community Funds, local Lions Clubs or social clubs and Credit Unions. "In these tough economic times remember to support your fellow polio survivors."

Well done, Brendan. If you'd like to help out raise funds locally, contact Megan, cfa@polio.ie.

FUNDRAISING NEWS



Hospital Saturday Fund

We were absolutely delighted to have a visit from our friends at the **Hospital Saturday Fund** in February, who came to present us with a fantastic grant of €13,500.

This very generous donation will support our Winter Heating Grant, which is such an important support for polio survivors. With the current cost of living crisis, the burden of high heating bills can be overwhelming, especially as polio survivors suffer from extreme cold intolerance.

We are so grateful to The Hospital Saturday Fund for their support for

our members. Donations like these allow us to help more polio survivors stay warm and safe throughout the colder months.

Pictured are Emma and Zaynab representing the staff and board of Polio Survivors Ireland, and Paul Jackson, CEO of The Hospital Saturday Fund, along with Mark Davies and Paul Clare. It was a pleasure to have everyone in the office, and we look forward to continuing to work alongside The Hospital Saturday Fund to support polio survivors.

Dundalk Credit Union

We are so grateful for the very generous donation of €200 to Polio Survivors Ireland from the Board of Dundalk Credit Union. Pictured is our member, Brendan Moore, who received the donation on our behalf. Brendan is a dedicated fundraiser for Polio Survivors Ireland and we truly appreciate his efforts. We are delighted to have been awarded such an amount, and what a lovely photo!



FUNDRAISING NEWS

Survivor Sweepstakes Winter Draw Results

The Winter Survivor Sweepstakes Draw took place on Tuesday 23rd January in our Coleraine House office. Given that €1,000 had to be won, we delayed the draw to ensure all the entries were received post-Christmas.

The four numbers drawn were

4, 14, 15 and 22. However, no-one matched 4. As it was the end of the 2023 draw, we put all entries back into the 'hat' and picked out one winner of the €1,000 prize.

The winner is... **Patrick Gaffney**



What a lovely phone call to make in January. Patrick was indeed delighted.

We then ran our €50 lucky dip and the winners were **Pat McCabe** and **Irene Ryan** – Irene had entered a number of times and her entry was picked out twice giving her €100. Irene was equally delighted to have won not once but twice and very kindly donated the prize back to Polio Survivors Ireland. We are very grateful to Irene and to all our entrants for their support. This draw continues to be an important source of fundraising income for us.

You can check this link for Match 4 proof:

<https://www.randomresult.com/ticket.php?t=3595334TSKBPHWBK2>

You can check this link for the €1,000 prize:

<https://www.randomresult.com/ticket.php?t=3595335H4W46NDM3R>

You can check the €50 lucky dip winners' link:

<https://www.randomresult.com/ticket.php?t=3595336HJBHR9LQXF>

The draw was witnessed by Niamh Fahy, Mental Health Reform Ireland, Coleraine House.

Our next draw is with this issue.

FUNDRAISING NEWS

Survivor Sweepstakes Spring 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 spring 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 are enclosing **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.

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
Saturday 1st June 2024**

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

We will run the draw and announce the winners at the Conference 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

Megan at 01 8898920. **Please note: there is no obligation to enter, but if you are able to do so, we wish you the best of luck!**

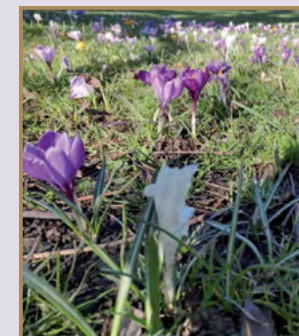
Terms & Conditions on page 30

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

John Carroll, Tessie Delahunty, Anne Ebbs

James Kelly, Margaret Malone, Betty O'Regan.

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



Spring Images by Megan Saunders Smith

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.

MMS

MEDICAL



**Manual Wheelchairs
Powered Mobility**



**Wheelchair Cushions
Support Seating**



**Home Lifts
Commercial Lifts**

**Bathing
Changing Places**

**Hoists
Stairlifts**



021 4618000



info@mmsmedical.ie



www.mmsmedical.ie

Nationwide Delivery & Installation