

Winter 2025 Vol 22 Issue 3

THE SURVIVOR

Irish Polio News

Polio
Survivors
Ireland



At Leinster House

Pictured are Ciara Power, Siobhan Banville, Nicola Fogarty and Erin McGreehan TD, with Mick Keegan (front), outside the AV Room at Leinster House, marking World Polio Day 2025. Photo: Andres Poveda

*Wishing all our Members and Friends
A Very Happy Christmas*

Online Christmas Shopping



THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK

Cyber crime occurs when a victim is tricked into providing personal or sensitive information online through their device or computer.

Phishing



Phishing emails that appears to be coming from a trusted source such as a bank, government agency or a supplier.

Spear Phishing



This type of phishing targets a specific individual within a company as their personal information is often listed on the company website.

Smishing



The SMS version of phishing, the criminal uses a text message to convince the recipient to send them personal information or to install malicious software using a link contained in the message.

Vishing



Voice phishing attacks occur when a criminal will leave a voice message for the victim instructing them to connect to a website to provide their personal or logon details.

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FROM THE CHAIR

I was honoured and privileged to be elected as Chairperson of Polio Survivors Ireland for the next 12 months, following our recent AGM.

I want to thank my board colleagues for their support and know that I have a very hard act to follow with the achievements of my predecessor, Macrina Clancy, who has stepped down. She has made and continues to make a significant contribution to our organisation and has been very generous in providing me with guidance and advice since I took on the role of Chairperson.



I also want to acknowledge the huge contributions of outgoing board members Pat McGillion, Miriam Kavanagh and Fintan Foy who stepped down at the AGM and have given great service on the board over many years. I

would also thank Charlie Smith, who resigned earlier in the year, but has continued to help us in the background. I want to welcome our new board members Susan Dowling, Boakai Nyehn, Maire Ní Chorcora, Anne Burns and Abayomi Ogunsanya for stepping up and I look forward to working with all of them in the year ahead.

It was great to see so many members attend our Conference and Annual General Meeting (AGM) in the Green Isle Hotel in late-September.

The programme included a very interesting contribution by Matt McCann, CEO and Co-Founder of Access Earth and how his personal experiences inspired him to become an entrepreneur, web developer, and software engineer, and to dedicate his career to making the world more inclusive and accessible for all.

The AGM provided an opportunity for the Board and Nicola Fogarty, our CEO and the staff team to report on our activities over the past year, for our Advocacy Officer, Siobhan Banville to given an overview of our advocacy achievements in 2024 to 2025 and for members to give feedback and to get updates. The social aspect of the conference and AGM is as important as the official programmes and provided

members with an opportunity to catch up with old friends and make new ones.



On October 21st last, just before World Polio Day, we convened an information session for T.D.s and Senators in the Audio Visual (AV) room in Leinster House, to highlight the ongoing challenges faced by many of our members. In our presentations, we urged politicians to recognise that many polio survivors lose access to essential disability supports upon reaching pension age. It was positive to see so many Oireachtas members in attendance. However, we need them to translate that support into action and for Government to address the needs of our members. Many thanks to the members and staff who made this such a successful event.

With the clocks going back and

a chill in the air, winter is now definitely upon us, but hopefully it won't be too wet, cold and dark. And of course, this also means that Christmas is just around the corner and in that regard, I want to wish all members a very happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year season, and I look forward to being in touch with you in 2026.

With every best wish,

James Doorley

Chairperson.



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A LISTENING EAR**

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Polio Survivors Ireland at Leinster House

By Belle Patterson

On Tuesday, 21st October 2025, just ahead of World Polio Day, representatives from Polio Survivors Ireland along, met with TDs and Senators in the AV Room at Leinster House. It was an important event, giving an opportunity to share real-life experiences and challenges of polio survivors as they grow older.

For many polio survivors, turning 66 brings an unexpected setback. Once they reach pension age, they lose access to disability supports that they've relied on for years and are moved onto the State Pension. Yet their needs don't disappear, if anything, they often increase. Many survivors are left trying to get help from Primary Care services that are already overwhelmed, with long waiting lists and limited resources.



One of the most moving moments came when polio survivor Mick Keegan shared his story of going through losing disability supports and being moved onto state pension. "I retired at 66...this polio didn't," he said, capturing what so many survivors feel. His words reminded everyone that you can't retire from a disability, therefore support shouldn't stop at retirement age. Together, we'll keep pushing for the fairness, care, and understanding every survivor deserves.



We call for a review of social protection and health policies that may deny over 65s with disabilities access to cost-of-disability payments and health services. Current policies appear to treat "older people" and "people with disabilities" as distinct groups, despite many individuals belonging to both. Older

people with disabilities must never be excluded from any current or future cost of disability payments. The medical card application process must also be reviewed to streamline the process of including disability-related costs and adjust income thresholds in line with inflation.



Conference Overview

By Belle Patterson

The 2025 Conference & AGM which was held on September 24th at the Green Isle Hotel brought together a mix of long-time members and new faces, in what was an enjoyable and lively day.

Matt McCann, founder of Access Earth, delivered an inspiring Joan Bradley Keynote Address on accessibility, sharing how his personal journey kicked off a mission to improve access in public and commercial spaces.

A deeply emotional moment came with the presentation of the Jim Costello Polio Hero Award to Evelyn Wainwright, Cork Social Support Group Convenor, in recognition of her dedication and tenacity in improving the lives of polio survivors. Her family's surprise appearance brought many to tears.

If you missed this year's event, you can watch it back on our website, www.polio.ie in the news section.

Statement regarding Rehab/Polio Fellowship of Ireland

The following is a statement from our outgoing Cathaoirleach, Macrina Clancy, as read at the AGM:



I can confirm that the Board of Polio Survivors have decided to enter into mediation with Polio Fellowship Ireland/ Rehab concerning the



The day also featured engaging Q&A sessions, a warm welcome to our new CEO Nicola Fogarty, introductions to staff, and a farewell to long-standing board members.

Advocacy & Policy Officer Siobhan Banville shared powerful updates on our advocacy work to ensure polio survivors' voices are heard at every level.

future of Polio Fellowship Ireland. The process is at a very early and sensitive stage and to avoid undermining the potential for a successful outcome, I hope members can understand we cannot comment further at this time. Our objective is to achieve the best possible outcome for Polio Survivors. Members will be fully informed, if and when the process concludes.



The Jim Costello Polio Hero Award

The late Jim Costello was the last of our founder members, making an untold contribution to the development and success of the organisation. Jim passed away in July 2022 and to honour his memory we developed an annual Award to be presented at the Conference, called the Jim Costello Polio Hero Award.

Jim contracted polio at the age of 15 at a rugby match and spent a great deal of his life in an iron lung in Cherry Orchard Hospital. 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, still helping up to his passing. His wife Delia is still a member and Jim is fondly remembered by staff and Board alike.

About the Polio Hero Award winner

This year's choice reflects the gratitude of the staff and the board to the individual, for their contribution down through the years. They have been a constant and reliable support to the organisation, always thinking of not just the greater good, but of people on a local level who need support, who need to forget their cares for a while when they come together with their fellow survivors.

They contracted polio on a day trip and spent the next two years in Cappagh Hospital in Dublin, very far from home.

They hated being separated from their mother all this time. They went on to live a full and active life, but this year, medical issues have been a huge challenge. Yet they left a hospital bed to make sure a social support group meeting was running the way they wanted, showing the same spirit and dedication as Jim Costello. It could not be more deserved to have presented the Jim Costello Polio Hero Award, for dedication and tenacity in improving the lives of polio survivors, to Evelyn Wainwright.

Evelyn's two daughters and her grandson surprised her by arriving for this presentation and it was an incredibly emotional scene, felt by staff and members. The photos tell the rest. Congratulations Evelyn.



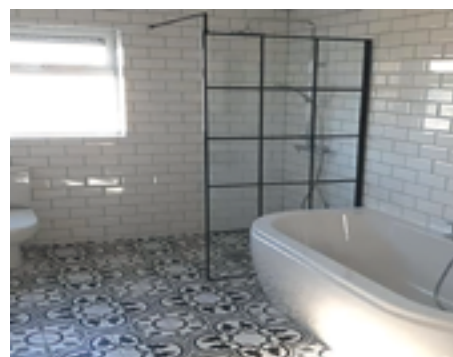
The SURVIVOR

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Christmas Closing

Please note the office is closing for Christmas on Monday, 22nd December, but phones lines will be open all day Tuesday 23rd December. We will re-open on Friday 2nd January 2025 at 9am.

We wish you a very merry Christmas and a happy and peaceful new year and look forward to hearing from you all in 2026.

Ash Atalla

TV Producer

Jackie Minnock

While listening to Desert Island Discs on BBC Radio 4, some weeks ago, I heard about Ash Atalla. I had never heard of him before, nor that fact that he was a polio survivor. The programme he produced The Office (Ricky Gervais) was very familiar to me. Like many things we watch or listen to we rarely think of those who work behind the scenes to bring those programmes to us. They too live interesting lives, as I found out.

Born in Cairo, Egypt in 1972, Ash Atalla contracted polio as an infant and has been a wheelchair user all his life. It also affected his lungs in a minor way. His parents were both doctors. The family moved to UK for his father's job and in the hope of better opportunities for Ash.

They initially lived in Belfast where he says he had a very happy childhood despite this being at the height of Northern Ireland troubles. He is the eldest of three children. He went to school for disabled pupils in Belfast and enjoyed his time there. When he was ten, they moved to Hampshire where he attended a boarding school for disabled children.



He left the school believing school life itself was a poor preparation for future life. His parents sent him to the local school where ramps were installed as he was the first wheelchair pupil.

He had a strong sense that life in a wheelchair was probably going to be difficult and so he knew he would have to work harder to get ahead. He says that this is where his drive to get ahead comes from. He went to the University of Bath, and he briefly worked as a stockbroker aged twenty-two. He wrote many letters to the BBC asking for work experience of any kind.



He was accepted and worked in many different areas doing many different minor jobs. He ended up working in the Comedy Department and through much trial and error he decided to take a leap of faith and became a Producer on the TV series The Office (2001). He also worked on the IT Crowd for the BBC. In 2004, he joined the production company Talkback Thames as Head of Comedy. He says that he now was seen as a Producer not as a guy in a wheelchair. In 2007, he set up his own company Roughcut TV.



He has won awards for his work. He is very proud of his awards. He says that being a Producer involves working on scripts, trying to get scripts commissioned and also producing the shows. He is truly a multi-tasker. He says that, even now, he approaches his work with the attitude that he is as important as the most important player – a line he took from Alex Ferguson. He believes that only disabled actors should play disabled persons' parts in productions.

WANTED

Polio survivor case studies

We are looking for members willing to participate as case studies in the work that we are doing to raise awareness of polio survivors, particularly in the media.

This means, we may from time to time, need people willing to speak to the media about living with the lasting effects of polio. If you're comfortable with sharing your story, and often also to have a photo taken, please join our 'Media List'.

Your story has the power to raise awareness and make a difference in the lives of fellow survivors. Call Emma on 01 8898920 or email emma@polio.ie

DUBLIN AREA Meeting Report



By Lilly Wellons

On Wednesday, 30th July, Polio Survivors Ireland held an Area Meeting at the Grand Hotel, Malahide, Co. Dublin, welcoming a strong turnout. For many attendees, it was a chance to reconnect with familiar faces, meet new ones, and take part in a day filled with information, support, and shared experience.

The meeting opened with an update from Member Engagement Officer, Nuala McLaughlin, who outlined some of the recent developments within the organisation. For staff, area meetings are not only about delivering information but also a chance to speak with members one-on-one and find out where we can lend a hand.

“These meetings are a fantastic opportunity to connect – staff with members & members with staff, members with each other, and members with the wider organisation,” said Nuala. “Hearing the stories of the polio

survivors who wish to share them, is a wonderful motivator, and means that we get a very strong sense of the very real difference our efforts can make in people’s lives”.

Nuala also highlighted the presence of two Social Support Group Convenors, Liam and Jim. They both kindly gave an overview of their group, how they got involved, the kinds of activities they do and the frequency of their meetings.

One of the most anticipated parts of the day was the introduction of our new CEO, Nicola Fogarty. Nicola took time to speak with attendees individually and shared that her grandfather had been a polio survivor, expressing that the mission of the organisation is very dear to her heart. For some members, it was their first time attending an area meeting in years after COVID-19, and the opportunity to reconnect was truly valued.

Attendees also benefited from an excellent session on Fall Prevention, delivered by Occupational Therapist Siobhan Banville. Her practical advice and open discussion created a supportive space where individuals could ask questions and share personal insights into managing mobility and safety in daily life.



We were especially pleased to welcome several individuals from the Polio Register, who not only enjoyed the day but were inspired to take the next step and join as members.

As always, your involvement makes a real difference, not just to our events, but to one another. If you haven’t been to an area meeting recently, we encourage you to come along to the next one in your area.

Your Membership Renewal

Did you renew your membership this year? Polio Survivors Ireland relies on subscriptions to help us bridge funding gaps, which ensures the organisation can continue to provide services.

Renew your membership at www.polio.ie or by sending €10 in the post. You can cut out the form below and return it using the reply envelope with the magazine.

Name:

Phone:

Address:

If you have any issues, please call us on 01 889 8920.



Libby's Art Exhibition

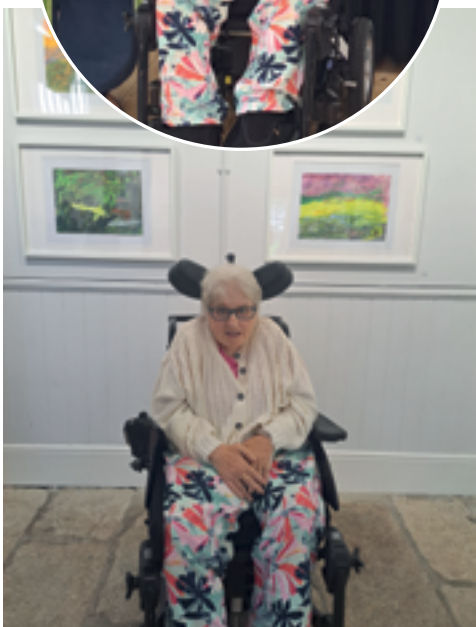
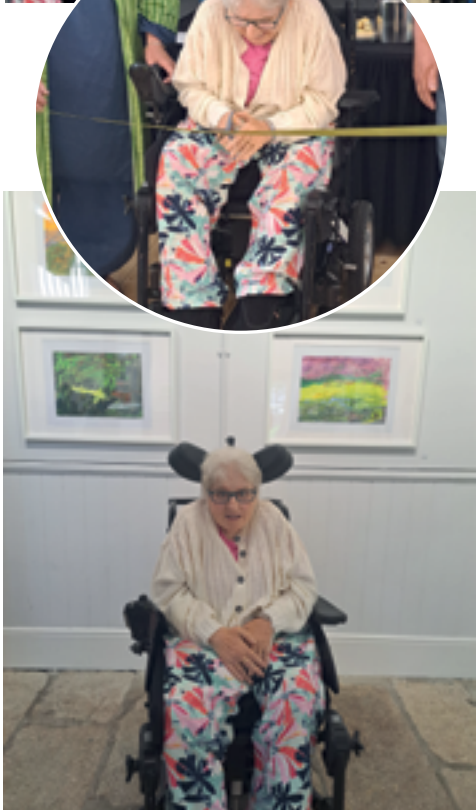
Lilly Wellons

We're proud to celebrate the creativity and talent of our member, Libby Hendrick, who recently showcased her artwork as part of a group exhibition at the Courthouse Arts Centre, in Tinahely, Co. Wicklow.

The exhibition, entitled Two x Two, featured four artists with disabilities, each presenting a unique collection of work that reflects their individual experiences and perspectives. Libby's natural landscapes stood out with vibrant use of colour and the depth of emotion. She finds inspiration from nature and her love of gardening, which is reflected well in the tranquil atmosphere of her work.

In addition to the exhibition, Libby's has also been selected for the Connecting Artists programme back in 2023, which culminated in exhibiting her work in Dublin and Belfast.

Events like this are a reminder of the many talents within our Polio Survivors Ireland membership, and the value of having those talents shared and celebrated. Congratulations to Libby on this well-deserved recognition and we can't wait to see what you create next.



Libby's paintings are still available for sale.
Contact the Courthouse Arts Centre for more information.

TIPS & TRICKS

By Belle Patterson

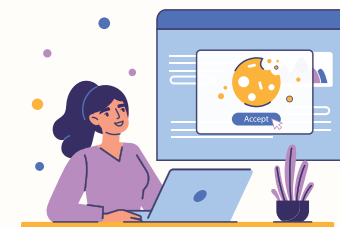
COOKIES & ALGORITHMS

Have you ever visited a website and been asked to accept cookies? Unfortunately, these aren't the sweet baked goods but rather technological cookies, which are small files stored on your device that keep track of your online browser activity.

Cookies were originally invented to make online life easier by remembering information such as your login details, so you wouldn't have to re-enter them every time you visit certain websites. They have since evolved into a marketing tool that, help create personalised ads tailored specifically to you.

Let's say you are looking into flights for a holiday, and for the last couple weeks you have been checking the prices of flights to find a good deal. The cookies and algorithms will remember that you have been looking up flights repeatedly and will begin to hide cheaper flights and advertise more expensive ones. This will want to show you the airline that pay the most for advertising rather than the best deal.

CRITICAL LITERACY WORKSHOP HIGHLIGHTS



You can always use private browsing mode or "incognito". If you use Chrome for example, click the three dots in the top corner and choose "new incognito tab" to avoid cookies.

Cookies are generally safe to use on your device, apps or trusted home Wi-Fi. However, if you are on a public wi-fi avoid entering banking or other sensitive information to keep your personal information safe. You can check this by looking at the address bar: "http" is not secure, while "https" (the "s" means secure) indicates a safer connection.

Most cookies are safe and help make your online experience smoother. Just keep in mind that some cookies can collect more personal information than you expect, so it's good to stay aware of how to use them cautiously.

What new ideas have you come up with to make daily life easier?



Benedetta Bianchi Porro

OVERCOMING MULTIPLE DISABILITIES

Jackie Minnock

Born August 1936, Benedetta Porro contracted polio at the age of three months. She was born into a large family, in Dovadola Italy. The diagnosis greatly affected her health, many of us who contracted polio as infants can appreciate this.

During her childhood, when a boy called her 'the cripple', her brother came to her defence and got into a fight with the boy. Benedetta is reported to have said 'he called me the cripple – what is wrong with that? It's the truth.' Despite the diagnosis, Benedetta was a happy child who loved reading and went on to be a good student in school. She wore a back brace because of curvature of her spine and used a leg brace, orthopaedic shoes and cane because of difference in leg lengths.

At the age of thirteen it was discovered she was losing her hearing. She finished school and went to university in 1953, aged seventeen. Despite her disabilities, or perhaps because of them, she wanted to study medicine. She was criticised by a lecturer who said that a deaf woman could never become a doctor. She responded by learning to lip-read.

Her studies were often interrupted due to hospital stays for polio and

her deafness. She passed all her exams with excellent grades despite this. Through her medical studies, in 1957, she diagnosed her own medical condition, which no doctor had been able to do for her. Von Recklinghausen's disease causes tumours to grow throughout the nervous system. This had led to her deafness at age thirteen. She also discovered that she would, eventually, become blind and paralysed due to this disease. No treatments were available. Today treatments used for cancer patients are used for Von Recklinghausen's disease.

She had to leave university and her studies. She had many surgeries between 1958 and 1963. These surgeries did not give her a better quality of life. She began to lose all five senses on a gradual basis.

Benedetta had always had a strong faith. She was visited by many of her medical student friends throughout this time. She undertook a pilgrimage to Lourdes in 1962, praying for a miracle for her illness. A year later Benedetta returned to Lourdes but came to the realisation that she would die from her illness. She passed away while on pilgrimage in Lourdes in January 1964.



The Georgian Museum *REVIEW*



By Leah O'Reilly

Close to Grafton Street, at 15 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin, is a small Georgian townhouse that holds lots of amazing rooms filled with historical artefacts. The Little Museum of Dublin, founded in 2011 and owned by Dublin City Council, may look small from the outside, but inside are the wonders of Ireland's social and cultural history told through over 5,000 artefacts.

I visited the museum recently with my grandma, and we both absolutely loved it. Every room is packed full of so many things to see – it's almost overwhelming at first! The walls are covered in paintings, posters and old photographs, while shelves are lined with hundreds of artefacts and bits of Dublin's past.

I loved looking at all the paintings and pictures on the walls during the tour. What interested me the most was the room dedicated towards Georgian Dublin, which features a huge handmade Georgian-styled dollhouse that took 20 years to complete!

Some of the other rooms showcase U2, The Irish Times, Animals of Dublin and Modern History, each crammed with artefacts and stories.

If you're in Dublin and fancy something a bit different, I'd highly recommend visiting the Little Museum. You can book your guided-tour tickets easily online and be shown the wonders of this beautiful museum!

The Little Museum of Dublin is wheelchair accessible with an external and internal lift.

Winter Haikus

Taken from 'How We Survived and Surprised', our collection of writing from Polio Survivors in Ireland.

By Ciaran Nicholson

*A shadowy moon
On earth below a knight
Awakens from sleep*

By John McFarlane

*It's cold-and I wait
For someone to shelter me
And take me from here.*

Christmas Cake

*By Cathy Conlon, from The Light Dancing,
published by Revival Press*

*No measuring cup or scales
were needed
Instead, she shook out
handfuls of flour,
scattered sugar like seed.
Knew the exact ratio,
whether by rote or alchemy,
in the end it all came down
to a sureness of touch.
And what she knew
by heart.*

Riddles Collated by Leah O'Reilly



1. What has to be broken before you can use it?
2. What has a face and two hands but no arms or legs?
3. The more of this you take, the more you leave behind. What is it?
4. What comes down but never goes up?
5. What has one eye but can't see?
6. What can travel around the world while staying in a corner?
7. What has keys but can't open locks?
8. What gets wetter the more it dries?
9. I'm tall when I'm young, and short when I'm old. What am I?
10. What belongs to you, but other people use it more than you do?
11. What has many teeth but can't bite?
12. What has words but never speaks?
13. The more you take away, the bigger I get. What am I?
14. I have cities, but no houses. I have mountains, but no trees. I have water, but no fish. What am I?
15. I speak without a mouth and hear without ears. I have no body, but I come alive with wind. What am I?
16. You see me once in June, twice in November, but not at all in May. What am I?
17. I am not alive, but I grow. I don't have lungs, but I need air. What am I?
18. What can run but never walks, has a bed but never sleeps, has a mouth but never talks?
19. Forward I'm heavy, backward I'm not. What am I?
20. What 5-letter word becomes shorter when you add two letters to it?

Answers:

- | | | | |
|---------------|----------------|--------------|---------------------|
| 1. An egg. | 6. A stamp. | 11. A comb. | 16. The letter "E." |
| 2. A clock. | 7. A piano. | 12. A book. | 17. Fire. |
| 3. Footsteps. | 8. A towel. | 13. A hole. | 18. A river. |
| 4. Rain. | 9. A candle. | 14. A map. | 19. The word "ton." |
| 5. A needle. | 10. Your name. | 15. An echo. | 20. Short. |

PAST TIMES

Pier Giorgio Frassati – A Saint Among Us

Jackie Minnock

September 7th 2025 saw the canonisation of Pier Giorgio Frassati (1901-1925). Pier's cause for canonisation began in 1932 and it has taken ninety-three years for the process to be completed.

Pier was born in Turin, Italy in April 1901. He was born into a middle class family. His younger years were spent mountaineering or swimming. He was very athletic. He was very dedicated to social justice issues and was involved with St. Vincent de Paul Society, along with other such organisations. His social status allowed him to be active in all his charitable endeavours, though much of his care for others less fortunate than himself began in his childhood in his own village. Stories are told of people coming to his home, when he was 8-9 years of age, looking for something to eat or some money for shoes and he gave his own shoes to the poor children. He entreated his mother to help a poor man his own father had turned away. She listened to him and sent him to find the man and bring him to their home for something to eat.



On his graduation from engineering studies his father offered him a car or a sizable amount of money to be placed in a fund for him. He chose the money in order that he could help others. This was the measure of the man.

His selflessness covered all aspects of his life, even his own health. In 1925, during one of his outings with his friends he developed sharp pains in his back. He did mention this to his friends but continued with the activities.

The following day he had a fever and severe headache. His mother's mother passed away this same day. Owing to this he did not want to be a burden at such a time and waited another day before a doctor was called. A diagnosis of poliomyelitis was made and thought to have been brought on by severe fatigue. He asked the doctor for a morphine injection to ease the pain and allow him to sleep. His doctor, and his mother, believed this would not be a good idea and Pier went with their decision.



He was known to have said, many times, 'charity is not enough, we need social reform'. As Polio Survivors we know that this is so true.

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.

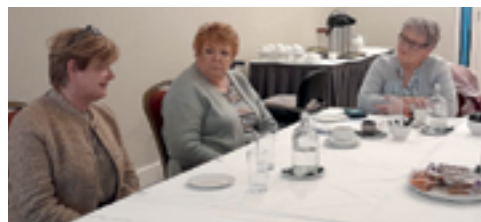
Contact Alan Raftery at 01 872 7120 or email: legal@holohanlaw.ie and Alan will explain everything you need to know to draft your will.

HOLOHAN LANE
LLP SOLICITORS

SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUPS

SLIGO

The Sligo Social Support Group were pleased to welcome Development Manager, Orla Barry, from the local Citizens Information Service (CIS) to a meeting at the Sligo Park Hotel. Orla gave a presentation on rights and entitlements with plenty of questions and answers from the group. It was a very enjoyable and interesting get-together.



BRAY

Pictured are members of the Bray Social Support Group at their recent meeting in October. Described as a lovely group by one of its members, a very enjoyable time was had by all.

SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUPS

SWORDS

The Dublin Swords Social Support Group were delighted to be joined by Andrew McCann, Manager of Citizens Information Dublin North, on World Polio Day, in Kettle's Country House Hotel, Co. Dublin. Andrew gave a very informative talk on rights and entitlements. Thanks to Jim Connolly for organising.



KERRY MEET UP



Pictured are members from Kerry, who got together for a meeting along with Member Engagement Officer, Órna Maddock, at the beginning of October in Ballygarry Estate Hotel, in Tralee. It has been a while since members in the area met, but everyone enjoyed the occasion and hope to meet again in the New Year.

CHAIR YOGA KILDARE

The Kildare Social Support Group recently completed another 6-week Chair Yoga course. The members who attended felt they benefited from the classes with our excellent teacher, Sara Holihan and it was also fun as well. We had ten members at our final session. We also must thank Naas Library for the free room (Tea/Coffee & Biscuits).

I encourage other SSGs to organise this for their members, as while it helped us physically, it also brought a great closeness in the group as well. The photo was taken by our new member, John Gibson, who did an excellent job.



SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUPS

NAVAN ACTIVE RETIREMENT



Breege Lunny, Chairperson of Active Retirement Navan, gave an interesting presentation on the 22nd October to the Navan SSG Group, at the Ardboyne Hotel.

Active Retirement Ireland (ARI) is a voluntary organisation for older people with a national membership of over 24,500 people and over 550 local associations. Members range in age from 50 - 100+ years and cover a



range of socio-economic backgrounds. Older people all have different interests and needs, which ARI aims to identify and fulfil. The organisation is run by voluntary committees at local, regional, and national levels. All the activities are aimed at keeping older people active and well. Breege explained how their work might help older polio survivors who feel isolated and lonely, with fun activities regardless of age or ability.

MAYO

Mayo Social Support Group members were delighted to be joined by Eilis McGuire, Information Officer, South Connacht Citizens Information Service for an interesting talk on rights and entitlements. Many thanks to Eilis for attending.



SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUPS

NAVAN SSG GROUP



The Navan Social Support Group were delighted to welcome Maise Bates, from Alone, to their group for a talk on how they can help support people to live independently at home, safely and securely. Huge thanks to Alone and to Maise. For more information, call their national support and referral line on 0818 222 024, from 8am to 8pm seven days a week, or www.alone.ie.

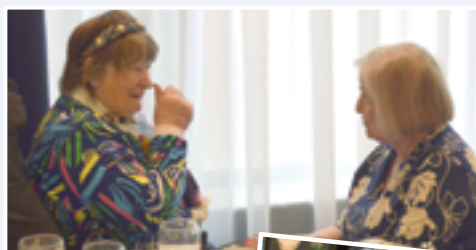
Masie was excellent and members really enjoyed the talk, and it's inspired the group to have other outside

organisations come in and planned another presentation in October.

Members agreed that although many of them may not need ALONE's services right now, being aware of the services that are available via ALONE, could be very helpful down the line, and Masie is a fantastic local contact to have. Masie gave the group practical examples of how she and her colleagues at ALONE can help, and her presentation was a real eye-opener. *Navan SSG*

CORK SSG GROUP

The Cork SSG met at the Carragaline Court Hotel on Saturday 28th June. We were somewhat despondent at first as Evelyn, our Convenor, was not present due to illness. It was the first time that she was ever absent from a gathering.



Our Cathaoirleach, Macrina Clancy, was warmly welcomed to Cork by Eileen. She shared news of a new CEO appointment and spoke about European Polio Groups and a Spanish university's Chair on polio and post-polio syndrome.

After reconnecting with old friends, we enjoyed a delicious lunch with attentive staff. Music, provided by our trusted DJ Jim, brought back memories of our youth. A musical quiz, name the singer and sing the next line, added extra fun, and we won prizes for answering all questions correctly.

We were pleasantly surprised when Evelyn joined us, having been allowed out for good behaviour! It was wonderful to see her looking much improved and, on the way, back to full health.

In her absence, many others helped: Geraldine ensured everything ran smoothly, assisted by Anne, while Angela and Finbarr were also on hand, and Jim took photographs.

Alas, it was soon time to part, but we were glad knowing Evelyn was on the mend and would likely join us for our next meeting in September. We send her, as well as Dolores and Harry, our best wishes for a full recovery.

By Joan & Vincent McDonnell

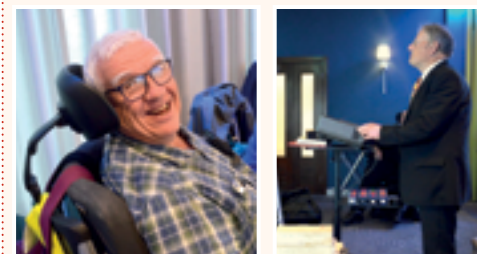
CORK GROUP GET TOGETHER

The Cork Group met for lunch at the Carragaline Court Hotel on Saturday 6th September. We were all delighted to welcome back our dedicated convenor, Evelyn, who had been ill. She was looking hale and hearty and well recovered after her spell in hospital. We had a very good lunch, with the staff, as always, was both kind and helpful and the atmosphere most relaxing.



Evelyn spoke briefly about the upcoming conference and some of those who are standing for election to the board. There was plenty of chat too as we caught up with the latest happenings of our members.

Angela introduced our guest speaker, Chris Larkin, railway enthusiast and author of *West Cork Railways*, a richly illustrated book of images, art, poems, and history. Chris gave a captivating



slide show that followed the railway from Cork city to the Mizen Head, using photographs and artwork to bring each stage to life. His visuals and commentary absorbed us all, and we were delighted to share the journey with him.

Then it was time to part, with promises to meet up for our Christmas party. So, home we went, greatly pleased with what was a most pleasant afternoon.

DUBLIN NC TRIP TO WATERFORD

Our final trip, this year was three nights to Waterford. We stayed in the Marina Hotel, which is situated in the heart of Waterford City, overlooking the banks of the river Suir.

We were blessed with good weather as there was so much to see and do. Our day trip was a trip to the Clock Museum. Evening entertainment was provided by our good friend, Joachim, from Roscommon. Twins, Jim and Tom Butler from Waterford and the thirty two people who joined us. The hotel staff were truly delighted to have us and look forward to our return trip next year. A special thank you to our photographer, Paddy Wynne.

Trip Organiser.



Home Safety

By Leah O'Reilly

Thanks to Brendan Moore for the information.



As we get older, our homes can present new challenges. With mobility and balance becoming trickier, it's important to make safety at home a priority. A few simple changes can make a big difference in stopping accidents from happening and help you feel more comfortable at home.

Our vision changes with age, so good lighting becomes crucial to reducing accidents. Make sure your hallways and staircases are well-lit and install nightlights in bedrooms, bathrooms and hallways to avoid night-time accidents.

Falls are one of the most common cases of injury for older adults. To reduce the risk, look out for trip hazards throughout the home, such as loose cables, clutter, and slippery floors. Secure any loose rugs, tuck away any loose cords, install secure handrails on both sides of your stairs and clear out unnecessary clutter from hallways to create open, hazard-free spaces.

Another common risk at home is caused by burns while handling hot food, using appliances or bathing. Make sure to stay away from cookers, always handle appliances with oven mitts and check water temperature before touching it.

If the situation ever occurs when you need help at home, ensure that you have strong systems to make sure you can get help as soon as possible. Remember your emergency contact systems and always keep a mobile phone or device near you.

Whether it's improving lighting, reducing trip hazards or adding safety features to your house, by following these steps you can create a safe and comfortable environment for yourself in your home and reduce the risks of hazards causing any harm. These changes will help create a safe and comfortable home for yourself.

Legacy Donations: Leaving a Lasting Impact *By Leah O'Reilly*

What Are Legacy Donations?

A legacy donation is a contribution made to a charity through a person's will or estate plan. By leaving a gift in your will, you can create a lasting impact towards a charity even after your lifetime.

How Do Legacy Gifts Help Charities?

Leaving a bequest in your will gives charities steady and reliable support for the future. These gifts help charities plan ahead, continue their services, and respond to new needs as they arise. Even if the donation comes many years from now, it can make a big difference by helping the charity stay strong and carry out its work for the long term.

For example, past legacy gifts have allowed us to provide a Winter Heating Grant to help many survivors stay warm during difficult months, fund customised shoes costing €500–€1,000 to support mobility and even install stairlifts valued between €2,000–€4,000 for individuals with significant accessibility needs.

How Can You Make a Legacy Donation?

Making a legacy donation is simpler than you might think. You can include the charity in your will by specifying their official name and address. Donations aren't limited to one charity; you can support multiple causes if you wish.

You can leave a fixed sum of money, a percentage of your estate, or even specific belongings that could be valuable to the charity. Consulting with a solicitor or financial advisor ensures that your wishes are clearly documented and legally binding. You can contact Holohan Lane, the solicitors, who will help you to do this.

Why Consider a Legacy Donation to Polio Survivors?

Supporting Polio Survivors Ireland through a legacy donation helps us continue our vital work supporting individuals living with the long-term effects of polio. Legacy support has already enabled us to make real, tangible improvements in quality of life that would not be possible without generous donors.

The Lasting Impact of Your Gift

By including Polio Survivors Ireland in your legacy plans, you are helping to create a world where those affected by polio are supported, empowered, and remembered. Gifts like the Winter Heating Grant and mobility equipment may seem modest, but they have transformed individual lives—showing just how far a legacy donation can truly reach.

Survivor Sweepstakes Autumn Draw Winners

Winners of our
Autumn Survivor Sweepstakes Draw winners
were announced at the end of the Conference on
Wednesday 24th September.

There was no winner of the €1,000 prize
as no one matched the four numbers 2, 6, 19, 25.

***We ran our €50 lucky dip and the winners were:
Sarah Martin, Maria Campbell and Rodney McCullough.
Congratulations to these €50 winners.***

You can check this link for Match 4 proof.
[https://www.randomresult.com/ticket.
php?t=4003237G6LMLPV5MW](https://www.randomresult.com/ticket.php?t=4003237G6LMLPV5MW)

You can check the €50 lucky dip winners' link here.
[https://www.randomresult.com/ticket.
php?t=4003240VF3FWSWVJW](https://www.randomresult.com/ticket.php?t=4003240VF3FWSWVJW)

The draw was witnessed by Charlotte Salter-Townshend,
Communications & Network Officer,
Irish Wildlife Trust, with thanks.

The next draw takes place at Christmas time and tickets are
included with this Survivor magazine.

This draw continues to be an important source
of fundraising income for us.
We are very grateful to all our entrants for their support.

Our next draw is with this issue.

FUNDRAISING NEWS

Survivor Sweepstakes Winter 2025 Members Draw



Pay €5 for 1 row, or €10 for 3 rows

€1,000 MUST BE WON - End of Year Draw - if 4 numbers are not matched we will do a draw for €1,000 prize

Our winter 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

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 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 34

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

Please return entries by Thursday 19th Dec 2025

– and make sure to provide a phone number (or address), so we can contact you if you win. If all entries are back by close of the office for Christmas we will endeavour to run the draw. If the entries are delayed by Christmas Postal delays, we will hold off the draw until January to ensure everyone is included.

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

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

Eileen Flanagan, Ned Grace, Blaise Kilbride,
Anastasia McNamara, George Patterson, Michael White,
Elizabeth Collins, Denis Thompson

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

Are you a member of a Credit Union?

Sometimes members nominate us to receive donations from their local Credit Union.



If you are a member of a CU, and willing to submit a letter seeking support, please contact us on 01 889 8920.

We will send you a letter to sign and send in.

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 Nicola Fogarty 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 emma@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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