

Taking Care



Pictured above are some of the members of the Limerick Support Group. Back row (from left): Lorraine Whelan; Carol Phelan; Sr Josephine Dempsey; Marie McLoughlin; and Eva O'Dwyer. Front row (from left): Tom Heneghan; Barry Purcell. Missing from photograph: Shelly Ryan; Des Croucher; Kitty Murphy; Rose O'Connor; and Nicola Perry

IN LAST YEAR'S autumn edition of *MSnews*, it was announced that a support group for spouses and partners of people with MS in Limerick was commencing in September 2006. The aim was to have a support group meeting approximately once a month — the format being an informal get-together for a cuppa and a chat.

Carol Phelan, founder and organiser of this group, is glad to report that the first year of the support group has been a great success; the group originally started with

three but has steadily grown to 12.

The first get-together took place on Monday, 25 September 2006 in the Woodfield House Hotel. Irene Barry, Chairman of the Limerick Branch, came along to wish the group the very best in its endeavours. That was then followed by a talk given by Renee Geary from Caring for Carers.

In October, the group had a qualified reflexologist and aromatherapist speak on the benefits of therapies and generally

how to maintain a feeling of well-being.

For the November get-together, a recognised counsellor spoke to the group about the role of being a carer and how it is vitally important for carers to look after themselves.

The group broke for the Christmas season and resumed again in January 2007. The February meeting was held in TARA, the new regional office and services hub in Limerick. It was the first group to avail of this wonderful new facility. "TARA is a perfect location for the support group meeting — it has a very relaxed and comfortable surrounding and members were even able to make their own cuppa," says Carol.

The March get-together was a thought-provoking exercise on new ideas for the group and members came up with a good one — on Monday, 30 April they had 'An Evening of Relaxation for Carers'. Everybody availed of reflexology, Indian head massage and therapeutic hand massage, followed by the usual cuppa and a chat.

"It was a most relaxing and enjoyable night with incense burning and relaxing music — we also had some newcomers on the night, which was very reassuring for the group," recalls Carol.

The group broke for the summer on Monday, 28 May but will be back again in TARA on Monday, 24 September at 8pm.

If anybody in Limerick would like to join this group or would like any further information, please contact Carol Phelan at 087 8171814.



Pictured left are teens from the Dublin, Wicklow and Kildare areas who recently went on an activity break to Oakwood Leisure Park in south Wales with some of our eastern regional community workers. The teens, who have a parent with MS, particularly enjoyed the bungee jumping and the mountaineering

It's all go in Galway!



Teachers and students of Scoil Mhuire An Tuairin, Beal an Daingin, celebrate raising €200 on their non-uniform day

THE GALWAY BRANCH has had a busy few months with volunteers, local supporters and businesses showing great gusto in raising funds for the Society. Recent events include:

- Non-uniform days at Scoil Mhuire An Tuairin, Beal an Daingin and Scoil Éinne, An Spidéal. Thanks to the students and teachers from both schools, who between them raised over €500 for the Branch
- A recent key ring day in Eyre Square and Galway Shopping Centres, which raised €650 for the Branch. Special thanks to Pdraic Naughton (Galway Shopping Centre) and Sharon Mulryan (Eyre Square Shopping Centre)
- Springtime coffee mornings in the Waterfront Hotel, Salthill, which brought in €220 for the Branch
- Walks that took place all over Galway for the Branch over the past few months. Many people took part in the TG4 walk to Spiddal. Some €7,500 was raised for the Society. Denis Carey, whose brother Joe in Clare has MS, raised €750 in a local walk for the Branch
- Church gate collections on 15 and 16 July. A big thank you to all the volunteers and supporters who raised an impressive €7,972.

BUSKING THE DAY

ON A BALMY Thursday, shoppers in Listowel were treated to an eagerly awaited annual open-air concert in aid of the local branch of MS Ireland. Musicians organised by Jimmy Hannon and local singer-songwriter Mickey McConnell played for free on the main street for over six hours.

Pedestrians entering the street were also met by collectors. The ever-generous people of Listowel donated more than €6,300 on the day.

The MS Busking Day has become a highlight of the summer in Listowel and an annual event.

The North Kerry Branch appreciates the help of the musicians who take a day off work each year to play for free, the shopkeepers who provide free electricity to power the amplifiers and guitars as well



Some of the collectors and musicians who took part in the Listowel Busking Day

as those shop owners who provide refreshments. In addition, the branch would like to let the volunteers who collect the money know that their work is much appreciated. Of course, the public who donate so generously each time deserve a special mention and thanks must go to them.

IN LOVING MEMORY

BRIDIE O'BRIEN

It was with great sadness that we heard of the death of Bridie O'Brien. We extend our deepest sympathy to all her family and friends. Bridie was a well-loved and popular volunteer in the MS Shop in Bray until her retirement at 80 years of age. We deeply appreciate Bridie's wish that money in lieu of flowers be donated to MS Ireland. May she rest in peace.



CHRIS DALY

MS Ireland would like to extend its sympathy to the family of the late Chris Daly who passed away in December 2006. Chris was a past Chairman of the Board and acted as a special advisor in establishing MS Ireland as a limited company. A printer by trade, Chris printed many publications for MS Ireland. A true friend of the organisation, Chris' contribution is remembered by many. May he rest in peace.





Some of the motorcyclists from the Wexford 100 club take to the roads to raise money for MS Ireland

CRUISE CONTROL

THE EIGHTH ANNUAL Wexford 100 Motorcycle Rally took place on Sunday, 27 May. The event was in aid of the Wexford South Branch and the County Wexford Community Workshop. Over 50 motorcyclists from the Wexford 100 motorcycle club took to the roads and byroads of the county.

The start/finish point was at The Porterhouse in Castlebridge and many thanks go to Eamon Culleton for looking after the bikers. The route was 120 miles long and took in Wexford, Enniscorthy, Bunclody, Graiguenamanagh and New Ross — to name but a few.

The day was a great success and enjoyed both by riders and collectors. A staggering €30,000 was raised, and special thanks go to Seamus Flood who organised the entire event. Thanks must also go to local businesses who donated raffle prizes.

Wexford South MS Branch wishes to thank everyone who helped out and, most importantly, to all those who sponsored the riders and made this rally a great success.

Fun while the sun shone

THE WEATHER MAY not have been the best this summer season, but that didn't stop some of our branches from getting out and enjoying the warmer climes.

On 26 June, a 'Strawberries and Cream' afternoon was held by the North Dublin Branch at the national headquarters of the Irish Wheelchair Association in Clontarf in Dublin. Local musicians provided the entertainment, aiming to spread some summer cheer.

The North Dublin Branch's summer outing saw members taking a tour of the National Museum of Ireland at Collins Barracks in the city in July. The museum is highly accessible, with the vast majority of the exhibitions on one level. The Order of Malta kindly provided the transport, where needed. Afterwards the tour members enjoyed a lunch in the



Some members of North Dublin Branch at their annual branch summer outing to the National Museum. Pictured are: Willie Phelan; Ciaran Lambe; Helen Behan; Nora Alford; Eamon Gough; and Liam Keaveny



Afterwards the tour members had lunch in the Halfway House on the Navan Road. Pictured above are: Patricia Cuthbert; Brenda Kennedy; Phil Buckley; Rose McAuliffe; Olive Kiersey; and Marie Nolan

Halfway House on the Navan Road. The day was thoroughly enjoyable with over 40 people turning out to make it a success.

Indeed, socialising isn't just confined to the long summer months and Branch

Chairman Ciaran Lambe would like to remind people that the branch holds a social on the last Tuesday of every month, except during the months of August and December. For more details, contact Ciaran on 087 4196658.

On your bike

THE CORK CITY Branch celebrated another fruitful Malin to Mizen Bike Ride, organised with the Cork City Garda BMW Club. A staggering €45,000 was raised this year. Nearly 100 riders took the journey up the country in June. Pictured is Seán Murphy accepting the cheque from Superintendent Kevin Ludlow. Also shown are members of the Cork Regional Office, the Cork Branch and some of the gardaí who helped raise the money.

