

Mo Shaol

MS Ireland
South Mayo Branch
NEWSLETTER
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Dia Dhoibh! Hello there!

It's been a while since we were last in touch. My, hasn't this coronavirus, COVID-19, really disrupted life as we used to know it!

I prepared a new edition of *Mo Shaol* in March and sent it to the printers and then.... And then, Lockdown happened. We cancelled the print-run because of the difficulties around posting it during the early stages of the Lockdown. However, those of you who usually receive the newsletter by e-mail will have got it.

Lockdown and cocooning has been very hard for so many of us in the last three months. Life is already hard when you have a disease like MS. Fortunately, it looks like the end of Lockdown may be in sight.

In the South Mayo area, we have been so fortunate to have a dedicated and compassionate Community Worker in **Mags Ryan**. Mags has, I know, been in touch with you during the last few months, organising activities online for people with MS. We are acutely aware that not everyone has access to a computer/tablet/smartphone to be able to join in these activities.

We are looking at ways to increase digital access for people that want it – but we also know that not everyone does want this. We are also looking at ways to resume contact with and help for our members in the old-fashioned way. It will take a little time but, be reassured, we are working on it. **We are here for you.**



The morning stretch

*The morning stretch is great to do,
It gets the blood to flow
And the muscles move
Stand up right, feel the strain
You will move much better, without pain.*

Seamus Burke is one of our members, and an artist. He lives in Partry. During Lockdown, Seamus has been making a series of paintings, each accompanied by a short poem, as his way of coping with the disruption in his life. Thank you for this, Seamus!

Maureen Feeney RIP

As I was preparing this Newsletter, news reached me of the death of Maureen Feeney. Maureen was a stalwart of the local branch of MS Ireland for many years and she also served on the national Board of the organisation. We offer our most sincere sympathies to Sharon and all of Maureen's family and friends. *Ar dheis Dé go raibh a h-anam dílis.*

Church Gate Collection 2020

The annual church gate collection for the local branch of MS Ireland took place, as usual, on the first weekend in March. We were lucky to be able to do it before Lockdown. As usual, the people of South Mayo contributed very generously. More than €16,500 was raised. Our thanks to all who contributed and especially to all our collectors.

Christmas Lunch 2019

You will recall that we had to postpone our Christmas lunch in Corley's Abbey Lodge in Ballintubber last December, so we rescheduled it for 15th March. Then, of course, Coronavirus struck and we were forced to postpone it again. We will have to wait for government advice and see how health conditions improve before we can try to rearrange it.

Rest assured, as soon as it is safe to do so, we'll gather together again.



Eircodes

I'm sure many of you will have heard the radio adverts urging people to make a note of their eircode and to keep it handy near the phone in case of emergency. This is very good advice and, if you have not already done so, please do. Carol has drawn my attention to the fact that some of you who receive *Mo Shaol* by post don't always get it as quickly as you should. It may be that putting your eircode on your address label will speed up delivery so we ask you to let us have your eircode. Please text it together **with your name** to Carol on 087 - 2754 628.

Using the Internet

Not everyone feels confident digital technology. Many feel intimidated by it, that they won't be able to use it. The term digital technology puts us off. In fact, it is not really that hard. Age Action Ireland has developed a very useful and easy-to-use toolkit to help you get started and get comfortable with it.

If you, or someone in your household, has a laptop or smartphone, go to <https://www.ageaction.ie/how-we-can-help/getting-started-kit>. Maybe a family member can also help you.

Yoga, Physiotherapy and More

Both Mags, here in South Mayo, and the whole of the MS Ireland Western Team, based in Galway, have been working to adapt to the restrictions of Lockdown during the time of COVID-19. In this, activities that would normally take place in person and in groups have had to be adapted to take place online. However, as we gradually get back to a new normal, MS Ireland has directed that **no** face-to-face classes or events will happen before December of this year. The situation continues to evolve and we will keep you up to date with any changes to this guidance.

Among those activities that have been done online are yoga, physiotherapy and meditation. Some of these sessions have now expired but they will be available again. If you have not taken part in online classes up to now, there are opportunities to do so in the Autumn. Because we are working online, we are not limited geographically, so if you have any suggestions for online classes, please let us know.

You can also join an online coffee morning each Wednesday between 11:00 and 12:00. This embraces the whole of the western region so there is an opportunity to meet people in counties Galway and Roscommon.

For more information about this and for help, please contact Mags on 087 2502 031.