

Mo Shaol

MS Ireland Mission:

To enable and empower people affected by Multiple Sclerosis to live the life of their choice to their fullest potential.

MS Ireland

South Mayo Branch

NEWSLETTER

Issue 74

Autumn 2023



Tall Cross, Monasterboice, Co. Louth

Dia Dhaoibh! Hello there!

Our photo this issue is part of the shaft of the so-called 'Tall Cross' at Monasterboice, Co. Louth. It was probably made sometime in the tenth century. On it, you can see clearly two of the sculpted panels. They depict scenes from the Old Testament. Can you figure out what each represents?

The upper panel depicts Abraham about to sacrifice Isaac at God's command before the Angel tells him to stop and sacrifice a goat instead.

The lower panel depicts Moses striking the Rock at a place near Kadesh in the Sinai bringing forth water for the thirsty Israelites. God, however, had instructed Moses to *speak* to the rock, and in striking it, Moses offended God. God punished him by not allowing him enter the promised land.

Would you have known all this just by looking at the sculpted panels of the high cross? We all need help and guidance in making our way through the world – especially when we suffer from a major debilitating disease like multiple sclerosis.

The committee of the South Mayo Branch of MS Ireland works to help people with MS in our area in their daily struggles with life. We are here for you.

Tony Candon PRO

Our Day at the Races

By Rosie Lowe

The South Mayo Branch ventured out to Ballinrobe Racecourse on Friday the 15th of September. We were a small, but select, group, fewer people turning up than we had hoped. It was a bright, if bracing, autumn day. A huge crowd gathered on the last meeting of the season. There was a carnival atmosphere, with hot hats and dapper chaps.

A total of eight races ran on the day, and swift trade was had at both Tote and independent bookmakers. The grassy viewing circle was close to the indoor Pavilion. We could watch the beautiful horses up close as they paraded before each race. Liam Cannon followed his tip offs and won three times. This was their first time at the races for himself and his wife, Patricia. He says they will be back!

A wheelchair accessible viewing platform was situated close to the finish line. The roar of the crowds and drum of hooves was heady. What an exhilarating way to spend the day!

Our group availed of scrummy burgers, hot dogs and curry chips at the vendors' vans. Steaming mugs of tea and hot chocolate kept us warm throughout. Towards the end, a local band struck up and the happy crowd jigged and reeled.

The South Mayo Branch is most grateful to Ballinrobe Racecourse for allowing our members free admission. Thanks a million!



Jackie writes...

Just thought I would give you a quick update on how I have been settling into MS Ireland. As you know I commenced work with MS Ireland in late January 2023 and it has been a very busy year to date where I have had the pleasure of meeting with many of you, either in person or over the phone or at the recent Information Fair in Claremorris.

I have managed to get in-person Physio classes in Ballina up and going and I have commenced work on Physio classes for Castlebar. If you're interested in attending, it would be a great help to me if you could let me know and I will then include you in the list of numbers.

I would like each and everyone of you to know that you can contact me with any worries or concerns you may have, especially as we enter the Winter season. I am aware of the rising energy costs and the additional costs of the Christmas season on many people. With the darker evenings the days can seem long, so if there is anything you feel I may assist you with or even if you just want to chat, please feel free to contact me. I work Tuesday Wednesday and Thursday but sometimes I am working outside those days so do make contact and if I am unable to answer I will come back to you.

I would like to wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas and I look forward to working with and getting to know you all better in 2024.

Jackie Keogh, Community Worker

Sativex

MS Ireland received recently the great news that Sativex has been recommended for reimbursement, subject to a managed access programme. Details of the managed access programme are yet to be shared.

Sativex (nabiximols) is a cannabis-based medicine. The drug can be prescribed for the treatment of MS-related spasticity when a person has shown an inadequate response to other symptomatic treatments, or found their side effects intolerable. Sativex can be used in addition to a person's current anti-spasticity medication.

According to Consultant Neurologist Dr Hugh Kearney, "Sativex will be an additional pharmacological treatment available for spasticity in MS. Our hope is that with better disease modifying drugs for MS we will see complications like spasticity much less often. This medication option may not suit everyone as it has many possible side effects, so other treatments such as physiotherapy and occupational therapy will still be as important as ever."

Further information about Sativex can be found at <https://mstrust.org.uk/a-z/sativex-nabiximols>.

If you think that this medication would be suitable for you, we recommend speaking to your neurologist.

Christmas Lunch

It may still be October, but we in the South Mayo Branch like to plan ahead!

We have booked Corley's Abbey Lodge, Ballintubber, again this year for lunch at **3:00 p.m. on Sunday, 3rd December, 2023.**

We would love to meet you there.

If you would like to come along (free of charge for members and a helper), please contact Ger Butler on 087 - 622 4347, or Email:

butlerger@gmail.com by **Wednesday 29th November**. We need to know how many people are coming along to advise Corleys of numbers.

STUDY ON STIGMA IN MS

Call for participants

A study led by Dr Rebecca Maguire from Maynooth University aims to understand if people with MS experience any stigma from others in relation to their condition. Dr Maguire is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at Maynooth University and also a person living with multiple sclerosis (MS).

This research will also explore why some people with MS choose to hide their diagnosis or symptoms from others and whether this has any impact on their psychological wellbeing.

The anonymous survey will take about 15 minutes to complete and is open to all people with MS who are over the age of 18.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Further information about the survey can be found by clicking on the link below. This link also takes you to the online survey.

https://maynoothpsychology.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3r6qydK66tK5sOy

New Board Member

We are happy to report that our Vice-Chair and PRO, Tony Candon, has been elected to the Board of MS Ireland.

This happened at the AGM of the Society in Athlone in September.



Tony was elected by the MS Council, the representative body comprising all MS Ireland branches. He will serve a three-year term.

While Tony does not have MS himself, he has lived with it nearly all his life – first with his mother, and latterly with his wife.



Outing to Museum of Country Life

We are planning a trip to the Museum of Country Life for our members on **Sunday 12th November 2023** and we would love to have you there.

The visit will include:

- Lunch at 2:00 p.m.
- Open Committee Meeting at 3:00 p.m.
- Tour of the Museum Galleries and Turlough Park House at 3:30 p.m. The tour will be led by Tony Candon, former Head of the Museum of Country Life.

The afternoon is completely **FREE** for members and helpers.

If you would like to come along, please contact Ger Butler, Secretary, on 087 – 622 4347, or Email: butlger@gmail.com by **Thursday 9th November**.



Throughout November, the wonderful MS Readathon takes place in schools and homes across Ireland.

It's a simple but truly special event that helps children improve their literacy skills, develop a lasting love of reading, go on epic adventures and raise money to support people affected by MS in Ireland.

By taking part in MS Readathon, children can hugely benefit from the tremendous power of reading in many different ways.

TAKING PART TRULY TRANSFORMS LIVES

The money children fundraise as part of MS Readathon is incredibly important to people living with MS in Ireland and their families.

Children who sign up for MS Readathon can raise money by using an online fundraising page or paper sponsorship cards – or both!

To help make life easier for teachers and home-schooling parents, we've created a range of MS Readathon resources you can easily download.

Find out more at www.msreadathon.ie.

Committee Members, South Mayo Branch MS Ireland, 2023

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