



Mo Shaol



MS Ireland

South Mayo Branch

NEWSLETTER

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Christmas 2023



MS Ireland Mission:

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

Nollaig / Christmas 2023

*Nollaig shona agus
Ath-bhliain faoi
mhaise roimh cách
ó choiste áitiúil de
MS Ireland*

*Happy Christmas and
Best Wishes for the
New Year to all
from the local
committee of MS
Ireland*



Christmas Lunch 2023



The Christmas Lunch of the South Mayo Branch of MS Ireland took place on Sunday, 3rd December in Corley's Abbey Lodge, Ballintubber. Twenty people attended.

Among those present was Anne Restan, Chair of MS Ireland. Anne spoke briefly, outlining her agenda for the organisation during the three years of her role as chair. This is to persuade the Board and the professional staff who run the Society to become more member-focused and to improve their communication with, and involvement of, the Branches in the affairs of the Society. Anne, of course, was elected to the Board by the Council as a representative of the South Dublin Branch, so she comes to the job as "one of us", so to speak. She was well-received by those there.

Also present was Aidan Larkin, National Services Development Manager for MS Ireland. It was an opportunity to thank Aidan for all that he had done for the organisation over twenty nine years of service, and especially the help and advice he provided to us in the South Mayo Branch over the years. Aidan leaves MS Ireland on 8th December.

For members and people with MS who were present, the lunch was a chance for them to meet in person and get to know Jackie Keogh, our Regional Community Worker.

Our thanks, once again, to the staff of the Abbey Lodge for the lovely lunch they provided.

Donation

At the end of the meal, one of those attending called me over to give me a donation for the Branch: Carmel Joyce handed me €50, a very generous gift from a generous woman. Thank you, Carmel!



Dia Dhaoibh! Hello there!

As I write this, Storms Elin and Fergus have struck and passed on. Today is cold, overcast and steel-grey.

Winter is upon us.

Christmas approaches. For most people, it will be a happy time. There will be presents and feasting. There will be friends and family perhaps not seen for a long time.

It won't be a happy time for everyone, however. For some, there will be a struggle for money to pay for it all. For others, there may be disharmony in the home. For those who have lost loved ones, there will be sadness and an empty place at the table.

For those with illnesses or conditions like MS, Christmas brings its own challenges.

We offer you our very best wishes for the season ahead; we hope you have a pleasant and happy Christmas.

Remember, 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

MS Readathon

One local school's experience

As most of you will know, the MS Readathon takes place in schools and homes throughout Ireland during the month of November each year. As well as raising much-needed funds for MS Ireland, the Readathon raises awareness about multiple sclerosis, especially among children, and it is also a valuable educational experience.

This year, as in previous years, the children of Killeen National School, Louisburgh, took part again. **Altogether, the children raised €1,872 for MS Ireland – a truly wonderful achievement.**

Several of the pupils wrote about their reading experience and we include some of these here. Each typed their account in their own style, with different fonts and font sizes. We are delighted to be able to reproduce some of these here; the only change I have made is to standardise the font size and style; otherwise, they are as each child wrote them. The lady they refer to is our own Ger Butler, who was the MS ambassador to the school.

My name is Daniel .I am 9 years old. I enjoy reading Diary of a Wimpy Kid - The Meltdown Book. The main character in all the books is Greg Heffley. There are also books about Rowley Jefferson, his best friend. I enjoy raising money for the MS Readathon.

The MS Readathon 2023

My name is Ellen. I joined the Readathon after a local lady came to our school to tell us about MS and her experience of getting diagnosed with it. It made me feel lucky that I am able to work my body. After the speech she gave us, I knew that I wanted to be a part of the Readathon because the money would go to great use. My family very kindly donated money and cheered me on. It felt great knowing that I was reading for an amazing cause. I also learned that if you have MS it doesn't mean that you can't do stuff, you can just do them in a different way to others. I know it's difficult but by feeling grateful for what you have, you can still lead a wonderful life.

Hi, I'm Cillian. I'm 9 years old and it's my first year doing the MS Readathon. The book I'm reading is called Danny The Champion Of The World and it is about a boy who's father is a mechanic and is poor. He doesn't go to school until 7 years old and finds out his dad hunts for food. I'd highly recommend this book.

Hi, my name is Aidan. I'm 9 years old and this is my first time doing the MS Readathon. I'm reading Artemis Fowl and the time Paradox. It's about a teenage boy in a world of fairies, dwarfs, spirits, pixies and demons. He has to rescue a lemur to save his mother but he made it extinct a few years ago. Talk about awkward so he went back in time to stop his 10 year old self from killing it...

Hi! my name is Áine. I am 9 years old. I wanted to take part in the ms readathon Because a local lady came to our school to talk to us all about ms .The lady has ms and she showed us an electricity wire to demonstrate how nerve damage affects the spine. At the moment I'm reading The Longest Whale song by Jacqueline Wilson.

I enjoy reading and I hope we raise lots of money!

Hello my name is James Murphy and I'm nine years old also. This is my first time doing the MS Readathon. I am reading a book called "Last Summer When I Robbed a Bank" . It's a really good book, so far so good and it's really funny and comedic. The characters are Kitty,Rex,Rex's parents,Uncle Lester and the shopkeeper (who's name I forgot. I am also reading another book called "Murder Most Unladylike". The characters for this book are Miss Griffin, Miss Lappet, Miss Bell, Miss

Parker, Mr MacLean, Mr Reid, Miss Tennyson, Miss Hopkins, Daisy Wells and Hazel Wong. I'm reading enjoying taking part in the Readathon.

Hi, my name is Frankie. I'm 9 years old and this is my first year doing the Ms Readathon. I enjoy reading Goosebumps. I enjoy reading and sometimes I just read to pass the time.

My name is Megan and I'm nine years old. This is my first year taking part in the MS readathon. I enjoy reading this book called Buttons the Runaway Puppy. It's about a girl who loves her neighbour's dog, Buttons but her mom said that she is not allowed a dog, even if her neighbours are giving away Buttons. She finally comes up with a plan to get a dog. I love reading for MS readathon.

MS Readathon

My name is Liliana Austin. I'm ten years old. I joined the MS Readathon because I felt really bad for the people with MS. A local lady that had MS came to tell us about MS Readathon. She told us what happens if you get MS and how to donate. My family donated some money too. I hope they find a cure.

Hi my name is Luke. I am 10 years old. This is my first year doing the MS Readathon. I joined the MS Readathon because a local lady who's living with MS came and talked to us about it. I would like to help her and a lot of other people. I enjoy reading Diary of a Wimpy Kid

and a lot of other good books like Tom Gates and David Walliams books. So far I'm really enjoying the MS Readathon. Thanks everyone at the MS Readathon team.

"Hi, my name is Tommy. I'm 9 years old and this my first time taking part in the MS Readathon. I really enjoy reading. It is fun to do. I like reading Mr. Gum and Diary of a Wimpy Kid. Doing this raises money and helps people with MS."

"My name is Róisín.

I started reading for MS a few weeks ago. I started to really enjoy reading. A local lady came to our school who was diagnosed with MS a few years ago. I learned that there are loads of different symptoms of MS. Some people have numb hands and feet and other people might be a bit shaky. I am really lucky to have all my limbs working really well. If you have MS I hope you are still doing everything like me, just a little bit differently. I hope they find a cure soon."

Hi, my name is Seán.

I'm 9 years old and this is my first time doing the MS Readathon. I'm reading a book called How my Body Works. I have read 9 books so far. I started reading near the start of November.

I also read a book called The Great Irish Farm book.

I'm really enjoying the Readathon.






Partly frozen Castlebar River, Turlough, Christmas Day 2010

MS Explored: The Podcast – Season 2

Season 2 of the podcast will feature four new episodes where we will explore a range of topics including meeting with a neurologist following diagnosis, dealing with MS related fatigue and advancements in treatment.

In the series, host Aoife Kirwan, Information Officer at MS Ireland speaks with a range of experts, consultant neurologists and people living with MS to hear first-hand about their experience. Here are the first three episodes.

		
<p>EPISODE 1: NEWLY DIAGNOSED: MEETING WITH A NEUROLOGIST</p> <p>Dealing with a new diagnosis of MS can be a challenging time and often involves engaging with a range of different healthcare professionals. In the first episode of Season 2 of MS Explored – The Podcast, host Aoife Kirwan is joined by Andy Walsh, from Co. Mayo, and Dr Karen O’Connell, consultant neurologist at Tallaght Hospital. Having been diagnosed with MS in 2020, Andy shares how he felt during this time and recounts his first experience meeting with a healthcare professional.</p> <p>Dr O’Connell defines what exactly MS is, offers insight into what a typical consultation with a neurologist might look like, and advice about preparing for an appointment.</p> <p>https://audioboom.com/posts/8409716-episode-1-newly-diagnosed-meeting-with-a-neurologist.</p>	<p>EPISODE 2: DEALING WITH FATIGUE</p> <p>Fatigue is one of the most common symptoms of multiple sclerosis and can impact many aspects of a person’s life - at work, home and socially. In this episode of MS Explored – The Podcast Season 2, Claire Dolan, Occupational Therapist St James’s Hospital, provides an explanation and definition of the different types of fatigue and advice on how to manage it.</p> <p>Host Aoife Kirwan is then joined by Mary McCusker, regional worker at the MS Ireland Midwest office to provide an overview of the supports available at MS Ireland for those experiencing fatigue.</p> <p>https://audioboom.com/posts/8409717-episode-2-dealing-with-fatigue.</p>	<p>EPISODE 3: ADVANCEMENTS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF MS</p> <p>Advancements in the management of any disease can bring a certain amount of interest in hope. In this episode of MS Explored – The Podcast, Dr Hugh Kearney, Consultant Neurologist in the MS Unit of St. James's Hospital Dublin, provides an update about the progress that has been made in the management of MS and what the future might hold.</p> <p>This episode was recorded at an information event hosted by MS Ireland on World MS Day.</p> <p>https://audioboom.com/posts/8409719-episode-3-advancements-in-the-management-of-ms.</p>

An All-Terrain Scooter is A Right Wagon!

By
Hazel Coffey

You don't ever see ads in the Sunday supplements for really useful things like all-terrain mobility scooters.

It took me a few months of online searching to find a wagon that is capable of taking me the places I want to go. My whole life has been about getting outdoors in wild and beautiful landscapes. I need it like food and drink, but weak and wonky legs have gradually made this impossible.

My all-terrain scooter has given me this outdoor life back. She is called a *Tramper*, and she's able for fields, tracks, steep uphill, bog roads, and hard sand. I can be out on her for a couple of hours on most of my favourite walks. Her powerful motor can chunter along Keel Strand in Achill, and Old Head beach. She's taken me round the Lost Valley walk with ease, she's well able for the Greenway and for most hilly loop walks and trails. A jaunt on the by-roads keeps me sane, out in nature, in the fresh air, with all kinds of lovely things to look at.

I can drive her up the ramp into my Berlingo and then off for our adventures all over Mayo. We've been all around the woods in Cong, and the little mountainy ways up behind Foxford, the length of Lough Nafooney, and the old green road along Killary Harbour.

You can see lots of *Tramper* videos on YouTube, and I got friendly help from people on a UK Facebook group, "Disabled Ramblers".

So, if your heart is aching to be back outdoors, amazing vehicles like this are out there! There's lots to be done to develop "disabled rambling" in Ireland. The cost is a real stumbling block, but *Tramper* scooters are widely available at National Trust properties in the UK, and there's no reason why National Parks in Ireland should not start acquiring some. Those of us who need the great outdoors for our wellbeing have to raise awareness that there are wheels that will do a great job for us, if they are made available.



Spaghetti With Spinach, Feta and Dill

As we approach Christmas with its traditional food, here's a recipe that is different. It is light but nourishing – and tasty! The quantities here will serve 4-6 people, but you can reduce the quantities in proportion if you are feeding fewer people.

Preparation time: 25 mins



INGREDIENTS

- 300g spaghetti
- 4 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 2 cloves garlic, minced or finely grated
- 2 medium scallions, white and light green parts thinly sliced, dark green parts reserved separately, for serving
- 250g fresh baby spinach
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice, plus more to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, plus more to taste
- 200g feta cheese, crumbled
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill, plus more for garnish

DIRECTIONS

Set a large pot of water to boil for the pasta. Cook the pasta 1 minute less than the package instructions. Reserve about 1 cup of the pasta water, then drain.

While the pasta is cooking, in a large, deep skillet or wok over medium-high heat, heat 3 tablespoons of the oil until shimmering. Add the garlic and the light green and white parts of the scallions and cook, stirring, until the garlic is pale golden, about 30 seconds. Add the spinach a few handfuls at a time, adding more as the spinach in the pan begins to wilt. Cook, stirring, until all the spinach is wilted, but still bright green, about 2 minutes. Stir in the lemon juice, salt and pepper. Remove from the heat and set aside until the pasta is ready.

After you drain the pasta, return the skillet to medium heat and add the drained pasta. Add about 120g of the feta cheese and the dill and cook, tossing to combine and adding pasta water as needed to loosen and coat the pasta, until most of the feta is melted, about 1 minute. Drizzle in the remaining olive oil. Taste, and season with additional lemon juice, salt and pepper, if desired.

Slice the dark scallion greens. Divide across 6 bowls, garnish with the freshly sliced scallion, dill and the remaining feta cheese and serve.



MoveSmart MS is MS Ireland's online, nationally recruited, symptom-focused exercise program. It offers specialised, tailored, symptom-specific online exercise programmes for participants living with Multiple Sclerosis, grouped by age and stage in their MS journey.

Explore the MoveSmart MS programs starting January 2024, covering a range of needs from Newly Diagnosed to Falls Prevention. To join a class, click [here](#) and complete the form. Our Senior Physiotherapists are ready to conduct online assessments via Zoom.

See the Move Smart page on the MS Ireland website for more information:
<https://www.ms-society.ie/movesmart-ms>.

"Ten Things to know about" on RTÉ One



This six-part series has been running on RTÉ on Monday nights at 8:30 p.m. for the last few weeks.

The sixth and final episode will focus on the immune system and MS Ireland were delighted to support it by liaising with producers and identifying an individual living with MS to take part in the programme. This episode on the immune system will air on **Monday, December 16th at 8.30pm.**

Advance Notice

I know – Spring is still a little way off! This to let you know that we plan to have our **Annual General Meeting** in late February 2024. This will probably be via Zoom.

Also –our **church gate collection** will take place in Spring 2024. We don't yet have a date but we will keep you informed about both this and the AGM.

Christmas Raffle

Christmas would not be Christmas without a raffle in Liam Cannon's Vegetable Shop in Castlebar! This year, another Crib is there to be won. The knitted figures in the Crib were made by Mulranny Knitting Club; the Crib itself was made by Damien Quinn. In addition, there is also a "diamond painting" of the Nativity, and a knitted table piece. Raffle lines cost €2 each, or three lines for €5. First prize is the Crib, with the "diamond paintings" as second and third prizes. Proceeds of the Raffle go to the local branch of MS Ireland. The draw will take place on **Sunday 24th** December.

