

# Mo Shaol

MS Ireland  
**South Mayo Branch**

**NEWSLETTER**

**Issue 77**

**Summer 2024**

## **MS Ireland Mission:**

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



## ***Dia Dhaoibh! Hello there!***

So: Summer is supposed to be here. Brrrr! It just doesn't look like it or feel like it. Spring wasn't much better. But Spring at least held the promise of coming warmth, regrowth and the reappearance of flowers and blossoms.

The photo above shows one piece of woodland here in Mayo carpeted with wild garlic and some bluebells. A feast for the eyes – and for the nose. For there is nothing quite like the scent of the wild garlic in late Spring. Spring and Summer together bring renewal, the flourishing of life and the promise of harvest to come. And this happens even when the weather is not as pleasant as it might be for people.

Nature, of course, struggles at times with the vicissitudes of the weather, just as we struggle with life sometimes also. This is the case when we suffer from a disease like MS. That's why we in the South Mayo Branch of MS Ireland are here: to help when needed. We are here for **you**.

## Jackie writes



Hi All,

I hope that this finds you well. Firstly, I would like to thank all of you who contacted me over the past while in support of the Neurological Alliance of Ireland campaign for a Neurologist for Mayo University Hospital. Your support coming up to the recent local election was incredible and I know that many of you have raised this important issue with your local representatives.

We held a very successful coffee morning in the McWilliam Park in Claremorris on May 29<sup>th</sup> and we had Laura Horgan there from Coloplast who gave a very informative talk on the important topic of Continence and MS.

We are also in the process of developing a Young Persons Peer Support Group for those with MS aged between 18-43. I recently sent out a survey to all those living in Mayo between those ages looking at what supports would be helpful. If you did not receive it, please let me know.

I am eagerly seeking some Art Class Facilitators and Yoga teachers alongside a Physio to run some in person classes in Autumn 2024. If you know of anyone and/or a suitable venue, please let me know.

As always, I am always here for any MS related issues or supports that you may need. I work Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays and can be contacted by phone on 087 – 2502 031 or through email at [jackiek@ms-society.ie](mailto:jackiek@ms-society.ie).

Until next time,  
Jackie.

## Summer – Autumn Outings

Would you like the Branch Committee to arrange an outing this summer and/or this autumn? We have come up with a short list of suggestions to see what people would most like to do. On the table are:

- Killary Harbour Cruise followed by Dinner at Leenane Hotel
- Kylemore Abbey Day Trip
- Dinner and Cinema in Castlebar
- Connaught Distillery Ballina followed by Dinner
- Achill Day Trip

We also would like to know when suits you best for this.

If you have access to the internet, please complete the short survey at this link: <https://forms.office.com/e/VmcG8knunr>.

If you do not have the internet, please phone Louise on 087 – 6799 131 or email her at [lulu09p@gmail.com](mailto:lulu09p@gmail.com).

### Thank You

We would like to offer our sincere thanks to Cora Waldron of Claremorris for her recent donation of €480. We deeply appreciate it.

## Living Well

A programme for adults with long-term health conditions



Living Well is a free group programme for adults living with any long-term or chronic condition. It takes place over six weekly workshops (6 x 2.5 hours) – either online or in-person. It is delivered by trained leaders, most of whom are also living with a long-term health condition.

You will develop self-management **skills and confidence** to live well with your health conditions. You will also meet other people who live with long-term health conditions and learn from each other's experiences.

### Upcoming Living Well Programmes

This **free Living Well** programme is exclusively for people with MS. Thursdays, 4<sup>th</sup> July to 15<sup>th</sup> August at 7:00p.m. Contact details below.

### To book your place contact

❖ Aine McNamee – Living Well Co-ordinator  
041 6850676 or 087 1140371  
[aine.mcnamee@hse.ie](mailto:aine.mcnamee@hse.ie)

❖ Elaine Duffy – Living Well Administrator  
041 6860710 or 087 4308735  
[elaine.duffy5@hse.ie](mailto:elaine.duffy5@hse.ie)



[www.hse.ie/LivingWell](http://www.hse.ie/LivingWell)

# Brazil in a Wheelchair

By Alison Dallywater

## *I went on holiday to Brazil by mistake! (Part 1)*

When my friend Sam said, “let’s get some winter sun!”, I assumed she meant Lanzarote. Brazil.

I probably didn’t plan as thoroughly as I should have done. I had no knowledge of the country before we left and how long we would spend travelling within the country. I used to joke that I had a bottom the size of Brazil – this has now been proven wrong, as Brazil is very big indeed! We decided to visit several cities without knowing where they were in relation to one another.

**I had bought an Airfold Powerchair to get around in.** Weighing only 15kgs, it folds up into the boot of a car. I named it Betty, and I thought she would zip about quite nicely. That was on the assumption that pavements would be level and smooth. Not so; they often forced me to wheel on the roads. Poor Betty took a battering and during the course of the holiday bits of it started to fall off.

**Internal flights in Brazil are hard work.** We used their low cost airline, Gol Airways, whose website, being in Portuguese, I couldn’t navigate. I phoned them several times but the staff would either tell me they didn’t speak English or hang up on me or both. Eventually I took a taxi out to the airport to get some answers and one member of staff told me that they don’t take motorised chairs. Another person asked me to take away a form as they would need my medical history and a signed note from my doctor before allowing me to fly. Eventually we just showed up in the wheelchair at the airport a few hours earlier than required and the staff there took all the details and I was allowed to fly.

**Copacabana** beach now has a new Access for All ramp and amphibious wheelchairs which I was eager to try. It was only on weekends for certain hours but it is a step in the right direction. When I arrived, they told me it was not possible as rats had been spotted in the sea. I was so keen to swim in the sea that at this point I’d have taken the chance but I guess I have enough illnesses for one lifetime.

We spent a few days in a town called **Paraty** that has ornate colonial style houses but unfortunately my wheelchair simply would not proceed down the cobbled streets. Straight away I got stuck in a hole and had to be hauled out by kind passers-by. *To be continued...*

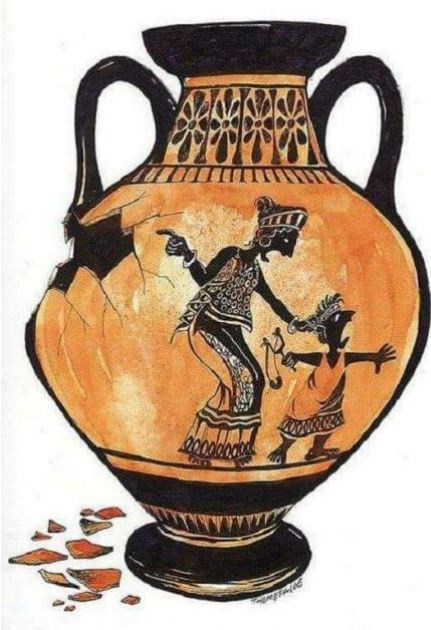
*The rest of Alison’s account of her holiday in Brazil will appear in the next issue.*



## South Mayo Branch AGM

The Branch Annual General Meeting took place on 9<sup>th</sup> April last, more than a month after it was originally scheduled to happen. The reason we could not have it in March was that not enough people turned up to attend it. The meeting was on Zoom.

At the meeting, Ger Butler resigned from the Committee and Yvonne Corrigan and Alison Dallywater rejoined it, for which we are grateful. The full list of Committee members and Officers is in the table below.



## New research suggests infections contribute to MS progression

Inflammation caused by infections like colds and viruses could contribute to progression of MS.

A weekly urine sample was taken from 50 people with progressive MS which was tested to identify if and how the body was responding to an infection. Researchers developed a new technique to measure inflammation from these urine samples. They measured progression of MS by taking MRI scans at the start and end of the study. Clinical disability was measured during clinic visits every six months. The researchers found that inflammation from infections was associated with the loss of nerve cells in the spinal cord.

### What does this mean for people with MS?

This research highlights the importance of seeking early treatment for infections and getting vaccinations that you are eligible for. People with MS should seek clinical advice from a healthcare professional, **and** make them aware they have MS when doing so.

We also know that bladder infections are very common in MS. People with MS should discuss urinary symptoms with their MS team, who can suggest ways to reduce infections.

These findings could also offer new treatment strategies to slow down progression. For example, the brain and spinal cord are usually protected from inflammation elsewhere in the body. Researchers can look into why this protective barrier is failing and find ways to stop it.

## Committee Members, South Mayo Branch MS Ireland, 2024

Name	Phone No. & E-Mail	Position(s)
Damen Barrett	087-7676 348 dbarrett@mayococo.ie	Asst. Treasurer; Welfare Committee
Seamus Burke	094-9543 163 seamusburke01@hotmail.com	Committee Member
Tony Candon	087-2685 071 candonanthony@gmail.com	Chair; PRO; Council Delegate
Liam Cannon	087-7714 590 patsy.cannon@gmail.com	Vice-Chair; Deputy Council Delegate; Welfare Committee
Sharon Dillon	087-6827 036 sharonfdillon@gmail.com	Treasurer; Welfare Committee
Louise Power	087-6799 131 lulu09p@gmail.com	Secretary
Yvonne Corrigan	087-9543 434 Yvonnecorrigan777@gmail.com	Committee Member; Welfare Committee
Alison Dallywater	087-6216 814 Alli_dalli@outlook.com	Committee Member



"ME 'N JACKSON ARE EXACTLY THE SAME AGE. ONLY HE'S DIFFERENT. HE'S LEFT-HANDED!"

Regional Community Worker: Jackie Keogh. Mob: 087-2502 031; E-mail: jackiek@ms-society.ie