

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
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Photos of the Earth and the Moon taken by Artemis II on their journey to the Moon, April 2026. Earth appears to be upside down; Africa and the Sahara are in red on the left, with Spain and Portugal just below.



Dia Dhaoibh! Hello there!

So – humans are flying around the moon again, nearly 58 years since the very first time they did this, in December 1968. And, in July 1969, humans landed on the moon. The last time humans flew around the moon was in December 1972. It is hard to believe that it has taken so long for people to return there.

I'm sure many of you will remember this and I'm sure, also, that for many more of you, this is the first time you will have lived through a manned flight around the moon.

I vaguely remember the first flight by Apollo 8 around the moon, but I recall vividly the Moon Landing of 1969, my own excitement and the excitement that feat generated around the world.

There are differences -obviously! – between the moon exploration programme of the 1960s and early 1970s and the current programme. Back then, only the United States were capable of pursuing this goal. Now, the Artemis II mission involves the participation of many others, including the European Space Agency, ESA, that provides the service module that powers the Orion capsule to and around the moon. A non-American, a woman and a person of colour are among the crew – so different to the 1960s and 1970s!

Even back then, reaching the moon took the participation of thousands of people, companies and agencies. To survive and thrive, we work together.

Life, especially when you have a disease like MS, requires others to provide support. 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...

Hello all,

I hope this finds you keeping well. Isn't it just lovely to see spring beginning to come in. While it's been a very wet couple of months, the evenings are beginning to stretch and the signs of mother nature awakening seem to be evident once again.

I have been busy planning some events for the next while and I am delighted to let you know that we have Joan Flannelly joining us for a '**Coffee and Calm**' morning in the TF Royal Hotel on Wednesday 22nd of April from 11-1. This is a free event with some valuable insights into the benefits of mindfulness and building it into our day to mind our mental health. If there was enough interest Joan will run some mindfulness classes for perhaps 6 weeks and I am more than open to supporting this. So please do come along and give it a try.

As **World MS Day** is on the 30th of May this year we will have some events on in May to mark same. We are delighted to have Sorcha Barlow, MS Ireland's Education and Support Nurse, coming to do a session for People with MS and their loved ones in the Clayton Hotel in Galway on Wednesday 20th of May from 11-1. Sorcha will speak about the many visible and invisible symptoms of MS so that we can all have a greater understanding of MS. She will also be available for a Q&A afterward. This is open to all in the Western Region. Please let me know if you're interested in attending. I have spoken with Sorcha about doing a similar event in Mayo but a date is yet to be confirmed. There will be a **Young Persons Lunch** on Saturday May 9th in the Clayton Hotel in Galway from 12-2 for people under the age of 45 living with MS. This is open to all in the Western Region.

Online Yoga with Aidrian continues until the end of June. **Move Smart** classes will recommence after the Easter break. **Online peer support** also continues, we are now taking names for the next **FACETS** programme (Fatigue Management Programme) so please let me know if you're interested in attending. As always please feel free to link in with me should you need any additional information or support.

Email: jackiek@ms-society.ie; Phone: 087 - 2502 031.

My working days are Monday – Thursday 9 am – 5pm.

Church-gate Collection, 2026

Our annual church-gate collection on 21st and 22nd February past. Each year, we depend on this as our main source of income. This money funds our activities for people with MS in our area.

This year, the collection raised **€19,853.65**. This compares with €19,607.51 in 2025 and €19,220.24 in 2024.

We are deeply appreciative of the generosity of the people of Mayo who contributed to this.

We are also extremely grateful to the many people who helped in the collection, standing outside the churches on Saturday evening and Sunday.

We could not have done it without them!

Annual General Meeting, 2026

The Branch held its Annual General Meeting in the McWilliam Park Hotel, Claremorris, on Saturday 7th March. This was the first time that we held the meeting in person for several years. It was a also "blended" meeting, with some people attending via Zoom.

In her report, the Secretary highlighted some of the past year's events and activities. The Treasurer presented the annual audited accounts for the Branch. A new Committee was elected, including the election of a brand new committee member, Sinéad Cooney.

After twenty years in the role, the Treasurer, Damien Barrett, finally stood down; his replacement is Yvonne Corrigan. We are very grateful to Damien for his long and dedicated service to the Branch and to PwMS; Damien continues to serve as an ordinary member of the Committee.



Tale of Faro

By Julie Martin

Escaping Ireland's autumnal moisture overload was long overdue — and this time, Faro turned out to be the perfect antidote. I'd never really thought of it as a quick city-break that balanced sunshine, food, and sightseeing, but when Knock Airport offered a good fare last autumn, we jumped on it. Just two and a half hours later, a balmy evening breeze welcomed us like an old friend.

Special-assistance teams in both Knock and Faro were excellent — friendly, efficient, and quick. The promised forecast of a cloudless week felt like winning the weather lottery. A taxi to the hotel for under €10 sealed our first impression: affordable paradise.

I've always been the travel enthusiast in our duo; my husband, less so. So I plotted a trip that might charm him out of his travel apathy. Thankfully, AI supplied plenty of ideas for food, sights, and hidden corners of town.

I'd brushed up on Portuguese, but nearly everyone spoke great English. The only times I actually used Portuguese were with hotel staff and a couple of taxi drivers — both appreciated the effort.

The prices amazed us. Taxis, coffee, desserts... everything under €10. A holiday miracle.

On day one, we set out to explore the Old Town. I was extremely grateful for the sturdy mobility scooter (<https://ngtours.com.pt/mobility-hire/>), which powered across Faro's three personalities of cobblestone. Riding around on that beast made me feel like a fashionable gladiator on tour.

Faro is calm, safe, and compact — with good planning you can see most highlights in a day. We began at the Carmelite Church, Nossa Senhora do Carmo, home to the



Chapel of Bones, an 18th-century reminder of life's brevity built with over 5,000 bones and skulls.

Next came Mercado Municipal to sample baked goods and admire enormous swordfish heads.

Passing Teatro Lethes, we stopped at Pastelaria Padaria Centeio, where two coffees and two divine desserts totalled €6.50. From there, we wandered toward the marina's sunshine and views of Jardim Manuel Bívar, the Sé Cathedral, and the old walls. The town wasn't crowded, but the +25°C heat made shade essential. Food stops were plentiful — always tasty, always affordable.

We ended day one at CHECK-in by Leonel (<https://checkinfaro.pt>), a Michelin gem with an extravagant yet surprisingly affordable menu — plus a water bowl outside for passing dogs, which won our hearts.

The next day we visited the Roman ruins of Milreu and the Palácio de Estoi, the beautiful "Pink Palace."



We didn't make it to Praia de Faro, but its accessible facilities put it firmly on our list for next time.

The highlight of the trip was dinner at Alameda — an eight-course journey of flavours and stories. The black octopus pudding alone deserves fame!

A couple of practical things to note:

- *Many attractions close for long lunch breaks and early evenings.*
- *Accessible bathrooms are still limited — even in top restaurants.*

For accessibility info:

<https://www.motion4rent.com/guide-faro-in-wheelchair>

Videos you may find useful

Julie Martin, PwMS, and a Branch Committee member, recommends the following videos that you may find interesting and useful.

The first is a webinar delivered for MS Ireland by Gilly Davis, a New Zealand based Neuro-physiotherapist:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tKaRMogg8Mg>;

The second link is to video exercises to follow on Gilly's website: <https://www.ms-ghs.com/exercise-videos/>;

The third is an up-coming webinar on medication and MS that takes place on Wed 15h April at 7:00 p.m. (Poster below). To register, click on the link:

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/medication-and-ms-making-sense-of-your-options-tickets-1982451619159?utm_campaign=social&utm-content=attendeeshare&utm_medium=discovery&utm-term=listing&utm_source=cp&aff=ebdsshcopyurl&utm_campaign=4341567_April%20Webinar&utm_medium=Email&utm_source=Overcoming%20MS&dm_i=7MLE,2L1Z3,52JCG9,5R2K2,1,0,0,0



MS Ireland
THE MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS SOCIETY OF IRELAND

Coffee & Calm

Wednesday 22nd April 11am-1pm

Join us for some "Coffee & Calm" and take a morning to balance the hustle and bustle of daily life with moments of peaceful reflection.



TF Royal Hotel
Castlebar, Co. Mayo. F23R288

If you are interested in joining us please email us on westernr@ms-society.ie or contact Jackie on 0872502031



Living Well with MS

Webinar Season 7 'Hot Topics'
Medication and MS - making sense of your options



Speaker: Dr Jonathan White
Wednesday 15th April, 7pm UK time / 2pm ET

Condolences

We offer our sympathies to Triona Ní Rainne, Banch Development Officer with MS Ireland, on the recent death of her mother, Máire Uí Rainne. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a hanam dílis.

Committee Members, South Mayo Branch MS Ireland, 2026-27

Name	Position(s)
Damen Barrett	Committee Member; Welfare Committee
Tony Candon	Chair; Council Delegate
Liam Cannon	Vice-Chair; Deputy Council Delegate; Welfare Committee
Sinéad Cooney	Committee Member
Yvonne Corrigan	Treasurer; Chair, Welfare Committee
Alison Dalleywater	Committee Member
Sharon Dillon	Vice-Treasurer; Welfare Committee
Julie Martin	Committee Member; Joint PRO
Louise Power	Secretary; Joint PRO



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