



ISA NEWS AND EVENTS

February 2023

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

Dear All,

I am delighted to welcome you all to the Irish Support Agency's first newsletter of 2023. This is my first as President having been elected in December. Originally from Whitechurch Co.Cork, I have been living in Sydney since 2012. I began volunteering with the ISA on the fundraising working group and proceeded on to take the role of Secretary before becoming President in December.

I am deeply honoured to take on the role of President for the ISA and I love to see the Irish spirit shine brightly here across NSW in the people I have been lucky to meet so far as well as the events we have organised and attended in the past year.

Since our last newsletter, the ISA have been very busy with a strong focus on our community and connection with many successful social events across December and January. We had one of our largest Seniors Christmas lunch attendances in some time!

We had the return of our Golf Day - kindly organised by Paddy McTigue. I would like to personally thank Paddy for his organisation of this fantastic event and for raising significant funds in aid of the ISA's work.

As we look forward to March and the St Patrick's Day period, I am excited to share that the ISA will take part in the Sydney St Patrick's Day Parade this year on March 19th. We will also have our ISA tea tent in the festival area of the rocks so please pop in and say hello to our volunteers, staff and committee on the day.

Finally, I would sincerely like to thank our outgoing President Marian Schaffer for her outstanding commitment and professionalism in her time as President. The warmth & kindness Marian brings to the ISA is invaluable and we are very lucky to have her stay on the committee and take up the role of Secretary for the coming year.

For now, I hope you all stay well and connected, and I look forward to meeting you in March as we celebrate our patron saint, St Patrick.



Alan Humphreys, **ISA President**

SENIORS CHRISTMAS LUNCH

On Wednesday 7th December 2022, the ISA held its Annual Seniors Christmas lunch in Penrith Gaels Sport and Cultural Centre, Kingswood. Almost 80 people gathered for this festive occasion, and we were treated to a beautiful 3 course lunch. We were delighted to be joined by Rosie Keane, Consul General of Ireland, Sydney and Penrith Gaels Club Chairman John Grieve and other committee members.

Sincere thanks to Penrith Gaels for awarding us a generous grant to host this lunch which is an annual highlight for many of our seniors.

We were also treated to musical entertainment by the wonderful Rebecca Harkin and Kurt Russell who generously gave their time to keep us all in the festive mood. Thank you to all of the staff and committee of Penrith Gaels for your warm hospitality.



FUNDRAISING GOLF DAY

On Friday the 3rd of February, Paddy McTigue of Oz Labour Solutions hosted a fundraising golf day in aid of the Irish Support Agency, in Moore Park Golf Club. We had 31 teams out in force, with plenty of healthy competition and great craic on the course.

Congratulations to the guys from Cormac McAnallens GAC who took home first place and Craobh Phadraig who narrowly missed out on the top spot, coming in second place.

Shout out to Alan Duggan who got a hole in one on the 5th hole and took home the prize for closest to the pin.

Thank you also to our massive 31 Hole Sponsors, without whom, the day would not have been such a huge success. Lastly, we are entirely grateful to the tireless efforts of Patrick McTigue who brought the entire day together, raised a huge amount of money on our behalf and made the day so special.



SYDNEY ST PATRICK'S DAY DONATION

Sincere thanks to our friends at Sydney St Patrick's Day Festival Committee who kindly donated \$3000 to the ISA from proceeds of their raffle at the Fundraising Ball held prior to Christmas.

It was a super night enjoyed by the all who attended. We wish them all the very best for another great weekend of celebration in 2023!

12 HOUR FUNDRAISING BOOTCAMP

On Saturday 11th February, Lisa Calvert and Own It Fit hosted a fundraising bootcamp challenge in aid of the Irish Support Agency, raising almost \$6000!

Over 30 people came down to Queen's Park and worked out for 12 hours! Not an easy feat by any means. It was a hot, humid day, but the participants persevered on.

The motivation for Lisa to organise this fundraising event is a poignant one,

"My sisters and I tragically lost our amazing Mam, Breda Hickey, on November 23, 2021. She was kind, thoughtful, hilarious (sometimes accidentally!), and basically my soul/heart. She spent many years of her life fundraising for charity and so I wanted to do something special in February (her birthday month) in order to honour her memory.

It has been an extremely difficult year and the grief counselling provided by the Irish Support Agency has helped me to no end. We all know somebody living abroad and to have found that support on the other side of the world has been amazing. It is a charity for all generations- helping new parents, seniors, and people like myself to bridge the gap between here and our homeland by offering seemingly endless support. They mainly depend on donations and are such a worthy cause." Lisa



ST BRIGID'S DAY 2023



On Tuesday 31st January, the Irish Support Agency hosted a Celebration of St Brigid in St Brigid's Church, Millers Point. The celebration consisted of thoughtful reflection and musical accompaniment on the relevance of St Brigid's teachings in our world today.

St Brigid was a woman known for her spirituality, connection with Imbolc and her healing powers. Brigid was a woman of peace, and had immense compassion for the oppressed. Her teachings and way of life can show us so much about life in the modern world and how to overcome adversity.

Many thanks to Sr Maree Marsh csb, Brigidine Sisters, Southern Cross, Coogee, Sr Fidelis S.M. (McTeigue), St Patrick's and St Brigid's Parish, and Pelle Söderström for their contributions to this inaugural celebration.

BRIGID OF THE WAVES



On Saturday 4th February, the Prankqueans, in association with the Consulate of Ireland, Sydney, hosted "Brigid of the Waves", an ocean-inspired celebration of Irish Australian female creativity which pays tribute to the ancient pagan goddess, Brigid.

The Prankqueans are an ensemble of artists inspired by ancient Celtic mythology to celebrate all things female and Irish Australian. They include Aine De Paor, AnneCasey, Gabrielle Carey, Cliona Molins, Rosie McDonald, Jacqueline McPhelly and Julie McFarland.

The Prankqueans kindly accepted donations on behalf of the Irish Support Agency and raised \$715 for our work. Thank you all so much for your generosity and for sharing your creative spirit and virtuosity with us all.

CPR FOR KIDS TRAINING



The Irish Support Agency was delighted to host *CPR for Kids* training on Sunday 5th February in Hugh Bamford Reserve Hall, Bondi.

Over 3 hours, our participants learned evidence-based theory and put it into practice on lifelike baby and child CPR mannequins. We learned how to administer CPR and what to do in case of drowning, fever, burns, choking, poisoning, head injuries and much more. This is such important training for parents and caregivers, and we were delighted to be able to offer this to the Irish Australian community in partnership with the lovely Tara from CPR for Kids Training. The Irish Support Agency would like to thank and acknowledge Waverley Council for their generous award making this community event possible.

MHFA TRAINING

Hosted by the Safe Space Community in Souths Juniors, 558A Anzac Parade, Kingsford NSW 2032.

This course is scheduled for 12 hours of face-to-face instruction across 2 days, Saturday 1st and Sunday 2nd April, 2023.



- As this is an accredited course it is essential that you only register if you are available to attend both dates in full.
- Morning tea and lunch will be provided.
- MHFA manual will be provided free of charge.
- Limited spaces available so book now to avoid disappointment - highly subsidised registration fee of \$30.
- If you can't afford the fee, please pick a concession ticket. There are 5 available. Don't let cost be a barrier, just email the host and we will facilitate it anonymously.

Sydney Community Safe Space Inc

"We are delighted to offer Mental Health First Aid to the community so that we can grow the mental health IQ in our community to better support our friends, family, colleagues, or anyone we meet in our daily lives. It increases participants' knowledge regarding mental health, decreases their negative attitudes, and increases supportive behaviours toward individuals with mental health problems."

Register here - <https://www.irishsupportagency.org.au/events/2023/4/1/mental-health-first-aid-training>

BOOKCLUB



Our book club is held on the last Thursday of each month in the Gaelic Club. Each month, we choose one book to review, and seek to include all genres! It's a great way to meet like-minded people and everyone is welcome. We are currently reading, *Small Things Like These*, by acclaimed Irish writer Claire Keegan.

If you would like to attend our next meeting, in person in the Gaelic Club on Thursday 2nd March at 7pm, please email Una at project@irishsupportagency.org.au or call 0435 917 260.

A GENEROUS BEQUEST



Sincere thanks to the late Michael Daly for a kind and generous bequest in his will. Michael passed away on the 14th March, 2022.

Michael was a highly regarded member of the Irish Australian community who was known for his kindness and generosity of spirit.

Michael's gift will secure our ability to continue to provide life changing support to people whose lives have been affected by unspeakable crisis and distress.

Leaving a gift in your Will is an extraordinary way to ensure you are making a profound and continuing impact that will live on.

If you would like to consider leaving a gift to the ISA, please contact our Executive Officer: Paula Cobain, admin@irishsupportagency.org.au or call 02 9300 8019.

WORLDPRIDE

Across February and March 2023, Sydney will be hosting WorldPride. The first time in the Southern Hemisphere, WorldPride is an event that promotes visibility and awareness of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer (LGBTIQ+) issues on an international level.

WorldPride includes parades/marches, festivals, and other activities such as a human rights conference.

Sydney Queer Irish (SQI) are hosting a number of events over the next 2 months and would love the Irish Australian community to come out in force to show their support.

A must visit will be the Fair Day, on Sunday 19th February, in Victoria Park, Glebe.



For more information on upcoming events, please follow SQI on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/SQIrish/events/?ref=page_internal and Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/sqirish/>

LIFETIME OF STORIES

On Friday 24th February, the ISA will launch their new Lifetime of Stories project, kindly supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs, Emigrant Support Programme.

Across 8 weeks (every fortnight), 10 members of the senior community are invited to participate in a storytelling experience, recalling memories from their lifetime. From growing up, to school life and to life in Australia, this will provide an opportunity to document all of the small and wonderful things that bring the tapestry of life together.

Over the 4 weeks, participants will work with a dedicated volunteer to produce a digital or handwritten book, which will be theirs to keep and treasure, a legacy for your nearest and dearest.

Dates: 24th Feb, 10th March, 24th March, 6th April. It is important that participants only register if they can attend all 4 sessions.

Places are limited, so please get in touch if you would like to participate by calling Una on 0435 917 260.

THE RAMBLING IRISH



The Rambling Irish are back with our first walk of 2023!

Join us on Sunday 19th February, starting in Woolloomooloo, follow the foreshore paths to Mrs Macquarie's Chair, through the Royal Botanic Gardens and around the Sydney Opera House and Circular Quay. We will then head under the Sydney Harbour Bridge, into Walsh Bay and Millers Point before arriving at the Wulugul Walk to relax and enjoy Barangaroo and a swim in the newly opened Marrinawi Cove.

Please bring swimmers and a towel. This walk is suitable for all ages and abilities, and it is pram and dog friendly 🍀 Register today -

<https://www.irishsupportagency.org.au/events/ribarangaroo>

The Rambling Irish is an initiative of the Irish Support Agency, NSW and it is a great way for people from all walks of life to meet and connect.

The Irish Support Agency NSW Inc is registered as a charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission ABN 70 880 566 535. We acknowledge the financial support provided to us by the Emigrant Support Program of the Department of Foreign Affairs of Ireland which enables us to make a significant difference to the Irish Community year.



Government of Ireland in New South Wales every
Emigrant Support Programme

An Roinn Gnóthai Eacetracha
Department of Foreign Affairs

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