



ISA NEWS AND EVENTS

June 2022

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the Irish Support Agency's June newsletter. It's hard to believe that we are almost halfway through 2022! I am glad to hear that you are all getting back on your feet with a return to some level of normality and that some of you have had the opportunity to return to Ireland to visit your loved ones.

I had the opportunity to connect with many of our senior community on a recent day trip to Parramatta. I had a wonderful day and it was a pleasure to spend it with our Seniors.

As you will be aware, due to the lockdowns across 2020 and 2021, the ISA's ability to fundraise was at a standstill. These circumstances have significantly affected our ability to continue our vital work supporting those in crisis or distress. I am delighted therefore to launch the ISA's new fundraising initiative, Push the Pedal for the ISA. This is a great opportunity to get involved – a real challenge requiring participants to work as a team to complete a virtual cycle around Ireland, 1338km in total. No easy feat! We truly need the support of the community and businesses to get behind us once more, so please do what you can to get involved and encourage those in your networks to join you.

As we approach the end of the financial year, I would ask you all to give what you can towards our EOFY appeal. Please know that your donations, however large or small, go directly to those who need it most. The Winter has certainly set in, and just like home, we do not want anyone to struggle with the rising cost of living.

I would like to wish you all a safe and happy Winter and please know that the ISA is here should you know anyone who is struggling or in need, or even just to connect with us for a chat.

Marian Schaffer, **ISA President**



SENIORS DAY TRIP TO PARRAMATTA



On Wednesday 25th May, we were delighted to take 36 members of our senior community on a day trip to Parramatta.

Located in Sydney's West and founded in 1788, Parramatta is Australia's second-oldest city. Over the years, this bustling area has evolved from the ancestral home of the Burramatta clan of the Darug First Nations, to the foundation of a young European colony, to a modern commercial centre.

Old Government House

Built by convicts from 1799-1816, Old Government House and its accompanying garrison buildings claim the title of the oldest surviving public buildings in Australia. The house was originally a country residence for New South Wales' first ten governors, including the famous Governor and Mrs Macquarie who were said to prefer the fresh air of Parramatta. These days, the house and its surrounds are recognised as a World Heritage site.



Parramatta Female Factory

Australia's first purpose-built convict Female Factory was the principal destination for unassigned convict women in the penal colony of New South Wales from 1821 to 1840.

This historic precinct offers a unique insight into Australia's colonial past and the era of institutional confinement of vulnerable women and children.

PUSH THE PEDAL FOR THE IRISH SUPPORT AGENCY



Push the Pedal for the Irish Support Agency is a new fundraising initiative running from the 4th-8th July. The challenge is a virtual cycle around Ireland, 1338km in total!

Teams of 5 can compete to clock up as many kilometres as they can within the week.

Due to the lockdowns across 2020 and 2021, the ISA's ability to fundraise was at a standstill. In order to continue to assist those most vulnerable and in need, the ISA relies heavily on the support of the Irish Australian community.

Whatever your cycling history or level, everyone is welcome to participate in our virtual cycle around Ireland. All that is required is determination and team spirit. ***Can YOU push the pedal for the Irish Support Agency?***

<https://www.irishsupportagency.org.au/push-the-pedal>

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION EVENING



On Wednesday 18th May, the ISA held its first Volunteer Appreciation evening. Over the past 2 years, during an incredibly difficult time for the community, the ISA has been overwhelmed by the commitment and support of our volunteers. For some, this was the first opportunity to meet each other in person and it was wonderful to witness people sharing their experience of supporting the organisation.

Without our volunteers, many of our outreach programs would not be possible, so again, we would like to thank you all for your ongoing efforts! If you would like to volunteer with the ISA, please go to - www.irishsupportagency.org.au/volunteer

MINDFUL HEART WITH MÁIRE NI BHRIAIN

On Sunday 5th June, members of the community were treated to a half day retreat with Máire Ni Bhriain.



Máire, a Co. Clare native, is over visiting her daughter who lives in Sydney, and kindly offered her time to host a mindful heart morning for the community.

Máire holds a B.A. in Humanities and B.Ed. in Education and is a qualified MBSR facilitator with the Institute of Mindfulness-based Approaches, (IMA), Germany.

This was a beautiful morning which explored celtic spiritual awareness for the modern soul. Thank you Máire for your generosity of spirit and time.

RETURNING TO IRELAND WEBINAR SERIES

With more people returning to Ireland than emigrating at the moment, across the month of May, in association with Crosscare Migrant Project, the ISA brought you a series of 3 webinars, each focusing on an aspect of returning to Ireland including:

- Returning with an Australian spouse or de facto partner
- Returning with Children
- Access to services



All of the webinars can be watched back via our website, and you can also access the powerpoint presentations that were prepared for your convenience.

<https://www.irishsupportagency.org.au/returning-to-ireland>

DÓCHAS

On Monday 9th May, we hosted our Dóchas webinar with Katie O'Donoghue on the topic of Relationships: Fostering healthy relationships and demystifying myths.

Katie O'Donoghue, originally from Cork, is the resident relationship coach at the online counselling practice 'The Indigo Project', host of the self-help podcast 'Self Explained' and creator of 'Reclamation' a newly launched self-paced Inner Child program. She coaches a mix of singles and individuals in relationships who are looking to rewire their patterns so that they can rewire their relationships.



On Monday 6th June, and following on from our Returning to Ireland webinar series with Crosscare Migrant Project, we felt it was important to hear from people who had made the move.

We were delighted to welcome Donna McKiernan, who many of you will know as a previous ISA president, who made the

move back to Ireland last year after living here for 18 years.

We were also joined by James Parnell. In 2016, James returned to Dublin after 16 years in Sydney. He published several articles in the Irish Times about his experience, appeared on RTE, TodayFM and Newstalk and participated in Irish Government forums helping emigrants return to Ireland. Mostly though, James is a fellow emigrant navigating through his new life and wanting to share the journey with fellow returnees.

Finally, we were joined by Natalie Lucey, who made the move back to Ireland in late 2019, just before the Covid 19 pandemic took hold. Natalie kindly shared her experience of finding it difficult to resettle and the decision that she and her family made to return to Australia.

This is a great watch if you are planning or even thinking about a move back to Ireland. Thank you to everyone who kindly shared their experience.

Our next Dóchas webinar will be on Monday 4th July at 7pm.

THE RAMBLING IRISH



The Rambling Irish is a new, social walking group created by a team of volunteers for the ISA.

They aim to complete 1 walk per month, in and around the Greater Sydney area. It will be a great way to meet new people and to explore parts of this beautiful city.

On Sunday 15th May, we held our walk from La Perouse, along the Cape Banks Track to Little Bay.

This was a beautiful walk, passing stunning views and idyllic beaches.

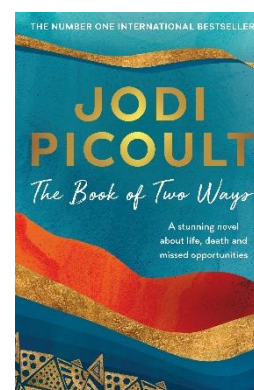
Join us for our next walk on Sunday 19th June as we complete the Bay Walk in the Inner West. Please call 02 9300 8019 if you would like to attend.

BOOK CLUB

Our book club is held on the last Wednesday 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, **The Book of Two Ways**, by Jodi Picoult. If you would like to attend our next meeting, in person in the Gaelic Club on Thursday 30th June, please email Una at project@irishsupportagency.org.au or call 02 9300 8019.



**Please note the change of day from a Wednesday to a Thursday for this month only.*

THE IRISH AUSTRALIAN CLUB OF WOLLONGONG CELEBRATES 51 YEARS



On Tuesday 17th May, we were delighted to be invited to The Irish Australian Club of Wollongong's 51st Birthday Lunch at Koonawarra Bay Sailing Club.

This organisation has been supporting people for over 50 years, organising grassroots, social and community events.

Sandra and Cathy have been instrumental in keeping this wonderful organisation going over the years and we are so grateful for all your wonderful work. Thank you all for a beautiful, warm welcome and fantastic views.

COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING EFFORTS

Comhaltas Sydney



On Friday 27th May, we were delighted to be presented with a very generous donation of \$1000 from Comhaltas Sydney.

The Sydney branch of Comhaltas is an organisation dedicated to the promotion of Irish music and culture in Sydney, Australia.

Comhaltas Sydney are responsible for organising the annual Sydney Fleadh which takes place on the last weekend of May.

This is a hugely successful event, bringing together people from all over the state to enjoy traditional Irish music. Well done to all involved for another great year and thank you so much for your kind donation.

MEMBERS' NETWORKING EVENING

Calling all members of the Irish Support Agency!

You are cordially invited to attend our members networking evening. This will provide a wonderful opportunity for members young and old to come together and share their experience of living in Australia and their experience with the Irish Support Agency.

Members are encouraged to also bring a guest with them. Please RSVP by calling 02 9300 8019.

If you would like to become a member of the Irish Support Agency and attend, please also give us a call at the number above.



SENIORS MID YEAR LUNCH



This year's mid-year lunch will take place on Wednesday 6th July in the Tea Gardens Hotel, Bondi Junction at 12 noon.

Anyone who wishes to attend, please phone 93008019 or register via: <https://drctisa.prod.supporterhub.net/events/seniorsmidyearlunch2022>

Those unfamiliar with the journey can meet at the Gaelic Club c 11.15am to catch the 11.41am train to Bondi Junction.

Cost: Members \$10 / Non-members \$15.

EOFY APPEAL

As we approach the end of the financial year, we would like to ask you all to give what you can towards our EOFY appeal.

Please know that your donations, however large or small, go directly to those who need it most. The Winter has certainly set in, and just like home, we do not want anyone to struggle with the rising cost of living.



Please call 02 9300 8019 if you would like to make a donation or complete the form enclosed with your newsletter.

Comic Relief by Patrick McCarron

When I was at the checkout and ready to pay for my groceries the cashier said

“Strip down, facing me.”

Making a mental note so I could complain to my local MP about this security rubbish, I did just as she instructed.

After the shrieking and hysterical remarks finally subsided, I found out that she was referring to how I should position my credit card.

Nonetheless, I've been asked to shop elsewhere in the future. They need to make their instructions a little clearer for seniors. I hate this getting older stuff.

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 in New South Wales every year.



Government of Ireland
Emigrant Support Programme



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha
Department of Foreign Affairs

To reduce the impact on resources, this newsletter is produced and made available online. If you'd like to receive future newsletters via email, please let us know at: admin@irishsupportagency.com.au