



ISA NEWS AND EVENTS

November 2021

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

Welcome everyone to our November newsletter and our last of 2021.

After a year in and out of lockdowns, it is with great happiness that we are ending the year with eased restrictions within NSW and open international borders.

As a community, we have been really tested over the past 18 months. We have struggled with homesickness, personal crisis, and lack of connection. Some of our own committee members returned to Ireland for different reasons. However, the ISA has seen first-hand, how the community has rallied together and supported one another during this difficult time.

We are delighted to see the resumption of our Cara Club seniors' group. It is wonderful to see your resilient and smiling faces walking back in the door.

I know some of you are returning to Ireland over the festive period and I wish you all safe travels and joy as you reconnect with your loved ones. I know too, that there will be a strong Irish community staying put, and I hope to see you out and about at one of the many community events happening across Sydney over this time.

On behalf of all the ISA team, I would like to wish you a safe and peaceful Christmas.

Marian Schaffer

ISA President



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CARA CLUB RESUMES



We were delighted to welcome back our seniors Cara Club Group on Wednesday 27th October.

It was wonderful to see how well everyone was keeping after a difficult 4 month lockdown.

Face to face interaction is essential for our community, and we are taking all precautions necessary to keep everyone safe and comfortable.

SENIORS CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Our annual seniors Christmas lunch will take place on Wednesday the 8th December at 12pm in Penrith Gaels Club, Kingswood, NSW 2747.

There will be musical entertainment from the wonderful Rebecca Harkin and her partner Kurt Russell.

Anyone who paid for their place for this year's mid-year lunch, will have their payment transferred to the Christmas lunch.

If you would like to purchase your ticket, please go to <https://www.irishsupportagency.org.au/events/2021christmaslunch> or call 02 9300 8019.

For those travelling by train, we will leave Central Station on the 10.41am train from Platform 18, you can meet us at the Gaelic Club at 10.15am.

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



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Annual members can now renew their membership for 2022.

Go to <https://www.irishsupportagency.org.au/membership> – or call 02 9300 8019.

If you would like to become a member of the Irish Support Agency, we would be delighted to welcome you. Please visit <https://www.irishsupportagency.org.au/membership> to sign up for just \$11 for the year or \$110 for Lifetime Membership.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Farewell

Monica Mullaney, originally from Co. Sligo has been living in Sydney since 1999.

Monica, who has served on the ISA committee since 2020, has decided to return home to Ireland.

Monica has been a great addition to the ISA, having been Club Secretary with Craobh Phádraigh GAA club.

Thank you Monica for your commitment and we wish you safe travels and all the best for your future.



Welcome



Ciara is originally from Cork and moved to Sydney in 2019. She joined the committee in October 2021. Ciara works as a Senior Manager with a top-tier strategy consulting firm and brings a wealth of experience having worked with c-suite clients all over the world. Before joining the committee, Ciara assisted the ISA as a volunteer with a large strategy project so we are extremely grateful to have Ciara on board with us!

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

Siobhan Cregan

Siobhan is a qualified therapist, social worker and mental health practitioner who is a Clinical Team Leader with Headspace, the National Youth Mental Health Foundation. Working on a voluntary basis to pilot the program, Siobhan was instrumental in assisting us with the design and development of SOLAS, our new mental health support service to facilitate access to essential mental health supports for our community. We are delighted she has created time alongside her full-time work commitments, to participate in the program as a registered SOLAS practitioner and are very grateful to her for sharing her expertise in support of her fellow Irish ex-pats here in Australia.



FUNDRAISING HEROES

Paul Kilroy



Paul's name will be familiar to you as he is a true ISA fundraising hero. Over the past 3 years, Paul has raised over \$40,000 for the ISA.

On the 13th of November, Paul organised a Fun Run for his online clients, and managed to raise well over the \$5,000 target.

Paul, thank you for your continued support of the Irish Support Agency.

Aine Tyrrell

Áine Tyrrell is a singer, songwriter, and music maker. In 2021, Áine was invited to join Irish President, Michael D O'Higgins and his wife Sabine in a ceremony and online tribute to the courage and creativity of Irish women. On Saturday 9th October, Áine generously held an online fundraising gig for the ISA. It was a beautiful, intimate evening, and Aine's musical soul radiated through our screens.

Thank you Áine.



Meitheal na mBan



The Prankqueans are an ensemble of Irish Australian artists who have produced shows including Brigid 2020/2021 and Nollaig na mBan.

On Sunday the 30th of October, they held their beautiful Meitheal na mBan event at Q Station, North Head in Manly.

They were also joined by Irish artist, Tania McMurtry, with her "Les Salon Refusées" artists collective whose

sculpture is on display across the headland.

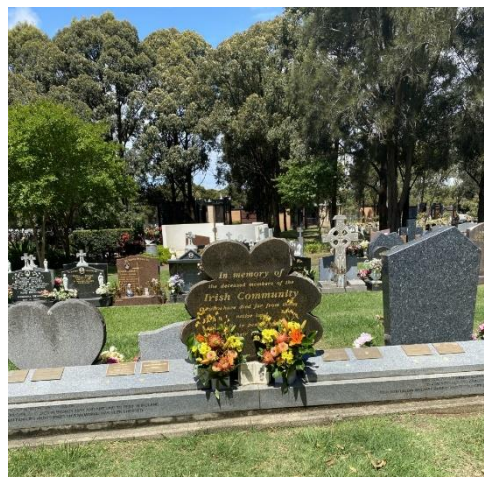
This was a beautiful afternoon of music, prose and poetry and we are very grateful that all proceeds were donated to the ISA. Thank you all.

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ANNUAL MASS OF REMEMBRANCE

Our annual Mass of Remembrance took place on Saturday 6th of November at 12pm in St. Mary's Cathedral, Sydney. Our new Consul General Rosie Keane welcomed an estimated 140 people to the ceremony, recognising what a difficult year it has been. Fr Brendan Purcell once again led a beautiful service and we were honoured with music by Edel McBride, Rebecca Harkin and Kurt Russell.

Flowers were also laid at our plot in Rookwood Cemetery, remembering deceased members of the Irish community.



BAILE AS BAILE (*Home away from home*)

baile as baile is an initiative of the Irish Support Agency being run in partnership with members of the Irish Australian community of NSW. The phrase, meaning 'home away from home', aims to support and strengthen the Irish community by offering a range of activities where people can safely connect with others.

Since its inception in November 2020, *baile as baile* has held over 70 events, online and in person.

Things have significantly changed for the better from this time last year, but we are aware that there is still a need for connection as we approach the festive period.

We are delighted to end the initiative and the year with a wonderful community focused event.

Wellness Day, 28th November

Flow Athletic, Level 1/134 Oxford St, Paddington NSW 2021

An opportunity for you to reset and recharge after a difficult year. This wellness day is for all ages and abilities and no prior practice is required.

Your day will include:

- ✦ Pilates with Paddy Coary
- ✦ Fitness with Johnny Klusch
- ✦ Yoga with Fionnuala Doherty
- ✦ Nutritious refreshments

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THE IRISH 30

5th October – Domestic Violence, Supporting families, information and resources

For October's edition of the Irish 30, we were honoured to host an important conversation on domestic violence.

In this webinar, we discussed the availability and quality of supports and services for people, including those on temporary visas.

We also looked at the role of friends and family, how we can all be much more informed and how to start a conversation with someone you care about.

We were joined by the wonderful Áine Tyrrell, who has been very vocal about her own and her children's lived experiences of domestic violence.

Further resources on Domestic Violence can be found on our website www.irishsupportagency.org.au/the-irish-30



28th October – The Roadmap to School



As children returned to the classroom after a long lockdown in NSW, we wanted to look at how we can prepare ourselves and our kids to go back to school. We are aware of how difficult this has been for students, parents, and teachers and this presentation aimed to demystify some of the expectations we have put on ourselves and our kids and offer some relief and hope as we look to the future in the classroom.

This was an informative presentation, with key takeaways and easily integrated skills.

We were joined by Dympna Kennedy and Miriam Meaney.

Dympna Kennedy, originally from Co. Derry, is the founder of CreatingBalance, a parent education, and early childhood advisory organisation.

Miriam, originally from Co. Cork, is a Principal at a primary school in Katoomba.

Our next Irish 30 session will be on Monday the 5th of December at 7pm and all of the recordings can be watched back on – www.irishsupportagency.org.au/the-irish-30

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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 Midnight Library**, by Matt Haig. If you would like to attend our next meeting, in person in the Gaelic Club on Wednesday the 24th November, please email Una at project@irishsupportagency.org.au or call 02 9300 8019.



Please note, there will be no book club meeting in December but we will resume in January 2022.

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.

Each walk has been carefully chosen to be accessible for all abilities.

On Sunday the 7th November, we held our first walk from Rushcutters Bay to Rose Bay, a leisurely 5km walk.

We look forward to meeting some new faces a long the way so keep an eye out for our next walk.



CHRISTMAS APPEAL

As we are all aware, 2021 has been an incredibly difficult year. For the Irish Diaspora, it has been particularly difficult with continued border closures, job instability, visa issues and non-eligibility for government assistance.

The ISA has provided *financial assistance* to over 35 clients. We have provided *food vouchers* to 21 clients. We have subsidised 46 clients to go through our *SOLAS program*. We have had many more clients who are seeking vital information to remain in Australia or returning to Ireland in crisis.

We appreciate the generosity of the community throughout the year.

If you would like to donate to our Christmas Appeal please go to - <https://drct-isa.prod.supporterhub.net/donations/christmasappeal2021>

FRIENDS REUNITED (*after 33 years!*)

In 1973, Paddy McCarron and John Garvey, 2 young men from Baileborough, Co Cavan met each other for the first time, a long way from home here in Sydney.



Paddy then moved out to Dubbo, NSW and the two men lost touch.

In 1988, at the St Patrick's Day Festival in Sydney, Paddy travelled down for the day from Dubbo and recognised John immediately, who was also there, and the two men were delighted to meet each other again.

However, it was not until the 17th November 2021, that the two met each other again! When Paddy eventually moved back to Sydney permanently, he asked around the community to see if anyone knew a John Garvey!

Years passed, but finally low and behold at one of our fortnightly Cara Club meet ups, Denis Carty, another member of the ISA, put Paddy in touch with John. After 33 years, it was great to witness these two friends reconnect.

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

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