



ISA NEWS AND EVENTS

June 2023

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

Dear All,

I am delighted to welcome you to the June issue of our newsletter, and I hope each and every one of you is keeping well. It's been a busy period as always, out and about in the Irish community so I hope you will enjoy reading this edition of our newsletter.

I have just returned from my first trip to Ireland since mid-2019 and it was such a special time to spend Easter with my family after such a long time apart. I hope you all had an equally lovely Easter with your loved ones.

While in Ireland, I had the privilege and honour to represent the Irish Support Agency, our wonderful staff, and of course all our members/clients at the Global Civic Irish Conference in Dublin Castle.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our NSW Consul General Rosie Keane and Aidan Cronin, the Director of the Irish Abroad Unit (DFA) for the invitation to contribute to the program.

We have some wonderful events coming up in the near future, which you will see in this edition, but I would like to call out our End of Financial Year Appeal which is live and happening all across this month. This is a key period for the ISA to raise much-needed funds to continue the great work we do day in / day out. However large or small, every single donation is appreciated, and together we can ensure that the ISA is around for our children, grandchildren, and all Irish expatriates who choose to call NSW home.

For now, I thank you in advance for any support you can give the ISA and I want to thank you again personally for your continued support as a valued member & supporter of the ISA – without your support across the year the work we do would be infinitely more difficult.

I look forward to seeing you at an upcoming event in the coming weeks and months.



Alan Humphreys, **ISA President**

EOFY APPEAL 2023



Since 1995, the Irish Support Agency has provided front-line support, to anyone in the Irish Australian community who finds themselves in circumstances of vulnerability or distress.

As awareness of the organisation grows, there is an increasing number of Irish Australians who are seeking support from the Agency across all levels of service. Traditionally a typical case might involve support with a **death and repatriation, workplace accident or unemployment**, etc. but in recent years, we have witnessed a significant increase in the number of clients seeking our help for **mental health** issues whether that be anxiety/depression, psychoses, or addiction issues. **Domestic and family violence** has also been to the fore, with this area notably exacerbated by the challenges of the global pandemic. Our **Senior Support** service has also increased significantly; our Outreach Worker Katerina works tirelessly to ensure no-one feels alone or socially isolated.

This year, more than ever, we are seeing the cost of living increases impact daily lives, requiring us to secure essential funds to ensure that our organisation survives and thrives in this difficult economic climate.

Please, give what you can, we **really** need your help.

GLOBAL IRISH CIVIC FORUM

Our President Alan and Committee Member Brigid were delighted to attend the Global Irish Civic Forum in Dublin, whilst they were home in Ireland last month.

The Global Irish Civic Forum is an initiative of the Irish Government to engage with the Irish diaspora from around the world.

The theme of this year's forum, "Together Again – Le Chéile Arís", set a tone of optimism for the strengthening of ties between Ireland and the diaspora.



Alan was invited to be a panellist on "Responding to the needs of, and staying relevant to, an evolving diaspora" and shared great insights with the audience of the challenges facing the diaspora here in NSW and Australia.

The forum also provides an opportunity for us to meet with our Irish based colleagues who support our work. Delighted to be a part of it, Le Chéile Arís.

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

LINK CONFERENCE 2023



The Irish Support Agency was delighted to attend the annual Link Conference last week, 18th-20th May in Brisbane QLD, hosted by our fellow support organisation Irish Australian Support Association of Queensland.

The Link Conference offers us an invaluable opportunity to meet the other Irish Australian support agencies across Australia as well as Embassy and Consular teams, and the support networks from Ireland including the Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas.

It is vital that our organisations work together and collaborate, to share knowledge, skills, and perspectives. Together, we can tackle complex problems, generate innovative ideas and ensure that our Diaspora across the country is receiving the support that they deserve and need.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION EVENING

We were delighted to host our annual Volunteer Appreciation Evening on Tuesday 16th May during National Volunteer Week.

We are entirely grateful to the wonderful volunteers of the ISA, without whom, many of our programs and initiatives would simply not be possible.

Volunteering is a great way to connect with other people, leading to new friendships, diverse experiences, skill development and better wellbeing. It builds communities and creates a better society for everyone.

National Volunteer Week is a chance for all of us to celebrate and recognise the vital role of volunteers and their contribution to our community. Go raibh míle maith agaibh.



50 YEARS IN AUSTRALIA



One of our long standing Life Members, Paddy McCarron, recently celebrated a significant milestone of 50 years since his arrival into Fremantle, Western Australia on 19th April 1973.

Paddy is a key member of the Irish Australian community here in NSW and we were delighted to be with him to celebrate this momentous occasion.

We wish you all the best for your future in Australia Paddy and we are honoured to have you as an ISA member.

SYDNEY ROSE OF TRALEE

On Saturday 13th May, Aoife Butler was crowned this year's Sydney Rose of Tralee.

Aoife, originally from Co. Wexford, came to Australia nearly 4 years ago to travel and follow her late brother Matthew's dreams.

Aoife is a Mental Health Nurse at St Vincent's Hospital and is very passionate about the Mental Health of the community.

Aoife has collaborated with the Irish Support Agency on a number of Mental Health initiatives, and we believe she is a great ambassador for the young Irish Diaspora here in Sydney.

Aoife, we couldn't be happier for you, and we wish you every success in Tralee later in the year.





MEMBERS' NETWORKING EVENING

The Irish Support Agency cordially invites our Lifetime and Annual Members to attend our Members' Networking Evening on **Thursday 15th June 2023, 6pm-9pm at the Gaelic Club.**

The Irish Support Agency now has over 200 members!

Some of you have been a part of the family for many years, and some of you have recently joined us.

The Members' Networking Evening will provide an opportunity for you all to meet

and get to know each other, whilst the ISA will update you on the work that we have recently completed.

Members are welcome to bring one guest with them on the night.

If you are not a member and would like to sign up, for only \$20 per year, \$11 concession, you can easily become a member and we would be delighted to welcome you to the networking evening! Please call Una on 0412 324 396 to confirm your attendance.

COMMUNITY DONATION - COMHALTAS SYDNEY



Huge appreciation to Comhaltas Sydney for their generous donation of \$2000, presented to the Irish Support Agency at the opening night of the Sydney Fleadh.

Comhaltas Sydney put together an unbelievable weekend of Irish music, including sessions, workshops and céilís and created a cultural experience reminiscent of fond times back in the homeland.

Thank you for bringing this wonderful collaboration of artists and musicians to the Sydney stage. Go raibh míle maith agaibh.

WOMEN FOR WOMEN

On Sunday 30th April, the ISA had the absolute pleasure of welcoming 40 Irish Australian women to the inaugural Women for Women, a women's mental health and wellbeing event.

This was an incredibly uplifting, supportive, empowering, and insightful event.

Although women are more likely to seek professional help for mental health issues, there is still an indelible need to focus on real and honest conversations amongst our friends and family.



Thank you to all of our contributors, Shannen O'Hara, Roisin Trainor, Molly Benjamin, Katie O'Donoghue, Helen Ward, Loretta Cosgrove, Denise Magee, Christine Meade, and Aoife Butler.

Thank you to those who generously and bravely shared their own experience with mental illness, grief, and addiction. Your stories have the ability to resonate widely and will help so many other people who may find themselves in a similar situation.

Thank you also to those who attended, who came with an open mind and listened empathetically.

This event was the work of the ISA's Mental Health and Wellbeing working group, we thank them for their efforts, and it was a true honour to host this event.

SENIORS MID YEAR LUNCH

This year we are hosting our fabulous Mid-Year lunch at the Tea Gardens Hotel, Bondi Junction at 12pm on Wednesday 12th July 2023.

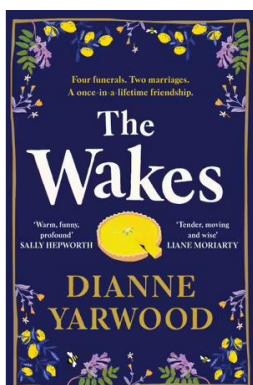
A beautiful lunch awaits as well as our raffle.

Cost: \$10 per person for members/\$15 for non-members.

Should you wish to become a member of the Irish Support Agency for only \$11, you will be eligible for the reduced rate on both lunches in the year.



BOOK CLUB



The ISA Book meets on the last Thursday of the month at 6pm in the Gaelic Club, 64 Devonshire Street, Surry Hills.

Each month, we choose a new book to read and review from a range of genres.

The book club is open to everyone, and it is a lovely way to meet and connect with like-minded people.

This month we are reading *The Wakes* by Dianne Yarwood.

If you would like to join our next meeting on Thursday, 29th June, please call Una on 0412 324 396.

THE RAMBLING IRISH

The Rambling Irish met on Sunday 28th May for our last walk until Spring 2023 and what a walk to finish on!

We ventured out west of the city to beautiful Bicentennial Park. We were treated to lovely scenery, wildlife and crisp fresh air.



Thanks everyone for coming, we love to see this group coming together and it's fantastic to explore areas that many of us haven't had the chance to visit yet.

The Rambling Irish is an initiative of the Irish Support Agency, and it's a great way to meet new people from all walks of life. Make sure to join us on our next walk in the Springtime.

TRIVIA AT THE TEAS

Join us at the Tea Gardens Bondi on Wednesday 21st June at 7pm for a traditional tráth na gceist.

This will be a trivia night filled with questions, music rounds, pictures and amazing prizes to be won. Our very own committee member, Brigid Maher will be your superb Trivia Host.

Tickets available for individuals and tables of 4 and 6. To ensure you get a spot, please pre-book as we cannot guarantee tickets at the door on the night.

All of the funds raised will go towards the Irish Support Agency's Client Support Services. Please call Una on 0412 324 396 if you would like to attend.



IN HOME SUPPORTS FOR OUR SENIORS

I would like to share my recent experience accessing Aged Care Services and highlight the valuable assistance provided by Katerina at the Irish Support Agency. With her guidance, navigating the system became much easier, relieving the pressure of not knowing where to begin. It's crucial for everyone to understand the importance of seeking support as early as possible, considering the lengthy waitlists involved.

*Among our primary concerns, my friend Joe and I worried about the risk of falling due to our age. Katerina arranged an in-home assessment for us and personally accompanied us on the day, readily addressing any queries we had. Our primary focus was on home modifications, and the service providers exceeded our expectations. I can confidently say that the installation of handrails in our bathroom, stairs, and outside our home has truly saved our lives. These modifications have not only improved our sense of security but also granted us a renewed lease on life. **Peter Daly***



If you would like assistance with accessing Aged Care Services, please contact the ISA on 02 9300 8019.

FIFA WOMEN'S WORLD CUP



Not long to wait until the match we have been eagerly anticipating, the Women's World Cup Opener Ireland Vs Australia on Thursday 20th July.

Missed out on tickets to the match? We have you covered!

Join us at The Gaelic Club and soak up the atmosphere and cheer on our women in green.

Tickets are only \$20 and all funds raised will go directly towards the ISA's Client Support Services.

To book your tickets, call Una on 0412 324 396.

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 Éireannacha
Department of Foreign Affairs