



# MAYO ROSCOMMON HOSPICE FOUNDATION



## NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 003 AUGUST 2024

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#### June 2024:

- €1,000 - Sean Collins
- €500 - Christy Kelleher
- €250 - Marian Deasy

#### July 2024:

- €1,000 - May Golden
- €500 - Ann Morrison
- €250 - Carmel Granahan

#### August 2024:

- €1,000 - Noel & Mary Kenny
- €500 - Peter Martin
- €250 - Joe Gill

Don't forget...the monthly draw is the first Friday of every month...and you've got to be in it to win it!

**Next Draw: Friday, September 6th.**

Sign up today. Call **094 93 88666**, email [draw@hospice.ie](mailto:draw@hospice.ie), enter online at [www.hospice.ie/draw](http://www.hospice.ie/draw) or call into any of our 12 Hospice Shops.



Martina Jennings, CEO of Mayo Roscommon Hospice Foundation, with actor Brendan Gleeson, at the launch of this year's Bewley's Big Coffee Morning for Hospice. Photo: Conor McCabe.

## Host a Coffee Morning for Mayo Roscommon Hospice this September

It's almost that time of the year again, with the annual National Hospice Coffee Morning, Together with Bewley's, taking place all across Ireland on Thursday, September 26th.

Whether you've hosted in the past, or you're thinking of getting involved for the first time, here at Mayo Roscommon Hospice, we would love to hear from you.

Organised annually, our Hospice Coffee Morning is one of our biggest fundraisers each year in Mayo and Roscommon. It brings people and communities together to catch up, have fun, and raise money for vital palliative care services. Remember, as with all our fundraisers, every cent raised locally stays locally.

If you enjoy getting together with friends, family or work colleagues, why not make your coffee count and become a Coffee Morning Host this September. There are lots of ways to get involved. You can organise a coffee morning, afternoon or evening in your home, club, school, office, business premises, or even virtually. Why not plan your event on your own or come together with friends? And, if neither

option works for you, simply check out what's happening in your community and go along to support another host.

Of course, we all have busy schedules and maybe you already have plans for that day. If September 26th doesn't work for you, don't worry, you can plan and host a Coffee Morning or other event on another more suitable date. Simply get in touch with our team today, and we'll work with you to help you plan for a date that suits.

As September approaches, we are calling on people right across Mayo and Roscommon to host a Coffee Morning in their home or workplace to raise vital funds for palliative care services in the two counties. By hosting an event, you will be helping the Mayo Roscommon Hospice Foundation to provide specialist care to patients in your local community at a time when they need it most.

**Online registration is open. Register today for your free Bewley's Coffee pack:**

Register online on <https://www.hospice.ie/coffee/>

Call our office on **094 93 88666** Email [info@hospice.ie](mailto:info@hospice.ie)

**Together We Can Do So Much**

To support our services, visit [www.hospice.ie/donate](http://www.hospice.ie/donate)

## A Message from our CEO, Martina Jennings

I hope you are all having a lovely summer so far. It continues to be a busy year for our services in our Hospices and the community. We have received some lovely feedback from patients and families who have used our services, and this is testament to the amazing staff both in the Hospice facilities and in the community.

We held our Annual Sunflower Days on June 7th and 8th, and we raised a staggering €115,233.74. This is our highest figure ever for Sunflower Days, and we are incredibly grateful to all our support groups, volunteers, and all who supported in both Mayo and Roscommon to help achieve this amount.

On the first Friday of August, we held the Foundation's inaugural Annual Memorial Mass at Swinford Church. It was wonderful to see so many volunteers and support groups in attendance, as well as family members of deceased volunteers. Before the Mass, we unveiled a plaque in memory of Ann Meehan in our Swinford Shop. Ann, along with Cynthia Clampett, had the vision of opening a charity shop in Swinford and it became the first of 12 Hospice shops to open across Mayo and Roscommon. We were delighted to be joined on the day by Ann's husband Tom, as well as their daughters and extended family. Ann was an amazing lady who left a positive impression on everyone she met. She will never be forgotten.

I am delighted to report that our shops are busier than ever, and we are so grateful to all our volunteers, and all of you who continue to donate to, and support the shops in any way.

September is a busy month for us here in the Mayo Roscommon Hospice Foundation. We are holding our car raffle on September 20th, and one lucky person will win a Volkswagen Polo Lite. If you haven't got your ticket yet, log onto [winacar.hospice.ie](http://winacar.hospice.ie).

Our annual Bewley's Big Coffee Morning for Hospice is on September 26th and this is one of our biggest annual fundraisers. We would be thrilled if you could hold a coffee morning at home, at work or in school. And if that date doesn't suit you, don't worry, you can host one anytime. Please call us on 094 93 88666 or log onto [hospice.ie](http://hospice.ie) to register your coffee morning and receive a coffee pack.

As always, thanks so much to all of you who have held fundraisers and supported us so far this year. We don't take it for granted that you do this in your own time, and it is because of people like you that we have two state-of-the-art Hospices in our region, along with an amazing community palliative care service. With your continued help, we will continue to fund, support and develop this vital service.

Warm wishes,



**Martina Jennings**  
 Chief Executive Officer

**Together We Can Do So Much**

## Being a Board member with Mayo Roscommon Hospice is good for the soul

Ballinrobe's Joanne Hynes has been a Board member with the Mayo Roscommon Hospice Foundation for 13 years and says her involvement has been "good for the soul".

The South Mayo pharmacist served as chairperson with the organisation from 2017 to 2020 and while it has undeniably taken a lot of time and effort over the years, it has also been a great honour to be associated with such an excellent charity.

For Joanne, medicine and healthcare have always been in the family. Her father was a vet in Ballinrobe for many years, while her grandfather was the local GP. Joanne opened her own pharmacy in the South Mayo town some 29 years ago. Located at Cornmarket in Ballinrobe, she built her pharmacy business around trust and a caring concern for all her valued patients, customers, neighbours and friends.

Shortly after Joanne first opened her pharmacy, her husband John fell ill with cancer. During this time, she saw first hand the benefit and importance of palliative care for patients and their families. John sadly passed away when the couple's two daughters were just three and five. The girls followed in their mother's footsteps, both qualifying as pharmacists. Joanne later met and married her husband Brian and they went on to have two more children together, a girl (17) and a boy (15).

It was John Tully, the late Castlereagh pharmacist, who first introduced Joanne to the idea of getting involved with Mayo Roscommon Hospice. He had been a central figure in the organisation since its foundation in 1992. "John was a wonderful community man, friend, and a great pharmacist. He encouraged me to get involved and it has really been a brilliant experience over the last 13 years," Joanne explained.

"There's no doubt that it takes up a lot of time sometimes, but even when life gets busy and you're tempted to lighten the load, it's very hard to imagine walking away from Mayo Roscommon Hospice. There is such a wonderful group of people involved with the Board and with the

organisation as a whole. It's really great to be around them, and there's something so special about Hospice. When people get involved, they come to it with such a good heart," she continued.

Of course, as well as her involvement with the Board, Joanne has another strong Hospice connection. Her mother, Geraldine May, was one of founding members of the Hospice Support Group in Ballinrobe. Definitely young at heart, Geraldine remains very active with the charity, as she approaches her 85th birthday later this year.

"There has been tremendous work done by so many over the years. From the Board perspective, it is inspiring to work alongside other volunteers with the purpose of achieving great things that will support people at a very difficult time of their lives - not just any people, but neighbours, friends, and family," she added.

Joanne has nothing but praise for her fellow Board members and indeed the organisation's Chief Executive, Martina Jennings. "When people say one person can't make a difference, I think of this organisation. I think of the people who have a vision, and the people who get behind that vision. We can all play a part and I have really enjoyed my time on the Board. It has been good for the soul," she smiled.

During her time as chairperson, she thoroughly enjoyed working alongside and supporting Martina and the team. "It has been so great to work with Martina. Not only does she make obstacles disappear, she doesn't even see them. She is so passionate and she does everything she can to move mountains. We're so lucky to have her as CEO and she's equally lucky to be surrounded by so many brilliant people," Joanne concluded.



*Joanne Hynes, Member of Mayo Roscommon Hospice Foundation Board*



## WOW! Westport women get ready for 605km cycle

A group of 17 brave Mayo women will don their helmets and cycling gear next month as they set off on their mammoth 605km cycle from Mizen to Malin. Westport Women On Wheels – or Westport WOW for short – will undertake the four-day challenge to raise funds for Mayo Roscommon Hospice and Mayo Rape Crisis Centre.

Comprising a mix of members from Westport Triathlon Club and the Covey Wheelers Cycling Club, the Westport WOW group will set off on their Cork to Donegal route on September 4th, and ahead of this, they're looking for your support.

In preparation for the event, the women have clocked up some serious mileage in training – more than 40,000km – travelling up and down the hills of Mayo and participating in cycling events and sports around the country.

The idea for the female-only cycle was the brainchild of Ironman athlete, Colette Sweeney of Westport Leisure Centre, who

is leading the group. "When you're part of a club and you all come together for a good cause, it brings the entire community together," Colette explained.

"Mizen to Malin is a legendary journey across the length of Ireland, spanning 605km from the southernmost point to the northernmost point of the island. We've been training hard for the last few months, and despite the bad weather over the summer, we've always managed to get out as a group a couple of times a week on top of our individual training," she continued.

The decision to do the famous cycle in the month of September was a strategic one,

according to Colette. "We chose the first week of September to complete the cycle, in the direction of Cork to Donegal, as the prevailing winds are southerly at this time of year. So hopefully, if all goes to plan, we'll have a little wind at our backs," she said with a smile.

Over the last number of months, the group has participated in some big distance cycle events including the Tour de Connemara (140km) and Cunga Ram (115km) in Galway, the Gran Fondo Sligo (135km), Westportif (160km) and the Ballina Salmon Sportif (120km) in Mayo, and the Ring of Clare (160km).

**Westport WOW has set an overall fundraising target of €25,000 and all proceeds will be divided evenly between the two charities. To support the 17-strong Westport WOW team, visit <https://www.idonate.ie/event/wowm2m>**



**The Westport Women on Wheels cycle starts in Mizen in Cork on September 3rd with a quick 26 kilometres to Schull (Cork), followed by four heavy days of cycling:**

- 147km from Schull to Charleville in Cork (September 4th)
- 157km from Charleville to Athlone (September 5th)
- 128km from Athlone to Enniskillen (September 6th)
- 147km from Enniskillen to Malin in Donegal (September 7th)



*In memory of Annemarie and to raise funds for Mayo Roscommon Hospice, Imelda Byrne organised a seven-strong group to participate in the Vhi Women's Mini Marathon. Pictured left-right: Imelda (sister), Olivia (sister-in-law), Emma (niece), Eithne (sister-in-law), Lauren (niece), Deborah (friend from nurse training), and Sandra (friend from nurse training). Embracing the fun of the day, Dubliner Sandra donned a Mayo jersey for the Mini Marathon in recognition of Annemarie's passion for her county and its teams.*

## Remembering Annemarie with Vhi Women's Mini Marathon fundraiser

A New Year's resolution by Imelda Byrne was the first step in the Bohola woman's journey to this year's Vhi Women's Mini Marathon. Declaring 2024 would be the year she'd improve her fitness, Imelda's announcement was met with laughter and banter at the family Christmas gathering, not least from her dear sister Annemarie. At the time, Annemarie was in the midst of another round of treatment but she was stable and enjoying time with her family over the holiday period.

A few short months later, Imelda and her family were blown away by the incredible care, attention and love that Annemarie received at Mayo Hospice. Sadly, the mum-of-three passed away at the Castlebar facility in April this year, but it was the phenomenal care she received there that inspired Imelda to participate in the June Mini Marathon to raise funds for Mayo Roscommon Hospice.

"I didn't exactly stick to my New Year's Resolution in terms of fitness," Imelda admitted, with a smile. "But I made a promise to Annemarie that I would do something to try to repay Mayo Roscommon Hospice for everything they did for her during her final weeks. Together with some family members and some of Annemarie's friends, we walked and skipped our way through the Mini Marathon in June."

Initially, the seven-strong group set a €500 fundraising target, but they managed to

raise more than €13,000 for the organisation. "Annemarie had really been through a lot over the previous 18 months but her experience with Hospice was fantastic. It was everything you would want it to be. She talked about how safe she felt there, and that's the best possible compliment a healthcare facility and its team could receive," Imelda continued.

In September 2022, Annemarie Byrne-Cunningham was diagnosed with advanced ovarian cancer. She underwent surgery, followed by chemotherapy treatment, concluding in May 2023. Annemarie and her family knew the treatment wasn't curative, but by May, the disease was under control. Unfortunately however, in August 2023, the cancer returned and the next round of treatment was planned for December.

"Annemarie had a really difficult chemo journey and there were issues with bowel

obstruction. Her treatment was traumatic, painful and invasive. There was never anything straight forward. In November, she spent three weeks in hospital, and then restarted chemo, but by February 2024, she was finding it tough and had debilitating chemo side effects," Imelda recalled.

Both Annemarie and Imelda had a lot of experience in healthcare and in some ways, maybe knew too much. "Annemarie was a trained nurse and had worked with people with intellectual disabilities and in other settings. She knew about healthcare and conditions," explained Imelda, who is also a nurse.

In February, Annemarie's Consultant advised that she undergo the next three weeks of treatment and then reassess her options, but before the three weeks had passed, she had made the difficult decision that she did not want any more treatment. "At the time she

felt guilty thinking like this, but as it turned out the decision was made for her, because at the end of the three-week period, the tumour had grown,” said Imelda.

Despite huge health challenges and several offers of help from Hospice, Annemarie remained resolutely independent throughout her illness. “She had previously been referred to the palliative care team in November. She met with them, but didn’t embrace it. There was also talk of Hospice daycare at the time, but she wasn’t ready. She thought there were people more deserving and in need than she was,” Imelda continued.

By late March, however, Annemarie was very fatigued. She was sleeping a lot and the smallest activities would take a lot out of her. The palliative community team came to meet her, and her bowel discomfort was escalating. Once again, Annemarie’s family encouraged her to embrace the support.

“One particular Monday, the palliative care nurse came to Annemarie’s house to talk to her, and introduced the idea of her going to the Mayo Hospice for some symptom management. That day, she agreed. We knew that admitting she was ready to seek Hospice care was a huge step but we were relieved she had made the decision herself,” said Imelda.

Going just a few short miles down the road from her home in Baloor, Breaffy, to Mayo Hospice in Castlebar, made all the difference. “Within 24 hours, she was a new woman. She was relaxed, and she wasn’t trying to cover up her symptoms. We felt like we got her back that day. We had fun, we laughed, we had some great conversations. She was so much happier and we had the peace of mind that she was allowing people to care for her,” Imelda added.

The staff and volunteers in Mayo Hospice were a dream. “The social worker, Agnes, was amazing. Annemarie trusted her so much and really opened up to her. Within a couple of days, Agnes knew as much about Annemarie as her family did. During her illness, she had also lost her faith and was, understandably, very angry, but she formed a great bond with the chaplain and she came back to herself.

***“The holistic care was incredible. She had aromatherapy treatments and even had her hair done. She was restful and peaceful, and we knew she felt both calm and empowered. She was able to access all of the necessary supports and to talk to her husband Jarlath, and their sons – James, Mark and Shane – about everything.*”**

“They got to spend time together, making memories and planning her funeral. One of the lovely things they also did was make cufflinks together. The cufflinks have already been used by the boys, including for the



*Annemarie Byrne-Cunningham, passed away peacefully at Mayo Hospice, in April this year. Her family will forever be grateful for the wonderful care she received at the Castlebar facility.*

Debs, Graduation and other important milestones. It’s like her way of being with them for the big days too,” Imelda confided.

During her final weeks, Annemarie was fulsome in her praise for the Hospice team. “She always felt she was their priority. The team was so caring, so discreet and we had open access to her when we needed it. At the same time, we always trusted their judgement. One day, for instance, the Consultant asked that we stay away for a little while because she needed to rest, recharge and reset. They knew what she needed. Annemarie trusted them and so did we,” Imelda added.

On the Sunday before she passed away, one of Annemarie’s sons took her out for a few hours. She was able to go home for a visit to Baloor and also to her home house in Bohola. “She was in great form and had a cup of tea with us. I remember saying that I wished we could keep her with us, but she couldn’t wait to go back to Hospice. She was so well cared for there, and she wanted to die in a safe, controlled environment, as pain free as possible. And that’s what Hospice delivered,” said Imelda.

That night, Annemarie’s family were called to her bedside, and for the next 48 hours, they sat with her until she breathed her last, aged just 52. “We miss her terribly but we are so grateful to Mayo Roscommon Hospice for all the wonderful care they gave her. Of course, the medical care and attention was really brilliant, but everything about the facility in Castlebar is just so perfect, and they couldn’t do enough for us,” she said.

“Annemarie was blown away by it all. She loved that the door from her room led her straight outside. She could see and hear the birds in the trees. She loved her dog Bundi, a Bernese Mountain Dog, and the fact that Bundi was able to come to visit her in Mayo Hospice, and could literally come and greet her at the door, was lovely. It was all just so special and we will forever be grateful to Mayo Roscommon Hospice.”



## Coffee Morning Top Tips

### 1. Pick A Day – Any Day

If September 26th doesn’t suit you, don’t worry. Pick another time close to the official date that will allow as many friends, family and neighbours as possible to join in the fun.

### 2. Claim Your Coffee

Thanks to the generous support of Bewley’s, we will send you a pack of their delicious coffee along with posters, invitations and collection boxes when you register.

### 3. Spread The Word

Get the word out there. Display posters, send a group invitation by email, set up a WhatsApp group or create a Facebook event. And remember, a personal phone call is hard to beat.

### 4. Get Competitive

Why not organise the Great Hospice Bake Off or another similar and fun contest. A Coffee Morning is always a great excuse to show off your baking creativity.

### 5. Pay As You Go

You can use our online platform to add your donations as you go along. It’s very easy to use, and the funds come straight to us. Simply visit [www.hospice.ie/donate](http://www.hospice.ie/donate) and follow the instructions. If you need any help, please call us on 094 93 88666. Cash donations can also be lodged directly to Mayo Roscommon Hospice and can be added to online donations.

### 6. Share Your Mug Shots

Share your photos using #togetherforhospice and post to our Mayo Roscommon Hospice social pages. You can also email pictures to us at [info@hospice.ie](mailto:info@hospice.ie)

### 7. Thanks and Be Thanked

Don’t forget to thank everyone on our behalf. We are truly grateful for all donations raised through Bewley’s Big Coffee Morning for Hospice, so be sure to let your guests know how much they helped to raise. Remember, every cup counts.

### 8. Donate to support

If you are unable to host a Coffee Morning this year, please support Mayo Roscommon Hospice by making a donation at [hospice.ie/donations/donate-online/](http://hospice.ie/donations/donate-online/)



The Tully family from Castlereah came together again this year to organise the John Tully Triathlon. Pictured, left-right: Ross, Sheena, Maura, Vince and Nial Tully.

## Triathlon honours John Tully's memory and raises €12k for Mayo Roscommon Hospice

John Tully's name has been synonymous with Mayo Roscommon Hospice since its foundation in 1992. He was a central figure in the establishment of the organisation, with a vision to provide hospice and palliative care services for patients and their families across the two counties.

Sadly, in 2018, John passed away suddenly, leaving a huge void for his family, his community and indeed for Mayo Roscommon Hospice.

At the time of his passing, the Castlereah pharmacist was a Board member with the organisation, having remained heavily involved with the charity since its foundation. It is fitting therefore that his legacy is now being remembered and celebrated through the John Tully Hospice Triathlon.

In late July 2024, the second annual John Tully Triathlon event took place in John's hometown of Castlereah. Organised by his family and supported by the entire community, the event was a tremendous success, raising an impressive €12,054.30 for Mayo Roscommon Hospice, while also serving as an official Triathlon Ireland event.

For the second year running, John's daughter Sheena took on the role of Race Director, with his son Nial as Assistant Director. They were ably assisted by their mother, Maura, and their siblings Ross and Vince, while also receiving great help and support from the businesses and community in Castlereah.

There were two separate races for competitors on the day – the Sprint Triathlon and Try-a-Tri – and with the event recognised by Triathlon Ireland, it attracted competitors from clubs all over the region who wanted to get involved, record a time, while also supporting such a worthy cause.

"It was so wonderful to see the community coming together to lend a hand. It's unusual for events like this to be run by families – they're usually a club fundraiser – but everyone got behind us once again this year. From building the transition area to marshalling on the day, the volunteerism was fantastic. We couldn't have done it without the community and I'm

sure dad was looking down proudly on his beloved Castlereah, proud to see such a brilliant event taking place in his name," said Sheena.

Despite the challenges involved in running such a huge event, the Tully family are delighted to be able to play their part in supporting Mayo Roscommon Hospice. "Sure, it's a lot of work, but we are all so passionate about Hospice and we couldn't think of a more amazing legacy to have running in dad's name," Sheena continued.

In terms of planning for the event, no decision was taken lightly. "The reason we first decided to organise the triathlon was because dad was a huge fan of Castlereah Outdoor Swimming Pool. He advocated for it for many years and was heavily involved in the pool. The cycle route, meanwhile, shows off the beauty of the area – from passing the Castle in Ballintober, to the transition area being in Somers Park, which is such an amazing resource. The run route took participants through the demesne, of which dad was a trustee. Competitors even ran through the fairy village, which was inspired by dad and was a facility he officially opened," Sheena explained.

"It all connected so wonderfully, and made so much sense for us on a personal level to honour everything that he loved, from the community spirit, to the town of Castlereah and all it has to offer. It was amazing, too, to see so many people coming together to make something so big happen," she added.

Across Castlereah, many businesses and organisations came together to show their support. Among them were An Chistin who did the catering, Josie's Cafe who provided hot drinks, the Enterprise Hub serving as the registration area and competitor zone, Harmac allowing use of their secure car park, Shane Conlon from Castlereah Cycles doing

bike checks for everyone on entry, the local cycling club helping to plan the route, Cahill's SuperValu providing water bottles, and many others too.

"It was a whole town effort and it is so special to know we come from a town that will pull together when you ask for help. We are also so grateful to the Total Health Pharmacy Group who came on board as main sponsors for the event. This allowed all entry fees to go directly to Mayo Roscommon Hospice, with Total Health covering all running costs like medals, t-shirts, goody bags, swimming hats, race belts, etc. This sponsorship made a huge difference in terms of the total figure we could hand over to Hospice," Sheena noted.

For the family, every bit of effort involved in running the event has been worth it. "We are so lucky to have a resource like Mayo Roscommon Hospice – something that dad so passionately believed in and an organisation that does such wonderful work across the two counties. As a family, we are so proud that he was involved in the establishment of the Mayo Roscommon Hospice Foundation and we want to keep supporting the organisation," she said.

In the weeks following the event, the Tully family have received some really great feedback from Triathlon Ireland, as well as clubs and competitors. "For us, it's really special to see the town coming together in dad's memory. It's unusual for an event like this to be run for a charity, rather than as a club fundraiser, and it's great to know that everyone is there because of absolute goodwill. We've got a lot of great feedback about the really special atmosphere that surrounded the event and the fact that it's family run. Dad would be so proud of what the John Tully Triathlon has become and hopefully we'll return again next year and create an even bigger and better event," Sheena beamed.

# Countdown is on for September's Car Draw

The countdown is on for our big Car Draw and with just over three weeks remaining, it's time to get those final entries secured. The draw takes place on Friday, September 20th, and you know what they say...you've got to be in it to win it!

Mayo Roscommon Hospice is delighted to be offering you a chance to win a brand new Volkswagen Polo Life, for as little as €15. This year's Car Draw is being supported by J Keane & Sons, Roscommon.

To enter, visit <https://winacar.hospice.ie/> where tickets are available for €15 for one, €50 for four, or €100 for ten tickets. Alternatively, you can call our office on 094 938 8666, or pop into any of our 12 Hospice Shops, where tickets are available to buy.

The clock is ticking, so there's no time to waste. Get your tickets today.



## Bernie Dolan goes the extra mile for Hospice

When Bernie Dolan sets her mind to something, she doesn't stop until she achieves her goal and this summer, she certainly went the extra mile for Mayo Roscommon Hospice.

Ten years ago, Bernie bought a wetsuit for no other reason than a desire to start open water swimming. This led her to join the Lanesboro Triathlon Club and she hasn't looked back since.

Having recently completed her 30th triathlon and in celebration of her 10 years membership with Lanesboro Triathlon Club, she decided to undertake two events in July to raise funds for Mayo Roscommon Hospice.

On July 6th, Bernie undertook the Two Provinces Triathlon, which entailed a 750m swim, 20km cycle and a 5km run. But she didn't stop there. Just two weeks later, on July 20th, she was back on the road again, completing the 120km Ring of Clare.

In undertaking these challenges, Bernie set a fundraising target of €5,000, but she far surpassed that, raising more than €6,000 for the charity. We are so grateful to Bernie for her efforts and congratulate her on her incredible achievement.



**WIN A NEW VOLKSWAGEN POLO LIFE**

Supporting Mayo Roscommon Hospice  
In association with J Keane & Sons Roscommon



**1 x ticket €15**  
**4 x tickets €50**  
**10 x tickets €100**

**In aid of Mayo Roscommon Hospice Foundation**

CHY No. 10980 RCN No. 20029098



COMMUNITY PALLIATIVE CARE | MAYO HOSPICE | ROSCOMMON HOSPICE  
TOGETHER WE CAN DO SO MUCH

## Did you know?

The Roscommon Hospice opened in 2023, and looked after 124 patients in total last year.

In 2023, there were 258 admissions to the Mayo Hospice, and 72 attendances at Day Care.



The Stephen Hession Memorial  
**OPEN BROTHERS**  
Golf Tournament  
**OCT 19, 2024**

2 Brothers in 4BBB format  
Or  
3 Brothers (half handicap)

**Raising funds for Roscommon Hospice**

**ROSCOMMON GOLF CLUB**

Members - €10      Non Members - €25  
**REGISTER YOUR INTEREST - BROTHERSCOMP24@GMAIL.COM**

**Monthly Draw**

WIN  
**€1,000**  
JACKPOT

2nd Prize  
**€500**  
3rd Prize  
**€250**

Help Support Our Hospice for just  
**€10**  
a month

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Tel. 094 9388666    Email [draw@hospice.ie](mailto:draw@hospice.ie)    Website [www.hospice.ie](http://www.hospice.ie)



Robbie McCarthy and family and friends are pictured here presenting a cheque to Josephine Ganley of Mayo Roscommon Hospice, the proceeds from their participation in the Tóchar Phádraig 35 km trek from Ballintubber Abbey to Croagh Patrick. The group raised an impressive €7,774.50 for Mayo Roscommon Hospice and the trek took them through road, field and bogland, taking in some of the most scenic sights in the area. Included in the photo are Robbie McCarthy, Brenda Gately, Anna, Kate, David, Peter and Sean, Seamus and Paulina Maloney, DJ Burke, Aoife Joyce, Niamh O'Malley and Ryan Mullvaney.



Patricia Kelly, Teresa Kelly, Mary Kelly, and Ann Kelly are pictured here presenting a cheque for €4,530 to Martina Jennings, CEO of Mayo Roscommon Hospice, proceeds from a coffee morning held in the Fáilte Rooms in Lacken in memory of Liam Kelly.

## Donate at Queen Medb's Throne

There's a really novel fundraiser happening at Rathcroghan Visitor Centre in Tulsk, Co Roscommon, this year. The Centre is supporting the Mayo Roscommon Hospice Foundation throughout the year by accepting donations at the Throne of Queen Medb.

The large bogwood piece has been carved by a local artist and is a concept piece representing Queen Medb's Throne. Visitors can sit on the throne and make a wish for just €1. All proceeds go to Mayo Roscommon Hospice.



## Ashford's Soccer Aid

The Ashford Estate is organising a staff charity fundraiser called 'Ashford Estate Soccer Aid' on Tuesday, September 17th, in The Neale GAA Grounds.

The event will feature four participating teams, and each team will pledge to raise a minimum of €500 each. Online donations will be very welcome.

## Coffee in Cushla

Cushla Active Age in Athlone will host a Coffee Morning and Bring and Buy Sale on Saturday, November 2nd, from 10am to 12.30pm in Monksland Community Centre. Your support would be greatly appreciated.



## Clare Island and Inishturk Walks put the 'fun' in fundraising

It's hard to beat a trip to the islands and the annual Kathleen Conneely Memorial Walks on Clare Island and Inishturk are always a huge hit with participants. Offering picturesque views, great fun, and warm welcome aplenty, the annual walks attracted big numbers once again this year, raising almost €11,000 for Mayo Roscommon Hospice.

On Saturday, June 22nd, Clare Island welcomed a huge turnout, while on Saturday, July 6th, it was Inishturk's turn to lay on the welcome. Mixed weather conditions didn't dampen the spirits of the walkers and two thoroughly enjoyable days were had.

Pat Conneely and Joe Brett organised the event once again this year, and it all ran very smoothly as always. Bus transfer from Balla, Castlebar and Westport was kindly provided free of charge for participants, as was the ferry crossing.

The organisers would like to thank the bus companies and Clare Island Ferry Company, O'Grady's, for sponsoring the transportation. Thanks also to the wonderful communities on both islands for their hospitality and sponsorship. And last, but certainly not least, a huge thank you to all the participants in both walks and indeed to everyone who donated to their fundraising efforts.



## Community support is vital to the success of Ballinrobe Hospice Shop

It's almost 12 years since the Mayo Roscommon Hospice Foundation made the decision to open its fifth store; this time in the South Mayo town of Ballinrobe. In November 2012, the charity expanded its portfolio by opening the doors to its newest shop on Church Lane in Ballinrobe. Since then, the shop has continued to go from strength to strength, thanks in no small part to the generosity of the local community.

Located less than 50 metres from Main Street in Ballinrobe (at F31 D309), the store is situated opposite Cummins' SuperValu, with the large public car park in front of the shop ensuring that parking is always available.

As with all of the stores, Ballinrobe's Hospice Shop gets great support from the community, with the large volume of daily donations serving as a reflection of the now multicultural community living in and around the town.

Thankfully, the shop is very busy and always has a wonderful stock of clothing, toys and other household items. The level of repeat custom is testament to the high level of

customer satisfaction, thanks to Majella and her team who always maintain excellent standards in terms of both service and offerings.

Of course, the success of the Ballinrobe Hospice Shop - as is the case with all 12 stores across Mayo and Roscommon - depends heavily on our wonderful volunteers who give their time so freely.

The brilliant work by so many volunteers across all our shops is absolutely vital in Mayo Roscommon Hospice Foundation being able to continue to provide Palliative Care Services to the people of Mayo and Roscommon.



If you have goods that you'd like to donate, or are looking to refresh your home or wardrobe, call in to see the team in Ballinrobe today. New volunteers are always welcome too.



Ballinrobe volunteers: Geraldine May and Peadar Higgins

## Volunteer Focus: Geraldine May and Peadar Higgins

Ballinrobe's Geraldine and Peadar are volunteering in the Hospice Shop since it opened

Ballinrobe's Hospice Shop must really be a very special place to work, with both Geraldine May and Peadar Higgins volunteering in the store since the day it opened its doors, almost 12 years ago. For Geraldine and Peadar, the amazing work being done by Mayo Roscommon Hospice is very close to their hearts, and the social aspect of working in the shop ensures they keep coming back for more.

In truth, Geraldine has a long association with the Foundation. In addition to a history of volunteering with Mayo Roscommon Hospice, she has been involved since the establishment of the Foundation in 1992, while also serving as Chairperson for a time. On a local level, she was instrumental in setting up the Mayo Roscommon Hospice Foundation Support Group in Ballinrobe and is still a very active member.

Working in the Hospice Shop since it opened in November 2012, Geraldine loves volunteering and finds it incredibly rewarding. "Only this week, I met a lady who had spent two weeks in the Mayo Hospice and is now at home and in a much better place.

The lady told me that she is no longer afraid to die since being in the Hospice," she said.

"She's living her life without fear of dying. Hearing this story and many other stories like it is what makes volunteering in the shop so rewarding. This gives me great satisfaction knowing that all the volunteering I have done over the years has made such a difference to people at the end of their days," Geraldine explained.

The social side of volunteering is another great bonus, and Geraldine enjoys interacting with new people and getting to know them. She loves the fun the Hospice team have while at work, and of course the cup of tea. Time flies in the store, much like in life, and Geraldine is looking forward to celebrating her 85th birthday in November.

Alongside Geraldine, Peadar Higgins began volunteering when the shop first opened 12 years ago, and he finds it very fulfilling. "I give my time for free and this feels really good. I also love the social side of it," he said.

Sadly, Peadar lost his wife to cancer some 17 years ago and of course, it was a very difficult time for him and his family. While trying to come to terms with his terrible loss, he also had to learn to do everything

for himself. "I was a plumber by trade and often away from home. My wife looked after everything - the children, food shopping, the money, paying the bills, she did everything. I had no idea what to do with a bank card, but I had to learn," he recalled.

Peadar also experienced his own brush with illness, when he was diagnosed with prostate cancer a number of years ago. "I went to the doctor for a regular health check and the blood test showed that I had raised PSA levels. I ended up having surgery, followed by a course of radiation therapy," he explained.

But according to Peadar, he was one of the lucky ones. "My advice to every man over 50 is to go for a health check every year. If I did not go for my annual checkup, I might not be here now," he added.

Like Geraldine, Peadar is certainly active. At 82 years young, he is a big believer in keeping busy. "I think keeping yourself busy by volunteering, socialising, dancing and having a good laugh is the secret to living well in your older years," he said with a smile. "I plan to continue volunteering for a long time yet."



## Young growers get involved with fun Sunflower campaign

Children from all across Mayo and Roscommon rolled up their sleeves and got involved with a fun sunflower fundraiser of their own this year. Almost 100 national schools and childcare facilities signed up to take part in the new 'Grow a Sunflower for Hospice' campaign, raising funds for Mayo Roscommon Hospice and having great fun in the process.

The campaign began back in January this year, with the charity contacting national schools and childcare facilities across the two counties to introduce the idea. From there, participating schools and facilities received sunflower seeds with instructions and details about how to grow and care for the flowers.

In June, to coincide with National Sunflower Days, a special 'Yellow Day' fundraiser took place in the various facilities, and an impressive €8,715.80 was raised by the children and their teachers for Mayo Roscommon Hospice.

**Thank you and well done to everyone who played a part.**



If your school or creche would like to take part in our 'Grow a Sunflower for Hospice' campaign next year, please get in touch by sending an email to [admin@hospice.ie](mailto:admin@hospice.ie)

## Totals raised through Sunflower Days

(excluding money raised in the 12 Hospice shops)

Aldi Castlebar – €1,571.92  
 Aldi Roscommon – €664.72  
 Ballaghaderreen Support Group – €3,370  
 Ballina Support Group – €11,100  
 Ballinrobe Support Group – €12,692.02  
 Ballyvary Post Office – €139.54  
 Bangor Support Group – €2,223.70  
 Benny's Deli – €270.29  
 Bohola PO – €54.49  
 Boyle Support Group – €5,837.40  
 Caseys Hardware – €82.95  
 Caseys Londis – €607.98  
 Castlebar Post Office – €1,111.54  
 Centra Ballindine – €199.60  
 Claremorris Support Group – €6,206.16  
 Foxford Support Group – €1,745.45  
 Cong Support Group – €72.60  
 Linda Conway Belmullet – €5,400  
 Corrib Oil Ballyhaunis – €547.49  
 Corrib Oil Castlebar – €824.11  
 Corrib Oil Swinford – €569.14  
 Corrib Oil Westport – €593.97  
 Corrib Oil Castlerea – €775.02  
 Crossmolina Support Group – €2,804.40  
 Cunninghams Londis – €747.80  
 Ballycastle Post Office – €108.00  
 Dunnes Stores Castlebar – €4,377.00  
 Dunnes Stores Roscommon – €1,184.97  
 Ballyhaunis Support Group – €3,311.54  
 Hollymount Stores – €133.85  
 Kavanagh's Supervalu Westport – €2,594.16  
 Kavanagh's Supervalu Kiltimagh – €1,362.91  
 Eurospar Swinford – €1,397.47  
 Kilkelly Post Office – €242.32  
 Knock Support Group – €1,698.92  
 Knockcroghery Support Group – €154.40  
 Lisacul Support Group – €375.00  
 Louisburgh Support Group – €5,056.22  
 Lyons Mace Castlerea – €940.81  
 Mayo General Hospital – €788.27  
 Charlestown Support Group – €399.53  
 Newport Support Group – €4,010.60  
 PJ O'Brien – €675.00  
 O'Conner's Ballinlough – €206.00  
 Mary O'Haire – €1,007.00  
 Palliative Care Team Roscommon – €190.75  
 Nuala Quinn – €143.60  
 Roches Centra Balla – €206.90  
 Rooskey Support Group – €946.00  
 Roscommon Support Group – €9,975.84  
 Strokestown Support Group – €526.00  
 Supervalu Castlerea – €2,815.75  
 Supervalu Castlebar – €1,702.73  
 Tesco Roscommon – €524.44  
 Tesco Westport – €1,281.15  
 Tesco Swinford – €1,580.27  
 Tully's Pharmacy – €78.95  
 Turlough Stores – €213.62  
 Westport Post Office – €716.07



# Sunflower Days raise record total for Mayo Roscommon Hospice

A **record €115,233.74** has been raised for Mayo Roscommon Hospice through this year's National Sunflower Days. Recognised as one of the charity's biggest fundraisers each year, the two-day event took place on June 7th and 8th, with volunteers out in force across the two counties.

Volunteers were on the streets and in stores all over Mayo and Roscommon, with a wide range of sunflower memorabilia on offer. As always, communities dug deep to support their local Hospice services, with this year's figure topping all previous years.

Midwest Radio was also broadcasting from Ballinrobe's Hospice Shop to mark the occasion, with great festivities on the day. A big hit this year too was the **Sunflower Tote bag** (pictured), priced at just €3.00. The bags are still available from the 12 Hospice shops in Mayo and Roscommon.

A huge thank you to all our amazing volunteers and support groups who gave their time so generously throughout the two days. Thanks also to each and every person who donated to Mayo Roscommon Hospice through our Sunflower Days. Remember, every cent raised locally stays locally.



# Sunflower Days 2024





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# Sunflower Days

2024





# MAYO ROSCOMMON HOSPICE FOUNDATION

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TOGETHER WE CAN DO SO MUCH



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**MAYO ROSCOMMON  
HOSPICE  
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