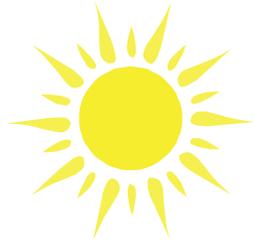




*The Miscarriage Association*

OF IRELAND



*Summer* 2011

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# *Newsletter*



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The Miscarriage Association of Ireland  
Carmichael Centre, North Brunswick Street, Dublin 7  
Telephone: 01-8735702. Fax: 01-8735737  
[www.miscarriage.ie](http://www.miscarriage.ie) • Email: [info@miscarriage.ie](mailto:info@miscarriage.ie)  
Registered Charity Number CHY9738

## *Welcome!*

On behalf of the Committee of the Miscarriage Association of Ireland, I would like to extend a warm welcome to each and everyone of you, especially those of you who are reading our newsletter for the very first time!

We hope that in reading these pages, you will feel less isolated and find comfort, consolation and perhaps, a sense of hope for the future.

We would like to thank all of you who have contributed to our newsletters in the past with letters, poetry, personal stories etc. Remember this is your newsletter and we welcome your views. If you feel that we could be more supportive, please let us know and we will do our best. We want to reach out to all of you who have experienced the loss of a baby and who may be struggling to find meaning.

The Miscarriage Association was set up in 1988 by and for people who have experienced miscarriage. We all have something in common and that is the sad reality that we have lost a child. As volunteers we work as a team sharing and supporting each other. To feel alone or unloved is indeed a poverty. We try to ease that loneliness. With your help we can do so much more to reach out to those in need. The following words come to mind: *“It is not how much we do, but how much love we put in the doing. It is not how much we give, but how much love we put in the giving.”* (Mother Teresa).

Remember, you are not alone! We are here with you and together, we can support each other. On behalf of your committee, I extend our support and friendship to you all.

*June O'Toole*

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## New Volunteers – Welcome

We would like to extend a very warm welcome to Deirdre and Niamh who have come on board to help. It is quite likely that you may get to speak with them, should you phone our support line. See our website [www.miscarriage.ie](http://www.miscarriage.ie) for details of our telephone rota.

## Membership Renewal

Just a reminder – your membership may be due for renewal. Our annual membership is €15. We ask members not to send cash in the post – cheques or postal orders please.

## Committee

**Chairperson:** June O’Toole, **Vice Chairperson:** Yvonne Shiels,  
**Secretary:** Niamh Ryan, **Treasurer:** Angela Grace  
**Committee Members :** Mary Lawson, Marie McManus, Liz Burton,  
Deirdre Pierce McDonnell, Niamh Darcy

## PRESS RELEASE

**The Miscarriage Association of Ireland welcomes the apology by the HSE to women affected by misdiagnosis of miscarriage and calls for greater vigilance in future.**

Commenting on the report issued by the HSE and the resulting apology to those affected, Chairperson June O’Toole said, *“We can only imagine the suffering that these women and their families have experienced. Miscarriage is always a sad and often traumatic event. What happened in these cases was unspeakable.*

*“Unfortunately, there must now be a great number of women who now wonder if their infant was, in fact, miscarried. Some will, for the rest of their lives, wonder if their miscarriage was misdiagnosed. They will never know for sure.*

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*“We are not in the business of telling the medical profession how to operate but it seems only reasonable and prudent that when a miscarriage is diagnosed that a second scan be offered in all cases and without the mother having to request it. This should be the normal procedure. We hope that the publication of this report will help to improve the procedures and practices around pregnant women and remind all involved of the significant nature of miscarriage. It may be a fairly routine event for the professionals but it is a life-changing event for the family involved.”*

The Miscarriage Association continues to offer all those affected by miscarriage a variety of support services including telephone support by volunteers and monthly support meetings.

**Miscarriage Association of Ireland**  
**Service of Remembrance**  
**14th November 2010**

Our Service of Remembrance took place on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> November last in St. Theresa’s Church, Donore Avenue. This lovely Church has become home for us each year on the second Sunday of November and Fr. McArdle and all the parish make us feel very welcome. There was a huge attendance at this Service, those who lost their babies very recently, those who lost their children many years ago. For many, it is an Annual pilgrimage to pause a while and spend precious time remembering their baby before heading back to their busy lives. Fr. McArdle was joined on the day by Rev. Suzanne Harris who spoke very movingly about miscarriage. Our narrator, Lorcan O’Toole, skilfully and sensitively guided us all through the ceremony. “Word in Harmony” provided beautiful music and singing which really set the tone for the day. Philip Lawson played a lovely guitar solo during the Candle Procession. The Candle Procession is one of the most moving parts of the Service when we become aware of our babies as tiny individuals who are no longer with us

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and we see all the candles lit on the steps of the altar representing our precious little ones. After the Service, there was time for those who wished, to make an entry in our Book of Remembrance, and, of course, time for some welcome refreshments and a chat. We are very grateful for all those who contribute to make this day possible. It could not take place without the many hands who help out with the organisation and on the day itself. *Mary Lawson*

## **Rotunda Bereavement Talks – March 2011**

We would like to express our congratulations to the staff of the Rotunda Hospital for their commitment and support of all those who have experienced the loss of a baby. We were invited to attend on the last evening of the Bereavement Talks to raise awareness that there is ongoing support and that nobody need grieve alone or in silence!

## **Ectopic Pregnancy Ireland – 24<sup>th</sup> March 2011.**

Congratulations to all on the official launch of Ectopic Pregnancy Ireland. We wish you well and believe that your organisation will be a source of great consolation and support for all those who have had the sad experience of ectopic pregnancy. A group of women who suffered from ectopic pregnancy, have come together and worked tirelessly, to set up this much needed charity offering the information, awareness and support which was previously lacking. For further information, see [www.ectopicireland.ie](http://www.ectopicireland.ie)

## **Glasnevin Museum – First anniversary 8<sup>th</sup> April 2011.**

Congratulations to Glasnevin Trust on the first anniversary of the opening of Glasnevin Museum – a very fitting tribute to the generations who have gone before. It is a wonderful achievement and a source of great pride and accomplishment for all involved.

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## **Carmichael Centre – Good Friday Concert**

### **22nd April 2011**

Carmichael Centre for Voluntary Groups holds a fundraising evening every Good Friday and in order to support them we in the Miscarriage Association of Ireland purchase two tickets. This Good Friday in Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, the Johannes Brahms Requiem was performed.

The Master of Ceremonies was Senator David Norris who has been the patron of Carmichael House for the past three years. He told us that he worships at the Cathedral on Sundays.

The programme included works from Johann Sebastian Bach, Thomas Tallis and Franz Liszt and after the interval we listened to The Goethe-Institut Choir and Orchestra perform the Johannes Brahms German Requiem. It was truly a wonderful performance.

The evening was a departure from the traditional Handel's 'Messiah' that had become a feature of Easter in Dublin but the night was no less enjoyable, the singing and musicianship were superb and Carmichael House was the beneficiary.

*Marie McManus*

## **Flora Ladies Mini Marathon and Cork Marathon**

### **Monday 6th June 2011**

We would like to express our gratitude to all of you who took part in the Ladies' Mini Marathon, whether you ran, jogged, walked or even went at a snail's pace and also those brave hearted folk who tackled the Cork Marathon on our behalf. A big thank you to those who have returned their sponsorship money and we look forward to receiving the outstanding amounts.

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## **Welcome Babies**

Congratulations and a very big welcome to Baby Kirsten Ruth, a beautiful baby daughter for Helen and Mark and a little sister for Emily.

A very big welcome to Baby Sean Wixted-Nolan born on May 1st. 2011 and weighing 7 lbs 6 ozs, a precious son for Marguerite Wixted-Nolan and Pdraig Nolan.

## **Anniversaries**

7th Anniversary of our first angel Baby Dunlea – who left us on 29th May 2004. You are forever in our thoughts.

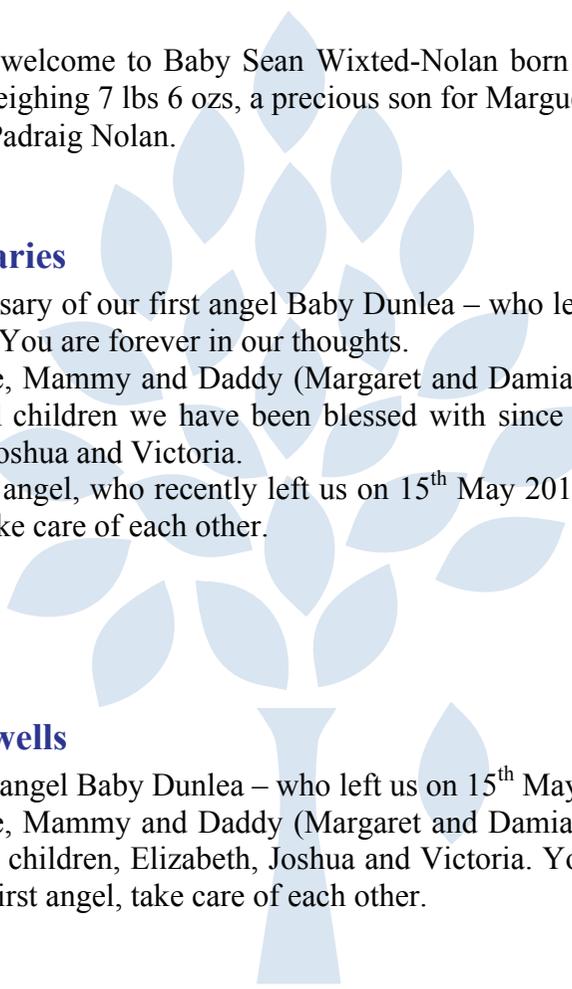
All our love, Mammy and Daddy (Margaret and Damian), and three very special children we have been blessed with since we lost you, Elizabeth, Joshua and Victoria.

Our second angel, who recently left us on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2011, has joined you now, take care of each other.

## **Sad Farewells**

Our second angel Baby Dunlea – who left us on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2011.

All our love, Mammy and Daddy (Margaret and Damian), and three very special children, Elizabeth, Joshua and Victoria. You have gone to join our first angel, take care of each other.



## Poetry Corner

### Snowdrops

The snowdrops determined in their task  
push on up through the earth.  
Reminding me of hopes and dreams  
that never came to birth.  
And still they push till soon I see  
their tiny dainty flowers.  
They stand erect through frost and snow  
through tears and winter showers.

*Audrey Slattery*

### The World May Never Notice...

The world may never notice  
If a Snowdrop doesn't bloom,  
Or even pause to wonder  
If the petals fall too soon.  
But every life that ever forms,  
...Or ever comes to be,  
Touches the world in some small way  
For all eternity.

The little one we long for  
Was swiftly here and gone.  
But the love that was then planted  
Is a light that still shines on.  
And though our arms are empty,  
Our hearts know what to do.  
Every beating of our hearts  
Says that we love you.  
RIP Baby Evan Daniel Lordan xxxxxxxxxxxx

*Karen Lordan*

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## Hugh McCormick

Today the world has lost a little person  
With all the potential of the universe within  
For reasons beyond all of our comprehension  
They will never have the chance for life to begin

Would their eyes have been as bright and full of wonder  
As our own ones were when we first saw the light of day?  
Is their little soul now a star up in the heavens  
Gazing down as we go along our way?

Do they know the love that would have soon surrounded them?  
The welcome to the world they would have gotten?  
The fact that I will never meet this little person  
Is a sadness that will never be forgotten.

I wish you peace and joy for all your travels  
Your energy will never fade away  
Though you will not walk the earth and be among us  
We will love you and remember you always.

***By Deirdre McCormick***

Aunt of Hugh McCormick  
Very much loved and never forgotten.



## Your Stories

### *Coping with the loss of a second baby through miscarriage*

As I frantically searched the ultrasound screen for any signs of life, the only thought going through my mind was, “This cannot be happening to us again.”

At almost eight weeks pregnant, with a history of ovarian cysts and a previous miscarriage, I was booked for an early scan. This was my fifth pregnancy – we have three wonderful children and lost one baby to miscarriage.

We were happy with our lot and thought we were finished having babies, so this pregnancy, surprise that it initially was, had us excited at the prospect of becoming parents again. We never thought for a second we would lose this baby. We had already been through a miscarriage and assumed we had been dealt our share of pain.

Our first miscarriage was painful, traumatic and an experience we never expected to repeat. So when the nurse could not find a heartbeat, I lay there stunned and panicking at the prospect of losing another baby. She went to get someone senior to look at our scan and, as she did, I felt my panic levels raise significantly. It was not a good sign that she needed a second opinion.

A doctor came in, checked the scan, could not find a heartbeat and said that either the baby was not developing properly or that perhaps we had our dates wrong. She suggested we wait 10-14 days before having a repeat scan, to check if the pregnancy was viable. She told us not to worry, but we knew that would be almost impossible.

We went home in a daze. We had never expected the possibility of a second miscarriage – I had even started to wear loose clothing as my belly had been growing. It seemed unreal and was very hard to take in. Fourteen days passed slowly and finally, it was time for our repeat scan. As we nervously made our way to the hospital the story of the scan misdiagnosis scandal broke on the radio. This was unbelievable timing, we were on our way to check the viability of our pregnancy and there

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was a possibility the hospital could have gotten it wrong, like they had with some other mothers. We had hope. Although it was distressing to hear this on the radio, it gave us a lifeline of sorts – maybe the machinery had been inaccurate and our baby was going to be okay.

Sadly, the scan showed no signs of life and while I cried, my husband asked about the machinery. He is not usually one to question in such circumstances, but the news reports made it sound like mistakes were common practice and we wondered if they were getting it wrong with us too.

They assured us, after a thorough and uncomfortable internal scan, that there was definitely no heartbeat and at almost 10 weeks pregnant, there should have been strong signs of life. I knew in my heart it was hopeless.

To be extra sure, they took blood tests and said they would repeat them after 48 hours, to ensure the pregnancy was definitely not progressing. We went home shocked and shattered, with another 48 hours in limbo until the repeat blood tests. All the while there was nothing we could do but wait for the inevitable miscarriage that was coming our way.

I could not eat or sleep, I was depressed and distracted. My children were confused about my demeanour and as much I tried to carry on as “normal”, I could not muster the strength. Friends and work colleagues were phoning and e-mailing to see where I was. I could not face them. We had not told many people about my pregnancy and I just wanted to stay under the radar and try to get through the miscarriage before I had to talk about it.

I had some light bleeding after that second scan, and 48 hours later, I was back at the hospital for repeat blood tests. As the nurse took the blood, my vein collapsed and I almost collapsed with it. She ushered me up to the gynaecology ward and there, the sister on duty took me under her wing. She had me lying down and fluids going into me within five minutes. There was a doctor at my side very quickly, checking to see if my miscarriage had started by doing an internal exam. Despite my despair, I felt very well looked after. We will never forget how kind they

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were to my husband and me – it made such a huge difference to us, when we were at such a low point.

The examination showed the neck of the womb was still fully closed. I was in pain and bleeding but not dilating, so the miscarriage was possibly a long way off. I was falling to pieces – exhausted, emotional and in pain – so I asked if I could be scheduled for a DC. It had been two and a half weeks since this nightmare had begun and I was at the end of my tether.

After two scans, which showed no signs of life, two sets of blood tests, which showed a significant drop in HCG levels, and as I was bleeding but not dilating, they agreed to a DC.

They booked the procedure for the following day and admitted me there and then because I was weak, dehydrated and in pain. The care I received was excellent and I find it strange admitting that, as I am not usually one to praise our hospitals.

In fact, with my first miscarriage, I received poor care in another hospital. That included experiencing a lack of empathy, being left alone in labour while I miscarried and my husband being left in the corridor not knowing what was happening.

While I never wished to go through a second miscarriage, I must praise the staff at hospital we attended, particularly in the gynaecology ward. The care, support and empathy they showed both my husband and me really helped us get through a terrible time and, somehow, is making the recovery process a little easier this time around.

After our first miscarriage, we planted a tree in our back garden which has flourished and grown beautifully and when we look at it, we remember the first little baby we lost. So now, it seems it's time for us to plant a second tree, in honour of our second baby, who we will never get to meet but who has impacted our lives in a special way and will always be remembered.

– *Siobhan O'Neill*

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## **Annual General Meeting – Friday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2011**

Our AGM will take place on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2011 at 8.00 p.m. in Buswell's Hotel, Molesworth Street, Dublin, 2. All members are very welcome to attend. As you can imagine, there is a great need for support following the loss of a Baby through miscarriage. We do the best we can but would love to be in a position to do more. If you feel you might be able to lend a hand, please do come along to our AGM and have a chat with one of our Committee members. Every bit of support, no matter how small, makes a huge difference.

### **Telephone Support, Email Support, Support Group Meetings**

Please remember we offer support to those who have experienced miscarriage and their families. You are welcome to contact us by EMAIL, [info@miscarriage.ie](mailto:info@miscarriage.ie) where your email will be read and replied to with sympathy and understanding.

TELEPHONE SUPPORT is also available, for those who would like to chat to someone who has had the experience of miscarriage. Please check our website [www.miscarriage.ie/telephonesupport.html](http://www.miscarriage.ie/telephonesupport.html) to obtain the number of the person on call. If we are not able to take your call, please leave a message and we will contact you as soon as possible.

We also hold SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS in Buswell's Hotel, Molesworth Street, Dublin, 2 at 8.00 p.m. on the first Thursday of each month, except July and August.

Both women and their partners who have experienced miscarriage are very welcome to attend. You will be in a safe place to talk about the loss of your baby in the company of others who have had a similar experience.

We have our Book of Remembrance at the meetings in September, December, March and June for those who might like to make an entry in the Book.

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## **Our Annual Service of Remembrance Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2011 at 3.00 p.m.**

This year Our Service of Remembrance will take place in St. Theresa's Church, Donore Avenue at 3pm on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2011. It is a special place for people to come and remember their babies and spend time with their thoughts alongside others who have shared similar experiences of loss through miscarriage. We would like to extend a warm welcome to you and anyone else you feel might benefit from attending this beautiful Service whether you lost your baby recently or long ago. We hope it will offer you comfort in your grief and help you feel less isolated.

### **Opinion Page**

Articles are welcome for our Opinion Page. This page is used for people to state their opinions regarding miscarriage.

This could mean:

- Treatment in hospital
- Aftercare
- Infertility problems
- Future pregnancies
- News that you wish to share with us about your miscarriage

Though people may wish to talk about their worries and concerns on this page, we would also welcome any positive experiences you have had. You may wish to remain anonymous in the newsletter but your name and address should be submitted to the Miscarriage Association of Ireland. Articles may be submitted to us at:

[newsletter@miscarriage.ie](mailto:newsletter@miscarriage.ie) or by post to Carmichael Centre, North Brunswick Street, Dublin, 2 and marked "Newsletter".

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## **Our next Newsletter/Your Ideas**

Please let us have your stories, poetry, articles, coming events, sad farewells, welcome babies, anniversaries and anything you feel will help those who read our newsletter. Please forward them to us at [newsletter@miscarriage.ie](mailto:newsletter@miscarriage.ie) or by post to Carmichael Centre, North Brunswick Street, Dublin, 2 and marked “Newsletter” and include name and contact details. Your name does not have to be included in the article if you wish to remain anonymous.

Closing date for entries for next newsletter is 30 September 2011.

## **Our Newsletter**

Our newsletter is circulated to members, hospitals and other interested parties and is available on the internet. The opinions in this newsletter are those of the contributors and are not necessarily those of the Miscarriage Association of Ireland.

***Mary Lawson***

