



The Miscarriage Association

OF IRELAND

Carmichael Centre, North Brunswick Street, Dublin 7.

Telephone: 8735702/8725550

Registered Charity Number CHY9738

WINTER
2003



NEWSLETTER

Welcome

We welcome you to our Autumn Newsletter. So much has changed this year for our Association. We have changed our monthly support group venue from Aungier Street Community Centre to Griffith College and we have also held a very successful Miscarriage Awareness Day in September. For some of you, this newsletter may be the first insight you may have into the work of the Miscarriage Association of Ireland. Sadly, for some of you, this may be because you have had the very sad experience of losing your baby through miscarriage. The Committee of the Association wish to assure you that we are here in a supportive and caring capacity. Our phone line is available to you whether you suffered your loss recently or many years ago.

Maggie O'Neill & Mary Lawson

October 2003

Miscarriage Awareness Day

20th September 2003 in City West Hotel

We held our first Miscarriage Awareness Day on 20th September 2003 in City West Hotel. We wanted this day to be a holistic one, of caring for mind, body and spirit.

Our morning session incorporated talks by our guest speakers:

Dr. Michael Geary, Master of the Rotunda Hospital on Early Miscarriage

Dr. Sean Daly, Master of the Coombe Women's Hospital on Recurrent Miscarriage

Dr. Aoife O'Neill, Registrar of the National Maternity Hospital on Ectopic Pregnancy.

Majella Flanagan, Bereavement Liaison Officer, National Maternity Hospital on her work.

Dr. Vincent Maloney, Consultant Psychiatrist on Bereavement and Relationships.

It was felt that each speaker spoke from the heart, extremely professionally and yet warmly human. The length of the questions and answers session showed a huge level of trust in the speakers with people sharing very personal information about themselves in an open and honest manner.

From feedback on the day, the morning proved invaluable to those who attended with many people having questions they carried for years eventually answered.

The afternoon sessions were described as the icing on the cake by many who attended, allowing people to assimilate the information they had been given in the morning and to relax and be totally cared for. The therapies enjoyed by the participants were: Reiki, Aromatherapy, Indian Head Massage, Reflexology, Kinesiology, Acupuncture, Foot Massage, Relaxation and Meditation.

If anyone, who attended the day, wishes to send us further feedback and wishes to write an article for our next newsletter, please feel free to do so.

We hope that those who attended received the level of hope and care that we hoped the day would offer them.

Ann's Story

I lost a baby at eight weeks in July of this year.

The familiar feelings have all raised their ugly heads. This pregnancy was different to the three babies we lost before, and the three successful pregnancies too. This pregnancy took a few short weeks of adjustment, changing the course of our lives. Our youngest child was about to begin "big school". I was to have more time to work, visit friends, more time to myself. A baby would change all that. Selfishly, although I would accept the baby, how was it fair, when so many friends desperately wanted a precious baby. They would make perfect parents, give a baby all it could ever want or need.

We had moved house a few months previously so I had an early scan in an unfamiliar hospital with a doctor

I didn't know. It showed that my baby had stopped growing at about seven weeks. The doctor and nurses were all lovely, very sympathetic, but I wasn't prepared for the shock of losing the baby. I'm not sure that it would have been different, if I had still attended the familiar hospital, where I had got to know many familiar faces.

Three months on, I can focus on a tree we planted in our new garden, a little plaque with an angel welcomes you to my garden. The lack of support from some people is amazing. Maybe they think that if they don't mention the baby, I'll get "over" it quickly. A sister had a baby a few weeks ago. Her baby is beautiful, and even though it took me a week to get the courage to see him, it hasn't made it easier or harder. He isn't my baby. I find myself thinking that he's lovely to

see, but lovely to hand back to his parents too! Another sister is due a baby exactly the same time we should be. I can't think of that now and I need space from her at the moment. I think that's reasonable behaviour. Others don't agree.

The summer was busy, our children at home. I tried to work, and maintain a normal life for us all. September was hard, with the three neat uniforms walking out the door, I felt alone. October is brighter. I can't force people to consider my feelings. I accept that now. I have become more selfish as to how I spend my time. Life is too short to waste time on people who don't accept me for who I am.

I would have loved my baby. I love the dream of my four little angels praying together, minding each other. I hope they remember to watch over their siblings and their Mammy and Daddy too.

Ann

Jennifer's Letter

To All Mothers who have had a miscarriage

I would like to give you my encouragement and give you strength at losing a baby. yes it is hard to accept that you have had a miscarriage. I've lost three babies. One survived but died at six months old. It was a horrible experience for me but I never gave up hope that one day I would have a baby. Now I have a three month old baby girl who brought so much tears to me and I still find it hard to believe that she is here with me.

I am not religious but have faith in Holy Mary and it will deliver. "Have Hope, Courage, Strength to go on and don't give up hope".

God bless all mothers.
Jennifer

Poetry Corner

Claire

Claire brought a ray of
sunshine to our lives
All the time you have been growing and
kicking
Arrived with a big bang
saying "Here I am, Mom & Dad"
We never forget that tearful day!!

Valerie

Remembering Aingeal and Rheanna

I give you this thought to keep
I am with you still I do not sleep
I am a thousand winds that blow
I am the diamond glints on snow
I am the sunlight on ripened grain
I am the gentle autumn rain
When you awake in the morning's hush
I am the swift, uplifting rush
of quiet birds in circled flight
I am the soft stars at night
Do not think of me as gone
I am with you still, in each new dawn.

Remembering Aingeal and Rheanna
Turner

You are always with us.

Michele & Joe Turner

Our Angel

There is a place within our hearts
that only you can fill
And though they say that time will heal
There are days it never will.

Like the day that you were taken
or the day you were to be born
The day the Lord decided
You were that precious one.

Through all our tears and sadness
We can only hope and pray
That God is looking after you
For this time you are away.

A silent prayer, a secret tear
Always wishing you were here
Lord give our baby a gentle kiss
And comfort "Our Angel" who
we truly miss.

Mammy & Daddy
(Catherine & Aidan) Bashford
XXXX

Remembrance Mass

26th September 2003

Newtownmountkennedy

A memorable Mass dedicated to all our angels took place in St. Joseph's Church, Newtownmountkennedy, Co. Wicklow, on Friday 26th September. It was the first Mass of its kind in the area, and it attracted an unexpectedly large number of people who came to remember their lost babies.

Our candle ceremony, where everyone placed a lighting candle on the altar rails signifying each lost baby, was like a hundred little stars twinkling to remind us that our babies are still close to us, while the beautiful music from the harpist and singer, Madeleine Doherty, floated in the background.

We were delighted that Cathy Lynch, from the Miscarriage Association of Ireland, was able to be with us on the night and she gave a though provoking Homily. Cathy was also present after the Mass for anyone who needed to talk or to find our more about the Miscarriage Association.

The Miscarriage Association of Ireland Remembrance Book was present on the altar throughout the ceremony and many people took the opportunity after Mass to make their own entry in the book. The Miscarriage Association's candle, and bronze carving were carried to the altar at the Offertory procession.

It was a beautifully peaceful and an emotional evening. A lot of the people expressed thanks that the Mass had been organised and said they were delighted to attend. Many hoped it would now become an annual event, I hope so too. Anyone who would like to attend next year or would be able to help out, in any small way, is very welcome.

Michele Turner

Mini-Marathon – 2nd June 2003

The annual Ladies Mini-Marathon took place on 2nd June, 2003. This year, we had twelve ladies, mostly walkers, some more energetic runners! We appreciate each one of you, taking precious time from your busy lives to get sponsorship and support the Miscarriage Association. Time-Out for the ladies!

Thank you to our usual supporters – June O'Toole's and Maggie O'Neill's friends (*some of whom are "recovering" pictured here*) are loyal, as ever to us.

Thank you to the new faces who joined us for the day. All support is appreciated to help us continue our work to support women, partners and

families who have lost babies through miscarriage.

Our usual visit to Luigi Malone's in Temple Bar was a suitable end to an energetic day!

Another Mini-Marathon success!

Cathy Lynch



*Sad Farewells
& Anniversaries*

Baby
Lynch, Baby of
Cathy and John Lynch,
lost on 8th July 2003 sadly missed
by Mam and Dad and brothers Sean, Conor
and Liam.

Remembering our Angels
Rheanna Turner, lost on 29th January, 2003
due date 3rd September 2003 and
Aingeal Turner, lost on 13th December 2001
whose 1st birthday would have been around
17th August 2003
You will never be forgotten by
Mum and Dad, Michele & Joe Turner

Baby Bashford lost on November 1st 2002
You will live in our hearts forever.
Love always
Your Mammy, Daddy and brother Adam.

In memory of our son
Two years passed
We miss you Eamonn
Lots of love
Val and Pat Greaney.

Baby Hope, lost on 4th October 2003 and
Baby Joy, lost on 3rd September 2003.
Sadly remembered by your Mam and Dad,
Linda and Dave McDonagh.

2nd October 2002 (Feast of Guardian
Angels)
Murray, one year ago today, you left and went
to join the rest of the angels. Every day since,
I think of you and I hold you in my heart
always. I love you my precious angel.
Mammy XXX

*Welcome
Babies*

Baby Kevin, a
welcome son to Susan and
Brian Fleming born on 10th May
2003.

Claire Greaney, welcome her to our
world
She is so much joy and love to her
parents.
Born 29th May 2003.

Lorcan, a very welcome son to
Marie McManus and Antoin Mullen,
a brother for Eoin born on 22nd
July 2003.

*Miscarriage and
Stillbirth – The
Changing Response*
by Bruce Pierce

We attended the launch of the
Rev. Bruce Pierce's book
"Miscarriage and Stillbirth – the
Changing Response" in Tallaght
Hospital on the 15th September,
2003. His book gives a valuable
perspective on miscarriage and
stillbirth today. We feel that this
book is very helpful for both
professionals and parents alike.

FUND-RAISING

Christmas Cards: Available at meetings and at our Service of Remembrance – Cost : €6 per pack or €20 for 4 packs. By post: Cost : €7 per pack or €24 for 4 packs including post and packing.

Pins: The main part of our logo is a tree which symbolises the family tree. The falling leaf reminds us of the very precious missing members of our families. Our logo is now available in the form of a gold lapel pin. They are available at a cost of €3 each or €3.50 including postage and packing.

Blessings: Our Remembrance Blessings are available by post or at our monthly support group meetings in Dublin. Relatives or friends often wish to give the bereaved parents a gift following the loss of their baby. These little Blessings will be treasured always. We request a donation of €1 per Blessing.

Renewal of Membership: If your membership is due for renewal, please fill in the enclosed membership form and return it to us. If you would consider becoming a member, we would be very grateful, as we are a totally voluntary organisation. Our annual subscription is €15.

Annual Service of Remembrance

9th November 2003 at 3p.m.

St. Teresa's Church, Donore Avenue, off S.C.R., Dublin 8

Our Annual Service of Remembrance takes place on 9th November 2003 in St. Theresa's Church, Donore Avenue, South Circular Road, Dublin 8 at 3p.m. The celebrants are Rev. Fr. Sean McArdle and Rev. Susan Green.

We invite you to come along to this important day. For many, this is, maybe, the first opportunity to have your precious baby acknowledged and remembered. For some attending a Service like this can allow them to put closure on their grief and move on in their lives in a very positive way.

Everyone is welcome regardless of how recent or long ago it is since you lost your baby.

Opinion Page

Articles are very 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.

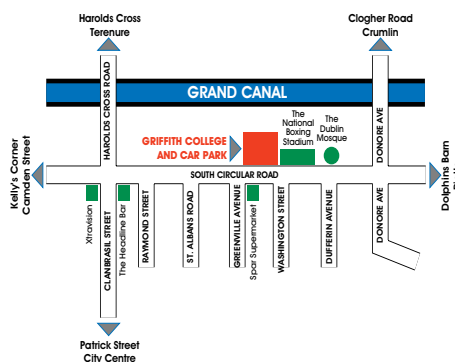
Though people may wish to talk about their worries and concerns on this page, we would also welcome any positive experiences you have had. You may wish to remain anonymous in the newsletter but your name and address should be submitted to the Miscarriage Association of Ireland along with your letter.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Our monthly meetings now take place in **Griffith College S.C.R., Dublin, 8**. Please note that as the first Thursday in January is a Bank Holiday, the meeting in January will take place on the 8th January 2004.

Dates for meetings are as follows:

- 2nd October 2003
- 6th November 2003
- 4th December 2003
- 8th January 2004
- 5th February 2004
- 4th March 2004
- 1st April 2004
- 6th May 2004
- 3rd June 2004



Talk in National Maternity Hospital Holles Street

On 28th August 2003, Mary and I were invited to speak on the emotional effects of miscarriage on parents. This talk felt extremely comfortable for us both and many of the hospital staff who attended felt that aspects we spoke about brought new insight to them into parents' feelings around such a loss.

Our Association feel that talks such as these are invaluable as we all have so much to share with each other in our continuing work. We feel that building a relationship between our Association and Maternity Hospitals gives us all an opportunity to pool our knowledge and offer couples suffering the loss of a baby through miscarriage the best possible service.

We wish to thank the staff at the national Maternity Hospital for their kind invitation and warm welcome on the day.

Maggie O'Neill

Closing date for contributions to the next Newsletter – 31st March 2004

Miscarriage Association of Ireland Committee

Maggie O'Neill
Chairperson

Karen Gilligan
Secretary

Mary Lawson
Treasurer

June O'Toole
Committee Member

Cathy Lynch
Committee Member

PLEASE NOTE: Our newsletter is circulated to members, hospitals and other interested parties and is available on the Internet courtesy of the Coombe Women's Hospital. The opinions in this newsletter are those of the contributors and are not necessarily those of the Miscarriage Association of Ireland.