



Cliona's Foundation NEWSLETTER | WINTER 2015

Working together to help struggling families in Ireland

Hi there everybody,
Well it's time once again to up-date you on what's been happening here in Cliona's Foundation since our last newsletter. We've had a busy few months with fundraisers. Among other events that you'll read about later, we held our 8th Annual Cycle at the end of August and the sun shone on us literally until the last cyclists had finished. Adare to Survive was in late September - another memorable day for lots of reasons, all positive I hasten to add but primarily & thankfully, no injuries. We can safely say, everybody came through the last obstacle with a huge smile on their face. Zumba in Da Club took place in October and that was super fun, it was certainly something different and novel which raised lots of funds. More recently The Dieselman's Ball was held in November. It was a great excuse to get dressed up and enjoy good food, terrific music & games by the Michael Collins Band and a monster raffle. We also had The Kube in November - you'd want nerves of steel for this one but again, it was full of fun and sheer entertainment for both participants and spectators! And one of our final events for 2015 was Strictly Care to Dance at the Movies - what style, steps, moves, agility, talent - the list is endless! It was a marvellous night, our Judges certainly had their work cut out for them.

Looking ahead to 2016well we have our 9th Annual Social in Bulgaden on Saturday, 23rd January next. This night is always so enjoyable as it's one where all the family can

attend and actually enjoy everything that's going on. Put the date in your diary and keep an eye on our website and Facebook page for updates.

There are other events planned for later in the New Year. We have a Cheltenham Tips Evening in March and 2nd April, we're having our 4th Annual Dog Night at Limerick Greyhound Track. Don't forget the Great Limerick Run on Sunday 1st May, even if you're not feeling terribly energetic now, next year you might change your tune and decide to take part and raise funds for Cliona's Foundation.

We hope you thoroughly enjoy this edition of our Newsletter. Our next edition will be in six months time but in the meantime, we'll have regular up-dates on our Facebook Page and website.

Officially it's not too early to wish you a very Happy & Enjoyable Christmas and good health & happiness for 2016.



Brendan & Terry Ring
CO FOUNDERS



Cliona's Foundation Annual Cycle

Cliona's Foundation 8th Annual Cycle Another Wonderful Success

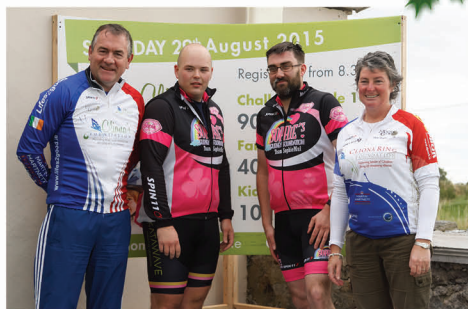
Cliona's Foundation's 8th Annual Cycle was a wonderful success for the organisation. Over 250 people attended the cycle with cycling clubs travelling from all over Limerick and surrounding counties to be there.

With three routes including a 10km for kiddies and funsters, a 40K family cycle and the 90km Cliona's Foundation Challenge the event appealed to cyclists with all levels of ability. This year's new 40km was a great draw for families of all ages and leisure cyclists. Following the cycle there was a BBQ, face painting, music and a bouncy castle to keep everybody entertained.

The Foundation would like to say a big thank you to Halfords in Limerick who provided free bike checks to anybody who wished to avail of it on the day.

The 8th Annual Cycle raised an incredible €5,000.00 for the Foundation which means that we will be able to help more struggling families all over Ireland.

We are already looking forward to next year's!



Adare to Survive

Cliona's Foundation Purple Platoon

Our supporters donned their distinct purple t-shirts to take on the 7.5km military style obstacle course at Adare to Survive this September. Cliona's Foundation has been the charity partner of Adare to Survive for three years and this year was our biggest wave yet. The 'Purple Platoon' set off at 2pm and had team members that included Brendan and Terry, Rugby star Joy Neville, the crew from 'All Star Moms', The Limerick Strand Hotel, Galway's Harbour Hotel and some of the Foundation's sponsors who also dared to take on the challenge. Cliona's Foundation would like to thank all the brave "Purple Platooners" for taking part. We hope to grow our wave for next year... we'll have to get a bigger tent to fit everyone in for soup and sandwiches afterwards!



Photos credit to Oisín McHugh Photography



Zumba in da Club

Thank you so much to Avril, Geri, Aleksandra, Joanne, Sarah & Darren who organised Zumba in da Club in aid of Cliona's Foundation. It was an epic night of dancing and fun as the Zumba crew invaded Crush 82 nightclub in Limerick in October. The event raised an incredible €2,345 and also raised invaluable awareness for Cliona's Foundation and the work we do.



Dieselman's Ball

The Dieselmans Ball took place in November and an incredible evening was had by everybody. Thank you so much to Anne Dullea & Pat White for all of your hard work.

"The Dieselman's Ball actually kicked off from the moment guests got out of their cars at the entrance to The Devon Inn Hotel. There were two Monster Trucks parked directly at the entrance to the Function Room - both gleaming and glittering! This was a fantastic sight and in fact set the tone for the evening. Guests were met at the door by at least one of the organisers of the Dieselman's Ball with a Table Plan. The Function Room looked spectacular.

There was beautiful style worn by both the ladies and the gentlemen. Chief Organiser Pat thanked the sponsors, the Committee and of course his wife Anne, he welcomed over 350 guests to the Ball and explained how the Raffle would work for the 30 raffle prizes donated. Then Pat invited Brendan to say a few words on behalf of Cliona's Foundation. After a delicious meal was served, The Michael Collins Band took to the stage and from the word go, the dancefloor was NEVER empty, either for dancing or taking part in the fun & games that Michael Collins had organised. The Dieselman's Ball went on late into the night such was the enjoyment everybody was having.

The total funds raised were over €8,500 and as a result, 5 families benefited from Cliona's Foundation.



The KUBE

What an amazing night we had in the Radisson Blu Limerick on Saturday the 14th of November for The Kube. It was lovely to see people from all sides of the county and all ages come together and enjoy the occasion. Congratulations to Ruth Dempsey, our winner who took home €1,500 in prize money!

We would like to thank all 36 contestants for providing us with a great night's entertainment and for raising an amazing amount of sponsorship. Each contestant had to complete a task, be it a physical challenge, intellectual challenge or testing their responsiveness, not an easy feat when you have the eyes of over 200 attendees on you. A last minute addition to the contestant line-up saw our ambassador Joy Neville battle it out against her older brother Paul, it's fair to say both are highly competitive, they had the entire crowd cheering them on! Well done to John Ryan, Caherconlish on raising an outstanding amount of sponsorship and winning the golden ticket to the finals. Of course, a special word of thanks goes to our main event sponsor David Ryan of DPACK Packaging Services Ltd who donated the prize money.

We had a wonderful night that was great fun from start to finish.



Strictly Care to Dance at the Movies

'Strictly Care to Dance at the Movies' took place on Saturday 28th of November in the South Court Hotel, Limerick. Well done to everyone involved we had such an amazing and entertaining night! All the dancers were phenomenal, judges Richard Lynch, Leanne Moore, Fergal Deegan and TJ Ryan were hilarious, Lorcan Murray as MC was superb and the organising committee played a blinder. It was an action packed line up; along with performances by the 18 dance couples, we were also treated to a traditional set, a comedy sketch and a spine tingling rendition of 'Let it go' by Gemma O'Riordan. We are delighted to have been part of it, thanks so much to everyone!



Universal Children's Day

On November 20th we celebrated Universal Children's Day. It is a day to celebrate and recognise the right of every child to have a happy childhood.

Speaking about Universal Children's Day Miriam O'Callaghan said

"Universal Children's Day is all about celebrating the right of every child to a happy childhood, but sadly for some families this is harder to achieve. Families with seriously ill children can find themselves struggling, not just with their child's illness, but with non-medical expenses such as travel costs and hospital parking, which can quickly mount up into thousands of euros."

Robert Montgomery, aged 5 celebrated Universal Children's Day with his Mum Denise and Miriam O'Callaghan.

Little Robert Montgomery was perfectly healthy when he was born but developed meningitis when he was just a one week old baby. He went on to have several surgeries as a result. Mum Denise said "Don't underestimate how much it costs to have a child in hospital. At one point Robert was in Temple Street for seven months, and the money we were spending every day on parking, petrol, lunches, is a small fortune and really adds up."

Cliona's Foundation helped the Kennedy family when **Lucy, now seven**, was diagnosed with a brain tumour. Mum Pauline said "Cliona's Foundation helped us out in the very early days of Lucy's treatment when things looked very bleak. We were terrified, and just so grateful and humbled by Brendan and Terry and everything they do.

In the early days when Lucy was sick I didn't care whether the bills were being paid or not, but life has to go on, and the costs of having a child in the hospital can really mount up. Pauline added "When the social worker team in Temple Street told us about Cliona's Foundation, and then handed us the cheque, we were blown away with appreciation, especially when you think of everything Terry and Brendan have been through themselves, the loss of their own daughter, it just overwhelmed us. I would ask anyone who can to please donate something to Cliona's Foundation."



*Lucy Kennedy with
Miriam O'Callaghan*



*Robert Montgomery
& mum Denise with
Miriam O'Callaghan*



Our Hidden Hero



The Hidden Hero's Awards recently took place in Dublin and we would like you to meet Hilary Noonan who won the overall award in the 'Healthcare Hero' category.

Outreach Nurse Hilary Noonan, from Limerick, has been a hero to countless families over the years as she continuously goes over and above the call of duty to support terminally ill children and their families.

Families rely heavily on Hilary for her professionalism but also for reassurance when their child becomes unwell and requires urgent medical attention. Hilary makes arrangements with the local A&E Department to get the child in quickly even in the middle of the night. She works hard to alleviate any stress on families as much as possible. She is never rushed or hurried and always has time for the families under her care. She even offers to babysit for families to give them a break.

In our opinion Hilary truly is a Hidden Hero and we cannot thank her enough for everything that she has done for Cliona's Foundation families over the years.

The Gill Family



Con Gill

A crick in the neck turned out to be cancer

Today Con Gill, 16, is a happy fifth year student in his local secondary school. But just six years ago Con, from Tralee, Co Kerry, was fighting for his life after doctors diagnosed a rare cancerous tumour growing on his spine, stopping the blood flow to his brain.

Mum Kay, who is telling the family's story to pay tribute to Cliona's Foundation, said: "Con was just a normal little boy out playing football every day, but in January 2009 he started complaining of a crick in his neck. We moved his bed so he wouldn't be in a draught, but it didn't seem to help."

Kay told how Con went to see GPs, orthopaedic surgeons and neurosurgeons to get to the root of the problem but gradually lost the use of his arm and leg and developed difficulty walking. Con was eventually diagnosed with a very rare non-malignant cancerous tumour of the spine.

She said: "They told us it was very serious, that there was a 50/50 chance he could die on the operating table. The doctors said they could try to remove the tumour and end up severing Con's spinal cord. The chances of him dying during surgery were very high, but if they didn't attempt the surgery the tumour would kill him anyway as it would stop the flow of blood to his brain."

"The only place in Ireland where children can get radiotherapy is Dublin, and we live in Tralee, so obviously there was a lot of expense involved in travelling up and down, and I also had to take a lot of time off work. Con needed six weeks of radiotherapy and Cliona's Foundation kept us going during that time, they made our lives bearable."

Sometimes it can be difficult to hear the hard-hitting truth behind the family applications we receive, but the truth is that a childhood illness can knock on the door of anyone. We are honoured to have relieved some of the pressure on the Gill family during this traumatic time and are thrilled to hear Con is back to good health.



WAYS IN WHICH YOU CAN HELP US



Help Freely helpfreely.org



Cliona's Foundation is now one of the charities you can support for free with your online purchases through helpfreely.org.

You simply carry out your internet shopping through helpfreely.org, there are more than 300 stores on board in Ireland – including M&S, eBay, ASOS, Boohoo, Easons, Lifestyle Sports, Littlewoods, Nike, and many more.

Please register now on www.helpfreely.org or download the helpfreely app for free and a percentage of your purchase at any of our participating stores will go towards Cliona's Foundation. You simply click Shop & Help and choose Cliona's Foundation. Continue to shop as normal and after you have completed your purchases the store will send a contribution to Cliona's Foundation.

Just 2 extra clicks can go a long way and it won't cost you a cent extra to make a difference with your purchases.

Every Cent Counts



Do you know that **EVERY** cent counts?

In Ireland we have started to phase out 1 and 2 cent coins. Most people don't really use them and often just stick them in a jar or have pockets and purses weighed down with coppers.

So what can you do with all your coppers? Why not collect them all up and consider donating them to Cliona's Foundation? It might not seem like much coming from one person, but if everyone gathered their jars, money boxes, purses full of coppers over the next few weeks and put it all together, it could make a significant contribution which would go a long way to helping struggling families who need the support.

If you would like to start collecting your coppers for Cliona's Foundation we can send you out one of our collection boxes. If you would like to receive one please email rachel@clionasfoundation.ie



SOME OF OUR SUPPORTERS

Thank you so much to everybody who took part in the Ladies Mini Marathon in Limerick. Pictured is Pauline & Eoghan Wallace who were part of the Cliona's Foundation team on the day. Well done Pauline & Eoghan.



Thank you to the fantastic Kellie and Leah Sweeney. Kellie and her family recently took part in Adare to Survive as part of our Purple Platoon and raised €637 for Cliona's Foundation.



Special Thank you to Key Ingredients who donated €500



key ingredients



SOME OF OUR SUPPORTERS



Festive Family Fun Day at Limerick Racecourse.

Looking to keep the kids entertained over the Christmas holidays? Bring them to the Festive Family Fun Day at Limerick Racecourse on December 29th where they will be kept smiling during their activity packed day, giving you the chance to socialise and enjoy the magical festive atmosphere with your friends and family. To get €5 off each ticket you purchase, buy online using the voucher code 'cliona2015' on www.limerickraces.ie.

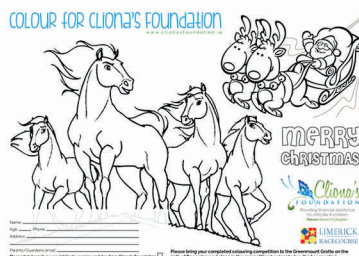
Give your child the chance to win great prizes by downloading the colouring competition image on the Limerick Racecourse website and bringing it along on the 29th to be entered into the race to win! All kids under 16 have free admission!

Doors open at 10.30pm and first race kicks off at 12.20pm, last race is at 15.50pm.

The Greenmount Suite will be transformed in to the Greenmount Grotto with a host of free activities for children of all ages to enjoy. A new addition to the line-up of entertainment this Christmas is mini Crazy Golf where parents and children are welcome to take up the challenge of this fun 9 hole course. Giggles Entertainment will be entertaining the children with clowns, balloon modelling, jewellery making, activity

table, face painting & kids temp tattoos, mini disco with the help of all the Disney, Minions & Superhero characters and lots of Fun & games.

This is going to be a great family day out, we hope to see you there!



Tom Walsh Memorial 10k Run & 5m Walk

The Tom Walsh Memorial 10k Run & 5m Walk will be taking place on Sunday 17th January in Caherconlish. The organising committee have kindly chosen Cliona's Foundation as their charity partner for 2016. Nothing like a bit of exercise in the new year to shake off the cobwebs and get you moving for the new year!



WE HOPE TO HELP MORE PEOPLE NEXT YEAR

'Corrie debt storyline' all too real' for Irish families with sick children'



It's one of Coronation Street's most harrowing storylines ever – a young family plunged into debt as they struggle to make their child's last Christmas perfect. But this isn't just a soap storyline, it's a real problem affecting 1,000s of families all over Ireland.

Viewers across the country have been gripped by the storyline which showed Corrie's Tyrone Dobbs take out notorious payday loans to cope with his family's spiralling debt after daughter Hope was diagnosed with cancer. If you were told that this Christmas is going to be the last Christmas you'll spend with your child, as you've been given the horrendous diagnosis that "there's no more we can do for your child", well then there's no doubt you'd do everything humanly possible to ensure that the last Christmas would be the most memorable and enjoyable – if possible – that anybody could ask for.

Cliona's Foundation helps families with costs like travel expenses, childminders and living expenses that can mount up when parents are forced to take time off work to be with

their sick child in hospital. Brendan said: "Just recently we received a call from a mother who has spent months in hospital caring for her 13-year-old little girl. Tragically her husband committed suicide two years ago and her daughter, unable to cope with losing her dad, also tried to commit suicide and is now brain dead.

"This lady now cares for her daughter by visiting her every single day. She is destitute and relies on prayer to get her through every day. She told me she prays for a miracle. She has no money and the bills have gotten out of hand, she has nowhere to turn. She has five other children and lives in fear of the phone ringing to tell her that another one of her children has done something terrible.

"We have encountered numerous families struggling with their everyday bills and costs. These can be huge and they are only practicalities such as car parking, food and phone credit. Recently a family used the funding received from Cliona's Foundation to buy fuel and oil to heat their home for the winter months ahead.

"We have to help these families, but we cannot do so without your help. We all have to make sure this Christmas can be the least traumatic possible for families with children who find themselves wondering will this be their last Christmas together."

You can donate €2 by texting CLIONA to 50300.

