

N Games Practice/Short Strand January-December 2019

We have negotiated the use of Short Strand Community Centre and every Wednesday evening our members gather to practise/play games in preparation for the National Indoor Games selection heats. These evenings have developed into social gatherings where members can chat and get latest information on topics of interest. We also use the premises for Committee Meetings. The two Boccia teams also meet for practice every Monday in the same Community Centre.

National Indoor Games March 2019

We once again funded the participation of a NIPF team in the National Indoor Games. These are organised by the British Polio Fellowship and were held in Leicester from 15-17 March. This provided an opportunity to meet and socialise with other Polio survivors from all over the UK. Our party consisted of 24 NIPF members and carers. We had a very successful tournament returning with a gold, two silver and two bronze medals.

May 2019

The highlight of the year was our 80th anniversary dinner which took place on Saturday 11 May 2019 at the Stormont Hotel. The evening started off with a wine reception followed by a most magnificent dinner.

Unfortunately our Chairperson, Bobby Doherty was unable to attend due to a serious fall.

The vice-chairperson, Eddie McCrory gave a history of the Fellowship to the 80 plus who attended. He told us about its founding by Patricia Carey and Frederic Morena in 1939 until the present day.

Thanks were paid for the life of Harold Rankin who for many years was the face and driving force of the NIPF. Members and guests were told on how Mr Rankin was able to organise events for the young polio. He was able to maintain a minibus which was donated to the Fellowship via a charity run by Sir Billy Butlin, this enabled the members to attend swimming lessons in the Ormeau Baths every Saturday evening. He made sure we all learnt to swim and through time we were able to attend swimming Galas in GB and Dublin. He purchased "Polio House" this was made possible by various street collections

throughout Northern Ireland. In the house he set up physio, shorthand and typing classes. We had parties, trips, treasure hunts and lots more. We went to swimming Galas in GB and Dublin.

As we grew up Harold helped us get into employment and helped everyone to apply for an invalid car.

We were told to get on with life and started to drift away from the Fellowship. Membership dropped from a high of 700 to around 20 but as survivors started to notice changes in their condition members came back and we now have 200 or so members.

As people came back we organised conferences on Post-Polio Syndrome and benefit entitlements and we also reintroduced social events. We returned to the British Polio Fellowship Games after an absence of 25 years.

Throughout the talk presentations were made to people of significance to the Fellowship.

Everyone received a specially designed plaque to mark this special anniversary.

April 2019

One member, Jim Bailey who had returned from Pakistan, organised by the Guardian Newspaper Group, gave a presentation at the dinner on the drive to eradicate polio in Pakistan and all the dangers associated with this. It was a very informative talk, and everyone was moved by the situation there.

July 2019

Once again, we returned to Breckenhill just outside Doagh Co Antrim for our annual BBQ. As usual the free to our members event was well attended, The bad weather put a bit of a damper on the outside games that had been organised but due to the large barn facilities we were able to complete a great day out.

Bucket Collection June-Night at the Races August 2019

One of our longstanding members from Crossgar organises a bucket collection in a local supermarket every June. This year he also had "A Night at the Races" held in his local pub. All we can say with certainty is that the people of Crossgar are very generous.

January-December 2019

We hold a monthly quiz in The Dockers Club, which has been going for a few years now, this is mainly down to our honorary secretary how goes out of his way to shop for the prizes and keeps the proceedings going smoothly. A special thanks also goes to his partner who provides the refreshments. The monies raised goes to a annual three day stay at the Slieve Donard Hotel. Everyone who attends the quiz always looks forward to the annual Christmas Quiz. This is a very special night and is always sold out. Supper is provided in the price of the ticket. We sell ballots for some magnificent prizes which have been donated by either the members or friends of the Fellowship. One prize, a stay at The Slieve Donard Hotel was donated by our President.