



## **JANUARY 2018 NEWSLETTER — HAPPY NEW YEAR!!**

*Dear Friends,*

*That post Christmas blah filled with guilt feelings of overindulgence and new resolutions to get back on track has arrived! Happy New Year to everyone!! I hope you have all had a wonderful Christmas season and I wish you and your families and friends a very happy, healthy and peaceful 2018! 2017 was certainly a year of political “in your face” events - here’s hoping that 2018 will be a better and more peaceful one! God keep us all safe — need I say more??!*

*I have always felt that January can be a bleak, non-entity month. It is the depth of Winter, filled with guilt feelings from the holiday season. BUT: let’s not forget — it is also a month where the days are getting longer and the short, dark, dour days have been left behind and we look forward to Spring which lies around the corner!*

*Thank you all for your participation in activities and your kindness in organising events and offering up your home to fellow members over the last 12 months. The spirit of the IWO remains strong and vibrant and as friendly and supportive as it ever was! Yes, I know that those members of long-standing remember fondly the “hey days” when there were many more members and wider activities (I have been hearing a lot about past dinner parties, for example!); but the modus operandi of the organisation has changed. We have moved on but remain a dedicated group of welcoming, supportive friends with many interesting, health-inducing and mind-developing activities, open to ladies of every nationality, creed and walk of life! This is our focus nowadays — which I could not put better than our dear friend Viola does in her “member focus” this month. Enjoy her contribution and I look forward to seeing you all soon!*

*Happy New Year, dear friends!*

*Linda*

## **Member Focus**

This month I am very happy to “welcome back” our dear friend, Viola, who returned to her native Hungary but who remains in touch and participative each month (especially in her contributions to the Book Club, which provide rich food for thought!). I think that her experiences typify the initial loneliness and isolation of moving somewhere new for many people; but her description of finding the IWO and the role it played (and continues to play!) in her life speaks for all of us and personifies why the IWO exists. She speaks of “soup for the soul” and, indeed, this is what our members provide for each other! Thank you, dear Viola, and looking forward to seeing you when you return to visit us here in Ireland!



*My name is Viola Janvari. I lived in Ireland for 9 years as my husband worked at the Irish World Academy.*

*After a long hesitation and very thorough arrangements in November 2006, I moved from Hungary to Ireland. It wasn't an easy decision as I had to leave my home, my family, my friends and to give up a job. But everybody was very supportive - including my children, who were happy to stay at home on their own and enjoying a “mother-free” life!*

*My previous boss in Hungary was also very helpful and he let me work for half month for the full salary, therefore from March 2006 I spent every month two weeks in Ireland to arrange my new life and two weeks in Hungary to close my previous life. This lasted for half a year and I was certain that everything was well organised. But .... as my daughter, who was 20 years old then, told me later that the trouble was that “I have a heart and a mind and sometimes my heart doesn't listen to my mind”.*

*In January 2007 I got a job in Ireland and worked there till the end of 2014 as an office and financial assistant, later as a personal assistant. I made my best to get into the social life of Irish society. I attended lectures at the Hunt Museum, joined a book club in Nenagh library, enrolled to different courses - English, painting, cookery, etc. Went to exhibitions, concerts, various programs in 50 km distance of our village. But I really couldn't make any friends. I cooked so many goulash soups inviting my and Ferenc's colleagues, his previous friends or anybody who was kind and expressed any interest, but it did not help either.*

*I just felt very lonely. I just wanted to be in the life and did not want to be an outsider. There were lots of tears during the beginning.*

*Then, And on 24th November 2010 I went to a Christmas baking demonstration in Cloughjordan. (No, I do not have such a perfect memory. I just found the program and the recipes a few weeks ago when I was planning this year Christmas.) So, on that winter Wednesday evening arriving too early to the Cloughjordan House I was sitting in the drawing room next to the fireplace waiting for the course to be started and I was reading, when a cheerful company of ladies arrived. How I envied them!*

After a short time, a lady from this group came to me asking what I am reading and asked if I was interested to join their book club. You can't imagine how happy I was. It was a feeling when a dream comes true. That lady was Mary Rose and I am and will be always very thankful to her for this invitation. I went to the book club in February at Marea's house in Adare. (The first book what I read was Mr. Rosenblum's list by Natasha Solomon. If somebody didn't read the book yet I highly recommend doing it as it is a very funny book.) It was a fantastic evening for me. Everybody was very kind and mindful. I just later learnt that it is not just a book club but it is the TWO. I became a member in 2011 and I still think that - despite moving away to Hungary - I remained a member of this organisation and hope that it will last long.

As a member of this organisation I belonged to a group, from which I got a lot. I got friendship, help, I could improve my English, I got lots of knowledge about everything, I had happy and cheerful hours. Getting into the TWO my life totally changed. The TWO was the place where I found friends, who helped me when I needed it. It could be official or just a loving talk, but everybody was always there for me. It gave me a secure feeling.

I am still an active member of the book club as it is a string which can link me with the TWO and it is very good as I can keep my English active, therefore to read the books now is much more important for me than it was when I lived there.

Moving home to Hungary in 2015 was very exciting but as you can't step into the same river twice, the country where we returned wasn't the same what I left nine years ago. But it is good to be at home, to be with the family and friends, using our mother tongue and understand everything when someone is talking to you. (Though occasionally it would be good not too. Unfortunately the political situation changed and I am not really happy with it.)



Perhaps some of you know that in this September we had a big happy occasion as some of our friends from Ireland visited us. It was a "chicken soup for the soul" as it helped me to connect my past with the present and the future. (Photo: Viola, Michele, Theresa and Carol!)

I hope some of you will also come to visit. Everybody is very welcome.

When I moved to Ireland I did not know that the

- butter is yellow and salted
- flour is self-raising
- bread is made with soda
- black pudding is not a dessert
- muffin, the buns and cupcake are not the same
- there isn't kefir but there is buttermilk

- there are cooking apples (I how much I miss them)
- turnip is a vegetable
- bacon and cabbage is delicious
- tea is drunk after all meals
- the unit of weight is once and pound
- hydrangeas are 10 times bigger than in Hungary
- Halloween is a very big fun
- Christmas tree is decorated at the beginning of December
- the rain is not always raining so I must water the plants in the garden during the summer
- buying a ticket on the bus I don't tell "can I have a single ticket t othe railway station, please" instead a "single to station" is enough
- meeting anybody during a walk I say hello and talking some words about the weather

*I miss Ireland a lot. I miss its beauty, its peacefulness, I miss my friends, I miss the butter, the self raising flour, the cooking apples and after all I miss the Irish weather especially during the summer when the temperature is at or above 40 C.*

*I hope once we will go back to Ireland for a visit.*

The pre-Christmas period was filled with many activities, many of which I mentioned in the December newsletter. One which I did not have time to include in the December newsletter was the annual Thanksgiving get-together (photos were not to hand!), which took place in Theresa's house this year (thank you, Theresa) and was attended by 13 members. The format is pot-luck, and Theresa provided a wonderful turkey, which was enjoyed by all! Here are the photos:



Thanks, Theresa, for a lovely evening!

## Welcome back – lunch with visiting member!



Our dear friend, Keyna, who moved to Malaysia in 2017, returned to Limerick to spend Christmas with her family (who joined her and her husband from UK). Christine and I met her for lunch, which was great! She regaled us with her stories of life in Kuala Lumpur and how she found a “permanent” home there for the duration of their stay, and moving in! Typical of our friend, she has made friends and settled into life there – enjoying it (apart from the humidity!). Great to see you, Keyna and looking forward to seeing you on your next visit! We miss

you and your warm smile and support here in Limerick!

## Adapt House

Many thanks to all members for their generosity in providing pjs, toiletries, etc, to Adapt House. And thank you, Mary Rose, for coordinating these efforts again this year. It's a very good cause and I am sure your generosity helped greatly!



Message from Mary Rose to all members who contributed:

*Ladies..*

*Thank you to everyone who contributed pyjamas for Adapt House. Between the two groups of women we have a very generous contribution with easily up to 60 pyjama sets plus toiletries, slippers and socks.*

*MaryRose*

## Nordic Walking

*Lin's ladies* continue to brave the elements each Friday morning from 10.30. There are a core of members who go there each week, and more are welcome. Lin sends a reminder out each week – come along! It is a heathy and happy get-together, usually either in UL or Mungret (mostly UL) – and I am sure very welcome in our New Year Resolutions! Look forward to it – see you there!

## REMINDERS:

\* As you know, January is **British Month** and Christine has organised Afternoon Tea in the newly-refurbished Adare Manor. The price is expensive, certainly - 45 euro pp - but this is a wonderful occasion to view the new manor! She has tentatively made a reservation for 7 people on 23 January 2018, 13.30 hrs. Those reserving may have to pay in advance as we will have to ensure attendance. RSVP to Christine if you are interested!

\* In October last, I indicated several **upcoming plays etc in Dublin** which I will go to in the first months of 2018. These still stand so let me know if you are interested in joining me for any of them!

\* **Beautiful (the Musical)/Carol King** will take place in Bord Gais from 9-20 January 2018. Donna and I will go to the matinee on Saturday, 13 January. We have booked and our seats are in Row C. Donna has kindly offered to drive and has room for 3 more in her car. If you are interested, book your ticket and let us know so that you can be guaranteed a place in her car — however, first-come/first served. If the number is over 5, then we will all arrange to meet in Dublin! Tickets are 41 to 60 euro — check the Bord Gais website!

\* **House Sunday Brunch:** There will be no Brunch this month in House — but we hope to have one in February (stay tuned!) and hope to see you there!

- **IWO dishes/cutlery/glasses:** presently in storage in AnneMarie's house. Further to my mention of this in the last newsletter, I am very happy to confirm that these will be moved in January and given to refugees in direct provision who are setting up a place where they can cook and eat. This was discussed at our last meeting and adopted unanimously by members. I am very happy with this and delighted that they will go to a good cause and home. It is a pity that there is no longer a need for them as in the past — but the IWO has other activities and, as I said before: we have changed! Thank you to Anne Marie for storing them all these years. we will be in touch in January to arrange a suitable time for them to be collected!

#### **Reminder:**

- Photos/privacy indications on members' list: As photos are usually taken at all IWO gatherings, it was agreed that ***the onus be on those members not wishing to have their photos taken/appear on Facebook to take measures at the time of the photos being taken not to appear in the photos.*** Members taking the photos will ensure that all know that photos are being taken so that those wishing not to be photographed have time to take measures to this effect.

We had no monthly meeting in December. Next meeting will be on the fourth Tuesday of January as usual, and Soo Ling will talk to us about her recent trip to Belorusse! L

***Please check out our monthly calendar for the update scheduled events each week!***