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Emily Drinan, left and Sarah Hurley, fifth class pupils from Scoil Mhuire, Schull, winners of the Junior Entrepreneur Programme Class of the Year Award, with their class project, 'Birdy Bites'. Full story page 20

Cork County goes Pop with live outdoor gigs

A series of more than 120 live outdoor performances will take place across Cork county throughout August and September.

Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr Gillian Coughlan has just officially launched 'Cork Co Co Pops', an expansive programme of events provided by Cork County Council to support performers and bring live events to local communities, including many towns across West Cork.

With a variety of offerings, from theatre to trad, spoken word to rock, classical and opera, 'Cork Co Co Pops' really has something for everyone.

There will be concerts and events in parks, cafes, markets and beaches

in locations such as Robert's Cove, Bowling Green, Kinsale, Main Street Macroom and Clonakilty Community Garden with the majority of events free of charge. Performances include Lisa Hannigan and Mick Flannery in O'Donovan Rossa Memorial Park, Skibbereen, as well as Aine Duffy with her converted horsebox 'The Duffbox' as part of the Clonakilty Guitars festival.

This wonderful initiative is supported by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media's Local Live Performance Programming Scheme.

Launching the programme, Mayor of County Cork Cllr. Gillian Coughlan said: "Cork Co Co Pops marks a very welcome return to live

performance. It will be a great boost to both performers, audiences and communities. It is wonderful to see live events in places you wouldn't traditionally see them such as Rocky Bay beach. Cork Pops Orchestra will also be entertaining residents outside care homes throughout the county. There truly is something for all ages and tastes."

While Cork County Council is encouraging everyone to enjoy the performances, attendees are asked to adhere to public health guidelines, to maintain social distancing and to remain in their pods for their own safety and for the safety of others.

To find out more about Cork Co Co Pops and view the programme please visit www.corkcoco.ie

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Clonakilty house to be won

Three of Cork’s top GAA clubs have joined forces to offer one lucky winner the ultimate prize – a brand new home in Clonakilty. The #WinAGaff competition is part of a fundraising initiative on behalf of St James’ GAA in Ardfield, in conjunction with Douglas GAA and Fermoy GAA, with funds being distributed to develop facilities at each for all age levels.

The ‘gaff’ in question is a brand new, architecturally designed three-bedroom, semi-detached home at The Miles, an exclusive development in Clonakilty. With many a cold and damp house selling for a crazy price in West Cork right now, this A rated house, beautifully finished and with an air-to-water heat pump and underfloor heating, has a value of over €300,000. Never mind how spacious, warm and efficient the house will be, it is the location that really makes it something special. The Miles development is situated on the south-western

side of Clonakilty, just minutes drive from the coastline at Inchydoney, Dunmore, Ardfield and more. Clonakilty town centre is just a 10-minute foot-pathed walk in the other direction – town and country living at its best. Is it any wonder then that West Cork has become such a popular destination for home hunters, with few properties remaining on the market for long? Unfortunately, this has made it very difficult for local people to get on the property ladder and to add to their troubles, rentals are scare and expensive. “We’ve had a lot of interest from people who are just priced out of the market at the moment,” says Niall O’Sullivan, Chairperson of St James’ GAA. “As I say to them, take a punt on this draw for the price of a meal out for a couple and they may get lucky and live the rest of their lives in comfort with no mortgage. We’ve seen a lot of tickets bought for wedding and birthday presents for young people for that reason.” Second prize in #WinAGaff is a 1.8 Toyota C-HR Hybrid Luna worth €32,860, and there is €5,000 in cash for the third prize. A maximum of 10,000

tickets will be sold and with numerous other amazing prizes up for grabs, your chances of being lucky are really very good. “Once the tickets are gone that’s it!” promises Niall. “We are rewarding early buyers by holding smaller draws every fortnight, with prizes from €2000 cash to a TV to an electric scooter, so the sooner you are in the more you can win.” Taking part in the #WinAGaff competition will also have a positive impact on the local community at Ardfield/Rathbarry, the home of St. James’ GAA, which is experiencing a period of great growth and positive energy following on from its first ever West Cork Junior football final victory in 2019 and numerous successes in the Scór competition, where the Club reached the All-Ireland final. Niall is confident that each of the three clubs will come away with €150,000 to invest in their club. St James’ main objective is to build a walkway around the park that everyone can enjoy. “In the last year, a lot of our patrons have felt intimidated by traffic on local roads so we want to provide a safe and enjoyable walk within the club to help everybody stay active. It will also be a great for young mem-



bers too, who will be able to run on it in winter months when the pitch might be too wet.” The Club also plans to build a wall ball alley to develop the skills of juvenile players. Liam Evans, Secretary of St. James’ GAA breaks down further what difference the funds will make: “This exciting venture will help in providing vital funding to allow St. James’ build our dream hurling practice facility, install a drainage system in our pitch, provide a walk way, replace our grass mower, and clear debt which has been a mill stone around our necks for

a number of years. It will also give us great pleasure to be part of something which will change the life of the lucky winner, a holiday home or perhaps provide a home for a family in need of housing.” Niall would like to finish by thanking the Club’s members, patrons, trainers and officers for all their help and understanding in the past year, when many plans had to be changed or cut short. “As a Club we still had bills to pay even though we were closed but we got huge support from people locally and across West Cork, particularly

for our local lotto. It’s great now to see the young players back out running around and going home tired and for that I have to thank the trainers and officers for their understanding and commitment to keeping us all safe and well.” To enter the draw you can buy your ticket online at www.winagaff.ie or call Niall on 086 3831187. Club members will also be out and about selling tickets in towns and villages across West Cork so keep an eye out for them.

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Courtmacsherry man scaling seven peaks in seven days for West Cork Volunteer Emergency Services



Courtmacsherry resident Jim O'Donnell, 48, is currently training for the challenge of climbing the seven highest mountains in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland in aid of West Cork's Volunteer Emergency Services, including the RNLI and West Cork Rapid Response over a seven day period in August.

Originally from the UK, the Master of Small Commercial Vessels now lives in the village of Courtmacsherry with his wife Barbara and daughters, Lola and Saoirse, where the active family enjoy all that the great outdoors has to offer. "When I'm not working outdoors, I am usually...outdoors," says Jim laughing. Always on the move, he's regularly to be seen out surfing, kayaking, running or hiking.

Jim still travels to the UK for work and, until the pandemic hit, life simply felt too busy to take on a challenge as big as this one.

"When Covid came around last year, with it's soul-destroying 2km and 5km lockdowns, it forced me to stop and take stock," says Jim, whose ambi-

tion has always been to complete the 'Three Peaks' – the three highest mountains in the UK – Snowdon, Scarfell Pike and Ben Nevis; he just never got around to it. After moving to Ireland and hearing about 'The Four Peaks' – the highest mountains in the four provinces of Ireland – Slieve Donard, Mweelrea, Lugnaquilla and of course Carrauntoohil, these peaks joined the others on Jim's 'to-do' list!

"I could have really done any of these at any time, yet I always let something get in the way," he explains. "Lockdown prompted me into action and I made it my aim to climb all of them as soon we could get out hiking again. The three peaks in the UK and the four peaks in Ireland are often done as a charity challenge and I thought what a cool idea it would be to do all seven, back-to-back, in seven days, and while doing so perhaps try to raise some money for some worthwhile causes in West Cork."

While he has walked lots of smaller mountains and Snowdon on one occasion, the outdoor enthusiast has never before taken on such a strenuous challenge. "I

love walking but in reality this is seven days of punishment," he says. "Each peak alone will be pretty tiring – not to mention the fatigue, twists and blisters that will build up walking seven peaks in seven days and, the travel involved between them. I just hope the weather is on my side or it will be worse still!"

A volunteer with Courtmacsherry Harbour Lifeboat, Jim has seen firsthand how important the volunteer emergency services are in a rural area such as West Cork. "The RNLI is top of my fundraising list and West Cork Rapid Response, which also provides a great service essential to our rural way of life is always in need of support to keep their 4x4 vehicles on the road, to continue saving lives," says Jim. Funds raised will also go to support West Cork Animal Welfare, which Jim says "do an unbelievable job here in West Cork looking after our animal friends!"

To donate go to www.gofundme.com and search for West Cork Volunteer Emergency Services.

New book shares details of Irish rebels held on Spike Island in 1921

A new book has been published about the Irish War of Independence rebels held on Spike Island in 1921, which marks 100 years this year. 'Spike Island's Republican Prisoners, 1921', is now on sale, authored by historian and long term island employee, Tom O'Neill.

The book details the story of the island's War of Independence prisoners, who were

captured by the British authorities in Cork, Clare, Limerick, Waterford, Limerick and Tipperary, as well as Wexford and Kilkenny. A total of 1200 men were held across the 10 months the island prison was open, with up to 500 at any one time. It was the third time in its history that Spike island would be used to hold prisoners, following a mid-1600's prisoner of war depot set up by Oliver Cromwell,

and a famine-era convict depot that remained open from 1847 to 1883.

Tom O'Neill has been researching the 1921 prison for over a decade. 'Spike Island's Republican Prisoners 1921' is a third solo book for Tom.

The book is available for purchase in the island Gift Shop and in bookshops.

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Solar farm plan to take Clon off grid

A solar farm in Shannonvale that will provide enough electricity to take Clonakilty off the national electricity grid is a step closer to becoming a reality.

Cork South West Deputy and vice-Chair of the Climate Action committee, Christopher O'Sullivan, recently facilitated a meeting between the Clonakilty Chamber of Commerce and Cork County Council to discuss potential partnerships to build the solar farm, which if successful will allow Clonakilty town to dip in and out of the National Electricity Grid as needed.

The initiative is being led by Clonakilty Chamber of Commerce chairperson Orla O'Donovan with the help of a dedicated voluntary working group.

"The Climate Action Bill has set some very ambitious targets which won't be easy to achieve. But towns like Clonakilty are showing how co-operation and a little imagination could see an entire town reduce its emissions significantly. Clon's position in the Southwest of Ireland is key to the success. After Wexford, West Cork is one of the sunniest places in Ireland," Deputy O'Sullivan said.

"I want to commend Clonakilty Chamber of Commerce Chairperson Orla O'Donovan. Since becoming Chairperson

she has focused on sustainability, and this initiative is no different. We have seen it manifest itself in the 'Taste it Don't Waste It' initiative, and also the installation of drinking fountains in Clonakilty town to cut down on plastic pollution," said Deputy O'Sullivan, who is also secretary of Clonakilty Chamber of Commerce.

"When Orla said a number of years ago that Clonakilty could go off the grid, many people laughed. But it's more and more becoming something that's within our grasp. It will take a couple of years, but the

Chamber is totally committed to bringing this project to fruition."

Amarenco, a Cork based solar energy company, received planning permission for the solar farm in 2019. As a sustainable energy community, Clonakilty Chamber of Commerce can progress the scheme as a Community-Led Project. Negotiations are at an advanced stage between Amarenco and Clonakilty Chamber of Commerce on a strategy to successfully complete this project for the wider community of Clonakilty. Amarenco will continue to provide technical support to

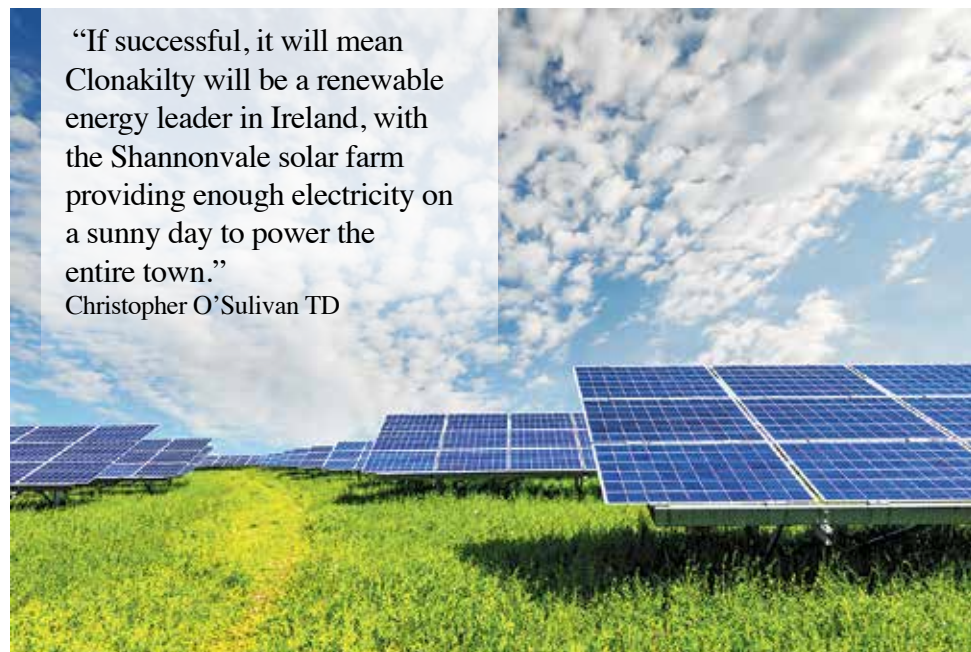
the project until construction is completed, which is expected to take a number of years.

Clonakilty will enter the bid for the Renewable Energy Support Scheme, a yearly scheme that lets community groups bid to be attached to the national grid to feed back in renewable energy.

"If successful, it will mean Clonakilty will be a renewable energy leader in Ireland, with the Shannonvale solar farm providing enough electricity on a sunny day to power the entire town," O'Sullivan concluded.

"If successful, it will mean Clonakilty will be a renewable energy leader in Ireland, with the Shannonvale solar farm providing enough electricity on a sunny day to power the entire town."

Christopher O'Sullivan TD



Argideen Valley Trail opens

Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr Gillian Coughlan has officially opened the new Argideen Valley Trail walkway. Works were recently completed on the installation of way-markers, map boards and interpretive signs along the new walking route that runs from Ballinascorthy to Timoleague and on to Courtmacsherry.

The walk is approximately 15kms in length and funding for the project was awarded under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme from the Department of Rural and Community Development.

Mayor Coughlan said of the Argideen Valley Trail, "This walkway connects Ballinascorthy down to Timoleague and Courtmacsherry and the Seven Heads walks, expanding the connectivity of walking routes in this beautiful part of Cork. As well as scenery, this area has a wealth of history and heritage and interpretive signage improves the visitor experience greatly. It's a lovely asset for the community and a wonderful attraction for visitors. Heritage and cultural tourism are key



to the economic success of the county. The development of the Argideen walkway will provide a key piece of recreational infrastructure that links rural development, tourism development and the development of a local amenity."

The walk beginning in Ballinascorthy beside the Henry Ford car, goes to Timoleague and on

to Courtmacsherry, traversing scenic countryside, along very quiet roads with great views of the surrounding landscape, passing through the smaller villages of Clogagh and Inchy Bridge, with seven points of interest for visitors. The theme of the walk 'Walk through History' highlights the diverse historical, physical and cultural landscape

of this area of West Cork, and draws visitors further inland.

The way-markers, map boards and interpretive signs along the route help keep visitors on track and provide information on some of the key sites along the route.

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Racism is never a joke

"I'm not a fragile individual," shares West Cork People fitness columnist **Tania Presutti**, "I've grown up Asian-looking in a white country (I'm adopted) and I've encountered everyday little acts of racism throughout my life." While Tania says that most of the time she just ignores racial slurs, marking them down to people being bigots, uneducated, or not so bright, a recent encounter at Dublin Airport made her reconsider putting up with such behaviour.

"It takes a lot for me to react," she says. "In fact, I can only recall one incident where I have ever reacted loudly. An older woman wanted my five-year-old son to step onto a busy road because she didn't want to walk next to us, as our paths were crossing. She kept shouting about social distancing and calling me Chinese (so by definition I must have Covid!). On this occasion, I told the woman (very sternly) that she was way out of line and I would not have my young son stepping onto the road to appease her racist beliefs."

Travelling from Dublin Airport to Copenhagen one early Sunday morning recently with her young son turned into another such distressing experience for Tania.

A simple coffee order at the airport Starbucks resulted in the harried mum being presented with a cup labelled with Ching (a version of Chink), a racial slur referring to someone of Chinese descent. In what she says was a moment of disbelief and sadness, Tania had to acknowledge that she was the victim of a racist joke.

"I decided not to complain about it at the time," she remarks, "as I felt the staff members who served me were in on the joke, it seemed like a small chance of success to get a complaint across. I determined to write to them once I was in Denmark. At that moment in Dublin Airport, I was just happy that my five-year-old son wasn't able to read. It would have been hard to explain to him why the barista wrote Ching/Chink on my cup."

According to Tania, on making contact with Starbucks Ireland, the company refused to take any responsibility, citing the airport branch wasn't a 'real' Starbucks. SSP, which runs the



airport franchise, offered her no real apology either. "There was no mention of consequences for staff or steps to address this on a corporate level. A €25 voucher for Starbucks and a 'we'll try to do better', was the reply I got," says a disappointed Tania.

"I think it's safe to say that Starbucks obviously doesn't care about my experience. I've asked for an official apology and offered to come and give a short seminar on racism for both staff and HQ, which they ignored and just sent me a long email about how important customer satisfaction is to them. You'd think from reading their reply that I had complained the coffee was too hot!"

"A lot of people have expressed sympathy and encouragement to continue on with my quest for an official apology, and I am pressing on via Twitter, but it does feel like a long, lonely road," she continues. "There are also many people who think I should just give up. Some have asked why I am making such a big deal out of it, and some just think it's a battle which can't be

won."

Tania says she can understand both sentiments. "Racism is very much ingrained in our self-understanding in the west, in the sense that the west puts itself on a pedestal over the rest of the world. We are better, more developed, more civilised, educated, advanced, modern, ethical and so on'. People of colour are at the bottom of the social class system here so it's easy to understand the dismissal of my complaint. Why should they take seriously the complaint of an inferior Asian woman?"

Tania adds, "It might not even be a clear, conscious choice to be racist. Because the mindset of being 'superior' has existed since we (Europeans) started writing our history down, unconscious racism (some might call it a colonial mindset) is common. To me, with a Danish identity and an Asian exterior, I am constantly in the middle of this, whether I want to be or not."

With the rise in hate crimes against Asian people in Europe, this fight is an important one for Tania. "I think this is a great opportunity for a global company like Starbucks, who claim they support diversity, to stand up and condemn any racist behaviour by an employee (regardless of title) – whether it's in a 'real Starbucks or a franchise Starbucks. I feel that if I give up, I would not only be giving up for myself, but also for every one of colour in Ireland or any person of colour who frequents Starbucks or Dublin Airport. So I'm continuing trying to reach them via Twitter and have also filed an official complaint via the Workplace Relations Committee on the base of discrimination. One way or another, I want Starbucks to acknowledge that this racist treatment was wrong, however inconsequential they may view it."

Skibbereen Historical Journal for sale

Skibbereen Historical Journal Vol 17, 2021, is now available for purchase in shops in Skibbereen, priced at €12. The Journal maintains the very high standard of the previous sixteen; for that, Skibbereen and District Historical Society thanks its contributors who have written some superb articles.

The Journal is also available to purchase at Biblio.com.

Cork to benefit from funding to help support remote work

Ireland South MEP Deirdre Clune has welcomed the investment in supporting remote working hubs across Ireland. In total €4 million has been dedicated to several projects in Ireland South by the Government. This funding will help to develop existing remote working hubs and broadband connection points all across Ireland.

In Cork many places received funding such as Republic of

Work in Cork City, Fermoy E-Centre, The Ludgate Hub, Benchspace, Bantry E-Centre, Macroom Enterprise Centre, gTeic Beal Atha an Ghaorthaidh and Avondhu Blackwater Partnership.

The Government has announced over €8.8 million in funding under the Connected Hubs Scheme. Grants will also fund measures to assist hubs to deal with COVID related challenges.

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Freaky summer



A WEST CORK LIFE

Tina Pisco

Oh my, my July! What a month it was. Not only did we have a glorious heatwave, but we also started meeting up again. Both were wonderful and yet a little freaky. The heatwave was like a dream come true. I even went swimming -both in a lake and in the Atlantic. West Cork is just dazzling in the summer sunshine and heat. Still, 30C does feel a little bit odd. I love it, but it's freaky. It's a temperature more suited to the Med. So are the throngs of tourists filling streets that have been empty for so long. I'm happy for the business community, but I've had to relearn that traffic out to Inchydoney on the weekend is going to be a nightmare.

Similarly, meeting people, having the chats, or going for a pint has been lovely – and a little freaky. I have probably met more people in the last month, both old friends and complete strangers, than in the last 18 months. I'm delighted, but I'm also finding it quite tiring. I have not had to engage in small talk, or navigated the complex patterns of an all-table chat, since back in March 2020. I've had to remember how to do it. I find it exhausting. I'm fully vaccinated, and I've always loved socialising, but I feel a

certain hesitancy to be in a large group. I can only put it down to having been locked down for so long. It's like I'm in training to brush up on my social skills and stamina.

Adding to the sense of unreality of living in July's pandemic paradise was the extreme weather we saw all around the world. Unless you were living under a rock (or were too busy enjoying the heatwave) you can't have missed the spectacular extreme weather that filled our news screens throughout the month. Heat domes. Fires on the Pacific coast blowing smoke all the way to NYC. Water shortages in California and Iran. Floods in Germany and Belgium and China. Then, when the month had only a few days to go, the Med had its own heat dome followed by fires. On Thursday we were contemplating going to Turkey and by the weekend we were watching tourists being evacuated from Bodrum.

As I slowly start to re-engage with other humans, I've noticed that the pandemic, and climate change have joined the weather as Universal ice-breakers.

As I slowly start to re-engage with other humans, I've noticed that the pandemic, and climate change have joined the weather as Universal ice-breakers. "How was lockdown for you?" or "Did you see the floods in Belgium?" is now the most common way to start up a conversation. Along with the traditional "How do you like this heat?"

The pandemic and climate change. It seems I could talk of little else in July – except when meeting strangers. I drove up to County Monaghan and stayed

for two weeks. I must have met over a dozen people. They all had one thing in common. The minute they heard where I lived, they wanted to talk about West Cork. How beautiful it is. How expensive it is. How much they'd love to holiday/rent/buy in West Cork. And of course, they also wanted to talk about the murder. Thanks to excellent branding, a terrific development of tourist amenities, a podcast, two television series and countless headlines everybody thinks that they know West Cork. It's freaky.

I love West Cork with a passion. I love the landscape, and the people, the music and the craic. I honestly think it is one of the best places on the planet. But there's something freaky about strangers being so enthralled with the place I've called home for 29 years this August. It felt weird to keep having the same conversation over and over. West Cork! Beautiful! Expensive! TV series! It's strange trying to explain the difference between the wonderful reality and the hype. At first it made me feel uncomfortable, but it quickly just became tedious.

The pubs are open. We have indoor dining, and small outdoor gigs are starting up, but it's not exactly the craic agus ceol of the Before Times. Though restrictions have eased, the whole experience is still a bit weird. Like going to a comedy show where no one is laughing. However, we just might be coming out of this. We're not there yet, but it's looking better than it has for a while. With a bit of luck, we might even get the weather back. I certainly hope so. I got a taste of what West Cork could be if the weather was like it used to be in the Med and it's left me longing for more. Despite it being just a little freaky.

Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the August edition of West Cork People,

It's been a long month but a good month...lots of visitors around hence businesses are busy, the vaccine rollout is reaping rewards (kudos to the crowds of young people lining up for theirs last weekend) and it's raining down Olympic medals in West Cork...how lucky are we to have such talented individuals doing us proud on the world stage and giving everyone a much-needed boost after such a tough year and a half. Huge congratulations to the Skibbereen rowers, Paul O'Donovan, Fintan McCarthy and Emily Hegarty and to our fastest runner, Phil Healy, who might have missed out on a medal but gave an exceptional performance at the Games – we're bursting with pride because of you all.

There's been a fair bit of talk and some upset around town about a recent article in a national newspaper that shed Clonakilty (or Clon as we call it!) in a not-so-favourable light. Just to set the record straight, no matter how many times I've done the route from this side of town to Deasy's carpark – stopping off for lunch on one occasion and a quick detour to Courtmac on another, I'm still coming in well under an hour. Also, would I be right in saying that Clonakilty Blackpudding doesn't really need to market its product under the so-called guise of a Visitor Centre, – I've yet to meet someone anywhere in the world who doesn't put the words Clonakilty and Blackpudding together! And as far as the housing situation goes, yes it's a pretty desperate situation for anyone looking to rent at the moment but isn't that the way up and down the country...at least we have two massive social housing developments nearly ready to go so that should ease the situation somewhat. One last thing, there was a fair bit of talk about how blow-in's are the only thing holding the fabric of our society together. Yes we do owe a lot to our adopted and they are beloved, however in fairness there's the odd local with a creative streak too...a solar farm is about to take Clonakilty off grid, our local healthfood shop led the way in waste reduction with its refill station, we have one of the best music clubs in the country (or world) and you're currently reading the best free read in West Cork (ahem), just to name a few enterprises all spearheaded by locals in Clonakilty and that's the case all around West Cork!

Getting back to our beloved and talented blow-ins, you'll find a fair few of them featured in our fabulous Creative West Cork feature this month, which gives a good feel for the culture we're steeped in here in the west of the county.

Enjoy the read and get out there and enjoy all that our breathtaking West Cork has to offer before we're really in back to school mode.

For stories like these and lots more see inside,

Until next month,

Mary

O'Sullivan clarifies situation at Bantry General Hospital

"The situation with admissions at Bantry General Hospital is a mess,"

says Cork South West Deputy Christopher O'Sullivan

According to Deputy O'Sullivan "it's impacting the GPs and staff of both Bantry and CUH, the already stretched ambulance service, and most importantly the people of West Cork."

O'Sullivan says that hospital management and the HSE are now working to reallocate two locum consultant physicians from CUH to Bantry in order to cover the shortfall at Bantry.

"This can't happen soon enough," he comments.

"I've spoken with the Taoiseach, Micheál Martin, and the minister for health, Stephen Donnelly, pleading with them to intervene and speed up the process.

"I've also been in regular contact with the management of Bantry, and the HSE, seeking both an explanation over how this occurred and a plan to rectify it.

"My understanding of the reasons for the admissions issue is this: the HSE are having huge difficulties in recruiting locum consultant

general physicians to cover the temporary loss of one of the three existing consulting physicians.

"They have inevitably found themselves in a perfect storm. Following the rapid rollout of the vaccine and the introduction of the digital covid travel cert many health workers in the system have taken their first opportunity in almost 18 months to take annual leave, with some returning to their home countries for the first time in a long time.

"This annual leave and return home is well earned considering the sacrifices staff have made over the past 18 months."

Deputy O'Sullivan also stresses that the medical assessment unit at Bantry is not going to be closed.

"To this end the HSE have successfully recruited three consultant general physicians who will start work their at during the period of end of August and the month of September. This will bring the total number of consultant physicians from three to 5.5 and will ensure the service remains.

"I will be doing everything within my capabilities to ensure this is the case."



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Taoiseach opens Ireland's largest solar farm in Kinsale



An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin and David A. Ricks, Lilly's chairman and CEO.
Pic Daragh Mc Sweeney/Provision

Taoiseach Micheál Martin officially opened the single largest solar farm in the Republic on July 26. Developed in a joint venture by Eli Lilly and Enerpower, the 16-acre facility will help power a significant proportion of the Lilly plant at its Dunderrow, Kinsale site with sustainable energy.

The ground-mounted Solar Farm will produce up to 5.6MW of power allowing Lilly to reduce its annual use of electricity from carbon sources by almost 6GWH and its carbon footprint by 2,350 tonnes. Comprised of 12,600 individual solar panels and costing €5m the development was a joint investment between Lilly and Enerpower, with Enerpower receiving support from the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland.

Lilly already uses a Combined Heat and Power (CHP) Plant that efficiently produces approximately 45 per cent of the site's electricity. By adding the power generated by the solar farm the quantity of electricity it needs will be further reduced by approximately 65 per cent at peak solar output.

Taoiseach Martin said: "The Lilly name has long been synonymous with Cork and Ireland, having had a presence here for four decades. They have invested substantially in their Cork operations over those decades as they evolved their operations and in the process have become a substantial and important employer in the region. With the opening of their new solar farm and extension to their biotech facility they are again demonstrating their ongoing commitment to Cork and to Ireland.

"This solar farm, the largest in Ireland, developed in

partnership with Enerpower, sees them lead by example in reducing their electricity use from carbon to more sustainable sources. The expansion of the biotech facility, with the potential to create further jobs on this site is most welcome and reinforces Lilly's commitment to innovation. I wish Lilly every success with both of these projects."

"Lilly is delighted to partner with Enerpower on this state-of-the-art solar facility and acknowledge the support of the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland to help bring this project to fruition," said David A. Ricks, Lilly's chairman and CEO. "We're proud of our team in Kinsale for their contributions over the past 40 years to produce medicines that make life better for millions of people around the world."

"This solar development is the Republic of Ireland's largest ever installation of solar panels. Over its lifetime, it will provide enough energy to power the equivalent of all the households of Kinsale for the next 20 years...."

Owen Power, CEO Enerpower commented: "This solar development is the Republic of Ireland's largest ever installation of solar panels. Over its lifetime, it will provide enough energy to power the equivalent of all the households of Kinsale for the next 20 years. The project was delivered during a very challenging year for all and demonstrates the speed at which large energy users can reduce emissions quickly. On-site Solar PV renewable

generation is one of the most sustainable ways to reduce fossil fuel generated electricity. Enerpower is delighted to be involved with this project - the journey to a zero-carbon world will require many actions, and projects like this are an exciting step forward in the energy transition. We would particularly like to thank the SEAI BEC programme for their support and Lilly for their forward-thinking renewable electricity ambitions."

"Despite everything that's been going on for the last year and a half, this solar energy project was delivered on time and that's down to the hard work of everyone involved," said Todd Winge, Lilly Kinsale General Manager. "That this project happened is due to a great engineer, Eamon Judge, who's been with us for over four decades and whose passion for environmental sustainability was a key driver in the delivery of this initiative"

The event also saw the official opening of an expansion to an existing large-scale biotechnology manufacturing facility at the Lilly Kinsale campus. Lilly began producing active ingredients for medicines at its Kinsale facility in 1981, so is marking its 40th anniversary this year. The site has been built on innovation over those four decades. In the early 1980s high volume antibiotics were the mainstay of operations, while in the 1990s new and innovative treatments for mental illness, heart disease and cancer were made in Kinsale. 2008 saw the advent of a completely new type of medicine manufacturing technology at the site with investment in a state-of-the-art biotechnology facility to make monoclonal antibodies. The opening of this latest biotechnology expansion sees that history of innovation continued.

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Kinsale Town set to welcome new multi-million euro library

Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr Gillian Coughlan, and Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, jointly marked the official commencement of works on Kinsale's new state of the art library facility. The event, which took place in Kinsale on Sunday, July 25,

marks the commencement of extensive refurbishment works which will see the town centre heritage building being re-purposed as a new library.

Designed by Cork County Council, the project will see the three-storey James O'Neill Building in Church Square converted into a modern library in the heart of Kinsale town.

The building, known as the Old Mill, dates back to the late 19th Century and will be transformed into a multi-purpose space with a wide variety of opportunities for community and cultural use. It will be 11 times the size of the existing library which is located in the Methodist Hall.

The overall value of the investment in the facility will be €3.7m, jointly funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and Cork County Council. The Minister has committed a total of €2.157m from the Government's Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF), with the balance being provided by Cork County Council. In addition, the Council made the premises available – together with the adjoining carpark facility – in a location where real estate property values are amongst the most expensive in the country.

Once complete, the venue will offer a ground floor entrance space and attached gallery exhibition area, a mezzanine area, a children's area, an adult and study area, and a dedicated digital facilities suite. The book stock available to borrow from Kinsale Library will increase fivefold, from approximately 5,000 items to 25,000 in the new space.

Speaking at site in Kinsale, the Minister said: "The completed Library will offer qual-

ity digital facilities to support small local businesses, tourists and locals requiring these facilities for work or leisure. It will also have a strong cultural, community and educational role particularly in the area of digital literacy while also preserving a listed building that is an essential part of the historic fabric of Kinsale town."

Mayor Coughlan added: "The redevelopment of Kinsale Library is a wonderful project that will transform the services available to the people of Kinsale and the wider area. A state-of-the-art library service is essential for a town with 10 primary schools and a community college with 1100 students. The My Open Library service will also be introduced, extending the self-service opening hours from 8am to 10pm, 365 days a year. I'm particularly delighted to see a sensory space included in the plans for the new library. Inclusivity is one of the cornerstones of Cork County Council ethos and this project is another example of this."

Chief Executive of Cork County Council Tim Lucey went on to say: "The project will bring back into full-time use a building that has been vacant for some time, together with bringing heritage to life, enhancing activity and business in the Church Square part of the town. More importantly, it will ensure the ongoing conservation of an important piece of



Artist's Impression of Proposed Kinsale Library Interior

architectural heritage in Kinsale town. It is an ideal location; it is highly accessible, in close proximity to existing housing for older people, and it has adjacent car parking. The significantly larger ground floor also affords our Library and Arts Service the scope to develop an enhanced and exciting service for the local community."

Christopher O'Sullivan TD

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Replacing Direct Provision needs to remain high on government's agenda

By Clonakilty Amnesty Group

Amnesty International Ireland has long campaigned against our system of Direct Provision for people seeking international protection (asylum) in Ireland. It is part of the June 2020 programme of the current government to replace Direct Provision but, given the failure of Irish governments to fulfill so many undertakings, Amnesty is maintaining its campaign under the slogan 'Set the Date' (amnesty.ie). You the public might keep reminding all elected representatives not to come looking for your vote at the next election if Direct Provision is not gone.

Our system of Direct Provision was introduced over twenty years ago and was, essentially, a copy of a pilot system



introduced in Britain, which they then abandoned within a year as unworkable. Thus, a system deemed unworkable still survives here. Everyone seems to accept that it violates human rights, left, right and centre. One could be forgiven for thinking it was designed to discourage asylum seekers from coming here for the protection that we are bound by international and Irish law (and human decency) to provide.

The government has made a start towards fulfilling its promise. Last October they published the report of an expert group asked to recommend how to replace the Direct Provision system by 2023. Key challenges include speeding up the processing of protection applications while respecting the circumstances and legal

rights of applicants; providing appropriate housing in the community when our governments have failed to meet the needs of so many of the rest of us; and addressing the backlog of applicants trapped in our failed system.

This February the government published a white paper setting out its proposals to implement the expert group's recommendations. New arrivals will spend no more than four months in state-owned reception centres, which will include units for families, before moving to not-for-profit housing from 'Approved Housing Bodies'. Quotas by county are being planned and applicants will be helped to integrate into the community and encouraged to find work. Already the target date has slipped to the end of 2024.

This slippage and the possibility of other problems in

implementing the white paper have been noted. The time taken to process applications has been a chronic problem that has resisted several attempts to address it. Even if the latest proposals are carried through, there remains the present backlog, which demands to be cleared. There are bound to be problems delivering the not-for-profit accommodation in time, especially when there are already successful applicants still in direct provision accommodation because no housing has been found for them. Also, some deadlines in the white paper could improve significantly if extra staff and resources were quickly added to the International Protection Office, the Appeals Tribunal, the Legal Aid Board and in the Department of Justice.

We are often reminded of our own history of forced emigra-

tion due to starvation or eviction (or transportation!) under our former imperial masters, never mind our history of economic emigration then and under our own self-government. We might also recall the destruction over centuries of our native culture to the point where only shadows of it survive. Asylum seekers have had a very similar experience in today's world. Coming from cultures destroyed by imperial meddling and as victims of the wars and politics of oil and religion, they are in need of care and not abuse. Today we can't escape the reality that we are all first and foremost joint citizens of a planet under extreme threat. The asylum seekers who arrive on our shores should remind us of our past experience and, if they stay, it will be because they are joining our future.

West Cork benefits from Heritage Grant Scheme

Cork County Council has announced the first recipients of its new Heritage Grant Scheme, with 23 Historical and Community groups set to benefit from up to €1,000 each in funding.

The successful projects include a wide range of historical publications, Heritage Week events, exhibitions, archives, video documentaries and condition reports for important local heritage buildings.

Successful applicants in West Cork include:

A Taste of Bandon Festival
Ballinhassig Parish
Baltimore, Rath and The Islands Community Council,
Ringfort Subcommittee
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The Dyatlov Pass mystery



THE HISTORY & POLITICS CORNER

Shane Daly

Shane Daly is a History Graduate from University College Cork, with a BAM in History and an MA in Irish History.

“Part of the canvas was poking out but the rest was covered in snow. I used an ice pick lying nearby to uncover the entrance.” – Mikhail Sharavin

In the winter of 1959, between February 1 and 2, nine experienced hikers ventured deep into the wilderness of Russia’s Ural Mountains and never returned. Formed for a skiing expedition across the northern Urals in Sverdlovsk Oblast, Soviet Union, the group was led by Igor Dyatlov, a 23-year-old radio-engineering student at the Ural Polytechnical Institute (now Ural Federal University). In the aftermath of the expedition, the eastern slopes of Kholat Syakhl, where they made camp, would become known as ‘Dead Mountain’.

It was a chilling scene that greeted rescuers on discovery of the missing hikers’ tent. Cut open from the inside, one side of the tent had all nine pairs of boots neatly lined up against it. Shortly after that, they found the bodies. Some of the hikers were discovered undressed and some were wearing each other’s clothes. After the bodies were discovered, an investigation by Soviet authorities determined that six had died from hypothermia while the other three had been killed by physical trauma. One victim had major skull damage, two had severe chest trauma and another had a small crack in the skull. Four of the bodies were found lying in running water in a creek. Three of these had soft tissue damage

of the head and face, two of the bodies were missing their eyes, one was missing the tongue, and one was missing eyebrows. The investigation concluded that a ‘compelling natural force’ had caused the deaths.

Numerous theories have been put forward to account for the unexplained deaths, including animal attacks, hypothermia, avalanche, katabatic winds, infrasound-induced panic, military involvement, or some combination of these. Three of the bodies had suffered mysterious internal injuries caused by a blunt-force trauma that was too powerful to have been inflicted by a human. Some of the bodies were found with abnormal levels of radioactivity. As disturbing as these details may seem, some of them have very simple explanations. Undressing is a common symptom of hypothermia, which unusually can make victims feel like they are burning or overheating, when in fact they are freezing to death. Scavengers were likely to have eaten the missing eyes and tongue. The blunt force-trauma could possibly have come from falling down a ravine. The radioactivity could have come from thorium, which was used in some camping lanterns at the time.

However, the biggest mystery of all isn’t so easily explained. What caused nine

experienced hikers to cut their tent from the inside and flee out into sub-zero temperatures in the night, some undressed, some partially dressed, all with no boots on? The official Soviet vague explanation at the time of ‘an unknown natural force’ unsurprisingly did not satisfy the public. This in turn led to an abundance of conspiracy theories. In 2019, with rising public interest in the mystery, the Russian government reopened the case and reached a new conclusion. An avalanche. However, this was hard to believe for a few reasons. Firstly, the recovery team had found no trace of an avalanche at the discovery site. Most of the hiking team’s injuries were not consistent with an avalanche and the slope of the mountain appeared to be too gentle at the site for an avalanche to occur. On the night in question there was no new snowfall to trigger an avalanche. The only likely trigger that would cause an avalanche was when they cut into the slope to make their camp. But forensic data suggests this would have happened nine hours before the avalanche occurred. If it were an avalanche, it would have had to be a freak one.

Interestingly new research published this year may confirm that theory. Aleksander Puzrin, a geotechnical engineer, wrote a paper on how earthquakes can cause delayed avalanche, and Johan Gaume, the head of a prominent snow avalanche simulation lab in Lausanne Switzerland, built a computer simulation to recreate the conditions on Dead Mountain that night. They came to the conclusion that the slope was steeper than initially thought; steep enough in fact to hit the threshold for an avalanche. Even though it had not snowed that night, powerful winds could have shifted the surface snow and created unstable conditions. It could have been an avalanche that was big enough to impact the tent and create panic, but small enough to blend in with weeks of regular snowfall by the time the rescuers arrived.

An avalanche, however, does not answer every question. Therefore, the mystery, which remains unsolved, continues to be debated...



The group’s tomb at the Mikhailovskoe Cemetery in Yekaterinburg, Russia

Bees in legend



FACT & FOLKLORE

Eugene Daly

A retired primary teacher, West Cork native Eugene Daly has a lifelong interest in the Irish language and the islands (both his parents were islanders). He has published a number of local history books and is a regular contributor on folklore to Ireland’s Own magazine. Eugene’s fields of interest span local history, folklore, Irish mythology, traditions and placenames.

The abundance of honey in early Ireland can be measured from the size of the vessels used either to collect the honeycombs or to pay tribute to an overlord, or for kitchen use. A barrel, so large and heavy that it could be lifted only as far as the knees by a strong man, was used, and a smaller vessel that could be raised on the shoulder and head. At table each person had a dish of honey into which he dipped his portion of meat, fish or fowl.

Honey and mead played their part in the lives of the early saints. A legend told about the childhood of St. Ciarán of Clonmacnoise seems to prove that there were wild bees in Ireland. One day Ciarán’s mother said to him, ‘All the little boys of the hamlet bring honey out of the honeycombs to their households, except you’. On hearing this, Ciarán went to a certain well and filled his vessel with water, which he blessed so that it turned into honey. He brought this home to his mother, who was, no doubt, hugely impressed, and convinced that her son was more clever and kind than any of his companions.

Whether or not Ireland possessed native bees, tradition would have us believe that a sixth century saint, Madomnoc of Co. Kilkenny, first brought bees to Ireland from Wales. The story of their arrival is full of charm. The youthful Madomnoc set out for Wales to study at the monastery of St. David. He remained there for many years



St Gobnait depicted with her bees by Harry Clarke in his stained glass window in the Honan Chapel at University College Cork.

where his special care was the beehives, which formed part of the great abbey’s wealth. At length when the time came for Madomnoc to return home, his little friends refused to be parted from him. Three times they followed him to the ship waiting to set sail for Ireland and three times he brought them back to their hives. In the end, St. David, ever generous, presented the swarm of bees to his friend and disciple. He blessed the bees with the words: ‘May the land to which you are brought abound with your progeny and may their species and generation never fail, but our own city shall be forever without you’. The prophecy was fulfilled, for the Welsh

A belief once held in many parts of the country was that if a death occurred in a household it was important to go to the hives and tell the bees; if not, they would either swarm elsewhere or die in the hives.

bees prospered and multiplied in their new home, their honey was ever sweet and the forests of Ireland were perfumed by that sweetness. It is said that after Madomnoc arrived in Ireland the bees that accompanied him were left at Fingal, near Balbriggan, and the name of the holy place was the Church of the Beekeepers. Madomnoc’s feast day falls on February 13.

If Madomnoc introduced the bees to Ireland, St. Gobnait of Ballyvourney, Co. Cork, is regarded as the patron saint of beekeepers. There are many stories in folklore about her dealings with bees. One story goes that an invading chief and his army descended on the country around Ballyvourney with plunder in mind. They

wanted to despoil the land and rob the cattle. But Gobnait was a redoubtable woman. She met the would-be robbers holding a beehive in her hands. She prayed for guidance and then let loose the bees. The bees stung the marauding chieftain and his followers so badly that they fled for their lives. Their work done, the bees returned to the hive and the making of honey. The name Gobnait is supposedly the Irish version of the Hebrew ‘Deborah’, which means ‘honey-bee’.

A belief once held in many parts of the country was that if a death occurred in a household it was important to go to the hives and tell the bees; if not, they would either swarm elsewhere or die in the hives. Another belief was that you should never buy bees but let them come to you. It was said that if you liked bees they would come, if not, they would stay away.

Bees also featured in the classical lore of Ancient Greece and Rome. For example, it was supposed that great writers and orators, such as Plato, Sophocles and Virgil, had been fed by bees or had their lips touched by honey in infancy. The Greek philosopher Aristotle features in a popular Irish legend that connects him to the bee. The story goes that Aristotle wanted to find out the secret of how bees made honey and constructed a glass beehive so that he could watch them at work. The bees, however, covered the inside of the beehive with wax, so that Aristotle’s view was blocked. In a rage Aristotle kicked the beehive, so that it broke and all the bees flew out and stung him until he was blinded. The story ends with the statement that there were only three things that Aristotle could not understand: the secret workings of the bee, the ebb and flow of the tides and the mind of a woman.

The Irish language has native words for bee (beach), honey (mil) and mead (mid). The usual Irish word for something sweet is ‘milis’ (like honey) and of course, sweets are ‘milseáin’.



HISTORY & POLITICS

Kieran Doyle

One of the more positive aspects to emerge out of this global pandemic has been a greater appreciation and discovery of one's locality, county and even country. Previously hidden beauty spots are now being explored and utilised and there has been a phenomenal switch to this lifestyle in the last eighteen months. And although we have so many amazing historical museums dotted around the country, there are many historical outdoor gems waiting to be discovered too. It was on one such staycation this summer in Connemara that I stumbled across some of these hidden jewels that combined the splendour of the countryside with a twist of historical interest.

The sky always seems much bigger in the west of Ireland. Perhaps it is because the sinking sun sets over the sea that far north and west, which combines to lengthen the day and widen the horizon. Perhaps it is the stretches of wild emptiness that makes you feel you are alone on the planet, the tranquillity that somehow enhances the sounds of nature. All of this and more are hypnotic qualities and reason alone for any trip to the west of Ireland. But there is the secret historical lore too. The endless tiny fields with nothing but stone walls. It's as if, as my father used to say, the soil was so bad, you could only grow stones. While there's no doubt our forefathers had to painstakingly clear the land to conjure a tiny tract of semi arable land, there is more to these ditches too. Many were built from the leftover stones of the empty famine ruins that littered this part of the world, like a ghoulish spectre.

Embarking on this trip, one has to carry a sense of curiosity, and oftentimes take the path less trodden. A few miles south of Oughterard in Galway, we noticed a turn off with a sign for Aughnacore Castle (Derived from the name – field of the Yew Trees). Though it wasn't on our radar,

we ventured for a look. It was a worthwhile detour. This 15th century Tower house on the edge of Lough Corrib is one of the finest and best-preserved tower houses of this period. The castle is enclosed within the inner bawn walls. It seems to have been constructed upon the foundations of natural rock, which elevates the grounds making it all the more impressive. Below is a moat and river on one side and, as we learned, the lake had previously flanked the other side, until modern times when some of the land was reclaimed around it. The O'Flaherty tribe built here, on the edges of Lough Corrib, after the Norman invasions spread west from Leinster. It was the De Burgos who ejected them from their stronghold, which we now call Galway City. In an era where land travel was difficult, underdeveloped, and dangerous, access to Lough Corrib was essential. We later got to appreciate just this when viewing the length and breadth of Lough Corrib from the top of one of the Maumturk Mountains. It was a breathtaking vista, capturing a flotilla of different shaped islands, dotting the waters all the way to Galway City.

On the ordinance survey map for Connemara there is a trail that runs, oftentimes in long, straight lines, all the way from Clifton to Galway. Today it rumbles over parts of the road, the western way hiking trail and farms. This was the route of the former Clifden to Galway train route, which lays claim to being one of the most picturesque train routes in Europe and it is easy to see why. Time and time again, modern generations have lamented at our government's decision to pull up the rail infrastructure that had linked our cities with some of the most rural places in Ireland. Economics and the popularity of road travel are cited as the practical reasons for doing so, but what would Ireland be like today if someone had the foresight to maintain them? Many of the greenways today in the most picturesque spots in Ireland like the greenways in Courtmacsherry, Dungarvan and Westport would have been magical to visit on a train. Imagine the benefits to rural communities and the international appeal, to travel on the most breathtaking train rides in Europe? I witnessed at Maum Cross, one of the best-preserved rural infrastructures I have seen, of that

era. On the edge of the road that swings north to Leenane, is a former station of the former Midland Great Western Railway Company. In 1889, the British Government gave a huge grant to the company to build a route linking Galway to Clifden. Today, we are told by successive governments that it isn't viable to create infrastructure in sparsely populated areas but the British Government at the time passed the 1889 Light Railway Act to overcome this. This spurred on fifteen major rail projects into rural, non-commercially viable routes and also was a stimulus for employment in areas that were deemed poor regions such as Connemara. Track, viaducts, bridges and tunnels were all built for what turned out to cost 9,000 pounds a mile, as opposed to the usual 3,000 pounds a mile for railway lines. However, in an era when most people lived alongside

Up here at the turn of the 19th century in what seemed a million miles from the centre of civilization, Guglielmo Marconi built his wireless telegraphy station powered by the masses of peat that surrounded the plant.

the coast in fishing villages, it was not very practical running it through the centre of Connemara. Today the railroad would draw millions of visitors, but unfortunately, it only lasted from 1895 to 1935. At Maum Cross, it briefly comes alive. There is a fine stretch of track preserved, with the ruins of a station house. You can also see a signal tower and equipment, and the implements for changing the track lines, as well as other smaller features. Your imagination quickly fills in the blanks standing in the blissful tranquillity of Connemara.

On the outskirts of Clifden, in the peat bogs around Derigimlagh, only the remains of one of Ireland's greatest ever technological sites now stands. Up here at the turn of the 19th century in what seemed a million miles from the centre of civilization, Guglielmo Marconi built his wireless telegraphy station powered by the masses of peat that surrounded the plant. Many of us



Aughnacore Castle, near Oughterard in Co. Galway

in West Cork may be familiar with a 'Marconi signal tower' on Brow head near Crookhaven and indeed West Cork is part of this narrative. The wireless telegraphy station was completed at this spot by 1907. It wasn't the only Marconi Tower operating from Ireland but it was the most powerful. It could communicate and send message with another Marconi Tower built in Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, Canada. The site had to house employees, a power station, and a receiver for 'returning messages' that had to be constructed at a distance from the power station, such as the noise generated when operating the system. It is recorded that people in the region would regularly gather outside each other's house to gaze, mesmerized, at the fantail of enormous sparks that lit up the sky, as the Marconi tower sparked into life with a thundery boom. Sadly, today little to nothing of it remains due to the activity of the Republican IRA and the inertia of the Irish Government from 1923. One of the scars of Ireland's Civil War (1922-23) was the destruction of infrastructure, some which

never recovered. What some saw as strategic targets, to others was an act of wanton vandalism. The destruction of large sections of the Marconi station by the local Republican IRA damaged it to such a degree that it was no longer operational. Marconi applied to the Free State government for compensation to rebuild it. After he was turned down, the station never was returned to its former glory, and like our great train stations, it crumbled or was sold for scrap. Yet a trip to the former site is a must. A designated trail brings you five kilometres along an old track complete with information boards, photographs and audio tracks that help one to reimagining what the remains looked like. One can recreate the huge condenser house building, the powerhouse with its six boilers, and massive aerial system consisting of eight wooden masts. The aials emitted 150KW at 15,000 volts – all this in the wilds of Connemara on the edge of the world. It truly must have been a sight to behold.

What adds to the allure of the site, and is also represented here, is the landing of Alcock

and Brown. These pilots won an international competition to see who could cross the Atlantic Ocean on a nonstop flight. In 1919 they managed the 1,900 miles crossing in sixteen hours. Although their landing destination was not the power station, incumbent weather and faltering mechanics forced them to look for an alternative spot. The massive aials of the Marconi station acted like a beacon for the men who landed softly in the blanket of peat bog. If the crossing wasn't historic enough in itself, the operators at the Marconi tower were in the privileged position to relay the news back across the Atlantic about the success of these intrepid adventurers. The story of these men and their successful crossing (earning them the equivalent of a million pounds today in prize money), is very much included in the history of the site at Derigimlagh. This outdoor gem of an open museum, infused by the smell of the peat bogs and the sounds of the rolling waves of the Atlantic, is enough to entice anyone who wants a staycation with a historic edge, to venture into the west. Hope you get there.

HOLLY CAIRNS TD

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The Dáil is in recess from now until September but we are still working for Cork South West. Please get in touch with me and my team if you have any issues. If we can help at all, we will.

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FARMING
IN WEST CORK

Tommy Moyles

In his farming diary, West Cork suckler farmer and columnist with the Irish Farmers Journal, Tommy Moyles covers the lay of the land across all agri and farming enterprises – news, views and people in farming across West Cork and further afield.

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Holidaymakers won't like to hear it but the drop of rain that came at the end of July was welcome here and has resulted in a serious burst of grass growth, as the moisture meets the warm dry ground. Within the space of a few hours, the sward colour went from yellowy brown to green. It's not like I spent the month sitting around waiting for rain. Far from it! The run of hot weather was great and made up for a challenging spring. My location helped too and, after a slow start, heading for the Red strand and a dip in the ocean be-

came a daily occurrence during that warm spell.

The heat did provide a challenge regarding the grass situation but all was kept under control.

Due to its coastal location the land here is prone to drying out in summer so it's always at the back of my head every year. For that reason the farm isn't stocked too heavily. If and when we hit a run of weather that is too dry then bales of silage are used strategically to keep cows' content and the grazing rotation on track. In terms of work routine, July is the summer equivalent of January, albeit the daily workload is considerably lower. Once cattle are checked, it's a case of doing maintenance work or just relaxing a bit once there's a chance.

Price

I visited the farmers market in Skibbereen a few weeks ago. There was a super range of fresh food and produce available and the place was thronged. What was also of note was how busy it was in the Aldi supermarket nearby showing there is room for different tastes but ultimately consumers vote with their feet and wallets. We're lucky to live in a country where there is such a wide choice in terms of food.

I was reminded of this when comparing the bounce on most commodity-produced by Irish farmers. The home market will deliver so much but the world market is the largest driver of price.

Launched in April 2021 the purpose of the LEADER Transitional programme is to bridge the gap between the 2014-2020 LEADER Programme and the commencement of the next EU Programme in 2023. LEADER sets out to support rural businesses seeking to reach new markets, expand, innovate and/or diversify in response to macro trends such as Covid-19 and Brexit. Alongside the wider fund, a specialised stream for food businesses is available under the LEADER Food Initiative.

The LEADER application process itself can be lengthy but the benefits for a rural business are significant.

For example, we recently worked with an ifac food business client, who was diversifying their product offering, to secure €120,000 in LEADER funding. While it was a detailed procedure, the funding has made a monumental difference



Cows and calves enjoying a clover sward on Tommy Moyles farm at Ardfield, Clonakilty.

The good run of prices has held pretty well across all sectors although there is a little bit of a pull back in lamb prices. This is to be expected, as most of this year's lamb crop will be coming towards finishing over the next few months. Prices for sheep in marts are running about €1/kg higher than 12 months ago.

It's the same story with beef. Prices are at a level not seen in years. They are almost €1/kg higher than the 2019 level, which subsequently sparked off one of the biggest beef protests in this country.

The main reason behind this bounce in prices is basic supply and demand. Asian powerhouse, China, is driving global demand and having a major influence on

the price of Irish animal protein. African Swine Fever (ASF) decimated Chinese pig production from 2019 on and the effects are still being felt. As a result, they began to source beef and lamb to fill the gap with all the big producers such as the South Americans, Americans and Australians filling the gap. Drought in Australia and parts of the United States meant their production was back slightly. Brazil went so far to cater for Chinese demand as almost killing two years' worth of cattle in 2020, resulting in a major deficit this year. All the signs are that the lift in beef price could continue into next year, which is a pleasant surprise given how much we were concerned about Brexit.

Calving

On the home farm, calving season finally reached its conclusion at the end of June. Due to focusing on building work last summer, a handful of cows were left with the bull longer than planned and ran into summer. Calving won't be running as late any more with a bit of a clear up under way.

Putting an end date in place for calving and removing the bull is the first step. This happened for the heifers at the end of June.

The bull was brought home to the older group of cows who had finished a month of AI. Last week he was removed from that group and put in with a small group of late calving cows. They'll get another chance, so

he'll spend a month with them. I was lucky with the timing as all were bulled since he joined them. I just have to hope that the heat of the last week doesn't have any negative impact. If they do remain in calf than they should be due at the beginning of May next year, which will tidy up the workload significantly.

Despite prices going well this year, it remains imperative to base any financial plans on the bad times. At least then when there's a good price year you're in a better position to benefit from it. That's the plan anyway.

Cork business owners and farmers urged to consider benefits of LEADER funding

Funding can be a major challenge for businesses that are looking to grow or diversify their offering. Ifac, Ireland's farming, food and agri-business specialist professional services firm, says significant support is available through the LEADER Transitional programme for rural businesses based in Cork.

Patrick Black, Food and AgriBusiness Executive at ifac, explores how LEADER funding can make a difference for rural businesses.

to the business' growth, helping to drive the business forward.

The level of funding available varies depending on the project and county in which a business is based but generally funding of up to 75 per cent, to a maximum of €200,000, is available for capital works, consultancy or machinery upgrades.

In ifac, we are working closely with a number of businesses utilising LEADER funding to grow their rural businesses. The types of businesses vary from established food businesses looking to expand, to start-up farm diversification projects. Eligible businesses are those with an annual turnover of up to €10 million and employing fewer than 50 people.

In most counties LEADER funding is administered by a Local Community Development Committee (LCDC). Some LCDCs operate open calls, which means they will

accept applications at any point throughout the duration of the programme. Others operate targeted calls, which means they will only accept applications during particular periods.

Having worked through the LEADER application process from initial engagement through to funding drawdown with several businesses, we have identified some key learnings to help with a successful application including:

1. Having a detailed business plan with a strategic focus, backed by strong financial projections will increase your chances of securing funding
2. Identify and engage with your LCDC early in the process and take their advice on board throughout
3. Managing all aspects of the application process can be tricky. Create a filing system that works for you. Track every email, quote, invoice, payment etc. in relation to

the project as you go. This will be vital at the funding drawdown stage

4. Do not commence any work until you have been approved by the LCDC as it could put the funding in jeopardy
5. Invest time in completing your expression of interest form. Putting your best foot forward initially is key.

Broadly speaking the LEADER application process can be broken into eight steps:

1. Engage with your LCDC and build a relationship with your Rural Development Officer
2. Submit your expression of interest (EOI) form to your local LCDC providing an overview of your proposed project
3. If your EOI is successful, you will receive a letter of invitation to complete a full application
4. Complete the full application to include; a business plan,

financial projections, application form, and the required procurement documents (e.g., quotes, requests for quotes, supplier details, etc.)

5. The application pack will then be presented to the LCDC for approval
6. Once approved, the business can commence with the project e.g., begin construction work, engage a consultant
7. Once the project has been completed by the selected suppliers, the business will need to pay the suppliers in full and keep a full record of all payments and invoices
8. LEADER will then evaluate the project and the business can reclaim up to 75 per cent of the fees for the project.

If you are a rural business or a farmer with a farm diversification project in mind and would like to discuss funding, get in touch with your local ifac office.

people Farming

A West Cork Farming Life: Tadhg Hurley, Barleyfield, Kilbrittain

Interview by
Tommy Moyles

This year's Carbery milk quality award winner's farm walk was a virtual event. A joint Carbery group and Teagasc event, it was held in the middle of July on the farm of Tadhg Hurley, Barleyfield, Kilbrittain.

Congratulations Tadhg on winning the 2020 Carbery milk quality award. Tell us about your farm?

My grandfather bought the farm in 1936. Currently we're milking 75 Holstein Friesian cows on 90 acres supplying milk to Barryroe Co-op. The farm is about 400 feet above sea level and last year we grew 12 ton of grass per hectare and fed around one ton of meal per cow. Last year we supplied 460kgs of milk solids per cow. I took over the farm

from my father Finbarr in 2014 and he gives me a hand around the place. He has high standards, as he had previously won the milk quality award for Barryroe in 1999 and 2009. We'd put a big emphasis on animal health. 65 per cent of the herd have never received an antibiotic in their lifetime.

What's a typical year like on the farm?

We start calving cows in January and that's our busiest time. In 2020 we had a six-week calving rate of 87 per cent. Because labour is so high in January and February, we like to have a break before breeding starts, so calving is usually finished by March 10. We turn cows out to grass around the middle or end of February. It's hard to get them out and we try to do first cut silage around May 20-25. We try to keep the cows out then until into December.



Breeding can be tough going. That's the time of year where I don't leave the farm at all. We'd be watching the cows a few times a day. Calving is easier in comparison because you have a fair idea of when they'll calf. With breeding there is more unknowns and you have to pay more attention. It's all AI: There hasn't been a bull on the farm

since 1983. We stop breeding at the end of June.

You said on the farm walk that you asked for the farm when you were 21. Tell us about that?

I finished agricultural college and thought I'd shift the world at that stage if I had a big enough crowbar. It had been busy through

January and February and I remember asking Dad at the breakfast one morning would he sign the farm over to me and he said no. He said I was too young and to go away and get a trade or work for a different farmer for a bit.

He still had some things he wanted to do and he told me that I could always come back and that the farm would always be there. I spent about seven years working for another dairy farmer and I learned a lot. With hindsight, it was a great thing. It was a great experience to see what over farmers were doing too.

What do you think are the positives of farming?

Well I've a short commute to work anyway. It's a great life. Sometimes in the afternoon I can go back down home to my wife Helena and play with our two sons TJ (4) and Charlie (1). It's great to be able to do that and spend a bit of time with them

before milking. It's very much a family farm, with Dad still involved. When I came home from working on a larger dairy farm I found that, between less driving and milking a smaller herd, I had about three hours free compared to before. I can work on small jobs then or spend time with the family.

While it's very busy early in the year the routine is much easier in the summer. I'd always say that we are dairy farmers, not milk harvesters. My father and grandfather both had the saying 'look after the cow and she'll look after you'. We were disappointed not to be able to host an actual farm walk instead of a virtual one. I've learned a lot over the years at different farm walks and you'd hope someone might learn something from ours too. It would have been nice to hold it but that's the way it is with Covid I suppose.

Positive farm price developments signal boost to farm incomes in 2021

Improving farm output prices are likely to provide an increase in farm incomes in 2021, in spite of rising input prices, according to the Mid Year Outlook for 2021 produced by Teagasc economists.

Weather conditions through the first half of 2021 have not been ideal for grass based systems, while conditions have favoured cereal crop development and potential yield.

The economic recovery from COVID-19 has led to some input price inflation, which has impacted on fertiliser and fuel prices. Price increases for fertiliser and fuel were foreseen and largely reverse reductions in the price of these input items which occurred in 2020. Feed prices have also been higher in 2021, reflecting the supply and demand conditions in the feed grains market over the past 12

months. This increase means that feed prices are at their highest level in over five years. There have been some signs of increased sales volumes for inputs, but these increased sales may have been prompted by a desire to purchase inputs ahead of expected price increases.

The effect of higher input prices have been more than offset by improvements in Irish milk, cattle and lamb prices in 2021. While the harvest is only getting underway, higher Irish cereal prices are also looking extremely likely this year.

The dairy cow population has continued to increase in 2021, and a particularly strong increase in Irish milk production of six per cent or more is likely.

Cattle prices, particularly for finished cattle, have improved in 2021. This increase will be partially offset by lower levels of support

payments in 2021, following two years in which exceptional aid was provided to the sector to deal with periods of weak market prices.

The trend of lower UK and New Zealand lamb exports to the EU, which was observed in 2020, has continued into 2021. This has created opportunities for Irish lamb exports. As a result Irish lamb prices, which were already at a high level, have surged further in 2021, with prices forecast to be more than 25 per cent higher than in 2020. While direct costs of production on Irish sheep farms will be higher in 2021 due to higher feed, fertiliser and energy prices, margins and incomes for Irish sheep farmers are forecast to grow strongly in 2021 due to the increase in lamb prices.

For Irish cereals, favourable weather conditions at sowing meant that there has been an increase in

the area allocated to, the typically higher yielding, winter crops for harvest in 2021. Due to more favourable weather at the critical plant development stage, expectations are that yields for Irish cereals in 2021 will be up considerably on those achieved in 2020.

Given international supply and demand dynamics, cereal prices are expected to increase significantly at harvest 2021 for the main Irish cereal crops, compared to harvest prices paid in 2020. Forward contract prices on offer at present, coupled with expected yield increases, will likely lead to a significant increase in cereal gross output on farms in Ireland in 2021. Straw prices also appear to be holding firm. The addition of support from the newly introduced straw incorporation scheme, will also provide a boost for tillage farms.

Whilst there will be some pressure from higher cereal input expenditure, this will be insufficient to balance out the projected output value increase in cereals. A large increase in cereal margins and incomes in 2021 is now expected, with the average tillage farmer expected to make an income in excess of €40,000.

While a portion of the peak milk delivery season remains, if weather conditions remain favourable and milk prices hold, then the average income on Irish dairy farms in 2021 could exceed the record of €86,000 achieved in 2017.

The average income on Cattle Rearing farms in Ireland is forecast to increase by five per cent (€9,500) in 2021, while incomes on Cattle Other farms are forecast to increase by four per cent (€15,300).

Incomes on sheep farms are set to be up by over 45 per cent in 2021, to more than €27,300, due to exceptionally strong growth in output value, in spite of higher production costs. This results from most positive lamb price dynamics which are set to continue, with global prices having risen substantially.

Overall, the average farm income in 2021 across each of the farm systems is likely to be higher than would have been anticipated at the outset of the year.

Teagasc has also released its Farm Enterprise Factsheets for 2020 based on the Teagasc National Farm Survey, which provide a detailed breakdown on the financial and technical performance of the main enterprises in Irish agriculture for 2020.

OUT & ABOUT IN WEST CORK Send your photos (with captions) to info@westcorkpeople.ie

The Clonakilty Covid-19 vaccination centre was among the first in the country to offer walk-in vaccinations on July 31 and was busy with locals and holidaymakers availing of the service. Pictured are: 16-year-old Jane Lynch with her dad, Declan Greaney, on holiday in West Cork from Newcastle West, Co. Limerick; 16-year-old, Ciara Brady, from Clonakilty; and Vivian Johnson Collins, from Bandon with her 17 year old son Ryan Johnson Collins. Picture: Jim Coughlan.

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The West Cork Campus takes pride in the fact that a wide range of QQI accredited courses at QQI Level 5 (one level 6 programme for 2021/2022) are delivered in a student-focused and supportive learning environment by highly experienced tutors.

The West Cork Campus in conjunction with the Cork City Campus – Cork College of Commerce continuously engage in the development of new and the modification of existing programmes. Driven by demand for graduates by local employers, the college maintains a close relationship with local businesses and service providers through the Work Experience placements

that is included in all courses and in the direct recruitment of college graduates. The college has extensive and very valuable progression links to UCC, CIT etc as well as great employment opportunities arising out of the QQI qualification.

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experience in an Intellectual Disability or other setting.

Further information is available on <http://westcorkcampus.corkcollegeofcommerce.ie/>. Prospectus and further information is available by contacting 028 21644 or emailing westcorkcampus@ccoc.ie or Máire O'Sullivan (Coordinator) maireosullivan@ccoc.ie

Clodagh McKennedy:
QQI Level 5 Hairdressing
“Studying Hairdressing at the West Cork Campus in Skibbereen has been one of the best experiences of my life. From the moment I stepped into the college and saw the salon, I absolutely loved it. All of the teachers are so friendly and so helpful. The teachers were amazing from helping us with assignments and preparing us for exams. I also made friends for life from this course.”

“I have always loved hair



since I was a young girl. I really enjoyed learning the theory and practical sides of hairdressing. I have learned so many skills such as perming, cutting, setting, shampooing, blow drying and so much more. I did my work experience in Nova Hair in Dunmanway and I have continued working with them as I absolutely love it there. It is such a fabulous salon and everyone is so lovely. The people I work with are so helpful and they have taught me so much. I am so happy there. I have gained so much confidence and I really enjoy talking to the clients, making them tea/coffee, washing their hair and more.

“I would highly recommend the Hairdressing course to anyone who has a huge interest in hair. I would also highly

recommend this college because everyone is so friendly and the support that you get is absolutely outstanding. I will always be so grateful for everything that they did for me and for giving me such wonderful opportunities.”

Julie Tobin:
QQI Level 5 Healthcare

“In September 2020, I returned to full time education at the West Cork Campus in Skibbereen. Having spent 23 years in the workforce, I was both apprehensive and excited at the prospect of returning to education after 30+ years.



“I enrolled in the QQI Level 5 Healthcare course. The course was very well structured, as was the guidance from the teachers on how to prioritise work and assignments, and we were given excellent preparation for our work placements. We were also excellently prepared and supported when our course had to move online and we had constant interaction by e-mail or telephone to help with any problems with remote learning.

“As a mature student, I felt very supported by all the teachers and staff at the college and completing the course, gave me a whole new skillset to embark on a new career. In addition, my experience at the college has given me the confidence to pursue further education should I wish to do so. Definitely the best educational experience I've had to date!”

Leanne Beechinor:
QQI Level 5 and 6 Business
“My experience in the Cork College of Commerce, West Cork Campus was absolutely wonderful. I completed a QQI

Level 5 eBusiness course in which I got the privilege to take part in an international internship Erasmus programme with the college. I had two weeks work experience in Groningen, Netherlands. The experience



was unforgettable and really enjoyable. After gaining many new skills and confidence in myself, I continued on to complete the QQI Level 6 Advanced Business course. Even through the toughest of unprecedented times with Covid 19, the college were able to support us from the comfort of our homes.

“I am now working as a Clerical Officer with the HSE and I am overjoyed with the position. I have learned many new skills from both courses that have helped me to get where I am today!”

Mena Kelleher:
Business Administration Medical

“Returning to education at the West Cork Campus was an enjoyable experience. It was also very challenging during Covid. We got a month on campus which was great, we



got to meet our class mates and tutors before moving online for the remainder of the year. The tutors were very helpful and understanding in guiding us through our studies.”




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Special Feature EDUCATION & OPPORTUNITIES

BIM offers internationally accredited qualifications for commercial divers working in the Aquaculture Industry

By **Brian Murphy**

Director of BIM Diver Training Programmes

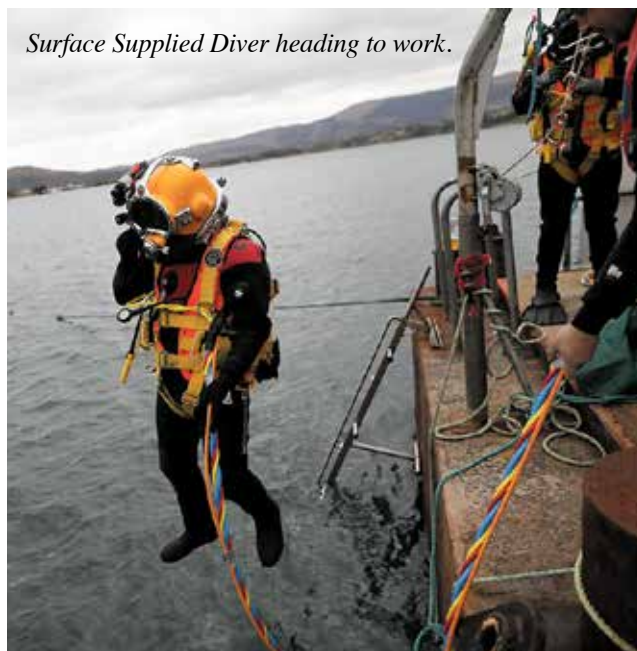
Bord Iascaigh Mhara provides a broad range of services and supports to Ireland's Seafood Industry. Two fulltime colleges, based in Greencastle and Castletownbere, deliver specialised training programmes. Courses include Deck Hand, Navigation, Fire Fighting, Engineering and now Commercial Diver Training at the National Fisheries and Diving College in Castletownbere, Co. Cork.

Divers are an essential element of the work force on any fish farm and provide vital services to other forms of aquaculture. The role of the diver is varied and depends on the stage of the fish production cycle. Typically, this includes site and mooring inspections, seabed sampling and surveys, net inspection and repairs, attachment or removal of net weights, removal of mortalities from cages and recovery of items from the seabed. The bigger the site the more work there is for divers and the more divers are needed to get the work done.

The aquaculture industry is now the largest employer of divers in Ireland. Many are fulltime employees, and some are contract divers who provide services to fish farms during busy periods and then work in other areas of the diving industry for the rest of the year.

BIM first ran commercial diving programmes in 1990, through to 2000, and trained many of the divers who have worked on farms since that time. With no courses offered between 2000 and 2018, a shortage of divers became apparent, as some retired or moved to different roles within the industry. Based on this industry demand, BIM revisited their diver training programmes and a new set of courses was established.

Firstly, two new awards had to be developed: a QQI Level 6 Commercial Scuba and a QQI Level 6 Surface Supplied Diver (Inshore) to thirty (30) metres. These awards were developed with Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) to meet current requirements for diver training based on Health and Safety Executive (UK), International Diving Schools Association (IDSA) and European Diving Technology Committee (EDTC)



Surface Supplied Diver heading to work.

standards to ensure a world-class standard for diver training schools in Ireland. BIM then had to develop their own courses to meet these new award standards. These courses are delivered by the National Fisheries and Diving College in Castletownbere and are approved by QQI and also by the HSE (UK). This ensures divers trained in Ireland receive internationally recognised certifications.

The National Fisheries and Diving College in Castletownbere is well placed for the delivery of these courses with a waterfront school and direct access to a sheltered body of water for the safe delivery of all elements of the course. Bere Island provides sheltered waters even in the most challenging weather conditions enabling divers to dive safely almost every day. BIM have invested in a complete diver training system that includes an International Marine Contractors Association (IMCA) certified containerised surface supplied diving system and recompression chamber together with the necessary ancillary equipment to run a diving spread. Divers start at the basics using commercial scuba equipment with hand tools and learn both the necessary theory and practical skills required for industry and certification. The tasks undertaken by a commercial scuba diver are limited. Surface-supplied equipment is preferred when divers are required to carry out works involving power tools, cutting, burning, or welding underwater. Surface supplied diving, as the name suggests, means that the diver's air supply is

provided from the surface via an umbilical, which also includes communications and depth monitoring capabilities. This is a safer alternative to scuba where the diver's air supply is limited by the size of the scuba cylinder. The correct choice of equipment and dive skills required is driven by a Dive Plan and Risk Assessment for any diving project, both of which are covered in the BIM diver-training course.

While the BIM programme has been established to provide divers for the aquaculture industry, the qualifications are the same for other areas of commercial diving, which include scientific diving, media, underwater archaeology, marine civil engineering, and many other areas where divers are required. Indeed, Ireland is about to enter a new era in marine industrial activity with the development of offshore renewable energy, primarily offshore wind energy. Not only will this new industry generate significant employment opportunities across a wide range of activities, but it will also undoubtedly generate a significant demand for suitably qualified divers.

New Irish diving regulations came into force in 2019. Statutory Instrument (S.I.) 254 *Safety, Health And Welfare At Work (Diving) Regulations 2018*, specifically includes the aquaculture industry. In the past, divers with recreational diving qualifications would sometimes carry out diving jobs on fish farms. Under the previous regulations, there was uncertainty regarding the qualifications required and the application of the regulations to fish farms. This is however

no longer the case, and any employer of divers is required by law to ensure that the divers are suitably qualified and competent to carry out the works required and meet the legislative requirements for minimum team size, type of equipment used, and the appointment of a diving supervisor who is suitably qualified and competent.

BIM engage a team of specialised instructors to deliver the courses to the highest standard. Brian Murphy, Course Director, is a qualified Mixed Gas Saturation Diver and Dive Supervisor with over 40 years' experience as a commercial diver and instructor working in the North Sea and around the world both inshore and offshore. Cillian Gray is a qualified commercial diver, instructor, and equipment technician with over 30 years' experience as a commercial diver in inshore civil engineering, scientific diving, and aquaculture. Tiernan Gray is an instructor, Life Support Supervisor, Air Diving Supervisor and Diving Medical Technician with over twenty years' experience both inshore and offshore. This blend of experience, qualifications, and state of the art equipment ensures that students learning at the National Fisheries and Diving College will benefit from world-class tuition and be fully prepared for industry on completion of their course.

The National Fisheries and Diving College plans to expand on the range of diving and associated courses available. Plans to create a Dive Supervisors courses and also to offer specialised training in underwater welding, burning and power tools are well underway.

BIM are currently in the process of re-engineering a barge, to specifically meet their training needs. This 29m x 12m barge, under refurbishment in Bere Island Boatyard, will primarily be driven by renewable energy, utilising a cutting-edge battery pack provided by Daretech technologies. It will ensure that BIM have the perfect platform to deliver these courses going forward.

Anyone interested in pursuing a career in diving or finding out more about the courses should contact Capt. Shane Begley, College Principal, (021) 71230 or Brian Murphy, Course Director, on (087) 2378471.

Further Education and Training critical to inclusive tertiary education and pandemic recovery

Further and higher education, along with research and innovation will be key to our country's recovery from COVID-19 according to Niall Collins, Minister of State with responsibility for Skills and Further Education. Launching, by video, the official publication of the 'Vision for Tertiary Education' and 'FET College of the Future' papers developed by Education and Training Boards Ireland's Directors of Further Education and Training Forum, Minister Collins said: "We know that the pandemic has affected some jobs and some sectors more than others. The world of work has changed dramatically, the pace of digitalisation has increased hugely and it's not going to stop. This means that we need to maintain a real focus on helping people learn new skills and move into new areas of employment. I'm very glad to say that our further and higher education sectors are not only willing but absolutely determined to provide the inclusive and accessible education and training that will do just that".

Speaking at the launch, ETBI Director of Further Education and Training Support Services Fiona Maloney stated: "Education and Training Boards are ready, willing, and agile in taking on the challenge of supporting Ireland's economic recovery from the pandemic. The linkages between Education and Training Boards and Higher Education have never been stronger, transition pathways never easier to access and this collaboration will continue to be critical to our collective success". She continued: "Both papers build on the continuing transformation of the sector and outline our vision for evolving Irish Tertiary education system and the role of the FET provision. ETBs are instrumental in supporting country's recovery, not only leading the skills training provision but also supporting the most vulnerable learners in our society. The new integrated FET College of the Future will deliver FET provision through an integrated network of Campuses, Centres and Hubs with a centralised network of support services underpinning the provision".

Speaking at the launch, Andrew Brownlee, CEO of SOLAS, emphasised: "The Further Education and Training Sector has made great strides in recent years particularly following the establishment of ETBs and SOLAS. As outlined in the recently published five-year strategy for the sector this transformation must continue, and FET has to continue to change. To meet the current and future needs of economy and society, it must simplify its structure and learning pathways, facilitate easier access, ensure a more consistent learner experience, and build a more powerful identity within communities and potential learners. We need to make sure that more and more people of all ages become aware of the opportunities to learn, develop and progress at local levels".

Other speakers at the launch outlined the challenges and opportunities facing Further Education and Training sector as it continues to evolve since the establishment of ETBs in 2013. These include the implementation of the Future FET: Transforming Learning Strategy 2020-2024, an integrated FET College of the Future, discussions around a Tertiary Education system and a new funding model for the sector, a new Apprenticeship Action Plan 2021-2025 and an anticipated 10-year Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy. These initiatives will be key to enabling the Further Education and Training Sector to deliver high quality, sustainable services and experiences for its learners.

Speaking at the launch, Denis Leamy Chief Executive of Cork Education and Training Board said: "The current time is an exciting one for Further Education. The creation of a dedicated Department and the Future FET Strategy reflects the Government's commitment and belief in the Higher and Further Education elements of the tertiary education system. At regional level, through ETB's, our ambition is to develop these links further over the coming months and years with seamless transitions for learners between Further and Higher Education, co-developed programmes and resources. As we gradually move out of the shadow of Covid-19, we are ready and prepared to meet the challenges of ensuring that there is an appropriate pathway for every learner."



Diver Training

Bord Iascaigh Mhara now provide commercial diver training courses based on international best practice at the National Fisheries & Diving College, Castletownbere Co. Cork.

Divers working in Ireland are required to have appropriate training. Depending on the work they do, they must have either a Commercial Scuba or a Surface Supplied Diving qualification.

For most commercial diving, the preferred method is Surface Supplied Diving (SSD), which provides greater protection for the diver, unlimited air supply, and a fully independent back-up supply. Divers with this qualification can work on all aquaculture sites as well as inshore civil engineering projects. To work in the offshore oil, gas and renewables sectors, a further top-up programme is required.

The SSD course duration is four weeks full time and on successful completion candidates will receive a QQI Level 6 Certificate: Surface Supplied Diving (Inshore).

The Commercial Scuba course is a prerequisite for SSD. Students learn how to use scuba equipment and simple communication systems in a commercial setting. Divers learn how to work underwater in a range of environments and how to use core tools underwater.

The Commercial Scuba course is five weeks long and on completion candidates receive a QQI Level 6 Certificate: Commercial Scuba Diver.

Both qualifications are recognised by the HSE UK ensuring international validity and employability.

For more information contact:

NFCI Castletownbere

Phone 027-71230
 Mobile 087-2897629 (Shane Begley)
 Mobile 087-2378471 (Brian Murphy)
 Email diving@bim.ie
 Website www.bim.ie



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Special Feature EDUCATION & OPPORTUNITIES

White Rabbit sauces perfect for BBQ weather



Following his graduation from UCC with the Diploma in Speciality Food Production programme Stephen Vaughan very successfully launched his

range of BBQ sauces, which he developed for use in the White Rabbit Bar and BBQ, on Cork's MacCurtain St. Stephen was delighted to be selected as a supplier of these

saucers on the Grow With Aldi programme.

Like others on the Diploma, Stephen benefitted from the wide range of technical and business topics provided by the course, plus the many opportunities to network with like-minded food entrepreneurs, trainers and support agencies.

Applications are now being taken for the next cycle of this Diploma, and substantial funding is available for eligible applicants. The Diploma will start on October 12, 2021, and will run on a part-time basis until May 2022. It may be necessary to deliver part of the Diploma programme using a suite of on-line delivery tools as a result of COVID-19 restrictions.

To learn more you can contact Dr Angela Sheehan, a.sheehan@ucc.ie, or by visit www.ucc.ie/en/fitu.

UCC PART-TIME DIPLOMA IN SPECIALITY FOOD PRODUCTION

Are you passionate about developing a food business?
Excellent funding available from the Department of
Agriculture, Food and the Marine.



PART-TIME DIPLOMA IN SPECIALITY FOOD PRODUCTION

The Food Industry Training Unit, University College Cork is now taking applications for the next cycle of UCC's part-time Diploma in Speciality Food Production.

Past participants have described this course as invaluable and would strongly recommend it to those starting or developing artisan and speciality food businesses. Many graduates have gone on to develop successful food enterprises.

The programme is typically delivered over two days, every three weeks, and consists of lectures in conjunction with practicals, case studies, site visits and workshops. It is anticipated that the content will be provided using a blend of face-to-face and on-line delivery.

The fee for the Diploma is €2,800 and funding (64% of the fee) is available for eligible applicants from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

The Diploma starts in October 2021 and will run until May 2022.

The closing date for applications is 24th September 2021.

Application forms and further information are available from Dr Angela Sheehan, Programme Manager: a.sheehan@ucc.ie or by visiting www.ucc.ie/en/fitu.



EmployAbility Service West Cork



Are you looking for support to secure a job? EmployAbility Service West Cork may be able to support you into employment.

Who are EmployAbility Service West Cork?

EmployAbility West Cork (EWC) is a professional and confidential, free employment service, supporting job seekers who may have an obstacle in their way to accessing and gaining employment.

EWC Job Coaches are proven experts in providing support to a diverse range of people with a wide range of skills.

This service also assists employers looking to recruit staff throughout the West Cork region, by providing practical advice, such as explaining financial supports that may be available. The service also supports employers in finding the right candidate for their vacancy.

EWC has grown from strength-to-strength and is celebrating its 20-year anniversary this year! The service is one of the highest performing supported employment companies in the country.

Of the service's links with the wider communi-

ty throughout West Cork, Coordinator Micheal Hurley says, "The positive interaction between employers, the service and clients who work with us throughout West Cork is evidenced by the 1,500 people who have secured employment from this service."

"Our team consists of experienced and dedicated Coaches; and an Administrator and Coordinator make sure that the team is supported so that our clients receive a quality service. The team is also governed by a Voluntary Board of Directors who guide how the organisation is run."

What to expect when you work with EWC:

Your job coach will first meet with you to discuss your needs. You then will work together to set agreed goals. This is accomplished by completing a 'Needs Assessment' to ascertain if the programme is suitable for you. "We will work on your C.V., identifying your strengths and skills," explains Micheal. "We are then in partnership with you to support you to find suitable employment if possible."

EmployAbility West Cork is Funded by the Department of Social Protection.

To arrange a meeting with your local Job Coach call one of the numbers in the advert below.

EmployAbility Service
West Cork
Supported Employment Agency

Are you looking for work?
You may be eligible for this service.

Please contact your local office for more information

Bantry (Head Office)

086 8126324 and 086 8079953

Skibbereen 086 8158786

Bandon 086 8101795

Kinsale 086 6007964

Clonakilty 086 8395058 and 086 6031335



An Roinn Coimircí Sóisialaí
Department of Social Protection



cetb

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Oiliúna Chorcaí
Cork Education and
Training Board

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QQI Level 1 to 3 - Beginners IT/Computers, Photography, Art & Communications, etc.



CONTACT:

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SOLAS
learning works

Special Feature EDUCATION & OPPORTUNITIES

Get off to a flying start with Clonakilty Credit Union's College Bursary Draw

As heading off to college next month becomes more of a reality, Clonakilty Credit Union would like to remind readers that it can offer a helping hand. Its Education Loan is ideal for students with a low interest rate, flexible repayment options and very high approval rate. For possibly the first loan of their adult life, students won't find a friendlier or more understanding organisation to deal with.

Clonakilty Credit Union is also encouraging students that there is still time to enter its Kevin Mullen College Bursary Draw. This draw has been set up to help with the many costs of college and has been named to honour the late Kevin Mullen for his contribution to the Credit Union movement.

Entry for the College Bursary Draw is open to Leaving Certificate students in its common bond – Sacred Heart Secondary School, Clonakilty; Mount Saint Michael Secondary School Ross-

carbery and Clonakilty Community College – who will be going to college in Autumn 2021.

One student from each of these three secondary schools will win €500 cash each. One other student will win a travel pass for year's free travel to Cork with West Cork Connect.

Former Clonakilty Community College student Sean Cavanagh was a winner last year. Apart from purchasing a new laptop, Sean sensibly decided to save the rest of his bursary in his Credit Union account for his second year in UCC, which he hopes will be in person. "I'm studying for a Bachelor Degree in Maths and Science," he told West Cork People. "I hated the first year, as it was totally remote but we've been assured the college is doing its best to get us up there next month."

Sean opened his Credit Union account in Leaving Cert with the specific aim of saving for college and would recommend other students look to the Credit Union

as "they make it really easy to get a loan or to save...to keep my money out of my hands!" he says.

To enter this draw you must have completed your leaving certificate year in June 2021 and intend on completing a full time Diploma/Degree at a Third Level Institution, apprenticeship or a full-time PLC. You must open or hold an account with Clonakilty Credit Union. Only those commencing their first year are eligible.

You can enter online at www.clonakiltycreditunion.ie or pick up an entry form from the Credit Union office on Kent Street. Entry forms must be completed in full and returned to the Credit Union by 5pm on September 30, 2021.

The Bursary and Free Travel Pass will be allocated by an Open Draw, which will be held publicly in the Credit Union office on a date to be announced later.

Back to schools cost still a struggle according to Irish League of Credit Unions

Sixty-eight per cent of Munster parents find covering the cost of back to school a financial burden. Over a quarter say they are getting into debt to cover back to school costs, with almost 40 per cent borrowing over €500.

The findings were revealed in the annual Republic of Ireland school-costs survey commissioned by the Irish League of Credit Unions (ILCU) and carried out by i-Reach Insights in May 2021, when 895 parents of school going children were surveyed.

When it comes to funding back to school, 65 per cent of Munster parents said they use their monthly income, with the rest relying on their savings. The number of Munster parents taking out a credit union loan is up to 10 per cent, which is twice the national average. Worryingly, 3.5 per cent of parents will turn to moneylenders.

This year's survey shows the overall spend on school items is up for both primary and secondary schools. The cost of sending

a child to primary school this September is coming in just shy of €1,200, while parents of secondary school children can expect to pay an average of €1,491.

School books once again top the list this year as the most expensive item for parents of secondary school children at €211. Extra-curricular activities are the top cost for primary school parents at €178. Spending on gym gear/sports equipment has increased for both primary school and secondary school. Significantly, 43 per cent of parents say they will have to deny their children new gym gear, a sharp increase from 2020.

For the second year running, the ILCU survey also looked at the impact and concerns brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 has had a profound impact on families, with the majority of parents in Munster surveyed reporting that the mental health of their household has been affected with half agreeing that their child's physical health has suffered.

Parents noted that the cost of buying of extra food for children at home during lockdown had the biggest financial impact on household budget. Expenditure on laptops/tablets to support home-schooling has also had an impact on their household finances.

As a result of the schools being closed for a number of weeks at the start of the year, 37 per cent

of Munster parents think that the school calendar should be adjusted to accommodate for missed time.

While a decision on the rollout of vaccinations to school children is being considered by Government, the survey revealed 72.5 per cent of Munster parents agree vaccinations should be offered to secondary school students with half agreeing they should be offered to primary school students.

Commenting on this year's findings, ILCU Head of Communications, Paul Bailey said, "Since we began carrying out our back to school research over six years ago, we have seen a steady increase in the cost of school books and uniforms. It now costs a staggering €1,500 to send one child to secondary school, while the cost for a primary school child is not that much cheaper at nearly €1,200."

"For parents with more than one school going child, these costs can place huge financial pressure on a family. Our survey shows that over a quarter of Munster parents go into debt to pay for back to school costs. If parents are unable to pay for back to school from their household income or through their savings, I would encourage them to explore cheaper forms of finance, by talking to their local credit union or bank, rather than using a credit card or going to a moneylender."



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ENTER ONLINE: clonakiltycreditunion.ie
or fill out the ENTRY FORM, available in our office, and return before 30 September 2021.

T&Cs:

- Be a member or become a member of Clonakilty Credit Union.
- Students heading to college in Autumn 2021.

- Students currently in Leaving Certificate from Sacred Heart Secondary School Clonakilty, Mount Saint Michael Rosscarbery & Clonakilty Community College only.

We are here to help...

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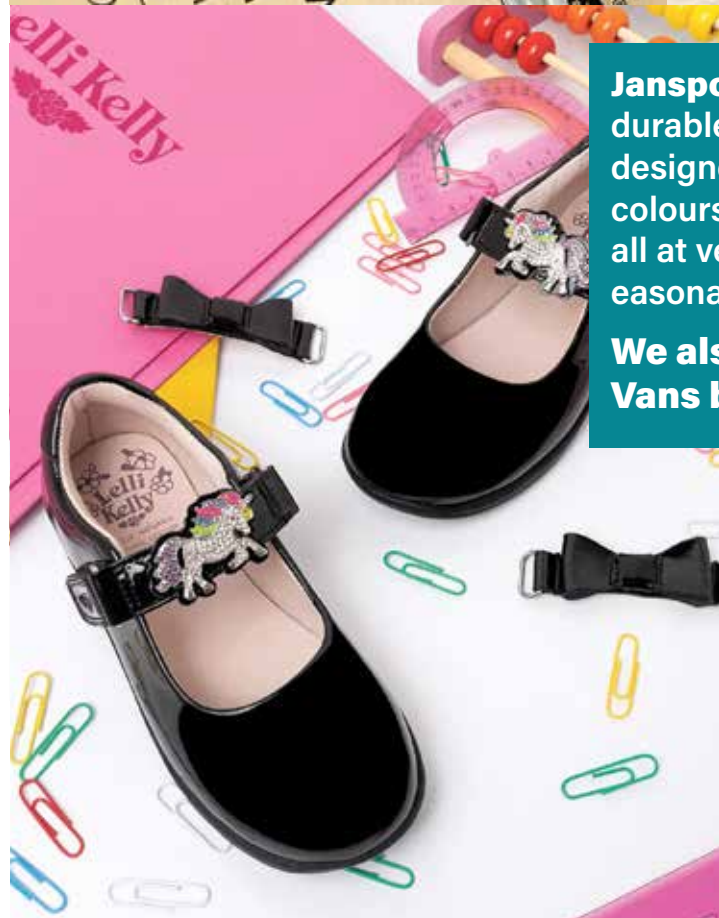
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Special Feature EDUCATION & OPPORTUNITIES

NLN's Focus Programme Clonakilty now open for applications



A community-based mental health recovery and personal development training programme run in Clonakilty, The Focus Programme is now open for applications. Developed by NLN, in conjunction with the HSE, The Focus Programme follows a recovery model approach to overall wellbeing.

The Programme won the 2020 Aontas Award for the best programme in Ireland in the health and wellbeing category. The 12-month free

course supports students to gain the confidence and skills to take control over their lives.

People's lives may have changed in so many ways over the last few months. People have found themselves: experiencing job loss; experiencing increased anxiety; feeling stressed; social isolation; excessively checking for symptoms; becoming irritable or; having trouble sleeping.

The Focus Mental Health Recovery Programme, with its 12 years' experience serving the people in West Cork, is designed to support people with experience of these and other Mental Health issues.

The Focus Mental Health Programme may be just what people need at a time like this to develop and try to maintain a new routine, work at rebuilding

their community links, repair relationships broken by social isolation or learn and practice stress management techniques. Many people may have lost their jobs so it may be a time to consider new pathways to training or employment in a supportive person-centred environment.

People have different reasons for joining Focus. For some it might be gaining the confidence to go onto further education and employment, for others it may be about having a routine and sense of purpose in their day, for more it may be about reconnecting with the outside world, meeting new people and exploring new ideas.

Here is small sample of what's on offer:

Activities – Arts and Crafts; Gardening; Cookery; Sea

Swimming; Boat Building; Excursions

Supports – Access to Psychology Support; Individual Plan; Relaxation Techniques; Mindfulness; W.R.A.P (Certified)

Certified Modules – Personal Development; Self-Advocacy; Health and Fitness; Career Preparation; Computers and more.

Increasingly attention is being brought to the importance of our overall wellbeing, which incorporates both physical and mental health. Focus welcomes people who have undiagnosed conditions whether temporary or long-term, such as social anxiety, isolation, or just being generally overwhelmed from the pressures of everyday life.

The programme works from a person-centred perspective, which means working on an individual basis with each person. Group work is also incorporated under this model. Success rate is high with regard outcomes with many students progressing to further education and employment but this may not be the goal for everyone and that is fine, as people are supported to achieve whatever goals they have.

Testimonials...

"Leaving secondary school, everyone is excited to move on to college. Move out, make new friends and follow their career path. For me it was terrifying. Suffering from severe anxiety and depression, the idea of college filled me with dread, so potent it was difficult for me to function. That is when I heard about the NLN Focus programme. At first, I was cautious when I started, anxious and panicked about being in a new school like environment, but as the weeks progressed, I found it to be the best decision I ever made. I loved the small, intimate environment where tutors catered to each individual's needs. Through this programme, I was able to learn about my mental health and find new ways of managing it. It became less debilitating. I learned a great deal not only about looking after my health, both physically and mentally, but I was also given the opportunity to learn from people who

understood my mental illness and worked with me to help manage it on a daily basis, which allowed me to think about moving on to college without the overwhelming feeling of panic.

"Being 23, I felt I had missed out in some way, not going to college when I finished school. Had I not done the NLN programme, I would have definitely dropped out, because I was not prepared. But the tutors at NLN supported me greatly and worked with me, so I would be prepared if and when I decided to go to college. NLN has given me back my confidence. For those who are my age and are struggling with their mental health, I highly recommend the Focus programme. It changed my life for the better and it might change yours." R.F.

"What I found fierce beneficial from the course was the routine and sense of purpose.

"While at the start, making a year's commitment was pretty scary and quite daunting, I started anyway and took the chance to see where it would lead. Taking it day by day and making the effort really paid off plus there wasn't any pressure put on us from the instructors who were very approachable, very kind and very available, helping me to look forward and guiding me to employment where my abilities and interests lie.

"The instructors were/are so helpful and kind making the course enjoyable, informative and really interesting. Because I was willing, that attitude paid off, learning lots about computers which I hate, however the teaching skills and patience (which instructors need a lot of, with my lack of computer skills) taught me loads.

"For the creative people like myself who like to work with their hands, there was plenty of arts and crafts for personal keepsakes and online exhibition for those who wanted to submit their work.

"Having access to a fantastic psychologist and rehabilitation officer, was a bonus that was gratefully appreciated and utilised by me.

"Going forward I do see a brighter future which I always believed I either didn't deserve

or couldn't aspire to, combined with a deeper understanding of me, my illness, life around me and hopefully managing these better with the skills I have learned on this course.

"Lastly, the other students on the course, well suffice to say they were beautiful and kind and non-judgemental and FUNNY.

"Now the course is nearing the end, I can't believe the year is almost up and boy did that fly.

"Showing up, being productive and constructive, has created a sense of achievement and accomplishment and has done wonders for my self worth.

"So it has been a most worthwhile and fulfilling course for me and would highly recommend it to anyone who is struggling to find their place." P.C.

"I joined the Focus course last year when I was going through one of the hardest time of my life. I was beginning to give up hope, I had no confidence, I would not dare to think of sticking up for myself and I took everything everyone said to me seriously. I bottled it all up, until I couldn't anymore. The Focus programme really benefitted me, it has made me believe in myself and given me the confidence I never thought I could have. I can now say I do not care what anyone thinks of me and I am finally able to stand up for myself. I would highly recommend it to anyone going through a tough time or needs that extra push. I promise you will not regret it. Coming here was one of the best decisions I have ever made." R.W.

If you are interested in this course but have other commitments like regular appointments/volunteering/childcare and so on, you can still get in contact with the instructors, as they can work around these. Social welfare payments are not affected. Please contact for more information: Elva on 087 2316919 email: elva.barron@nlm.ie Lee on 087 2447160 email: Lee.cole@nlm.ie

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Special Feature EDUCATION & OPPORTUNITIES

Explorers Education Programme online course presented from West Cork

The Marine Institute's Explorers Education Programme successfully held its first Continuing Professional Development (CPD) interactive online teachers summer training course with West Cork Education centre, reaching a group of teachers from all around Ireland.

Dr Dympna Daly, Director of West Cork Education centre congratulated the Explorers team on their outstanding delivery of the five-day training course, bringing the seashore to the classroom and introducing marine themes on the

primary school curriculum. "This was the first time we held an Explorers CPD course in Cork; and the first time the Explorers team have offered this as an interactive online CPD training course. We were therefore delighted with its successful delivery and as one of the teachers said they knocked it out of the park."

To make it as engaging as possible, and not too far removed from the face-to-face courses that the Explorers have delivered for the past 15 years, the teachers received personal Explorer

packs, which contained a range of educational resources and interactive materials. These were used throughout the course along with the recently published Wild about Wildlife on the Seashore films, presentations and interactive online and printable teaching resources that are now available on www.explorers.ie.

The Explorers training also provided teachers with a range of ideas and themes for projects in the classroom ranging from plastics in the ocean to coming up with novel ways to mitigate

climate change; as well as learning about marine biodiversity. The interactive online activities provided teachers with an opportunity to make flood defences – in their kitchens, to creating sea monsters from recycled items, as well as writing and performing stories – some of which used 3D online props.

For further information about the Explorers Education outreach in schools, teachers workshops and training, as well as the resources see www.explorers.ie.



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Ballinspittle NS leaves us searching for words

Teachers and pupils at Ballinspittle National School are in a celebratory mood having once again been chosen to feature in an Our World Irish Aid Awards online Global Goal Getters magazine, having already been featured in a previous edition published earlier this year.

Their featured submission is a creative 'Africa Wordsearch' which challenges readers to seek out a series of words all of which relate to the continent of Africa.

Minister for Overseas Development and the Diaspora, Colm Brophy TD, highlighting the extremely high standard of entries, said: "I would like to offer my warmest congratulations to Ballinspittle National School. As I did the wordsearch myself, I was reminded how important it is that Irish Aid continues to help deliver on the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals – and how

essential it is that everyone makes their own contribution to this ambition."

The Our World Irish Aid Awards is the flagship Global Citizenship Education initiative of Irish Aid, the Government's official international development programme run by the Department of Foreign Affairs. Cancelled in 2020, the Awards this year moved online for the first time in their 16-year history, facilitating home-learning.

This year's awards attracted more than 350 submissions from pupils who have been learning in the classroom and at home, using specially created curriculum-linked teaching and learning materials focusing on this year's theme of Partnership for the Goals.

View the Global Goal Getters magazine online via the www.ourworldirishaidawards.ie.

Africa

Name: _____

1. Ethiopia

2. Freetown

3. Victoria Lake

4. Victoria Falls

5. Coffee

6. Tea

7. Diamonds

8. Chimpanzees

9. Addis Ababa

10. Termite Hills

11. Zambia

12. Kilimanjaro

13. Uganda

14. Malawi

15. Sierre Leone

16. Languages

17. Sahara

18. Kalahari

19. Continent

20. Meerkats

21. Scorpion

22. Tanzania

23. Cactus

24. Oasis

25. Rainforest

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L	A	D	T	Z	D	M	K	C	H	Z	Z	J	Y	X	E	K	T	F	

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people Environment : Making a difference



ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

Fiona Hayes

People power creating change

circulatory system and muscles all working independently and together to maximum.

The people of Skibbereen are immensely proud of their rowing club, which pulls in hopeful Olympians from all around West Cork. I wonder how many of these people realise the contribution that 'they' have made to ensuring that West Cork continues to produce Olympians.

These same people came together to protect West Cork when an American Corporate applied for planning permission to build a polymer compounding facility in Skibbereen.

The factory would have been venting chemicals such as antimony; heavy metals, dioxins, furans and polyaromatic hydrocarbon, along with particulate matter from its chimneys, and these fumes would be carried by the prevailing wind right across the town and directly to the school. Long-term exposure via inhalation to antimony alone causes respiratory effects such as inflammation of the lungs, chronic bronchitis, and chronic emphysema. Winona, home to the company's headquarters, has the worst record of lung disease in the whole of the State of Minnesota.

However, West Cork came together to protect Skibbereen and thus our famous rowing club can look forward to training many more world-class athletes. The campaign to 'Save Our Skibbereen' is a great example of how looking after our environment

also looks after us and has far-reaching effects.

S.O.S. Skibbereen though, had an easier time than other campaigns in demonstrating to the community that if this planning were granted it would adversely affect the health of the community. Other campaigns around West Cork are less easily understood, both in terms of harm to the environment and to the community, 'and' in terms of legal procedures.

Bantry Bay, Protect Our Native Kelp Forest for example, had to start out by informing people what kelp is and why it is vital, not only to the local community, but also to the planet.

They had to explain how kelp beds are the nurseries for fish, which then grow to a size that can sustain our fishing industry and feed the visiting dolphins and whales that attract tourism to the area. They explained how kelp forms a natural storm barrier, massively reducing coastal erosion, and how it is one of the most important carbon sinks, removing carbon dioxide by photosynthesis and sequestering it in parts of the plant that break off; these parts are washed out to sea and sink in the deep ocean where they lie undisturbed, safely trapping the sequestered carbon.

The fight against climate change has long focused on scaling back humanity's emissions of planet-warming carbon-dioxide but, as the 'plant a tree' initiatives recognise, finding ways to actually pull existing CO2 out of the air and lock it up somewhere safe is vital if we are to reduce the rapidity of global warming. The Protect Our Native Kelp Campaign is not only of importance to the local community, supporting

marine tourism, fishing and the coastline, but is also a part of the much larger global effort to arrest rising temperatures and reduce the resulting catastrophic weather events around the world.

Not only is the importance of protecting the Native Kelp Forest difficult to explain, with immediate danger to the local public less obvious, but the court case has also been complex and far from clear cut. The licence to mechanically harvest over 1,860 acres of Kelp in Bantry Bay was granted in 2014 by the Minister for State at the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government. The community have been campaigning against this decision for over four years.

As was reported in West Cork People, in May 2020, The High Court ruled that there is 'no effective licence to permit the mechanical extraction of kelp from Bantry Bay because the Government failed to comply with all the requirements of the 1933 Foreshore Act, thus the licencing process is not complete'. Whilst this was in some ways welcome news as no kelp extraction could occur until the licence came into effect, it also left open a route for the granting of the licence and provided no resolution to the arguments all sides had brought before the High Court; and so the Kelp Campaign and the Government both took the case to the Supreme Court.

Noting that the case had been decided on issues that the Judge in the High Court introduced into the proceedings, rather than something the plaintiff had pleaded, the Supreme Court observed 'The pleadings in a case set the parameters and fix the issues in dispute between the

parties and those to be determined by the court' and ruled that a decision must be made on the pleadings and so the case must go back to the High Court for further hearing and case management. The legal issues in this case are complex and as yet there is no completion. You can read the Supreme Court case at <https://tinyurl.com/4764v978>

The community of Bantry and West Cork are now faced with the cost of going to court yet again but the campaign looks forward to the High Court's adjudication of the legal arguments they have made. They have a more difficult case in court than the Save Our Skibbereen Campaign faced, and they have higher costs in a long drawn-out process. Nevertheless the immediate advantage to the community and the importance to future generations, though initially less obvious is no less impactful than that of stopping a polymer compounding factory from spewing out fumes that injure the lungs.

West Cork came together to protect Skibbereen. West Cork is coming together to Protect Bantry Bay's Native Kelp. Indeed the people of West Cork are campaigning over many, many, environmental issues. They are putting time and money into opposing decisions that will adversely affect the future and to fight for improvements to the decision-making process; and they are doing this because they understand the importance of our environment and how interrelated all of these decisions are.

Irish rowing in 2021 has won Olympic Bronze and Olympic Gold. For this sport in Ireland reality changed when perception changed. Fintan McCarthy,

now alongside teammate Paul O'Donovan, an Olympic Gold Medalist, was 19-years-old as he watched the 2016 Olympic final. He told the Southern Star that it showed him what was possible. He trained the same as Gary and Paul, with the same coach Dominic Casey, on the same river, in the same club. He said, "If they can do it, I can do it."

Human reality is moulded by perceptions. The 'people power' to create change is greater than we at first realise. Change the story we tell ourselves and we change the future. We can all tell a different story, we can all dream of a better future. Once our perception of what is possible, changes, once we envision and hold a reality based on new ideas and values, we are empowered to take the actions to also create that better future.

Today there is no place for decisions based solely on linear economics that destroy the future and benefit only a few; we are building community-based regenerative cultures for our grandchildren and their grandchildren and because West Cork recognised that, today our Olympic hopefuls training on the Ilen breathe in lungfuls of clean air.

Today, there is no mechanical kelp harvesting in Bantry Bay. The fish nurseries are nurtured safely, eco tourism has a vibrant future and the kelp forests protect the coast from erosion and pull carbon from the atmosphere locking it down in the deep ocean.

You can find out how to support the Kelp Campaign by going to bantrybaykelpforest.com.

I live on the banks of the River Ilen and regularly watch Skibbereen Rowing Club training on the river, so I read with absolute delight how six of Ireland's 2021 Olympic Rowers are from Skibbereen Rowing Club.

When Paul and Gary O'Donovan won Olympic silver medals in 2016, Skibbereen was buzzing; and in the years following that success, the river was alive with Olympic hope. The number of junior beginners in the club rapidly doubled, as youngsters, who had watched two local lads create history and become national celebrities, caught the excitement.

This morning at 9am; the morning that Skibbereen rowers brought home the gold, as I watched the youngsters of the same club train on the water, I reflected on the quality of these rowers' elite performance, which requires high levels of power output at Maximum Oxygen Uptake with heart, lungs,

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Fish kill confirmed on River Ilen

Inland Fisheries Ireland, the state agency responsible for the protection, management and conservation of the Irish inland fisheries resource, is investigating a major fish kill last month on the Ilen River in Skibbereen.

Fisheries Officers were alerted to the incident by a call from a member of the public early on the morning of July 21.

Officers estimate that there were around 2,000 fish mortalities across several species including sea trout, salmon, eel and flounder.

Fish mortalities were detected over a two kilometre stretch of the river, downstream from the centre of Skibbereen town. Water and fish samples were

taken from the scene by Inland Fisheries Ireland Officers and removed for scientific analysis at an independent laboratory.

Investigations are ongoing and Inland Fisheries Ireland is not in a position to comment on the cause of the fish kill at this stage, pending further analysis of samples taken.

The River Ilen provides an important habitat for sea trout and salmon and is one of the prime angling rivers in the South-West of the country.

To report fish kills, members of the public are encouraged to call Inland Fisheries Ireland's confidential hotline number on 1890 34 74 24, which is open 24 hours a day.



Assistant Inspector with Inland Fisheries Ireland, John Twomey, pictured with fish samples at the scene of a recent fish kill along the River Ilen in Skibbereen.

people Environment : Making a difference

Colour leg rings provide insight into behaviour of Black-tailed Godwits



Birds are on the move and one to watch out for this month is the Black-tailed Godwit says **Nicholas Mitchell** Birdwatch Ireland West Cork.

You may have noticed a lot more juvenile birds in your garden and hedgerows this last month as the fledged birds disperse from their nest sites. Their contact calls are often heard before they are seen. Some, such as Robins, are found in ones and twos and are normally not far from where they were raised. This is perhaps our most ubiquitous garden bird, as it appears from nowhere the moment we pick up a spade and waits for us to disturb the soil. Long-tailed Tits on the other hand may be encountered in small flocks of extended families moving through our gardens. They forage widely, covering 7km or more during the day. It's lashing with rain, as I write this, but we have had a long hot dry spell this summer, so please keep in mind that both you and the birds will be rewarded by a birdbath in your garden.

Garden birds are not the only birds on the move. We can

again enjoy the sound and sight of wading birds on the estuaries of West Cork, as they migrate south from their summer breeding grounds, some on passage and some to over-winter. One of the waders to look out for is the Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa icelandica*; *Guilbneach earrdhubh*) some still very striking in their rich orange summer plumage before they moult into the plain greyish brown of their winter plumage. They typically wade in shallow water on tidal mudflats and the best time to get a good view of them is an hour or so either side of high water, as they are pushed towards us. For residents of Clonakilty, the Model Railway Village is a good spot. Then, at high water, they move to their high-roost sites and can be seen well at Clogheen Marsh, White's Marsh, Deasy's Quay and the surrounding fields of Clonakilty Bay. Timoleague and Rosscarbery also afford great sightings of these late summer arrivals.

Most of the Black-tailed Godwits that over-winter here breed in Iceland, but what else do we know about them, where else do they go, and when, how does habitat play a part in the timing of their migrations and so on? Some of these answers come from the use of colour leg rings. These are normally attached to juveniles at the nest site, but also to adults on their winter and passage sites. Each bird has a specific combination of rings that identifies it.

With the introduction of colour leg rings, more than 80 per cent of marked birds are re-sighted, compared to 2.5 per cent with metal rings. This has provided valuable insight into



Juvenile Long-tailed Tit. All pics: Nicholas Mitchell



Juvenile Robin

the behaviour of the Black-tailed Godwit. We now know that:

1. Individuals wintering in good habitats (abundant food) depart earlier and arrive in breeding grounds earlier than those that wintered in poor habitats.
2. Breeding partners migrate independently of one another but show synchrony in their arrival dates at nesting areas.
3. Both sexes migrate south at the same time.
4. Spring migration is getting earlier, driven by new recruits getting back to Iceland earlier than older birds.

The male Black-tailed Godwit pictured (known as BL-RGf) was recorded at Clonakilty in September 2018 and July 2019. It was first ringed as an adult by José Alves on the Tagus Estuary, Portugal in November 2011. Re-sighting records show that it seems to spend most winters in Portugal and in early spring it flies north via West Netherlands. We then see it in late summer on passage through Clonakilty, as it returns south.

It is not just waders that we should to look out for. The female Black-headed Gull pictured (known as W-EAOH) was ringed by Date Lutterop



Black-headed Gull W-EAOH



Black-tailed Godwit BL-RGf

in May 2014 on Griend Island, Netherlands, re-sighted in June 2018 on Minsener Oog, Germany and then at the Model Railway Village, Clonakilty in August 2019

So, while you are enjoying the sight and sound of these visitors tour our estuaries, please keep an eye out for colour leg rings. If you find one please take careful note of the ring colour(s) on each leg, the position (above or below the knee) and any markings and/or flags. Also note the leg and position of the metal ring if visible. Information about the ringing project and who to report the sighting to

can be found on www.erbirding.org. Alternatively, please contact us at the details below. We can all be a citizen scientist.

BirdWatch Ireland West Cork Branch

For more information about the Branch contact Nicholas Mitchell at secretary@birdwatchirelandwestcork.ie or join our mailing list by sending an email to mailinglist@birdwatchirelandwestcork.ie.

Green Skibbereen secure woodland funding for restoration of historic Myross Wood



Green Skibbereen, a not-for-profit company that promotes and delivers climate action and sustainability, is about to get started on its objective to make Myross Wood in West Cork a living, community resource for biodiversity, education, recreation and the arts. This week the project received a huge boost in the form of a grant of €28,000 through the Woodland Development Fund from the Department for Agriculture, Food and the Marine. As preparations continue for the coming launch of the new Centre of Excellence for Climate Action and Sustainability (CECAS) at Leap, this funding has been warmly welcomed by all involved.

Brendan McCormack Press Officer for Green Skibbereen explained the background to

the project "Myross Wood unfortunately suffered significant damage as a result of Storm Ophelia and this is an all too graphic reminder that we are dealing with a very present problem of extreme weather events in West Cork caused by climate change. The wood is a much loved feature of this part of West Cork and this project will help us restore our woodland through careful planting of native varieties, removal of some invasive non-native species, improved access and trails, and activities that are both sensitive and complementary to the woodland and it's special area of conservation for the rare Killarney Fern."

Fellow Green Skibbereen Director Trish Lavelle described how "We want to create a 'Meitheal' type project that

will involve local people and organisations at all levels, from schools to businesses and community groups and with that in mind we are aiming to create a new group 'The Friends of Myross Wood' to support, fundraise, volunteer and most importantly get involved in our work. We are also looking for local people who have memories and stories to share about the wood."

The Myross Wood Meitheal Project will fund works, specialist support and a better future for the wood over the next 18 months and If you would like to be involved in any way with the 'Friends of Myross Wood' please get in touch with us via trish@greenskibbereen.ie or the Green Skibbereen Facebook page.

people Environment : Making a difference

Ellen Hutchins Festival bursting with botanical activities

Whether you have been before or it's your first time, the Ellen Hutchins Festival during Heritage Week has a great range of activities around botany, botanical art, the biodiversity of Bantry Bay and the story of Ireland's first female botanist. This year features seaweeds, willow baskets, coastal wildflowers, lichens, and a kayak trip exploring shoreline wildlife.

Live outdoor events for adults, and families with older children take place from August 19–22, but before these, there is a DIY and Online Festival, from August 14–17, allowing people to take part wherever they are.

Wednesday, August 18 has a wonderful Wild Child programme for children aged six to 12, with a very special moss hunt and a native tree trail in the morning in Glengarriff Woods. In the afternoon the action is in the stable yard and grounds of Bantry House. The gardens are open for free that day, and there is a self-guided trail to trees from around the world. There are free nature art sessions that can be booked, for flower and leaf pounding and making tree ID disks with Etain Melville, and creative adventures with leaves and paint with nature artist, Sue van Coppenhagen.

The Coorycommune Loop Walk in Coomhola offers a great range of habitats for wildflowers and beautiful views over Bantry Bay. Clare Heardman, Conservation Ranger for Beara, will guide a group on this walk in the



Leaf pounding on Wild Child Day

morning on Thursday, August 19. Clare will lead another walk on Sunday, August 22 for coastal wildflowers along the O'Sullivan Mile from Trafask to Faha (and back).

On Sunday afternoon, Neil McAllister of Wild Atlantic Wildlife is repeating the highly successful trip he ran in 2019 from Adrigole Pier, exploring the shoreline wildlife in kayaks. It's a beautiful place to celebrate Water Heritage and see seals, seabirds and seaweed, and learn about water matters and coastal botany.

Oceanic Lichens in Glengarriff Woods and Harbour is the focus on the afternoon of August 19 when Paul Whelan will lead a session exploring the hidden world of this fascinating

life form. Hand lenses will be available. Since running a similar session in 2019, Paul has written a book with the same title for the Festival, published last month. West Cork is one of the best places in Europe to explore lichens and there are so many interesting ones to be seen in Glengarriff.

On Friday, August 20, a morning session at Ardnagashel, 'She Gathered Seaweeds on the Seashore' is with historical re-enactor Carrie O'Flynn and aquatic biologist Frances Gallagher. Discover who gathered seaweeds and why and how they did so. Learn about the seaweeds from Frances, make your own seaweed specimen and take a walk back in time in a special place with Carrie.



Carrie O'Flynn, historical re-enactor, dressed as Ellen Hutchins

On Friday afternoon, under a parachute shelter at an outdoor venue in Ballylickey, 'Ellen and Dawson: Seaweed and Sealing Wax' focuses on the letters and friendship between botanists Ellen Hutchins and Dawson Turner. In a session chaired by Finola Finlay of Roaringwater Journal, hear actors Karen Minihan and Mark O'Mahon, read from letters written in Summer 1811, and learn about that period from historical re-enactor, Carrie O'Flynn.

The afternoon of August 21 is 'From Branch to Basket: Willow and other useful trees' at Future Forests, Kealkil. Drop in to see a basket making demonstration by Yvon O'Flynn and a display of

baskets, book to take part in mini willow weaving sessions with Ciara Strange, and hear a talk on willow and other useful trees by Mike Collard.

While most of the in-person outdoor events are free, they must be booked in advance through Eventbrite. Numbers are limited and information given about how the events run and the safety measures in place to follow public health guidelines.

For the DIY Festival, each of the four days has a theme and a short video will be released on the Festival website in the morning to introduce this and give DIY activity ideas for the day. The Online Festival has two Zoom art workshops on painting

flowers in watercolours, with talented artists, Shevaun Doherty and Sue van Coppenhagen, both also experienced teachers.

Funding from County Cork and Creative Ireland is enabling the Festival to present its programme. The Heritage Council has provided a grant for new shelters as weather protection, outdoor furniture and sound amplification systems to make access easier.

Details of all the events, DIY days and online art workshops are on the Festival page of the website www.ellenhutchins.com with links to Eventbrite to book places.

On eagle's wings

On June 30 last year, Sunniva fledged from her nest in Glengarriff Harbour. At the time Sunniva made history by becoming the first white-tailed sea eagle chick in Ireland to be successfully raised by a single parent (with a bit of help from NPWS staff in the form of daily fish supplies!). The team at Glengarriff Nature Reserve share how Sunniva's story has unfolded over the last year.

Most young eagles leave home a few weeks or months after fledging, typically between September and December. However, as winter progressed Sunniva showed no signs of wanting to leave home. Two things might have altered the normal dynamics of dispersal: her status as the offspring of a single mother (Black P) and then the arrival of Brendan, a young male eagle.

Brendan, who hatched in Kerry in 2017, arrived in Glengarriff in late November, vying with Sunniva for Black P's attention. Brendan and Black P courted,

building up the old nest in February and March.

Unfortunately, Black P didn't lay, probably because Brendan was too young but possibly also due to the continued presence of Sunniva, who never strayed far from Glengarriff Harbour. We don't know of any young eagle in Ireland or UK that stayed home for as long as Sunniva.

Finally, on May 6 – a day we thought might never come – Sunniva left home in a sudden and conclusive manner. Her satellite tracks show she spent the night of May 6 in Kilgarvan and the next day she travelled more than 250km from south Co Kerry to the north coast of Co Mayo. There she found company in the form of another young female eagle who had also fledged in 2020. That chick had followed the more conventional dispersal pattern, leaving her Co Kerry home in November, and moving around Kerry and Cork before making her way to Mayo three weeks before Sunniva. Both birds have remained in Mayo,



mostly in separate locations, although they have met up again.

It is poignant that these two youngsters, representing a new generation of eagles, chose to spend time on the north coast of Co Mayo. Along this rugged coast is where the last pair of white-tailed sea eagles in Ireland is thought to be bred before the species became extinct. A pair is reported to have nested at a

coastal site between Portacloy and Porturlin for several years in the early 1900s but by 1910 they were gone.* In Co Cork, they became extinct even earlier, with the last pair believed to have bred on sea cliffs at Crow Head, Beara, in 1846.**

Here's hoping these two young female eagles will go on to have their own chicks in a few years time. And maybe one

of them will become the first to breed again on the north coast of Mayo, or the western tip of Co Cork.

*R.J. Ussher - in *Seán Ly-saght, Eagle Country* (2018)
** Penelope Durell, *Discover Dursey* (1966)

Thanks too to Dr Allan Mee for information for this piece.

New book on lichens of Glengarriff



Glengarriff Woods Nature Reserve is delighted to have been involved in the production of a lovely new book about the 'Lichens of Glengarriff' by the author of 'Lichens of Ireland', Paul Whelan. Accompanied by fantastic photographs there's lots of clear information to help identify the Oceanic Lichens special to West Cork. There's also a general introductory section that helps demystify the world of lichens.

The book is available from Bantry Bookshop or online via www.ellenhutchins.com RRP €16

Special Feature CREATIVE WEST CORK #madelocal

West Cork Creates 2021 on 'Home Ground'

West Cork Creates Exhibition 2021 will hold its 10th summer arts exhibition entitled 'Home Ground' from August 7 to 28 in Skibbereen. The exhibition forms part of this year's national August Craft Month and Cork Craft Month.

This year's WCC exhibition will be showing the work of 48 fine artists, sculptors, photographers and craftspeople.

During the last 18 months, most of us have had to spend large amounts of time in 'lockdown' due to Covid-19. Those of us living in West Cork are very fortunate in that our 5km limit will often include not only some built environment, but also gardens, open fields, coast, riverside and mountains.

Our immediate surroundings are not only our homes but have become our workplaces,



our playgrounds, schools for our children and our walking/ cycling/ jogging trails. This has prompted us to look with

renewed attention and appreciation at the microcosm of our locality, especially the natural world and the lives within that

space.

Practices such as gardening, wild swimming and walking barefoot in nature have become more popular during this period as powerful ways that human beings can feel more 'grounded' and connect directly to the energy of the Earth, whilst receiving benefits to our physical health and mental wellbeing.

The ground we walk upon takes on a renewed significance as we consider the soil itself as the cradle of life, a resource for growing food and for making our homes, a symbol of our identity and values. As humans

we are bound to the Earth in so many ways and our relationship to it is both physical and emotional.

In 2021, artists have been invited to submit proposals for artworks in response to the 'Home Ground' theme.

West Cork Creates Exhibition takes place in the O'Driscoll Building, Levis' Quay, Skibbereen (behind Peter O Sullivan's shop in the Main Street) from August 7 to 28. Doors open Saturday, August 7 at 11am. Opening Hours 11am-5 pm, Monday to Saturday. Admission is free.

Learn and make at Cork Craft Month 2021



From left : Eleanor Cahalane, Christine Byrne and Bernadette Tuite, Board Members of Cork Craft and Design at the Showcase Exhibition launch in Ballydehob. Pic Anna Groniecka

Cork Craft & Design, Ireland's largest social enterprise for craftspeople, has launched its 2021 programme for Cork Craft Month this August. Showcasing the best of contemporary Irish craft, a stellar line-up of over 70 exceptional workshops, masterclasses, artist talks, trails and demonstrations is taking place throughout the month. Featuring both physical and online events, along with free family-friendly activities, the packed calendar will present endless opportunities for people to explore the best of local artisan crafts. The full programme is available at corkcraftanddesign.com.

Reflecting on the past year, Cork Craft Month's 2021 showcase exhibition will share craftwork

inspired by the lockdown, with Baile/Home running in Working Artist Studios in Ballydehob until September 1.

Throughout August, Cork Craft & Design's shop at St Patrick's Mills in Douglas will host two Made in Cork craft and food markets (8 August and 29 August) while Douglas Village Shopping Centre will be the setting for the collaborative exhibition of furniture makers, ceramicists and potters, From The Earth.

The Gallery @ No.46 on Grand Parade will host Emerge, a showcase for up-and-coming Cork crafters. This exhibition will include graduating students from CIT Crawford College, Coláiste Stiobhán Naofa, St John's Central College, Kinsale College and Skibbereen College of Commerce.

Speaking on the 2021 Cork Craft Month programme launch, Carol Walsh, Operations Manager at Cork Craft & Design, said: "The pandemic has been a challenging time for crafters, but the lockdowns of the last year have also created opportunities that we never

could have imagined before. Being at home allowed space to focus, to be creative, and to try new things. Finding the positives of the past 16 months, our 110-strong membership have built online communities through social media, took the time to hone their skills, and responded to a changing world through their art.

"The energy and vision of our members was so instrumental to the success of last year's festival as we pivoted online with them, and we are eager to build on that this year through our online exhibition and digital workshops. We are also excited about our physical events. Following Government guidelines, we welcome the public to our workshops, exhibitions, artist talks and demonstrations where they can connect directly with local crafters, see the fruits of the creativity of the last year, and even learn some new skills themselves."

To coincide with Heritage Week, three workshops will be held in the Chapel Hill School of Art, Macroom on August 21 to spotlight traditional heritage

crafts and their importance to Irish culture. Rosemary Kavanagh of Wild Rose Basketry will deliver a basket weaving workshop. Helle Helsner will demonstrate Bronze Age casting and mould making, and stone sculptor James Horan will deliver a Sketching in Stone workshop.

Kilcoe Studios in West Cork

will also run a series of heritage events to celebrate traditional straw craft, An Tionscadl Tuí (The Straw Project), a family-friendly, multigenerational straw craft workshop, suitable for children over the age of nine, along with a unique online straw plaiting workshop.

Greywood Arts, based in a historic Georgian house in the

centre of Killeagh, East Cork, will host a series of weekly workshops on Fridays during Cork Craft Month.

Cork Craft Month will be running through the Design & Crafts Council Ireland's inaugural National Craft Month.

Continued on next page...

CORK CRAFT MONTH
BRINGING TOGETHER THE VERY BEST OF CORK'S UNIQUE AND EXCELLENT IRISH CRAFT AND DESIGN TRADITION
AUGUST 2021

MORE THAN 70 EVENTS!



The full programme for Cork Craft Month is available at corkcraftanddesign.com



for more follow Cork Craft Month on



#corkcraftmonth21



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...Cont'd from previous page

Carol Walsh added "We are delighted to see our local success replicated at a national level with the first ever National Craft Month. We are immensely proud that the craft community in Cork were able to provide a model for this nationwide programme of events and look forward to seeing the whole of the country embrace their local crafts just like the people of Cork do every August."

See corkcraftanddesign.com and follow Cork Craft Month on Facebook and Instagram for more. #corkcraftmonth21.

Cork Craft Month is supported by the Local Enterprise Office, Design & Crafts Council Ireland, Cork City Council, Cork County Council, Cork Education and Training Board, Cork County Council's Cobh Municipal District, Creative Ireland, and the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. Media partner for Cork Craft Month is RedFM.

West Cork events for Cork Craft Month Book essential at www.corkcraftanddesign.com/events

'Baile' Annual Showcase Exhibition

August 1 - September 1, 11am - 4pm
Working Artist Studios, Main St, Ballydehob

Cork Craft Month's annual showcase exhibition in Ballydehob. This year's theme is Baile (Home) and will set out to highlight the relationship with our homes, both as a living and working space over the past circa 16 months.

Coiled Baskets from local Plant Materials



August 10, 3pm - 5pm
Kilcoe Studio, Ballydehob (opposite Camiers garage)

This workshop by Sonia Caldwell will use locally collected rushes and grasses to make a small basket using coiling techniques. All materials will be already prepared for the workshop but we will also learn about sourcing and preparing materials found locally. Tickets €20.

An Tionscadal Tuí Harvest Event (Fómhar) with Kilcoe Studios & Brown Envelope Seeds

August 21, 10am - 4pm
Brown Envelope Seeds, Turk Head, Skibbereen, Ardagh North, P81 HP71

Brown Envelope seeds and Kilcoe Studios will host an event where they will give a talk about heritage straw craft as well as demonstrations on straw craft with some hands out activity. They will also be doing some of the threshing and harvesting of the grain that has been grown at Brown Envelope seeds and celebrate the folklore and traditions of harvest time.

The event will take place in the open shed and with social distancing in place or outdoors if weather allows. Please bring suitable footwear and clothes for outdoors.

Light Refreshments provided. Spaces are limited.

An Tionscadal Tuí: Virtual Straw Workshop & Introduction to Straw Craft

August 22, 12-1 (virtual)

This online workshop will give a brief introduction to Straw craft and then Sonia from Kilcoe Studios

will demonstrate a few basic techniques including ropemaking, braiding and decorative work. An email will be sent out to participants beforehand with information about any preparation that can be done. All the techniques we will do can be done using wild grasses, rushes and new zealand flax as well as straw that has been harvested by hand.

This workshop is funded by Creative Ireland and is free of charge, however spaces are very limited so booking is required.

An Tionscadal Tuí: Straw Craft Workshop (Ceardlann Tuí) with Kilcoe Studios

August 23, 11am - 1pm
Kilcoe Studio, Ballydehob (opposite Camiers garage)

This event will be a multi-generational workshop facilitated by Sonia Caldwell / Kilcoe Studios. Suitable for all ages over 9 years old.

This workshop will explore different styles of decorative straw plaiting and braiding. Participants will make decorative bracelets and a harvest bow.

This number is subject to covid guidelines. Spaces are limited.

Artistry on Sherkin

Patsy Atkinson gives an insight into some of the art exhibitions on Sherkin this August.

There's a picture in my mind's eye: cerulean blue skies meet turquoise seas. A daub of sap green and a splash of burnt orange add a vibrant note while tiny droplets of white spray on the water light up this ever-changing scene that stretches out to the horizon.

This is nature's artistry at play on Sherkin Island.

Every view on this small island is like a painting. Even the dry stone walls, wild flowers and the creamy cattle grazing and dreaming in fields that sweep down to the sea are a thing of beauty.

Home to artists, photographers, writers and other creatives, this tiny island in Roaring Water Bay off the south west coast of Cork is a picture perfect place.

But scenery aside, if you love art and you are looking for an inspiring day out in West Cork, then Sherkin Island is the place to be this August. A short ferry ride from Baltimore will get you to this unspoilt island.

Despite all of the additional challenges of social distancing, the community has decided to go ahead with its plans to showcase the island's creative and artistic talent this summer with a series of solo and joint exhibitions in August.

All take place in the Community Hall on Sherkin Island,

just a fifteen minute walk from the pier.

Vanessa Richardson and Nigel Towse's collaborative exhibition, 'Rust never sleeps' opened on July 23 and runs until August 2. It includes landscape paintings of Sherkin Island by Vanessa and artistic photographs by Nigel.

An exhibition by Tara O'Donoghue from August 4-9 will follow. Tara, who is also known as 'Sherkin Tara' is a collage artist whose colourful and quirky work is distinctive and humorous.

"As a collage artist living and working in West Cork, I am delighted to be exhibiting on Sherkin Island this August," said Tara. Unfortunately, my exhibition last year, 'Lockdown Frogs,' had to be cancelled so I'm thrilled that it is going ahead this summer and have aptly named it 'Freedom Frogs' so you can expect to see lots of happy frogs hopping around the Sherkin Island Community Hall this summer!"

The next exhibition, 'On the Other Hand' will run from August 11-16 and will feature oil paintings by Brigid O'Connell Madden and ceramics by Róisín Youell.

Róisín said: "What inspired me to start ceramics was when I was living in Finland just before the pandemic, a friend of mine introduced me to his own ceramic bead work and I fell in love with the process and the therapeutic effect it had on my mental health. I returned to Sherkin and spent all my



Rosie Frog by Tara O'Donoghue

savings on a kiln and everything else I needed to set myself up. Just a few weeks later the pandemic had hit Ireland and without a job in my family's pub, I started to dedicate all my time to my ceramic work. Ceramics require a lot of experimentation, time and patience. Mixing my own glazes has been important for me from the start as it allows me to create a beautiful spectrum of colour with just a few different oxides. I've been able to create some quite jewel-like finishes to my beads, while staying lightweight and easy to wear."

The final exhibitor in August will be John Simpson who will showcase a collection of paintings and monoprints to celebrate his twenty years living on Sherkin Island.

"I make paintings that are strongly influenced by both natural and geometric forms. Compositions result from a combination of intuitive image making and proportional struc-

turing," said John.

"I live on Sherkin Island where the environment provides me with many sources for painting; observations from rocky foreshores, sandy beaches, close and distant spaces, light and water, land and growth, calm and stormy weather which develop into many thematic variations.

"We are all part of nature which never stands still – always changing – always in movement. I try to reflect that powerful dynamic in my work. I enjoy working in a variety of ways, from large and small scale oils on canvas to mono printing, drawing and mixed media on paper."

July was also a busy month for artists on the island, with several exhibiting in the Community Hall including Jo Ashby, Robbie Murphy and Jordyn Lynch who was the first solo artist to exhibit this year with her exhibition titled 'The Emancipation of Stitch'.

Jordyn said: "During the



Ceramic beads by Róisín Youell

pandemic, I designed a collection of handbags and cushions. These items explore the power of stitch and how it can be used as a metaphor for identity and moments in time. Summer exhibitions on Sherkin Island are really important, as we have a very creative community here and it's a great opportunity to showcase all the talent and creativity Sherkin has to offer."

Photographer, Robbie Murphy, agrees: "It is important that the exhibitions have gone ahead this year because of the sense of normality they give. For me, Sherkin Island is a very inspiring place to live. The landscape, while always familiar, is constantly changing due to the weather and the seasons."

These thoughts are also echoed by artist, Jo Ashby, who had a joint exhibition with Robbie in July and whose garden studio is open through August. She said: "I feel that the Sherkin exhibitions are a great celebration of the artists working on or associated with the island. From early career through to established and well-known artists, each exhibition is given

equal status, which feels very important in a small community. This is echoed in the Sherkin community exhibition, which was held in July and invites all creatives on Sherkin Island – from fine art, applied arts to home crafts – who are encouraged to submit examples of their craft and work. The show always reveals the richness of creativity on such a small island and is always a popular event."

Artistic duo, Bernadette Burns and FX Murphy live and work on Sherkin Island and although they didn't exhibit this year, they also welcomed the opening of the exhibitions, as did Majella Collins O'Neill, another well-known Sherkin Island artist whose work relates directly to her experience of living on the island.

All of the exhibitions will operate to strict Covid-19 guidelines including the use hand sanitisers, face coverings for all visitors and a one-way system in line with social distancing requirements.

For ferry times see: www.sherkinisland.eu/ferry

July 23-August 2: *Rust never sleeps*, Vanessa Richardson and Nigel Towse

August 4-9: *Freedom Frogs*, Tara O'Donoghue

August 11-16: *On the other hand*, Brigid O'Connell Madden and Róisín Youell

August 18-24: *Painting and Monoprints*, John Simpson

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Award winning architects announced as principal design consultants of the €29m Crawford Art Gallery redevelopment project

Taoiseach, Micheál Martin T.D. and Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Catherine Martin T.D. on July 23 announced that the contract for the design for the redevelopment at the historic Crawford Art Gallery has been awarded to Grafton Architects.

The overall plan provides for the investment of some €29m in the redevelopment, including design, of the 200-year-old Gallery building over the next four years.

Crawford Art Gallery is a National Cultural Institution, located in the heart of Cork city and dedicated to the visual arts, both historic and contemporary. The collection comprises over 3,000 works, ranging from eighteenth-century Irish and European painting and sculpture, through to contemporary video installations. It has over 260,000 visitors per year.

The gallery located in an important historic building, parts of which date back to the early eighteenth century. The building needs significant enhancement to meet the evolving demands of a dynamic National Cultural Institution.

Through Project Ireland 2040, the Government is investing €460 million in Ireland's National Cultural Institutions to revamp and modernise their facilities both in terms of visitor experience and storage of the national collections.

The Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Catherine Martin T.D. approved last September the business plan for the Crawford Gallery.

As part of this overall plan, Grafton Architects have now been selected as the principal

design consultants following a two-stage procurement process. They will be responsible for providing all construction-related technical advice and design services to the Crawford Art Gallery and the OPW in respect of the Project.

Speaking at the announcement, the Taoiseach said: "This is a big public investment by the State in Cork City - which supports Cork's regeneration into being a forward thinking European Cultural City. It is an extraordinary opportunity to reimagine the Crawford Art Gallery's potential and create a vibrant new space for art and the public to meet in the heart of the city.

"Grafton Architects are an internationally renowned architecture firm with projects spanning from Milford to Milan, and from Lima to London, and I have no doubt that they will bring their experience and skills to bear in interpreting and developing the unique characteristics of the Crawford Art Gallery."

Minister Catherine Martin said: "I would like to thank the Chair and Director and team in the Crawford for their commitment to the redevelopment project and in continuing to deliver a wonderful artistic programme, both here in the Gallery and on-line that is so important for the wellbeing of our citizens, especially during these difficult times.

"This has been a very challenging time for artists and I was very pleased to put in place last year an Art Acquisition fund which resulted in the purchase of 422 artworks by 70 artists working in Ireland for the national collection. This scheme has been a huge success and

provided vital support to our artists while at the same time enhancing the national collection. It is inspirational to see some of the works purchased under the scheme on display here today."

Speaking on behalf of the Board and staff, Rose McHugh, Chair of the Crawford Art Gallery, welcomed the appointment of Grafton Architects as lead Designers for this major redevelopment of the Crawford. "We are delighted to have Grafton Architects leading the interdisciplinary design team, and we look forward to working with a practice that demonstrates creative vision together with a strong collaborative ethos.

"Our progress in this project to date has been based on collaboration. We have strong and productive support from the Office of Public Works (OPW) and from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. We are also grateful to Fáilte Ireland for their support and for their recognition of the Crawford as a significant attraction, and to Cork City Council for their continued support.

"Now, we look forward to collaborating with the Grafton team. With their support in this redevelopment, we will ensure that the Crawford can continue to be a place of opportunity for artists and all those interested in art, education, architecture and civic discourse. This next phase of development of the Crawford Art Gallery is a once-in-a-century opportunity to enhance the architectural and artistic life of our city and region, and we look forward to the journey."



Pictured at the announcement of the contract for the design for the redevelopment at Crawford were An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin; Yvonne Farrell, Grafton Architects and Mary Mc Carthy, Director, Crawford Art Gallery. Pic Daragh Mc Sweeney/Provision



Image of the design approach to Crawford Art Gallery. Pic: Grafton Architects

'Historic day' as Crawford Art Gallery transfers from Cork Education and Training Board to the OPW

The transfer of the Crawford Art Gallery from the auspices of Cork Education and Training Board to the Office of Public Works concluded on the morning of July 1. The completion of the transfer has been described as "a major milestone" for the Gallery in terms of their capital programme planning.

Chairperson of Crawford Art Gallery Rose McHugh welcomed the completion of the transfer as it supports Crawford

Art Gallery in progressing its capital works and projects.

She also acknowledged the extraordinary work of the Cork ETB, in particular Suzanne Mullins, Director of Organisation Support and Development, who led out on this process.

She said: "Crawford Art Gallery acknowledges the great relationship it has had with Cork ETB and we also acknowledge that the city and State owes them a depth of gratitude for holding the building in

trust and supporting the Gallery throughout the years."

Suzanne Mullins added: "Cork Education and Training Board is very proud of its association with the Crawford Art Gallery and while it is always sad to lose a piece of family, it is the right step for the growth of the Crawford as it embarks on a new chapter of its development as a National Cultural Institution. It has been an honour to be involved with Crawford Art Gallery for such a

significant period of time – we even had the pleasure of calling the building home for many years when our head office was located there."

She also acknowledged the great work of the Crawford Art Gallery over the years and added that she was confident that the invaluable relationships established through this process would "continue long into the future."

The Chief Executive of Cork Education and Training Board,

Denis Leamy acknowledged the momentous occasion and has every confidence that although no longer connected with Crawford Art Gallery, through the collection, Cork ETB will continue to champion their work while fostering links with students from their Further Education and Training institutes, such as St. John's Central College, Cork College of Commerce and CSN College of Further Education.

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Finding the light

Australian born artist Barbara Becker first arrived in Ireland as a backpacker in the 80s. Drawn in by the beauty, mystery and history of this country, which always stayed with her, more recently she realised a lifelong dream and moved from New Mexico to settle permanently in West Cork. Today Barbara divides her time between her garden overlooking Bantry Bay and painting in her studio.

While Barbara's work has been influenced by different elements over the years, a few have remained steadfast; colour and strong line with an emphasis on the underlying drawing is very important to this artist. For inspiration she looks to Van Gogh and Monet but also many of the Realists such as the American artists Janet Fish and Wayne Thibau.

"The theories of the Impressionists definitely have influenced me but I like to sharpen the focus and heighten the realism of my images. I'm not afraid to use colour, but the most important thing to remember is that colour is actually light, and so I try to paint what the light is doing on objects and landscapes."

Barbara studied art and design at the College of Fine Arts in Sydney, where she attained both a Bachelor of Arts (Fine Arts), and a Bachelor of Education (Visual Arts). She also holds a Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction from New Mexico Highlands University.

Although she majored in painting at college, for over 20 years she worked only in relief printmaking, before recently returning to oil painting.

Seduced by vivid rich colours, she explains how oil painting allows her to build up the illusion of light playing on surfaces through the use of several layers of thin glazes. "My hope is that the viewer can be taken into new ways of seeing everyday objects and places," she says. "My experience of the world has always been tinged with a touch of magic and I would like that quality to resonate from my work."

For the upcoming West Cork Creates exhibition, Barbara is looking to her magnificent surroundings: Patterns of fields on hillsides, undulating landforms, dramatic skies and the juxtaposition of water, shore and mountains.

For more information on Barbara's work and exhibitions go to www.seagardenstudio.ie.



Artist Barbara Becker



Geoff Greenham is a photographer who focuses on landscape, still life and portraiture (mostly informal). He also uses software to make composite images. His photographs in this year's 'Home Ground' West Cork Creates exhibition "feature places in Skibbereen as they were in 1990 incorporated into images of those same places as they are today. The streetscape and skyline of Skibbereen has changed in the 35 years I have lived here."

Whether it's landscape, photo montage, still life or portraiture, Geoff's imagery strives to capture an emotional response, an elevation of the ordinary to the extraordinary.

The moment of shutter release becomes his moment of insight.

The paradox of looking out through the lens and finding something that lies deep within.

His passion is creating and photographing still life compositions. "It's demanding," he shares "but you have total control over everything, the lighting, setup, nothing is left to chance."

Memento mori is a common theme running through his work. "Dead birds, leaves, dried flowers, all reminders of the

What lies within

inevitability of death, we are just passing through."

Before turning to photography Geoff worked as a stained glass artist for 30 years where he undertook many private, commercial and ecclesiastical commissions.

His last big commission in stained glass was The Glen Church in Cork in 2009-10. "It consisted of 14 huge windows in a repetitive design: I designed a wave going all around the church. It took a year to complete and afterwards I couldn't look at a piece of stained glass again," shares Geoff.

Since 2012, Geoff has devoted his energy and creativity fulltime to photography.

Born to a Polish mother in the UK, Geoff is hoping to soon become an Irish citizen. "I feel more Irish than anything else," he says.

When he first arrived in West Cork in the 1970s, on a tour of the South of Ireland on motorbike, he describes feeling "an incredible sensation of 'home'" when stopping at the lay-by on the N71 that overlooks Roaring Water Bay, the islands and the ruin that is now Jeremy Irons' refurbished Kilcoe Castle. "I had an unusual sensation of home and belonging, that I could live in this beautiful part of the world, that it was comfortable, that I could set down roots here."

Years passed and Geoff ended up falling for a Cork woman in Corfu, his future wife, who brought him home to meet her parents.



West Cork Cottage overlooking Cape Clear.

"Her father suggested we go Skibbereen, the place of his birth and where many of his relatives still lived. So off we set in a rented car and after many introductions and cups of tea, we eventually ended up at the lay-by on the N71 that overlooks the bay, the islands and the castle. Imagine my astonishment to see this view again and to learn that Dan, my future father in law, had been born in the house next to the lay-by."

"Time passed and we eventually inherited land overlooking the lay-by, the bay and the castle, which is where we have lived for the last 32 years."

'Anseo.' It's a mystery why this land spoke to me but I'm thankful to it."

Geoff is currently exhibiting in The Blue House Gallery, Schull. www.geoffgreenham.net



Robin Egg

Out of this world Cork art residency

The National Space Centre outside Middleton, in partnership with Killagh neighbour Greywood Arts has announced an open call for a unique Space Waste artist residency. The one-month sculptural project examines the debris produced by the acceleration of space technology and is supported by Cork County Council.

"The residency is a unique chance to re-purpose technological components that can't be recycled and see what emerges creatively from space waste," explained Jessica Bonenfant, Artistic Director at Greywood. "This collaboration will give an artist working three-dimensionally the chance to visit the National Space Centre to collect materials and investigate the other-worldly campus environment."

The international invitation to artists is open until August 22 and the residency will run through November. The project concludes with an exhibition and discussion at the National Space Centre in early December to showcase the work created during the residency, and to launch the NSC's 10th Birthday celebrations.

Applications and more at greywoodarts.org/space-waste/

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Through the eyes of a painter

While most of lockdown was spent in her studio in Berlin, artist Noël O'Callaghan admits to very much missing Ireland during this period, so much so that it provided easy inspiration for her work in this year's West Cork Creates exhibition 'Home Ground'.

“I began to paint from memory places I had often painted in situ,” she explains. “I used no reference material, preferring instead to let arrangements distilled from memory take shape, almost of their own accord on the canvas.”

While Noël has a studio in both Berlin and West Cork, she has been spending more and more time in Ireland recently and, since 2018, she has been busy renovating a former pub in Drimoleague with her partner, which now houses a studio for both of them and a pop-up gallery.

Drimoleague was the homeplace of Noël's father, the noted painter, Diarmuid O'Ceallacháin (1915-1993). O'Ceallacháin was in charge of the painting department at the Crawford Art School from 1940-1970.

“Painting was part of the fabric of home life... There was always a smell of linseed oil in our house,” shares Noël, who now divides her time between Berlin and West Cork.

“My father was constantly drawing – everywhere and all the time – and I was always watching him. I learned the importance of it from him and was fascinated by the gestures he made while doing this – the arm movements and the way he would size up the subject while getting it down on paper in a swift, decisive action. Sometimes he would take me sketching with him in the countryside. I have one vivid memory of being a small child sitting up on the bonnet of the car – the warmth of it, as I sat and sketched the field patterns of the valley below. I was later delighted to find my drawing from that day among my father's papers.

One of the most important lessons Noël says she learnt from being around him was “to be true to yourself, regardless of what others think”.

“He was very different to everybody else – always doing things his own way and wearing



clothes that were a little different. In the conservative Cork of the 50s and 60s and 70s, he would have been considered unusual or even a little ‘mad’.”

Inspired by her father, Noël can't remember ever wanting to be anything other than an artist, however, by the time she followed in his footsteps to the Crawford to study art, he had retired from his post and it turned out the Crawford wasn't such a good fit for his daughter. “I found the school-like atmosphere stifling compared to the artistic education, which I was absorbing at home,” she explains. She left and turned her attention to studying English Literature and History at UCC, where she became very involved with the Dramat – the university theatre society. Here she discovered a love and a talent for acting and, after graduating, she accepted a job offer with the newly formed ‘Graffiti’ Theatre Company. After two years touring with ‘Graffiti’ it felt time for a change of scene and Noël decided to relocate to Berlin where she soaked up the historical and cultural influences.

“West Berlin in the 1980s was a very unique place, circled by the Berlin Wall, with the scars of the war still apparent in the shrapnel-pocked buildings – It was the history I had studied come to life,” she shares. “The cultural history was also one I had always been interested in

and one I identified with. The German expressionist painters had always been favourites of mine – Emil Nolde, Käthe Kollwitz, and The Brücke movement – and also Edvard Munch, who himself lived in Berlin. Brecht and Weil were for me the pinnacle of theatre: Bauhaus was my ideal of modern design. They had all been influences on me, and, fused with the sensibilities of the Punk Generation, I naturally gravitated toward the cultural possibilities that deserted factories and half-bombed areas provide – in a city that has a good social infrastructure, supports the production of art, and addresses the basic needs of its citizens in terms of housing, health care, youth centres etc. That was West Berlin before the wall came down. There was always work to be picked up – in youth centres, schools and bars – and because accommodation was so cheap, you could manage on two or three days work a week, leaving plenty of time for art and life. Nowadays Berlin is a different city where property speculators are eating the heart out of it.”

After working for a short time with a Commedia del Arte Theatre, in 1988, together with her partner, Douglas, and another friend, Noël formed the Turkish-Irish Speed Folk band ‘Alice Brennen’, playing regularly in Berlin clubs and touring Spain and Turkey. When the wall came down in 1989, the



Spring Woods, oil on canvas 30 x 24cms

band, which had grown to six and later nine musicians, toured the former East Germany. Noël bought a guitar and was West Berlin's first solo female busker which, as well as being fun she says, also paid the bills.

While music and theatre was during those years in the foreground of life for Noël, she continued to paint and draw. Her father's death in April 1992 was the impetus she says she needed to return to painting fulltime. “I was struck by the thought of all the knowledge that was gone with him – the colour-mixes, the way of looking at the world and of making lines. It made me realise how much it all meant to me – and always had.”

Noël works in oil on canvas, linen, wood or paper. She also uses watercolour and for drawing, oil pastels, pens, markers and graphite. “Fluid, buttery materials.”

While she favours energy over academicism in painting, drawing is nonetheless an important aspect of Noël's work.

Whatever the subject matter, be it a life drawing or a landscape, she explains that her intent is always to create a sense of immediacy, honesty and freedom.

“I am trying to express the world around me directly as I see it. I never expect anyone else to understand what I am doing and am always pleasantly surprised if people do. I want my work to be open and transparent in its construction so that how I arrived at the end juncture is clearly viable for those who wish to analyse it.

“It's a sort of deconstruction

of the painted surface, which couples formal arrangements with very fluid and spontaneous mark-making. The support or ground (the basic surface of the painting for example canvas, wood, paper) is an important element for me and I like when it is evident in the finished painting. The unpainted area is as important for me as the painted. One defines the other as silence defines words. I want a feeling of rawness in the painting – the acknowledgement that this is a material object. I am trying to express the lyrical beauty and its effect on me but in a sparse, unsentimental way – much as a very young child does.

“I spend a lot of time mixing colours and trying to find new harmonies that excite me.”

While painting has become her full-time occupation, music and theatre have not left the life stage for Noël and in fact impact her painting.

“I play percussion and have recently got a full drum-kit, which I love playing. The structure of a drum (as a stretched skin) and stick is not so far removed from brush and canvas. Both the drum and canvas have a spring or bounce. The rhythm of the brushstrokes is important to me when painting and I tend to apply them in volleys much like playing. The tail-off of a brush stroke is a delight to me in the same way as the resonance of the last note of a musical piece. Words such as tones and harmonies are common to both music and painting. Much like a song is formally structured into verse, chorus, bridge etc., a painting is

also formally arranged. Placing of elements is very important, regardless of whether the painting is representational or abstract.”

She explains how the immediacy of playing gigs or live theatre also has a resonance in that, in her painting and drawing, the action is as important as the finished work. “I am very active when painting – never sitting down but walking swiftly for miles back and forth between the easel and the wall, and my viewing position at the other end of the room. When I paint outdoors, I cycle everywhere with all my gear on the bike. The feeling of the unrepeatable moment is ever-present for me and this is a sense of urgency, which live performers will understand.”

Noël's durational work ‘Live’, based on life-drawing in public spaces, was the first art event to be part of the Dublin Theatre Festival's main programme in 1995. She has been commissioned for a number of public art projects in Berlin and has exhibited widely in both solo and juried shows, including the Oireachtas, the Crawford Open and Iontas. In his catalogue essay, Iontas adjudicator gallerist Bernard Jacobson singled out her work for its honesty and originality. “I was delighted, not least because he was the gallerist of my teen hero David Bowie!” she shares. In 2020 she was shortlisted for the Janet Mularney prize and selected for the Highlanes Gallery Open Submission Exhibition. Her work can be found in private and public collections in Ireland, Germany, UK, China and USA. She has received awards from the Irish Arts Council and the Berlin Ministry of Culture.

While there have been many highlights throughout her career, one of the nicest things to happen she shares was an exhibition of 30 of her and her father's paintings at Uillinn in December 2018 entitled ‘Affinities’. “In this show, works of his which had a special significance for me hung alongside works of mine, which I felt may have been unconsciously influenced by them. It was lovely to bring his work back to his birthplace.”

Noël is currently showing in the Boyle Arts Festival exhibition ‘Crossings’ and will be showing at the McKenna Gallery in Northern Ireland in the Autumn.

www.noel-o-callaghan.com

Special Feature CREATIVE WEST CORK #madelocal

Creating new conversations

With 260,000 visitors a year pre-pandemic, Crawford Art Gallery is one of Cork's most popular attractions, second only to Fota Wildlife Park. With the transfer of the Crawford Art Gallery from the auspices of Cork Education and Training Board to the Office of Public Works recently concluded and the total re-development of the building with a State investment of some €29 million behind it due to commence soon, Crawford Art Gallery Director Mary McCarthy tells **Mary O'Brien** she has confidence that the footfall in this national cultural institution could easily almost double in a few years time.

“I would see it becoming a place that's really busy, I don't think 450,000 visitors a year is unrealistic,” she says. “The renewed Crawford, post development, in say four years time, will be a very significant cultural institution in Ireland and Cork... a big asset to Cork city, county and the wider metropolitan region, somewhere that will attract people to visit but also enhance the lives of people who live and work here.”

Mary's vision for the Crawford is as a dynamic institution in the heart of Cork City that's available to the public and reflects contemporary Ireland but that also takes on the debate on what it means to be Irish now. “We always say we tell stories across centuries but we must also tell stories that are relevant and that challenge some of the existing narratives that are out there.”

Another massive boost to the gallery last year was the government acquisition fund of €400,000 to support Irish artists and enhance the national collection. “There were many Cork and West Cork artists who benefitted,” shares Mary “particularly in a year where artists couldn't get to the market and show their work, it really provided both a financial and morale boost. For us, it creates this wealth of a collection into the future that we can curate or research from.”

In total, 225 artworks by 39



Mary McCarthy, Crawford Art Gallery. Pic: Clare Keogh

contemporary artists have been added to Crawford Art Gallery's collection in recent months.

‘New Threads’ the exhibition currently showing until September 5 at Crawford, showcases more than 20 of these newly acquired artworks, ranging from the inimitable humour of Stephen Brandes’ ‘Chat Show’ (2020) to the geometric colour of Tom Climent’s ‘Eden’ (2019) to the intricate sculptural forms of Evgeniya Martirosyan and Nuala O'Donovan. There is more sobering work on view too, including Rita Duffy's political ‘Guantanamo amas amat’ (2009) and ‘Meditating Tongqui’ (2020) by Stephen Doyle. The exhibition also features several paintings and prints by artists working in supported studios, including Yvonne Condon and Brianna Hurley.

“New Threads is upstairs in the Gibson Galleries so you're seeing these very contemporary artworks in 1800s architecture and there is something really beautiful about that,” says Mary. “We would say it creates new conversations between our collection and these new works. They're very vibrant and it shows that contemporary art is very high calibre in Ireland and a really high quality of work being made. There is no shortage of work out there to be bought and collected.”

Mary explains how in selecting the artworks Crawford looked at the gaps in the existing collection, as well as considering the regional imbalance. As well as acquiring work

that they had been coveting for some time, the gallery also bought work from artists who were completely new to them. “We really reviewed a lot of files and asked the advice of curators from around Ireland,” she explains. “We also asked the question ‘Do these works make sense in a public collection?’”

Does she have a personal favourite in the collection? Mary deflects the question with a smile. “Everybody has their own favourite, that's what I love about the collection,” she says. “I wasn't long in my job when I met an elderly woman in the gallery cafe who asked me the whereabouts of a particular artwork, as she missed seeing it in the gallery,” shares Mary. “People make relationships with different works at different times in their lives. What's great about the Crawford is that it's free, so people can come in for ten minutes or an hour and form relationships with different artworks, they become like close friends who are missed. Currently we can only have 15 per cent of those works on show because of storage and space limitations.”

Interestingly post-Covid, the demographic trend at the gallery has shifted towards a younger cohort. “It happened quite organically and we have had a very high presentation of people in the 18-25 age bracket visiting the gallery,” explains Mary. “I think that while it's driven by social media it's also because young people are smart and want to look at something that's not commodified,” she

shares. “Post pandemic, young people are finding a space in culture, where they can think and find themselves, where they can reflect.”

When it comes to the public's favourites, some of the most popular artworks in the gallery according to Mary are “Sean Keatings ‘Men of the South’,

Lavery's ‘The Red Rose’, John Butt's ‘View of Cork’, the portrait of Fiona Shaw by Victoria Russell. More recent works would include the Canova Casts and contemporary works like those of Rita Duffy. Then works by Cork artists like Eileen Healy and works by Tom Climent in our recent acquisitions.”

Her advice to up and coming artists is to “Keep bringing your work to our attention. We don't solicit proposals but we do ask people to keep us informed, let us know when you're having an exhibition, come to Crawford, keep looking at art that's here, see how your own art might be relevant and suggest it to us by all means.... Artists know when they've created something that should be in a public collection, something that would fit, create a conversation.”

According to Mary, the arts generally in Cork and West Cork provide a great opportunity for people to have individual or collective moments of reflection. “We've lived our lives for the past two years in isolation and realised the importance of turning up for things, backing people, networks, connecting with people,” she says.

“People are more reflective and I think arts and culture did come to the fore during the pandemic. I think values have changed and in Ireland we've realised the importance of culture, local and national. Certainly Cork and West Cork is steeped in it. I grew up in West Cork where artists really informed your thinking. All this creativity and culture has made West Cork the really great place it is today.”

Iconic painting by Jack B. Yeats becomes part of national collection at the National Gallery of Ireland

Work by one of Ireland's best-known artists, Jack B. Yeats, relating to an episode of huge social and political significance has become part of the national collection at the National Gallery of Ireland. ‘Bachelor's Walk, In Memory’ has been purchased by the Gallery with the special and generous support of the Government of Ireland and key contributions from several donors.

‘Bachelor's Walk, In Memory’ depicts an incident in Dublin city centre in 1914 in which a detachment of the King's Own Scottish Borderers opened fire on a crowd of demonstrators. Three people were killed (a fourth later died) and over 35 were injured. Earlier on the day in question, soldiers, and officers of the Dublin Metropolitan Police and Royal Irish Constabulary had intercepted Volunteers and members of Na Fianna transporting a consignment of rifles and ammunition that had arrived at Howth earlier on board the yacht The Asgard. News filtered back to Dublin, where a hostile crowd accosted the soldiers on

their return to barracks.

Yeats painted just a handful of pictures that addressed contemporary politics or current affairs directly. ‘Bachelor's Walk, In Memory’ is one of the most striking and important of these. The artist did not witness the event but was evidently deeply affected by it. He visited the following day and based the painting on a sketch he produced on the spot. He noted ‘a bullet hole in shop window’ and recorded that ‘a few paces further towards O'Connell

bridge flower girls had thrown flowers’. The painting was not seen publicly until 1922, when it featured alongside other works by Yeats at the ‘Exposition d'Art Irlandais’ in Paris. The work has been on long-term loan to the Gallery for the past twelve years. It has now been purchased by the Gallery with the support of the Government of Ireland and private donors. The acquisition of such an important political work during the Decade of Centenaries is particularly significant.



Special Feature CREATIVE WEST CORK #madelocal



Shop online at
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Lovingly curated **Gift of West Cork** box



Grey Heron curates the best of West Cork makers in Bandon

Perched in the heart of Bandon town sits Grey Heron, a design-led gift shop that first opened its bright yellow doors in April 2019. The history of the shop stretches back further though; before refurbishment and rebranding it was known simply as Bandon Craft Centre.

The new lease of life for this craft shop had been a few years in planning. For years brothers Dave and Phil McLaughlin had sought out design-led gift shops whilst travelling up the country or abroad. With each visit they returned to Bandon with some more inspiration, whether it be the carpentry of displays within the various shops, or how each positioned themselves in the market.

"We loved coming back with ideas we'd seen in places like Dublin or Galway, and eventually married some of those ideas with our own taste and



The makers at Grey Heron

interests to design what eventually became Grey Heron," they explain.

Like most other businesses in the non-essential retail sector, it's been a challenging 12 to 15 months but that hasn't stopped the brothers trying

new things. "We launched our online shop back in October 2020, which thankfully we'd commenced pre-Covid and we were very happy with the Christmas we had, both online and in store. There was huge goodwill out there to support

local businesses."

In the first year of trading, Grey Heron made it to the 'Retail Excellence Ireland Awards Top 30' finals, after a rigorous application process. "We were very surprised, and obviously delighted, to qualify for the Top 30 but the best part of it all is that we received loads of great pointers, which we took on board and are always working on behind the scenes!"

Grey Heron supports Irish artists, suppliers and makers with a very large smattering of local West Cork and Cork makers on its shelves. "We love to help tell the story of the makers and artists that work with us. It's important as there's an unbelievable amount of work behind their creations."

Makers at Grey Heron include Bert from Designer of Things, Ruth of Danu Ceramics, Louise from Inchydoney Candles, Aoife McLaughlin

(Phil's wife), Lily of Petal to Petal, Réidín from Warrior Botanical, Tony of West Cork Coffee and so many more.

"We've also been lucky to have some exceptional West Cork artists exhibiting here such as Michael McSwiney, Eilbhe O'Donovan and our town's very own Bandon Art Group, to name but a few, and some seriously talented local photographers such as John Beasley, Stephen Hayes and Jonathan Tyner.

This year Grey Heron also launched its 'Gift of West

Cork' gift box, which has really proved popular both online and in store. As its name suggests, this box comprises of carefully curated items from wonderful West Cork suppliers, from edible to bathtime treats.

However, the brother's work doesn't stop here: "We've to keep evolving and we have a very exciting announcement coming in the next month or two which we hope will add a new dimension to our shop so keep an eye out on our social pages @greyheronwestcork."

Tom Weld exhibits at CCAC

Clonakilty Community Arts Centre will hold a new exhibition of Tom Weld's paintings from August 6 to August 27 in its gallery at Asna Square, Clonakilty.

The paintings on show were mostly painted since Tom moved permanently to Ireland in 2012. The artist has exhibited his work since 1968, in art centres and galleries in London, New York, Boston, Trivandrum and many provincial venues in the UK and Ireland.

The places where Tom lived, visited, or resides, now form the basis for most of his work. Travels in Europe, America north and south, and India have often provided him with intense stimuli, feeding his fascination with the relationships, not always destructive, between land and people.

In his 'Aran' drawings he addresses those issues directly, and in 'maps' also, with its emphasis on the use of mapping to symbolise and justify violence.

Recent work has included exploring the raw material we live in and on – rock and earth and water.

Tom studied literature at university and words play a crucial role in some of the work on show at CCAC. As a painter he is self taught, both in art history and the practice of drawing and painting.

As well as communicating his love of painting through colour and form, Tom is very aware of the power of art to initiate conversation and thought, and hopes this exhibition will have that effect on its visitors.

The exhibition opening is outdoors on Asna Square on Friday, August 6 at 7.30pm and all are welcome.
www.tomweld.ie

Right: North African Story by Tom Weld



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Mr. Kite Designs Tropical Leaf Cushion €35 **Grey Heron, Bandon**

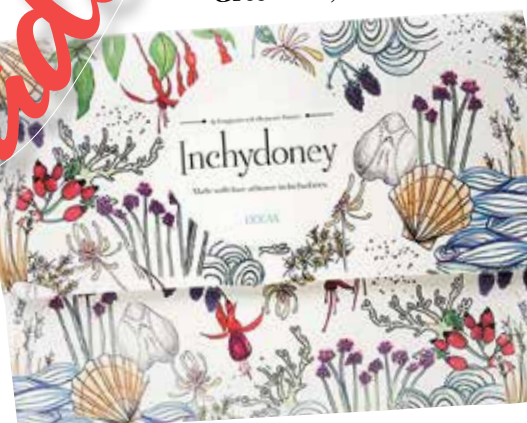


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Organic baby beanie hat €12.50, made in house at **Green Dot, Clonakilty**

Scented Drawer Liners by Inchydoney Candles €12.95
Green Dot, Clonakilty



Badly Made Books notebook €18
Grey Heron, Bandon



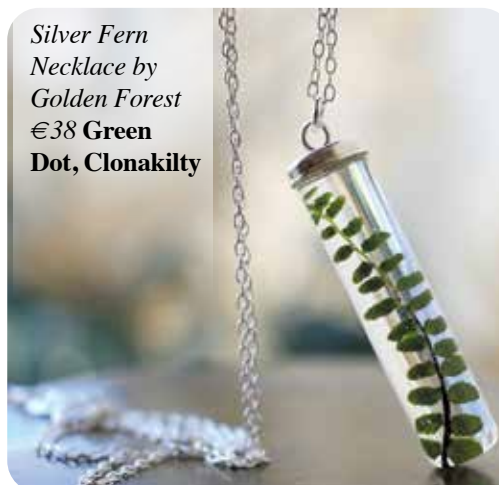
Handmade Paul Maloney Teal Tankard Mug €20
Grey Heron, Bandon



Lemongrass and ginger diffuser by La Bougie €33 **Chalk & Easel, Ballinspittle**



Cashmere/merino wool mix wraps €79.95 **Chalk & Easel, Ballinspittle**



Silver Fern Necklace by Golden Forest €38 **Green Dot, Clonakilty**



Citroen 2CV Print (Unframed) by Bert, The Designer of Things €35 **Grey Heron, Bandon**

Artists collaborate on limited edition collection of hazel furniture

‘Collaboration’ is a limited edition collection of hazel armchairs, with footstools, made by Alison Ospina with quilting, patchwork and stitching by textile Artist Mary Palmer. The collection is part of the West Cork Creates Exhibition 2021.

Each year, green wood chair-maker Alison Ospina searches for textile designers with an interest in collaboration to produce an original, limited edition collection of upholstered hazel armchairs and stools.

“I had been making wooden chairs and stools for over ten years and reached a point when I felt it was time to add some colour to my work,” Alison explains. “Textiles transform my seating by adding colour and soft textures, which comple-

ment the beautiful hazel wood they are made from.”

In previous years Ospina has used textiles designed and produced by Orla Kiely, Anne Kiely, Kerry Woollen Mills and Nicola Brown.

This year she is working in collaboration with textile artist Mary Palmer to produce pieces that reflect the ‘Home Ground’ theme of the West Cork Creates Exhibition 2021.

“My home is my comfort zone, so with comfort in mind, I look for colours and textures which are warm, comforting and familiar. I choose natural materials and organic shades,” Alison explains. “The colours I saw around me during the 5km lockdown were stones, tree bark, sheep’s wool hanging on the barbed wire fence, wild

flowers and plants. Mary and I set out to find the colours which most appealed to us within our limited home grounds.”

They chose light Jacob’s woollen cloth as a base colour for upholstery with cornflowers, montbretia, foxgloves and ferns for decorative detail.

Mary’s quilting and stitching designs add a new dimension to Alison’s chairs; her quilting introduces texture to the upholstery fabrics and her delicate, hidden stitching details, with hints of colour, delight the eye. You have to look closely for the detail and you can’t help smiling when you discover tiny flowers and leaves hidden in unexpected places, on the seats, footstools and cushions.



Special Feature CREATIVE WEST CORK #madelocal

Creating with clay

Dividing her time between London and her studio in Leap where she works obsessively when she's in Ireland, ceramicist Kathleen Standen looks to the ever-changing patterns of weather in the South West, together with such natural elements as rock strata, moving and still water, lichen, wild flowers and the fishing industry as influences for her work. She makes ceramic sculptures and vessels that allow her to explore colour and texture.

At her coastal property in West Cork, Kathleen is fortunate to be surrounded by 22 acres of land, some of which has been landscaped to assimilate with the rugged beauty of its surrounds. It's this garden with its majestic rock formation, native ferns and mature trees that Kathleen looked to during lockdown for inspiration for her glazed stoneware and earthenware vessels, with relief added, created for this year's West Cork Creates exhibition.

Born into an Irish artistic family in London – her father and brother trained as artists – Kathleen studied Marine Biology and followed a career in teaching in between raising her family before pursuing her passion for ceramics. She left teaching to enroll on a degree course in ceramics at the London Metropolitan University. Since graduating in 2005, she has exhibited in Ireland, USA, Germany, Belgium, China and the UK.

Kathleen's collection includes small sculptures and vessels

in addition to large pieces for display in gardens. 'Industrial beachcombing' in the fishing villages of West Cork and by the River Thames in London is central to much of Kathleen's work and some of her finds have become old friends, settling themselves into the undergrowth of her property.

Hers latest work is based on identity and was inspired by Brexit and questions such as: Where do I belong? Is Ireland my home or am I seeing Ireland through the eyes of a visitor? This Identity series comprises three strands: large vessels with lids made in coloured clay with images and texture of West Cork; smaller textured vessels and wall panels based on the colours and textures of The Burren area, where her mother was born; and thrown, glazed stoneware and earthenware vessels with relief pattern, based on Kathleen's garden. The latter work was made during lockdown.

She is currently exhibiting 'Standing Stones' in Richard Scott's sculpture exhibition, in the grounds of Ballymaloe House, where she sold two of her three forms on opening evening.

While the UK is where her family is based, grown-up children and grandchildren, West Cork is where Kathleen's artistic fire is fuelled and she and her husband John have made many good friends here.

Life in West Cork is "nature all around us...coastal walks, cycle rides, sea swimming, boating, and much more," she



Kathleen Standen

says passionately. The robust art scene in West Cork is also a draw. "Visual arts, music, plays and general nurturing environment for all aspects of the arts. Declan McCarthy music gigs (Baltimore Fiddle Fair) and Connelly's of Leap musical events organised by Sam McNicolls are firm favourites."

Kathleen makes her own coloured clay, adding organic material, which burns out in the kiln, leaving an eroded surface.

While the work can be physically hard – she shows off the large heavy moulds for her vessels – this doesn't phase her. "There just never seems to be enough time," is this artist's one real complaint.

Passionate about experimenting with clay, Kathleen somehow did find the time to fit in writing a much-lauded book about how clay body additions

can introduce remarkable new forms and textures in ceramic work. In 'Additions to Clay Bodies' Kathleen reveals a range of possible effects, and profiles the extraordinary work



Standing Stone 3

of contemporary makers using additions in their practice.

When she's not busy creating or writing, meeting the public and talking about her work and ceramics in general is a high-

light for Kathleen. She is particularly interested in inspiring young people to strive and has taught at a number of different institutions and societies in Ireland and UK.

Exciting new pop-up gallery in Bantry

The Square Gallery is a new art gallery for West Cork, showing artworks in various media by well-known locally based artists such as Cólín Murray, Catherine Weld, Fiona Power, Paula Marten, Tom Weld, Colin O'Daly, Sonia Caldwell, Aisling Roche and Paul Ó Colmáin among others

The gallery is located in a prominent position in Wolfe Tone Square, Bantry. It is a temporary enterprise, but will run until at least the end of August. It is an exciting new venture for Bantry, the town does not currently have

a dedicated gallery space and it is hoped there will be a lot of interest generated, both from the local community and visitors, especially this year as people holiday at home.

The gallery is open 11am to 5:30 Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, and Wednesdays 3:30 to 7pm.

It is closed on Sundays and Mondays but if anyone would like to view outside of the above hours, this can be arranged, usually within an hour or so by calling 087 1185652.



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Call of the island

“Heir Island had no choice but to become home,” shares painter and printmaker Christine Thery with **Mary O’Brien**, recalling when she first set foot on the small island off West Cork. It was to be another five years after sailing to the Caribbean and US before Christine and her husband cast anchor again at Heir; this time purchasing the two acres they had originally seen. “In many ways it simply made me feel at home,” she explains. Christine was born and raised on Hong Kong island and Heir brought back memories of other small islands she had lived on in the South China sea.

Christine is modest when talking about her work. “I have had great success being bad at any job I did so stuck to the freelance world of first black and white photography then printmaking, mostly etching then painting.”

Although she attended art school for four years, where her main subject was sculpture, a formal education carries no weight with her. “Like most people I know who did the same, I can’t say there was any training involved, even if we did all get degrees at the end. Most people who go to art school either give up art when they leave or train themselves as hard as they can for the rest of their lives.”

She admires work that is honest and not a victim of fashion and says her own influences are ever-changing. “I am inspired by what I see around me every day. The lives of people living and working the land without the knowledge any more than the birds have that they are part of it inspire me; but sadly those people are vanishing with the animals and insects around them.”

“The subjects that most interest me are those I paint, self sufficiency, independence, sustainability, protection of the world around us, if not the bigger world, then the small section of it that we can look after.”

Working mostly in oil paint on canvas, Christine also does a lot of sketching with charcoal



and pastel and makes sculptures using found objects.

Not one to mince words, she says she is not keen on conveying a message through her artwork. “It seems hard enough to understand your own work without turning it into a message at the same time.”

Christine is of mixed Russian, French and Welsh descent. Her mother was Russian, born in China, and was a refugee in Shanghai at the end of the 1940s where she met Christine’s father. They married in Shanghai Cathedral a month after meeting. Christine’s father, who worked for BOAC at the time, the British state-owned airline, had flown into Shanghai to help get refugees out during the Communist takeover. He was born in Canada to a German/French father and a Welsh mother.

After attending art college in the UK, Christine returned to Hong Kong where she lived in traditional villages on the outer islands.

While earning her income as an illustrator, as well as a freelance photographer travelling in SE Asia on assignments, she also became part of a development project on one of the islands, growing traditional vegetables organically, helping the last rice farmers to improve their soil and broaden the markets for their produce. During this time she sketched, photographed and painted the day to day life in the village and is still developing some of that material now.

Living aboard a yacht with her husband sometime later, she worked on a small etching press and did illustration work for a yachting magazine in the UK, sending it back from ports along their route. She continued her

etching work ashore when the couple moved into a house for two Maine winters.

In the early days of living on Heir Island, Christine concentrated mainly on printmaking while cultivating vegetables and taking care of chickens and ducks. Later when oil painting took hold of her, she began having regular summer exhibitions in The Gate gallery (later the Morris gallery) in Skibbereen. Unfortunately it was at the expense of her garden, as Spring was suddenly too busy a time in the studio to devote precious hours to food growing.

Christine views herself as quite a traditional artist. “I love paint itself and, although I do like a lot of abstract painting, I can only really paint pictures myself that have some sort of a story, even if that is only known to me.”

Each piece of her work has a story behind it and many of the tales are woven with threads of Hong Kong and West Cork. “The similarities between all people who live and work on the land whether in China or Ireland or anywhere in between really fascinates me,” she explains. “I plan a show of my Hong Kong and Ireland paintings all shown together one day so others can judge that for themselves.” This show was due to happen last May in Cheltenham. For now the paintings are still on Heir Island!

For this year’s West Cork Creates ‘Home Ground’ exhibition, Christine has painted the wild skies over her favourite part of the island, the western end across the bridge. “They were skies I saw, as I walked this winter and spring on the island that is vanishing, as it becomes depopulated of residents and becomes a holiday

playground,” she says sadly, admitting that, as a result of this changing face of the island, she and her husband have made the difficult decision to move to live fulltime on the mainland (although Christine will keep her artist’s studio on Heir). “Most of the houses in my paintings are homes no longer, but empty all winter under the huge sky,” she shares. “Barely a thin grey whisp of smoke to fight off the massive weather.”

For the exhibition, Christine also painted a series of imagined women in their imaginative kitchens, painted in the colours she has seen in many old houses and ruins on the nearby islands and mainland.

Although it can be a challenge getting some of her bigger paintings off the island, Christine says the sense of thrill and surprise when someone wants to buy one of her paintings is worth the effort.

“I should do more to cultivate a collector base but am a bit allergic to social media, so rely on my past and present exposure in galleries,” she shares. “Like a lot of other people who paint or pot or sculpt I don’t like to self publicise, hate exhibitions if I have to be at them, and just want to work away and have someone come and collect finished paintings and sell them for me. A vain dream unfortunately!”

Christine loves being in her studio but, after a busy day painting, she relishes the stillness that comes with sitting down in the evening with a glass of wine while the sunset blazes in through the garden doors. The art of stillness has always been a part of island life.

DESIGN POP festival returns

Cork city’s architecture, design and food festival, Design POP, is set to return to the streets of Cork and online this August 27-29. Enjoy architecture, food, and design through a series of architectural pavilions, events, talks, exhibitions, and conversations.

This year’s programme is its biggest yet – the festival has already announced seven architect, designer and food collaborations working on seven different outdoor pavilions which will be situated in different locations around Cork city: Mark Horgan and River Club Bar at The River Lee Hotel; Play Nice studio and Currabinny at Wandesford Quay; Cook Architects and Ballymaloe foods at Elizabeth Fort; Alan Macilwraith of JCA Architects and Good Day Deli at Nano Nagle Place; Maser and Crawford Gallery Café at Emmett Place; Wilson Architects and Naturally Nourished at Penrose Dock; CCAE and Blackrock Castle Observatory at Blackrock Castle.

Full details on the pavilions can be found at designpop.ie.

Design POP will also host over 15 events at the outdoor festival HQ – The Courtyard at Cork Printmakers, Lavitt Gallery, and Backwater Studio on Wandesford Quay.



Printmaker and visual artist Shane O’Driscoll.

Special Feature CREATIVE WEST CORK #madelocal

Wild Wool Way packs a punch in the world of craft

likened to ‘painting with yarn’, punch needle is a traditional form of rug making, one where you create continuous loops of wool by punching your needle in and out of a special fabric.

Certified Oxford Punch Needle Instructor, artist and environmental scientist Michelle O’Driscoll is the owner of Wild Wool Way, a West Cork craft business that offers punch needle starter kits, online lessons, yarns and accessories.

Nature-loving Michelle lives on her family farm in Enniskeane with her dairy farmer husband and four children. She shares her crafting journey, from novice to expert, with West Cork People.

An artistically-inclined child, Michelle was always painting and making things but never really settled on a particular craft. As an adult, being made redundant from a job led Michelle to a period of reflection, during which time a close friend taught her to crochet.

“I followed this Yorkshire lady who crocheted online. She was one of the organisers of Yarnale, a festival of wool and creativity that I just knew we had to visit!

“It was huge and hard to take it all in. On the second day we were rushing out to make our flight, when we passed a rug maker who was punching with an Oxford Punch Needle... well it completely captivated us.”

Michelle had finally found HER craft.

“Rug making to me is all about connection; connection with people, with fibre, with the past. You can make all kinds of things with punch needle, from rugs to wall hangings to bags – the only limit is your imagination. I also love the slowness of it, the peace of just listening to the crunch of the punch, and your thoughts.”

Michelle explains that “whilst readers are probably familiar with latch hook, quite popular in the 70s and 80s, punch needle is not latch hook. They are both forms of rug making but they use different needles and backings, and completely different techniques. With traditional rug hooking you work on the front of the piece but with punch needle you work on the back of the project so your design is backwards.”

In 2016, Michelle attended a workshop given by Amy Oxford, an American rug maker



and inventor of the Oxford Punch Needle. “I wanted to become a certified instructor so Amy looked at my work and told me that whenever I was ready, to come to her school in America, where there would be a place for me.

“Over Christmas 2017 I booked my spot on an intensive teacher training programme in Vermont. A close relative had been diagnosed with cancer and I just thought life is too short, stop thinking ‘I’ll do it when the kids are sorted’ or ‘I’ll do it when I retire’. I’m so happy I took the chance to follow my dreams.

“We had the greatest week of learning, sharing, tears and laughter. That’s why I love rug making so much... I love the community feel, the chats that are had over wool and punching, the sharing of stories, of life experiences.”

To become fully certified, Michelle designed and punched a 2x3 foot rug called ‘Cow gazing’ – “It embraces the two loves of my life, my cows and stained glass!” – that is now featured in Amy Oxford’s new book.

Although still working full-time as an environmental scientist, Michelle has gone on



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to set up Wild Wool Way, which she hopes will become a go-to destination for workshops and punch needle supplies.

“I am passionate about punch needle and want to create a community where people can come together to practice the art. When I started, punch needle wasn’t as popular as it is now. I found it very frustrating to source materials, or the materials I used weren’t great and I wasted a lot of money on the wrong items.

“I provide the highest quality of tools and materials, sourced ethically and as local as possible. The wooden frames in my kits are made in Clonakilty and my wool is sourced in Ireland. I hand dye some of the wool myself in small batches or use other small dyers. I also supply rug wool; this isn’t Irish wool, but it is great for beginners to get the stitch count right.

“I believe everybody should be given the chance to craft so I always ensure I have supplies for all budgets.”

Using the best quality materials and tools creates an overall enjoyable experience advises Michelle. “I love working with 100 per cent wool. I love when you can literally smell the sheep off it! Depending on the project, I also like to use cotton yarn.”

However, material options are endless when it comes to needle punch. During the first lockdown Michelle created a piece from her recycling bin! Highlighting another global pandemic, this piece contains food wrappers, butter wrappers, netting from fruit and plastic sleeves from milk cartons.

Michelle grew up in Ballincollig, which at the time was still “in the countryside” and she comes from a long line of farmers. “My father is from Drinagh and my mother from Ballyfeard outside Kinsale, so we spent a lot of our summer holidays on family farms, mean-

dering through the fields or out on the bog.”

Now living on a farm herself, Michelle is constantly inspired by what’s outside her back door. “Observing my cow’s personalities gives me lots of ideas. The first kit I designed was a cow called Bó... I have punched a lot of cows!”



Colours in nature as the year progresses also influence her, “I try to match the colours of the hedgerows in my yarn dyes.”

What constantly draws Michelle back to rug making are the stories the rugs tell. Her own designs are generally connected to something or someplace in her life: “I did a piece recently following the death of my uncle, of whom I was very fond. It’s called ‘Gone Fishing’ and is a memory that we shared. I thought of him and his family while punching it. You pour yourself into a piece, thinking of all the people involved, and I think that love comes across.”

Michelle also credits access to the coastline of West Cork for her creativity. “I love the sea, it sings to my soul; my lighthouse kit is inspired by Galley Head and the ‘Night Swimming’ kit is inspired by the bioluminescence experienced by kayakers in Lough Hyne.

Turning a hobby into a business has been a steep learning curve for Michelle but she recommends reaching out to online communities for support:

“Being a one woman show is hard, all the decisions fall to you and you have no one to bounce ideas off. You don’t know what you don’t know until somebody else mentions it and suddenly you have a lightbulb moment. I have made a lot of mistakes but I am learning.

“I am part of the Biscuit Community, a group for creatives and small business owners run by the fabulous business mentor Tara and also www.upsheerises.ie, where Virginia is all about empowering women to build powerful brands and believe that you can do this. You do need to push yourself out there and dampen down that inner critic and imposter syndrome, that for me is definitely a challenge.”

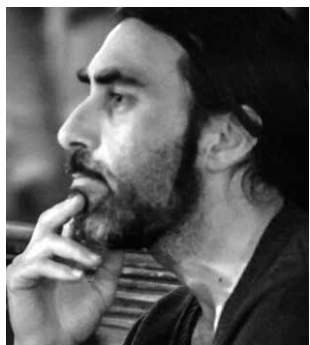
In the last year Wild Wool Way has refreshed its branding and launched a more user-friendly website with the help of the Local Enterprise Office in Clonakilty, “I am so grateful for this funding, it has helped my business grow for sure”, and Michelle has lots more ideas to grow the business into the future, “I have new punch needle kits launching early and late August, which make great presents for all ages, give the gift of craft for a gift that lasts a lifetime!”

For all you punch needle requirements visit www.wildwoolway.com or connect with Michelle on Instagram @wildwoolway and Facebook: Wild Wool Way.

Wild Wool Way is launching a new kit this August, simply called ‘Big Fluffy Cloud’. West Cork People readers can get a 10 per cent discount by using the code ‘WestCork’ at the checkout.

Special Feature CREATIVE WEST CORK #madelocal

The Wall: Stencils, spray and paths to freedom



THE SHAPE OF THINGS

James Waller

James Waller is an Australian born artist and poet based in West Cork. Through this column James explores the world of art, introducing the reader to major works of art and artists and reflecting on what makes them so engaging.

The new Michael Collins mural in Clonakilty, titled 'Paths to Freedom', is not only a colourful nod to the birth of the Irish Free State, but also a work which enfold West Cork into Ireland's street art revolution. The stencilled mural is today's equivalent of the medieval fresco; the level of craft and creative ingenuity involved is no less, even within the content perimeters of a state commission. Indeed it is the very language of stencil art, and its appeal to youth culture, that commissioning bodies are seeking to exploit.

Over the last seven years The Walls Project art agency has spear-headed the evolution of street art in Ireland, engaging solo street artists and bringing them together with state and corporate commissioning bodies. ADW Artist was in this way approached by The Walls Project and Michael Collins House for the creation of the 'Paths to Freedom' mural. It is one of many projects under ADW's creative belt, often typified by smart graphic compressions and savvy social commentary.



'Path to Freedom'

ADW is no stranger to historical subjects. His Ferns series in County Wexford depicts the 12th century Norman invasion of Ireland by Richard de Clare, known as Strongbow and his subsequent marriage to Aoife Mac Murrough, princess of Leinster. Also facilitated by The Walls Project agency, the Ferns series shows ADW at his finest: a delightful compression of monochrome figure, high-key colour, Celtic and Norman ornament and pattern, and multiple scenes worked into the shape of a single figure. The sprawling 'Paths to Freedom' mural is less cohesive in contrast, though no less full of historical detail, depicting three major Independence figures: Tadhg An Asna, Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa and Michael Collins.

Asked about the Paths to Freedom mural, ADW writes, "I do love a project that you can really get your teeth into, and this one was right up my alley with plenty of research needed to create the correct narrative for the mural. I also worked very closely with Shane from Michael Collins House, who was involved in each stage of the visual drafts before the right one was finally agreed on. We had a great few days in Clonakilty

painting the piece and there was a great vibe in the town and amazing feedback from the piece we created."

On the flip-side of commissions such as the state-sponsored 'Paths to Freedom' ADW has created more subversive and witty works, such as 'Grey Area' (2018), in affiliation with SUBSET, which depicts grey workmen in a grey world pouring coloured paint down a grey drain. It was created in support of SUBSET's initiative, challenging the rules governing planning regulations in Dublin, for public artworks, which they saw at the time as prohibitive.

'Grey Area' is the kind of smart graphic urbanites might be more familiar with; it is classic stencil-art with a social message, cleverly conveyed, one which nods to the roots of stencil art counter-culture. Asked about how such social messaging can possibly work within the framework of a commission ADW writes: "I think it depends on how brave the client is. Commissions from local councils will choose to be more sympathetic to what the public are viewing, whereas a private commission from a bar/venue or advertising agency could choose to push the boundaries of the content a little

more."

Stencil art, as an urban art form began to appear in the 70s and 80s in North America and Europe. It emerged as unsolicited acts of urban graffiti, like wildflowers of sprayed expression popping up in the proverbial concrete jungle. Legendary artists, such as John Fekner (NY), Blek le Rat (Paris) and Nick Walker (Bristol) paved the way for the likes of the contemporary artist, Banksy (UK), who has since become a household name (though, of course, not his real one).

Over the decades the work of such artists have transformed public perception and debate on the nature of urban graffiti and public art. In Melbourne the city council has designated, for a number of years now, certain city laneways for stencil artists – a legal compromise, which recognises the value of street art culture and that it actually brings in tourism.

In Ireland a major answer to street art legitimacy, for the last seven years, has been facilitated by The Walls Project, not only in the form of commissioned work, but also via its annual Waterford Walls street art festival, happening again this August (see: www.thewallsproject.ie).



'Grey Area' (top) and 'The Face of Ambition' Courtesy of adwart.com

ADW agrees that The Walls Project has helped shift public perceptions and sees street art as becoming much more acceptable in Ireland.

Dealing with commissions is something of a sea-change for stencil artists, for whom the norm, over the decades has been to flirt with arrest, working late, under pseudonyms, on unsolicited walls, all for the beauty and thrill of it, for peer acknowledgment and the honing of one's craft.

Business-savvy stencil artists today, such as ADW, facilitated by agencies such as The Walls Project are finally achieving commercial success, both through commissioned work and gallery exhibitions. There is, perhaps, a trade-off, in content and creative messaging. But one might say the same of Renaissance painters who were hired to paint the narratives of church and state. And within the perimeters of commissions the unique creative voice can always be heard (or in this case seen).

Menagerie: Animals by Artists at The Crawford

Crawford Art Gallery's show Menagerie: Animals by Artists, running from June 4, 2021 – March 6, 2022, will delight children and adults alike.

Menagerie is a word that describes a diverse collection of wild animals, kept in captivity for public or private display. In the works featured in this exhibition, historic and con-

temporary artists have captured animals in image, observing the behaviours of domesticated pets, the feats of circus animals, and the forms of their free-roaming cousins.

From domestic spaces and farmyards to circus tents and natural habitats, and from cats, dogs, and goldfish to camels, monkeys, and falcons, Menagerie: Animals by Artists asks:

what might we learn of animals seen through an artist's eye?

In conjunction with this exhibition, Crawford Art Gallery's Learn and Explore team will be hosting a programme of events. Details will be published through the Gallery's website and social media channels in the coming weeks and months.

Menagerie features the work of Sarah Atkinson, Alfred

Bendiner, Sylvia Cooke-Collis, Elizabeth Cope, Helen Farrell, Jan de Fouw, Lotte Funke, Patrick Hennessy, Daniel Malclise, Norah McGuinness, Joe Neeson, Gretta O'Brien, Tony O'Malley, Walter Osborne, John Platt, Nano Reid, Gail Ritchie, Liu Yong Xian, and more.

Curated by Anne Boddaert, Kathryn Coughlan, and Michael Waldron.



Patrick Hennessy, Self Portrait and Cat, 1978.

Special Feature CREATIVE WEST CORK #madelocal

Stephen Brandes at Uillinn



November, acrylic and coloured pencil on lino, 2021

Uillinn: West Cork Arts Centre hosts 'La Place des Grands Abysses', an exhibition of work by Stephen Brandes that runs from now until September 4.

A superlative draughtsman who has exhibited internationally, Stephen Brandes explores the interplay of word and visual language as a vehicle for storytelling with particular reference to travel fiction, absurdism and satire. This exhibition at Uillinn is the culmination of over ten years of research, observation and invention.

Three monumental, highly-detailed drawings combine with traditional collages and an animated slideshow to allow a multiplicity of readings. Central to this exhibition is an hour-long video work and the story of a fictional character, Albert Sitzfleisch and the last few months of his life in 2069, as he travels and starts writing a book on optimism, to his after-life as an unwitting tour-guide of the ruins of the Place des Vosges a century later.

La Place des Grands Abysses offers both a meditation on the legacy of the Enlightenment and a speculative portrait of Europe. It also attempts to consider our shared histories and destinies with a balance of dark

humour and poignance.

Stephen's practice explores both word and visual language as vehicles for storytelling, with particular reference to travel fiction and European traditions of absurdism and satire. For several years he embarked on a series of very large, highly detailed drawings on floor vinyl, which charted a perpetually expanding fictional universe – the genesis of which was a journey through contemporary Eastern and central Europe, following a route his grandmother had made in 1913, escaping pogroms in Romania. More recently, he commenced a body of work which not only includes drawing and painting, but monumental posters, signage, collage, printed publications and animated slideshows.

The underlying theme of this work considers the legacies of European history, by viewing human endeavour within the landscape and the constructed world from oblique cultural and historical perspectives. It is fuelled by an interest in how visual and pictorial languages from the recent past have been adopted within particular social movements, from the avant-garde and totalitarian aesthetics of the early 20th century to the graphic sensibilities of more recent years. These are often put into conflict with the subject matter: the landscapes, the

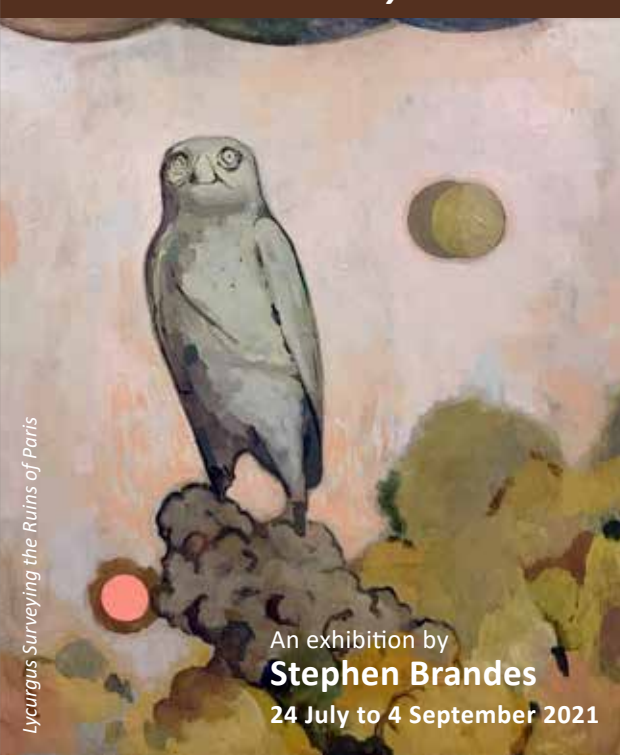
monuments and architecture that have evolved throughout Europe over the past 400 years.

His re-engagement with this material is not out of nostalgia, but rather for the purpose of misappropriation, in order to reinvest fresh meaning to these subjects. The challenge is to create objects and images that present alternative views to commonly accepted standards of beauty and authority. It also attempts to consider our shared histories and future with a measured mixture of poignancy and humour.

Stephen Brandes was born in Wolverhampton, UK in 1966 and now lives and works in Cork after moving to Ireland in 1993. He represented Ireland at the Venice Biennale 2005 as part of Ireland at Venice, and has shown in numerous exhibitions both in Ireland and internationally. Brandes has also worked on several curatorial projects, most notably Superbia, commissioned by Breaking Ground in Ballymun, Dublin, 2003 and Beasts of England, Beasts of Ireland at Visual, Carlow, 2013. With artists Mick O'Shea and Irene Murphy, he formed the absurdist culinary performance group, the Domestic Goddess. Most recently, his work has been acquired for the National Collection at the Crawford Gallery.

www.stephenbrandes.com

Uillinn: West Cork Arts Centre presents
La Place des Grands Abysses



www.westcorkartscentre.com
Mon to Sat 10am - 4.30pm
Admission Free

An exhibition by
Stephen Brandes
24 July to 4 September 2021

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Special Feature CREATIVE WEST CORK #madelocal

Mind in metal

Depending on what he's working on at the time, Paddy McCormack will describe his occupation when asked as either artist or artisan.

Working with metal, he uses a welding technique that is not widely practiced today. "I mostly braze my materials, copper and steel, using oxy/acetylene and silicon bronze rods," he explains. "For me it's a great way to weld copper and gives a lovely contrast to the colour and texture and forms a major part of my particular style."

Although he has no formal training in art, Paddy does boast a diploma in musical instrument technology (guitars) from the London College of Furniture. "I no longer make guitars, but it has served me well over the years as a baseline for many different workshop practices," he shares. "I think it is important to have some technical skills first, particularly working with metal, and let the art then come from there."

He has been a landscape gardener, carpenter and guitar maker before returning to his native New Zealand in the late 80s where he discovered a passion for metal work. Here he picked up some tricks of the trade in a friend's forge and found an outlet for his creativity. He began working with iron and copper, making interior pieces like tables, chairs and candleholders and selling these in art galleries and craft shops throughout New Zealand and then Ireland. "Some of my work may be seen as art and some as craft," he admits. "I like to blur



Fly Me To The Moon

the line between the two, as I think it gives me more scope to actually make a living out of what I do."

Paddy moved back to Ireland from New Zealand with his young family in 1997 and has been settled in West Cork since 2000. A steady demand for his

functional interior pieces at trade fairs kept him occupied fulltime throughout the Celtic Tiger years. While the crash in 2008 brought work to a standstill, fortunately he was able to break into the corporate presentation and award market. This also allowed him the time to do some larger sculptural work.

Although he finds the winters to be cold is his big workshop, Paddy has found there is something about the West Cork landscape and being on the edge of the Atlantic that benefits the creative mind. This also means it can often be difficult to switch off.

"I might be out on the high seas or staring into a pint and something out of the corner of my eye, or something somebody says, might trigger an idea, and I go into my own little world," he shares. "Using and understanding your imagination is powerful but you have to remember to bring yourself back into the reality of the present moment sometimes."

What is reality is that Paddy has been lauded more than a few times for the quality and beauty of his metalwork. Most notably, he received an award at Showcase for 'Moon Bowl' and for 'Vest' at Sculpture In Context. Another highlight was exhibiting in Hangzhou China with 10 Hands.

More recently, Paddy has completed the Baltimore sea memorial, Croi na Mara, a commission from the Baltimore Rath and the Islands Community Council, and made in collaboration with Helen Walsh. The



memorial, which is awaiting its installation in Baltimore stands at an impressive 3.4 metres high.

For this year's West Cork Creates 'Home Ground' exhibition, he is making three seats suitable to sit and relax in on your home ground. Made from copper and bronze, 'Whale rider' has the tail of the whale as the seat; 'Spare Tyre' has the shape of a flat tyre with the top compressed down to form the seat; and 'Pouffe' has the basic shape of the traditional leather pouffe.

Paddy's work is available to purchase locally at Bantry Craft Shop and West Cork Crafts Skibbereen. Follow Paddy on Instagram: paddy_mccormack



Whale Rider

Design and Crafts Council Ireland's second annual MADE LOCAL campaign to foster greater support for the Irish craft industry

Following the enormous success of last year's inaugural campaign, Made Local, a nationwide initiative developed by DCCI, will run throughout the summer and aims to once again spotlight some of Ireland's most talented craftspeople, while boosting sales and driving revenue for makers and retailers alike.

Announcing the launch of the campaign, An Tánaiste and Minister for Trade, Enterprise and Employment, Leo Varadkar TD, highlighted that: "Irish designers and makers are world renowned for their unique talent and skill. The craft and design sector contributes €500m to the Irish economy every year. I encourage everyone to dis-

cover what their local designer has to offer and support this #MadeLocal campaign."

Commenting on the importance of Irish craft and design, Andrew Bradley, Chair, DCCI, said, "Irish craft and design is an inherent part of the Irish identity. Over the past year, our studies have shown an increased desire from Irish consumers to choose quality products created by designers and craftspeople in their local communities. This year, #MADELOCAL seeks to tell the stories of these makers, building an even greater affinity between them and their customers and, in turn, support in the rejuvenation of this beloved industry."

An example of such a maker

is Badly Made Books (pictured on the right), who are producers of recycled paper notebooks, journals and planners. All of their books are handmade with machines from post-consumer waste and secondary materials. Based in Cork City the Badly Made Books studio specialises in the production of high quality, low impact local stationery. They choose to use recycled materials, risograph printing and hand-operated, pre-used machines in combination with our unique binding method to create lay flat recycled books for various uses.

Padraic McElwee, chair of the network of Local Enterprise Offices, welcomed the launch of the 2021 Made Local campaign

and said; "In collaboration with Design and Craft Council Ireland, the Local Enterprise Offices play a key role in supporting and growing businesses in the design and craft sector across the country. Like many small independent businesses they have been massively impacted over the last 18 months and this campaign will highlight to consumers the fantastic crafts and innovative designs available on their doorsteps."

For more information on Irish craft and design and where to shop products that are Made Local, please visit: www.dcci.ie or join the conversation by following #MADELOCAL.

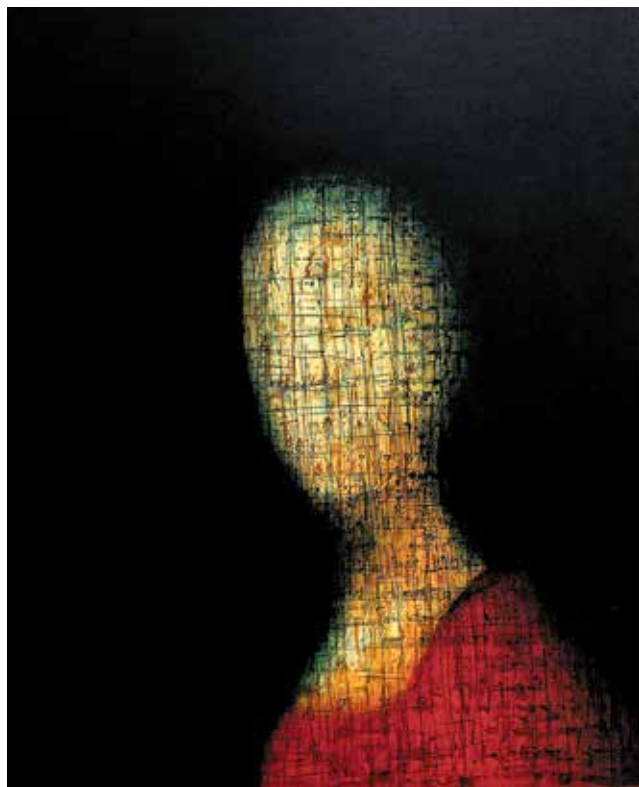


Special Feature CREATIVE WEST CORK #madelocal

Shows in the Blue House Gallery for your August arts calendar

From August 6 – 18 at Blue House Gallery in Schull, Stephen Lawlor 'A Liminal State'; prints, paintings and sculpture comes with the publication by Gandon of a substantial book on his work with text by, amongst others, John Banville and Theo Dorgan. One thinks of liminality as the state, or position, of transition between stages of existence. Through his largely figurative work individuals and small groups appear almost like a resonance of energy left behind. Fleeting, momentarily captured like a glimpsed echo of a dream. A transitory moment of flux and briefly contained energy, achieved in part by his bold use of black with emerging and layered dashes of pinks, whites and pale tones evoking the palettes of the Old Masters. Lawlor is a leading figure in the world of printmaking and has shown his work internationally.

Upstairs at Blue House is 'Amadeus on Main Street' photography by Todd Billeci. Fearless in his almost forensic photographic style – from the minutiae of life forms to the detritus of urban life and human situation Billeci brings his lens to the documentation of the construction of 'Amadeus' a play by Peter Shaffer brought to life as a joint project between PlayActing Theatre and Schull Drama Group. A collaborative, contemporary project that was performed in Schull over several nights in October 2019.



Stephen Lawlor - Diva - etching

Also running concurrently until August 18 in the Boiler Room will be a group show exhibiting a small but diverse selection of gallery artists.

August 20 until September 1 is 'Two Painters' – Kym Leahy and Nadette Charlet. An exhibition featuring the work of painters both having relocated to West Cork from other shores. Australia and Belgium respectively. Leahy's work concentrates on the source of much inspiration; the nature and flora that surrounds her in her West

Cork home. A direct response to the times we have all lived through this last year and a half and the need to concentrate on what is known, nature's beauty of line and colour, undisturbed by pandemics. Similarly in Nadette Charlet's work we see a freedom and curiosity in her exquisitely painted momentary fragments of snapshot whimsy. Concentrated viewpoints of details that might ordinarily pass unnoticed to the preoccupied passer-by. Whether that be scudding clouds brooding or

reflected or a skewed perspective that is interjected with a cast of country animals and rural oddities.

Upstairs at this time will be 'Interiors' by Christine Thery, which showcases recent work by the painter well known for her timeless representations of life on Heir Island. At once contemporary and yet reminiscent of an older story telling tradition, we are instantly brought into domestic and familiar spaces, helped by Thery's use of thickly textured and muted, yet rich pastel colours conjuring up the feeling of plastered walls, built up over many generations bearing witness to the lives lived and stories told within those same walls. At once familiar and yet almost belonging to a time already consigned to days of past and long ago.

Continuing the theme of domesticity, master (or mistress?) of her craft for over 20 years, Alison Ospina presents her greenwood chairs for which she is deservedly renowned. A stalwart for the support, expansion and collaboration between the craftworkers and artists of West Cork her beautiful, hand crafted, one-off pieces of furniture incorporates functionality and artistic aesthetics that continue to delight and surprise. Captivating as individual pieces, each with their own distinct character; a welcome addition to any home.

More exciting shows are scheduled for September so stay tuned!

Set in the midst of Schull Village on Main Street. The Blue House Gallery showing local, national & international art is open Everyday between 11am and 5 pm from Easter to October

www.bluehousegalleryschull.com



Todd Billeci - Amadeus in the Street - photograph



Kym Leahy - White Tulip - acrylic

Dunmanway artist brings circus memories to life

Artist Mags Walsh said she was both nervous and excited when asked to create a number of murals for her hometown of Dunmanway. Not just any murals – Mags was given the task of creating designs that honour the town's fascinating history and connection with Duffy's Circus. She shares the details of the project with Sandra Maybury.

A self-described introvert, Mags explains how art, up until now, has just been a hobby, but creating the Duffy's circus murals has reignited her creative side, "I was nervous about this project, it was my first big leap into the world of art in the public eye and probably my most significant career accomplishment to date."

Located outside Aldi on Main Street, Mags' murals have garnered huge attention and are



an attraction that adds to the town's charm. "Once I got over the nerves, I loved to watch people's reaction and answer their questions, as my designs were coming together. It felt wonderful to give something back to the community and to feel part of the amazing work

going on in the town."

Dunmanway has a unique circus connection; much loved entertainers, Duffy's Family Circus' winter base was close to the town centre, on Doheny Lane, and the Duffy family made this West Cork town their home. Just imagine growing up in the 1940s and 50s when the daily sight of elephants walking through the streets and the sound of a lion's roar was the norm! The circus community was described as being a great asset to the town, providing employment and a boost to the local economy. People can still recall the Duffy family triple wedding of 1951, some might describe it as one of the biggest celebrations in the town! Four members of the family, John Duffy and his sons John and James, and James's wife Priscilla, are buried at St.

Patrick's Church, Dunmanway.

Mags has hand painted four murals in honour of this connection; a magnificent portrait of a lion's face, showing its majesty, vibrance and strength, and a beautiful image of an elephant, in all her glory. "I was given Duffy's Circus as the theme and asked to include an elephant specifically. I included a lion too, as I remember a retired lion that lived at the end of the town in my youth," Mags explains.

The other images are of the iconic blue and red big top tent and a very unique copy of a photo, taken in Dunmanway, of an elephant who tried to enter the front door of a house but obviously didn't fit!

Each image was carefully planned out. "Because times have changed so much, it was important to be respectful in how I depicted the lion and the



elephant. Performing animals were perfectly acceptable and wildly celebrated back then. Even though displaced, they once brought much joy and laughter to many. I feel I man-

aged to achieve that balance."

These delightful paintings are easily spotted, as you drive through Dunmanway, at the entrance to Aldi.

Pics: Noel M photography



A FLAVOUR OF WEST CORK RECIPE

Karen Austin

The Azores High brought great excitement and good weather to West Cork in July. For ten days it was like living in the Mediterranean. The beaches were packed and the sea full of people bobbing about, a rare and delightful sight. Families were moving in with plastic bath tubs full of picnic and kit and I felt I had been transported to another country. It began to feel the norm to get up and put my shorts on at every opportunity.

Gardeners and farmers alike welcomed the torrential rain at the culmination of the heat-wave, and the courgettes sighed a breath of relief. For a vegetable that has a sunny reputation, it needs a lot of water to happily produce. I have lived here for so long that I really should not be surprised about this, nor how late it is before they arrive in abundance. And I must concede that everything seems happier with a little less heat and more water. I'd happily stand in the sunshine watering the garden but it's not the same as a good dump of rain. All in all, the garden is good, first sunshine and then rain seems to have done the trick, it's all looking very green and happy.

August brings home gardeners to the ultimate 'eat everything you have grown' moment. After patiently

Traditional Greek cuisine stuffed with flavour



waiting, weeding and watering, there's a rush on the ripening front. Peas, beans, kales, salads, fennel, beetroots, spuds, tomatoes, cucumbers, onions, apricots, raspberries, blueberries: We're drowning in some kind of food nirvana!

Here is a recipe from our friend Elisa of Syros in Greece, which we enjoy this time of the year.

Gemista, which means 'filled with' in Greek, are ripe vegetables stuffed with rice and herbs, then baked with potato wedges and olive oil. Tomatoes, peppers and courgettes all enjoy this treatment. It's an ideal recipe to make for sharing, perfect for a big family dinner or entertaining. Once the vegetable preparation is done the dish goes into the oven for an hour, then comes to out relax for at least 30 minutes before serving. In Greece this dish is not served hot. Letting everything sit allows the juices to settle and flavours develop.

The tomatoes are very important in this recipe, as it's

the juice of the tomato that cooks the rice. Big fat tomatoes are the ones to look out for. It doesn't matter if they are misshapen or ugly, as long as they are big. If you don't grow your own or have a friend or relative that might share some with you, try the farmer's markets, failing that the supermarkets sell big tomatoes. As a general rule the more local the tomato, the tastier it will be.

This recipe makes enough for six hungry people but is easy to scale back if you would like to make less.

Gemista – Stuffed Tomatoes and Peppers

Ingredients:

- 6 large ripe tomatoes
- 6 small bell peppers
- 6 onions
- 12tbs arborio rice
- 50g pine nuts
- 50g currants
- 150mls olive oil
- bunch parsley
- bunch of mint
- 6 medium/large waxy potatoes

Method:

Cut the tops off the tomatoes with a small sharp knife and scoop out the seeds and the flesh with a spoon without tearing the tomato. Put the tomato tops and the empty tomatoes aside.

Roughly chop the flesh and seeds, keeping all the juices as far as possible then put into a bowl.

Cut the tops from the peppers, take out the seeds then put the peppers and tops aside.

Peel and finely chop the onions. Heat a large frying pan, add enough oil to generously cover the bottom and, when it's hot, add the onions. Cook on a medium heat, without browning, until the onions soften. Season with a little salt. Add the pine nuts and currants, cook for a couple of minutes more then add the rice, tomato juice and flesh and season with salt and pepper. Take off the heat. Chop the herbs and stir in then leave to cool.

Pre heat the oven 180c

Fill the tomatoes and peppers loosely with the mix and put the tops back on.

Place in an ovenproof baking tray with high sides that will accommodate the vegetables snugly.

Peel the potatoes and cut into wedges. Jam these in between the tomatoes and peppers. Drizzle everything generously with olive oil.

Bake for about one hour, until the tomatoes and peppers are soft and lightly charred.

Leave them to relax for 30 minutes before serving.

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OUT & ABOUT IN WEST CORK



Kilbree players Caoimhe Murphy and Emily O'Donovan, part of the Cork minor camogie team that recently won the Minor A Munster championship final.



Aengus O Coileain aged 5 graduating from Montessori school Clonakilty.



90-year-old Patrick McClean enjoys his first pint in over 12 months at The Beehive Bar, Connonagh, Leap.

people Health & Lifestyle

Emmet Hotel rises to the challenge

It's been a busy few months for The Emmet Hotel, a boutique hotel in the heart of Clonakilty. Proprietors Rob and Rebecca O'Keeffe, share how their journey through the lockdown has seen them come back stronger and with a renewed sense of value for their staff, guests and all the community around them.

“Over the past five years we have been making changes all the time to our hotel and have established The Emmet as one of the best boutique hotels in West Cork. When the lockdown first happened, our main concern was for the health of our staff and customers,” says Robert.

“As time went on and further lockdowns were imposed, we began to think long and hard about how we wanted The Emmet to be when we finally reopened. We tried to take full advantage of the lockdown to

improve the hotel and to come back with a better product. Our first step was to improve our accommodation by upgrading and redecorating our bedrooms and bathrooms. We also added Nespresso coffee machines and wireless speakers to our bedrooms. These, along with our new fibre broadband, have really added to our guests' enjoyment.”

“As lockdowns extended, we turned our attention to our Emmet Bar,” continues Robert. “We moved the location of our bar and opened up the space that was always there. Our new floor and a complete redecoration have completely changed the whole look and feel. When our regular customers have come in for a look, all of them have been astounded by the change. It's a really comfortable and relaxing space now for dining and drinks.”

The Emmet Garden was redesigned in 2019 with a new covered area and with the emphasis on outdoor eating – this was another area of opportunity to extend and improve on for Robert and Rebecca.

“We were closed for eight months which is quite a long period,” Rebecca says. “We



took this as an opportunity to improve what we have. We upgraded the garden in particular because we believe the outside is the new inside. We have a new gorgeous fuchsia pink parasol with new heating and lighting, which adds to our existing outdoor covered space. These are changes which will enhance the hotel not just now but for years to come. We've planted all around the garden and it is just a wonderful space now for everyone, young and old, to enjoy.”

“It has been a difficult time

for all of us and for our staff and one of the ways to overcome difficulty is by working through it,” adds Robert. “We planned carefully and worked through all the areas we wanted to improve.”

“We wanted to come back better,” says Rebecca. “After such a difficult time, I think it is important to have something new and improved for our guests and customers. More space, more comfort, everything upgraded. When our guests arrive, we want them to feel how important they are to us. I think

that is something that everyone has realised during this time – just how important we all are to each other – from our staff to our guests to our neighbours and local community – we have all pulled together.”

“The support of our local community has been brilliant. Clonakilty and West Cork have really come together during these times and all of us want each other to do well,” says Robert. “The people here have been truly special.”

“Since we re-opened,” continues Rebecca. “The response

and feedback has been brilliant. It has been a tough time, but I think we have come back better and stronger and with a much improved Emmet Hotel. Every day we hear about how much our guests are enjoying Clonakilty and West Cork. They love the Michael Collins Museum beside us and can then visit his birthplace and home nearby. There are wonderful walks nearby in Castlefreke Woods, between the Warren beach and Owenhincha, and out on the seven heads near Courtmacsherry. We had a guest the other day singing the praises of the visitor centre at Clonakilty Black Pudding while others have returned with gorgeous photos of the Beara Peninsula. We are surrounded by wonderful places to visit and Clonakilty is filled with delightful boutiques, shops and places to visit.”

“It is a pleasure to welcome guests back and gives us great hope for the future,” Rebecca says. “To see our Emmet Garden filled with guests enjoying our fabulously fresh West Cork food is an absolute joy. So we would say to everyone, come and visit – The Emmet Hotel is back and we have so much more to offer everyone.”



LGBTI+ MATTERS

BRÓD is an LGBTI+ Community Group based in West Cork. A mix of LGBTI+ people and allies, the group's mission is to 'Support, Advocate and Increase Visibility' for the LGBTI+ community in West Cork.



by Mark Holland

Taekwondo is a Korean martial art, not Japanese, but as neighbouring

Doing us proud on the world stage

countries and cultures, it takes some bravery to go over there to compete in their sport and expect to win. At 22-years-of-age that's what our Jack Woolley did, representing his country, Ireland explains Mark Holland. He was ranked as number six in the competitors and intended to improve on that position during the games and bring home a medal. It was devastating for him to lose his first bout, only in the last few seconds, his five year journey to Tokyo all over in six minutes of fighting. He is the first Irish person to compete in this sport at the Olympics and he is the first openly gay Irish person to represent his country at the games, and we pat ourselves on the shoulder because we have come such a long way. We have, but starting from such a low point in 1993, the year that homosexuality was decriminalised, we have such a long way to go.

During the campaign for decriminalisation, David Norris, the only homosexual in the country at the time, was advised by RTE before an interview to not show his face and to disguise his voice; he had to explain to them that they might be

missing the point. A couple of years ago the organisation that I was working for had drawn up an action plan to make Ireland 'The Best Place to be LGBT+', I had the opportunity to put a copy of this plan into the hands of a highly placed politician/legislator, a great advocate and supporter of equality and fairness, who had to eyeball me quizzically and say, referring to the marriage equality referendum, “I thought that was all sorted” – unfortunately no, just the tip of the iceberg.

Jack Wooley has gone out there on the big stage to represent us all, to show the world that unlike the insecure little place this country was thirty years ago, we are now determined to educate and inform ourselves, to shine a light into the shadows and proudly embrace all of our diverse people equally, but he is still on his own. Even going by the demeaningly conservative figure of 10 per cent, the Irish Olympic team made up of 116 athletes should, on average, contain 10 or 11 LGBTI+ people. Now, it's not all just down to national bias, some of these sports at the highest

echelons are fiercely controlled. According to Finnish swimmer Ari-Pekka Liukkonen, it is not tolerated in his sport, which does not mean that you can't 'be' gay, it just means that you can't be open or honest about a fundamental part of your identity, about who you are. Here we go again. And it is not about the individuals who make up the teams, it's never about the individuals, it's the institution, and standing up to the institution can be a very cold and lonely place to be. Jack is not saying; 'Hey, I'm Irish and this is totally cool.' No, he's saying; 'I'm Irish and I'm not afraid to take you on, because the bigotry of discrimination is not cool, and the environment and atmosphere in this country has changed enough that you can have your opinion and express it, and I'll be fine over here with my friends, wondering what's up with you?'

Nine years ago at London 2012, out of around 10,000 athletes there were 23 who were openly LGBTI+. Four years later in Rio the number had risen to 56, and this year in Tokyo, out of around 11,000, the figure could be 178, up from 168 last

week, still a frighteningly small number of people out of a likely 1,100 who feel that their careers and futures will be detrimentally affected if they were to make their true identities known to the public. At the last count there were only two from Asia! It is an inherent duty of all privileged members of our species to challenge discrimination and inequality against another, of any kind. It is incumbent on us all to educate and inform ourselves to challenge the phobia that is woven into the order of our society by institutions that use fear and division to dominate us as their power base.

I would not attempt to name all of the LGBTI+ athletes of Ireland, as that would be unfair to any that I don't know about, but I think special mention has to go to the wonderful and amazing Joy Neville from Limerick. As a player she captained the first Irish team to beat France in Rugby's Six Nations, and was part of the team that won a Grand Slam in 2013. After a playing career she went on to referee, winning the accolade of World Rugby Referee in 2017. While she has refed professional games



Joy Neville

internationally she has not yet refed an International, between two nations. Earlier this year she became the first female television match official (TMO) in the men's Six Nations Championship, three times, and in two of those games she had to draw the referee's attention to try disallowing infringements, on the ball Joy. So I am going to take a punt that she has made sporting history again as the first TMO ever to take Maternity Leave, congratulations! And if I'm wrong I'll stand you a coffee and a carrot cake at the market in Schull on Sunday.

people Health & Lifestyle

Spare a thought for your future self



Radical Wellness

Freya Sherlock

Freya Sherlock is a professional Chinese Medicine practitioner offering Acupuncture and Moxibustion, Chinese Herbal Medicine prescriptions and Tui Na Remedial Bodywork at her private clinic in Dunmanway. She offers a general practice with additional specialisms in women's health and digestive disorders. Freya is also Ireland's premier WildFit Coach.

Have you ever sat back and wondered what kind of life your 'future self' will be living? Of course, we have endless future selves – the one that lives next week's life, or your life in a year or decade even from now. With life's beautiful, if a little unnerving unpredictability, how can we possibly really picture what life will be like for our future self in term of circumstances, as opportunities, careers, relationships, and phases all come and go? Indeed, if nothing else, the past 18 months has illustrated how even the unimaginable is still entirely possible.

However, the one rock-solid reliable feature of any future we are fortunate to have, is indeed ourselves. As sure as night follows day, we will trundle towards our future self, be it tomorrow, next month, next year

with a certain inevitability (for as long as we are spared our encounter with the final horizon!). Many of us are indeed prudent planners when it comes to taking care of our future self financially with pensions and retirement plans, or career wise, setting ourselves on course to become who we conceive ourselves to be through education. But in my observation, we are more prone to a couple of significant blind spots, with a greater disconnect from this quiet yet unwavering fact when it comes to our health and the environment, as if the person we are today and the way we are living today will bear no influence on the life and health our future self will enjoy. For now, let's take a look at health.

As an acupuncturist, Chinese Medicine practitioner and WildFit coach, I find the art and practice of holistic medicine is an intriguing process of consciously meeting a person in 'the now', at the threshold of their past and future selves. The consultation process is about archeologically sifting through all they have experienced and how they have lived, physically, nutritionally, psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually up until this point and all that their body now symptomatically reveals as an honest reflection of their biography.

Like art, which isn't so much a process of imposing form but revealing and releasing what is calling to be expressed, similarly the treatment process is one of listening deeply to the quiet whisper of a person's future self and helping to strengthen their bond to a more positive potentiality. Much like a ship set on a course in one direction, one that may be heading towards a future self fraught with poor physical or mental health, illness, and compromised quality of life,

through a highly individualised treatment process, that course can be adjusted by several degrees, which when followed over years of metaphorical miles will indeed lead to an entirely different and more wholesome destination.

I have a particular passion for empowering people to realise just how much they can radically alter the life and health of their future self for themselves simply by overhauling their nutrition. This is a relatively simple yet immensely impactful and practical route to a whole new level of rude health that we are often not aware of. We have so lost sight of all that we as humans need for a true human diet, set aside from all that is on the shelves masquerading as food, that we can genuinely believe we are eating well, not realising that our body begs to differ.

Yet in my clinical life, I see the results of the modern diet all the time and it isn't pretty. My role is to listen to the body's cries for help and believe me it can be a resounding wail that even the custodian of the body is oblivious to. People come in because their diabetes, IBS, UTI's, ME, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, auto-immune conditions or post-Covid syndrome has brought them, or their pains and inflammation has made them book an appointment, or their anxiety, depression and existential angst compelled them to look for help, or their post-chemo fatigue is debilitating them, or their menstrual life is a monthly hell for them or their longing to conceive a baby brings them in or their menopause is wreaking havoc with them.

No matter what brings them in to my clinic, in almost all cases, if I could wave a magic wand for them, the most important

thing they need to address first and foremost which would have the most incredible qualitative impact on their health and well-being is what they are putting into their body each and every day.

Our bodies are so immensely forgiving and work tirelessly all day, every single day to mitigate the effects of all the sugars, chemicals and non-functional foods we consume on drip feed throughout the day, often without even realising it. And often, the very symptoms that bring people in for treatment are simply a) a reflection that the body is no longer coping with this low-grade but ever-present toxic load and b) the body's attempt to discharge that toxic load somehow, someway, in a bid to keep YOU alive and as well as possible. All that inflammation is simply toxicity stored in the joints away from your vital organs. All those UTI's, skin conditions, troublesome bowels and copious phlegm are your body valiantly trying to find ways to discharge what it can't cope with, while mental and emotional health is, in part, a demonstration of the body-mind continuum in action. So on and so forth.

Personally, I love nothing more than helping people to build a whole new relationship with themselves and their remarkable body, to discover how much they can do to re-write the trajectory they are on and with a combination of acupuncture, Chinese herbal prescriptions and WildFit coaching, help them fall in love with being and feeling vibrantly healthy. So please, spare a thought and advocate for your future self today in a way that She or He will thank you for!

Busting cleansing myths with CeraVe

After a year that has strengthened the importance of cleansing — hands, face, surfaces, and everything in between — the experts at CeraVe thought it was a good time to dispel just a couple myths that surround this very important skincare topic.

If you don't wear makeup, a splash of water is fine: According to consultant dermatologist, Dr Alexis Granite, water just doesn't cut it. "If we are not cleansing, we're essentially allowing build-up on the skin which can open up a whole range of issues. Even if you don't wear makeup, you still need to remove other products which your skin comes into contact with from moisturisers to SPF as well as daily pollutants, dirt, oils and sweat. Build-up of these toxins can result in everything from lack of

luminosity to clogged pores, dry, irritated skin, breakouts and even acne. Without cleansing you're not giving your skin chance to renew itself. Cleansing also ensures a fresh canvas on which to apply additional products within your skincare routine, allowing them to penetrate more effectively.

The best cleansers are packed with super-active ingredients: You've probably heard about buzz ingredients such as glycolic acid, vitamin C, antioxidants and peptides, and you might assume that you'd want them in your cleanser too. But for Dr Granite, cleansing is "a functional step that, when it's done right, creates the perfect canvas for the rest of your routine. It can actually be more effective to keep your cleansing step super simple and leave the targeted treatments and ingredients for the steps

which follow such as serums and moisturisers. That's not to say that you never want an active ingredient in your cleanser — for certain skin types, a salicylic acid cleanser can be really beneficial but if you're using a cleanser with salicylic acid, you probably want to check that you're not doubling up with the same ingredient in the rest of your skincare routine."

Cleansing can't help restore your skin barrier: Dr Granite explains how "Our skin barrier works as a protectant and if it becomes damaged this may allow external aggressors, irritants and allergens to penetrate the skin and cause issues such as skin sensitivity and dermatitis. If your skin barrier has been compromised there are ways to help restore it back to its fully functioning best. Our skin naturally contains ceramides, lipids that

support the skin barrier by ensuring our skin functions correctly. CeraVe products are formulated with a unique blend of three essential ceramides that are crucial for skin restoration. Cleansing with CeraVe can help to restore the skin barrier and leave you with plumper, more hydrated skin."

Dr Alexis Granite often recommends CeraVe cleansers to her patients "They're fragrance-free, and super-gentle but incredibly hard-working. Every formula is developed with dermatologists from around the world who share their advice and knowledge regarding skin science and ingredients, and the patented MVE technology ensures gradual release of active ingredients to ensure consistent moisture levels are maintained throughout the day."



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HERBAL HEALING

Dr. Rosari Kingston

Dr. Rosari Kingston PhD, M.Sc (Herbal medicine) is a medical herbalist practising in Dr. O'Reilly's integrative clinical practice in Clonakilty, Co. Cork as well as Church Cross, Skibbereen. Dr. Kingston's area of research are the healing modalities present in Irish vernacular medicine and she incorporates them, where possible, into her clinical practice. In her clinical practise she specialises in infertility and digestive issues. www.rosarikingstonphd.com

Honeysuckle /woodbine (*Lonicera periclymenum*) is spreading its glorious perfume among the hedgerows at present, and it is a really beautiful scent on a summer evening. Even though its early growth is soft and supple, it becomes hard with age and is very strong. In the 'Táin Bó Cúailnge', Cúchulainn tells Ferdia to cease fighting or "I will entwine you as a woodbine binds trees" Murphy, in his work on early Irish lyrics, mentions honeysuckle as a plant of beauty growing over the doorway of the hut of Marbán, the hermit.

In times past it was common for children to suck the base of the flowers for their sweet

nectar and this sweet nature explains why it is so attractive to bees.

The flowers are used medicinally to treat respiratory diseases and a syrup is made from the flowers to treat coughs, colds and asthma. In the past, this syrup was useful also in the treatment of TB and whooping cough. The advantage of a syrup is that, if properly made, it will keep well in a cool dark larder over the winter months. Honeysuckle's presence in our hedgerows this month is thus a timely reminder to prepare for the common illnesses that visit us during the cold dark days of winter and early spring.

A strong tea of both leaves and flowers may be used as a mouth wash and gargle for inflammation and mouth ulcers and this infusion is also useful in the treatment of thrush. Allen and Hatfield note this use, as recorded in Sligo, the Aran Islands, Wicklow and Wexford.

The flowers are antispasmodic, and a tea made from them may be useful in cramps, but the leaves are laxative, so a tea of same may bring on a bout of diarrhoea if one is not careful.

Unfortunately, there has been very little research carried out on our native honeysuckle, unlike 'Lonicera japonica', which is used in traditional Chinese medicine, for fever, cold-related headache, cough, thirst, certain inflammation including sore throat, skin infection, and tumor necrosis. A compound, ioniflavone, in this herb is currently being investigated as a possible source of new drug development against SARs-CoV-2.

Steal an accessible parking space – steal someone's independence

WALKING IN MY SHOES

Elizabeth Walsh

Walking in my shoes – accessibility explained. Each and every day our lives impact on each person's life whose path we cross, metaphorically and physically, positively or negatively!

She reverses in slowly, raising the windows, closing off the welcome air supply. A glorious day. She gathers handbag, mask, phone. Positions walking aid within reach, about to push open the car door. A car skids to a halt and begins reversing into the hatched area between the two accessible car parking spaces. Effectively, imprisoning her in her car. She beeps the horn, politely. The driver looks. She lowers her window again and explains that "It is not a parking space; the hatching is to enable People with Disabilities (PWD), like me, to enter and exit their vehicles". The woman drives on.

An articulated truck is parked in an accessible space and the hatched areas, either side of the space, blocking a second accessible space. The driver is unloading. A man enquires why the truck is parked illegally blocking the accessible parking spaces. "There are no parking spaces available, I have to do my job".

His parked car comes into view as he rounds the corner in his wheelchair. He slams his hands to his wheels to brake. "What the hell"! He rolls closer. No solution. Been there before. A car is parked so close to his door in the hatched area, it cannot be accessed. Bucketing down rain. Another sit and wait job.

The young man is conspicuous. He sits in a car in an accessible parking space, without a blue parking permit displayed. A quiet Sunday morning, there are many available spaces, just not at the 'door' of the shop. Asked politely if he realises that he is parked in an accessible parking space, his response is, "I'm only here for two minutes! My partner is not long out of hospital"! He is politely told, "This is not a two-minute parking space. It is not a parking space for people not long out hospital, it is accessible parking for PWD, is enforceable by law,



and is subject to a €150 fine for violations". The young man moves his vehicle.

The car becomes conspicuous as the driver suddenly emerges, rapidly, having been apparently waiting, no obvious disability. It may be a hidden disability, there may be a passenger with a disability, it may not be possible to identify a blue parking permit on the windscreen. Ten minutes later, the car is still there, not displaying the appropriate blue parking permit. Inside it a woman and two children are enjoying an outdoor dining experience with a box of take-away pizza. She mouths, through pizza, "I know, I am only here two minutes". The response, "You are here a minimum of ten minutes, and this is not a two-minute, a ten-minute, or outdoor dining parking space, it is an accessible parking space". The remaining two slices of pizza are dumped on the child's lap in the front seat, and she takes off at speed.

She sees the car in the accessible space of the multi-storey carpark and realises that it is not displaying a blue parking permit. She climbs out of her car, and laboriously makes her way to the driver's door. "Could you please let me park here? I need this space". The young girl issues a shocking expletive in her direction. Resignedly, and hopeful that her young daughter had missed the exchange, she makes her way back into her car. She reassures her daughter that she will find a space and manage. She parks in a standard space which appears to have the most width from other cars. Her disability makes it challenging to exit the car. She struggles to unload her daughter's wheelchair, jokes with her, to lighten the moment, dissipate the tension, alleviate her distress. So difficult to haul her out a half open door to a wheelchair at the back of the car. Finally, as they

roll towards the lift, the young girl drives out of the accessible parking space, past them. Lunch is over.

Second time around the town, eyes darting, searching for an available space. So busy. So frustrating. One available accessible parking space, a car is parked across the hatching behind it protruding into the space, effectively rendering it unusable. A van is nosed right up to the space at the other side. Maybe third time lucky.

Supermarket parking is always busy but especially in the summer in West Cork when visitors and tourists abound. Especially for PWD. Accessible parking is not a concession, but a necessity to access the shop. A woman, with children, a supermarket car park. An entire car park reverberates with the news that she can identify a PWD parked in the family spaces. PWD do have children, sometimes several; family spaces are also accessible spaces. PWD have families. This woman looks around and in outrage, parks in an accessible space.

Flashy vehicle, devoid of a blue parking permit, young driver, chatting in sunshine, parked in accessible parking space. "Excuse me, I notice you don't seem to have a blue parking permit, you are parked in an accessible parking space?" "Two-minutes" he responds. "This parking space is for PWD; while you are blocking it, an actual genuine PWD who needs and is entitled to the use of this space, may pass as it appears occupied, and be unable to park". A woman lurks nearby, "Leave him park where he wants," she says. "Waiting for someone in shop, be two-minutes. Not moving". Takes out phone, more harassment emanates from lurking bystander. "That's ok so, I will just give the Garda station a call, there is a fine of €150 as you are break-

ing the law". The jeep pulls out, drives off.

The take home message is that accessible parking spaces are exactly that, not two-minute parking spaces, not delivery spaces, not outdoor dining areas, hatching is not to be parked on, and having children is not a recognised disability. Selfishness, lack of a moral compass and low integrity, does not excuse poor and unacceptable behaviour. Think before you steal someone's independence, right to access and mobility. What if it were you, your child, your friend, your family member? Does your moral compass extend to people whom you do not know, what example do you give to your children, to others in the community?

Please report all violations of accessible parking to the Gardaí. In standing together we support our most vulnerable. A community can surely be judged by how it treats, supports, and protects, their most vulnerable citizens. A community will surely command the respect of others, by the respect it affords PWD.

Note clarifying accessible parking spaces:

Accessible parking spaces are provided for PWD who are entitled to, and who are in possession of, and displaying, the statutory blue parking permit, on the windscreen of their car, issued by relevant authorities. These accessible spaces are defined in law, therefore, anyone violating these spaces, by parking in them illegally, and breaking the law, becomes subject to a fine of €150.

On-street accessible parking spaces should have hatched areas (accessible parking standards best practice, IWA) to the front and back of the parking space. This is to enable the loading/unloading of wheelchairs/mobility equipment/passengers/drivers from the rear door of vehicles. Car park accessible spaces should have hatched areas to either side of the accessible space. This is to enable the driver/passenger to open their door fully to exit/enter the car (dependent on their specific disability), unload/load wheelchairs/mobility equipment and for the safety of PWD who require additional space to manoeuvre in. It is important to note, that many PWD cannot exit or enter their vehicles, transfer in/out of their wheelchairs or use their mobility equipment, without the use of an accessible space.

people Health & Lifestyle

Busy July for Clonakilty Access Group

by Cionnaith Ó Súilleabháin,
PRO Clonakilty Access Group

When the government announced two months ago, that we were to have 'an outdoor summer' there was relief all round that society would be re-opening somewhat and some sense of normality and activity would return. It was particularly welcomed in tourist towns like Clonakilty, which has a huge economic dependency on visitors during the summer months.

Clonakilty Access Group, a local voluntary community organisation made up of people with disabilities; visual impairments; their family members and carers, welcomed this news too, as many of their members had not been out socially for months.

However, as June progressed, the Access Group was getting daily complaints about difficulty of access on the streets and footpaths of the town as visitors arrived and businesses began to see more customers. A WhatsApp group was set up, which saw members going from four to five people to around 25 in the space of a few weeks. These are all locals and directly affected by issues of access.

A two-hour emergency zoom meeting took place on July 3 where many issues were discussed at length. The meeting was attended by local Independent County Councillor Paul Hayes who offered clarification and great advice.

The meeting concluded that there were several issues which needed addressing as a matter of urgency, and they decided to appoint liaison officers to contact the County Council; Gardaí and Chamber of Commerce immediately to address issues of

concern.

Since then, there has been many improvements as a result of these interactions and, while there are still a lot of work to be done, the Access Group thanks all involved on the great progress made to date with the co-operation of the above bodies and also the goodwill and understanding of various businesses in the town.

Illegal parking on disabled spaces had become a problem, especially on Pearse St., where a number of outdoor dining areas displaced some disabled parking spaces. Gardaí have pledged to be more vigilant and monitor this issue; tickets have subsequently been issued to offenders. As only valid blue badge holders can park for ANY length of time in a disabled space. Gardaí advise people to report illegal parking immediately by ringing Clonakilty station on 023-8821570. The situation has improved a lot since due to reporting and responses by the Gardaí;

Obstructions on footpaths is one of the biggest issues and biggest challenges to rectify. By law, no one can place any item on a footpath (tables, chairs, signs, items for sale, bicycles, pot plants, etc.), without first getting permission from the council. This has been a law for many years before we ever heard of COVID. However, it has never been enforced by the local authority. Since mid-June, footpaths narrow and wide have seen a lot of items placed on footpaths - particularly outside of bars and restaurants. In some areas, these are causing real problems as they intrude onto the space meant for people to pass by.

The Access Group has publicised this issue in local media

and on Facebook as a way of raising awareness. They have written to the county council calling on them to police their own bylaws and sought clarification on a number of related issues. They await a reply. In a positive development Sea Salt on Pearse St., responded by removing their footpath sign and other businesses have made adjustments to the number of items they place out. An Súcán was praised for removing their notice board from the footpath and placing it neatly against their front door where it is not an obstruction. Access Group committee members have also made direct discreet approaches to other individual businesses pointing out difficulties and these have been met positively in most cases.

An hour-long meeting took place between a rep of the Access Group and Orla O'Donovan, Chair of Clonakilty Chamber of Commerce, where many of the issues were discussed. The Chamber has re-issued the ClonAbility flyer to its members and appealed to them to be cognisant of people with disabilities on the footpaths and public areas of the town. There is also a plan over the coming six to eight months to develop further actions in advance of next year's tourist season.

Floral displays. Low-level trailing plants can be a problem for the visually-impaired in particular who walk into them. A recommended vertical clearance of 2.3 metres from the footpath to the tip of plants is requested.

For many years, the Access Group has communicated with local council engineer Michael Tobin about issues. Recently, the Road Lining Contractors were in town and among the works carried out were some



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requested by the Access Group. Included were the painting of the disabled spaces in Pearse St. in the distinctive blue and placing of yellow lines on both sides of the crossing point exiting Super Valu.

There was great praise for the recent work carried out by Dunnes Stores on the re-surfacing and relining of its car park. Management had really put great thought into it and has ensured that the less able bodied get priority parking and safe passage from the car park to the main entrance. The Access Group call on shoppers to respect the new layout and encouraged other supermarkets to consider similar layouts.

Similar praise was lavished on the Community College who have provided excellently laid out and practical spaces as part of its new extension.

To join the Access Group WhatsApp group or find out more about the group and its activities, see Clonakilty Access Group on Facebook.



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Schull school children defy the pandemic to create successful classroom business

Over 3,500 primary school children began their entrepreneurial journey this year while they were learning remotely, finding out about entrepreneurs and brainstorming ideas over Zoom. The Junior Entrepreneur Programme became the ideal vehicle to help pupils bond again as a class on their return to school as they worked in teams to carry out market research, calculate costs, source materials, and design products. They went on to launch approximately 100 classroom businesses right across the island of Ireland. Schools worked

on their projects right up to the conclusion of the school year.

The originality and ingenuity displayed by the fifth class pupils of Scoil Mhuire in Schull earned them the Class of the Year award in this year's JEP; 'Birdy Bites', a fiery food for your feathered friends, is a chicken treat that contains chilli. This ingenious idea was developed by the pupils, many of whom have chickens of their own at home. They wanted to solve the problem of rodents stealing the chicken feed and through their research discovered that chickens don't have spice receptors, but rodents do

and hate it. They experimented with ingredients to create a tasty and nutritious treat which they tested on their clucking customers in the school chicken run! 'Birdy Bites' were sold in the local hardware shop and at the school's JEP showcase day. The class had made a profit of €220 at the time of submission and had decided to donate a quarter of the profits to the local hen rescue charity.

Further enhancing the Schull school's entrepreneurial credentials, teacher Lorraine Whelton's sixth class successfully launched 'The Mini Kitchen' a cookbook filled with recipes

featuring locally-produced ingredients from West Cork that pupils and their families cooked at home during lockdown. The beautifully designed front cover was the result of an art competition organised by the class within the school.

West Cork Merit Recipients: Sixth Class Bandonbridge National School, Bandon; Fifth and Sixth Class Scoil Eoin, Innishannon; Sixth Class Scoil na mBuachaillí Clonakilty; Sixth Class St Joseph's Girls National School, Clonakilty; Sixth Class, Timoleague National School.



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people Health & Lifestyle

No more plastic with NIVEA MagicBars

NIVEA is encouraging everyone to ditch the bottles and go plastic free with the launch of its new NIVEA Magicbars, a trio of face cleansing bars boasting 99 per cent or more natural origin formulas.

Not only are they the first mass-market cleansing bars range available, but NIVEA's first plastic-free face cleanser – with not even a microplastic in sight!

Each bar is equal to one whole bottle of cleaner, so

sweeping your shelf of plastic in favour of sustainability needn't mean compromising on quality, with a variety of cleansing formulations to suit all skin types and needs.

These magic bars will help you cut down on a lengthy skincare routine and the plastic packaging that comes with it!



HEALTH

Hannah Dare
Organico Bantry

Beauty from within

I love skincare products, particularly natural skincare like Dr Hauschka, Trilogy and Kinvara. I enjoy using them and my skin loves them too. But I find that some of the most important ways of keeping my skin hydrated, soft, supple and in good condition is through my diet and the supplements I take. Ten years ago this effect wasn't very noticeable, but now that I'm in my mid 40s, it really is, and I am paying a lot of attention.

Also, contrary to what magazine ads would have you

believe, having 'good skin' is not only about reducing sagging skin and wrinkles. Because taking care of our maturing skin is also about keeping the skin resilient, which is important for faster wound healing and having a strong external barrier for decades to come. If you know anyone who has had to take cortisone, which thins the skin, you will know how important this barrier is in terms of staying active and well.

Also (I have to admit this is based on my intuition, not medical research) I think that the skin is the last organ in terms of priority – the heart and lungs for example are far more important to our survival, so they would get nutrients first if there was any lack. So, by monitoring your skin health and focussing on keeping your skin healthy from within, you are actually making sure that all your other organs and your joints are kept in tip top condition. If the fats you eat (for example) are reaching your skin, you know your brain definitely has enough!

One incredibly important element in skin care from within is water – staying hydrated, especially in the summer, is essential for maintaining the type of moisture levels that supports the skin's natural detoxification

and keeps it looking smooth and plump. Keep drinking that water!

And you know how your skin glows after a run? Often forgotten is the impact of exercise on your skin radiance – getting your heart pumping with a good workout boosts circulation and gets more blood, nutrients, and oxygen flowing to the skin.

Exercise can also help reduce levels of cortisol (aka the body's stress hormone) which breaks down collagen – an essential protein for maintaining the structure and integrity of the skin.

Then we mustn't forget the impact of eating vegetables – you've probably heard this one before – but it's so important to make a habit of eating a variety of colours at every meal to support healthy (and beautiful) mature skin.

Fill your plate with colourful whole foods (like berries, leafy greens, root vegetables, herbs, and spices) to ensure you're consuming plenty of antioxidants which fight off free radicals that cause cellular oxidative damage and contribute to aging – and that's all the different sides of again, including joint health, heart health, as well as skin health.

I love using natural oils on my face, but it is also incredibly im-

portant to eat plenty of fats and oils are to provide moisturisation from within. We need to make sure our diet includes high quality moisturizing fats, as the right type of fats can slow down signs of aging by reducing inflammation and providing essential skin nutrients like omega 3s, vitamin E, zinc, and selenium.

Healthy sources of good fats: Avocado; nuts and seeds; oily fish (mackerel, sardines, salmon, herring...); olives; extra-virgin olive oil; ghee; Unrefined coconut oil; pasture-raised eggs; full-fat yoghurt.

And finally, I do take a number of supplements that are aimed at boosting skin health, and keeping my skin soft and supple. While we'll always look to a healthy diet as our first port of call for good nutrition, the supplements below will help ensure you get a daily dose of the essential nutrients that protect and nurture mature skin.

Omega-3 fatty acids fight inflammation, boost the skin's hydration levels, protect against dry and itchy skin, and mitigate signs of aging. I take Wiley's Fish oil, but others like to take Udo's oil or a high strength vegan EPA/DHA capsule (ask us if you need guidance)

I also take a high quality Collagen Powder every day,

in my coffee (it melts in and is tasteless, and a bit creamy, so it's actually delicious). This vital protein provides structure to the skin, thickens the dermal layer, and is responsible for maintaining the skin's smoothness, firmness, and elasticity. It also benefits our joints.

Vitamin C helps brighten the complexion for a natural glow, and promotes the production of collagen, which is essential for maintaining the skin's elasticity and firmness. And since we all want to take it these days for immunity, this is a nice side effect.

Other supplements people take for skin health include Vitamin E, CoQ10, and there are several combinations like Skin.NY if you think your skin could use some extra structural support. For more information, call in to us in Bantry and we will be your guide to better skin from within.

Have a lovely August folks!

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New Alliance call on Irish government to address global Covid-19 vaccine inequity crisis

Irish organisations, health practitioners, trade unions and activists were joined by international guest speakers including Dr. Mike Ryan from the World Health Organisation and Winnie Byanyima of UNAIDS to officially launch the People's Vaccine Alliance Ireland.

The diverse coalition came together united in their call on the Irish government to take a stand for fairness, equality, and global health by addressing global Covid-19 vaccine inequity crisis. The People's Vaccine Alliance are asking Ireland to use its voice within the EU to support the TRIPS waiver and to endorse the World Health Organisation Covid Technology Access Pool to facilitate the sharing of know-how by Pharmaceutical companies to increase Covid-19 vaccine

production.

The TRIPS waiver is a mechanism at the World Trade Centre that would allow for the temporary suspension of intellectual property rights for Covid-19 vaccines, treatments and diagnostics. A measure that could help break Big Pharma monopolies and increase vaccine supplies so there are enough doses available for everyone, everywhere.

The Alliance said: "Pharmaceutical company monopolies could leave countries in the Global South waiting years for widespread vaccination. This must change, so they too can protect their citizens. Not only is it the morally right thing to do, but in addition, until the vaccine is available worldwide, we risk the emergence and spread of new variants. Restricting vaccine sup-

ply to protect profits during the pandemic means all populations remain at further risk of health and economic shocks and crises."

Majo Rivas, a Paraguayan-Irish People's Vaccine activist, based in Cork, said: "I began speaking up about the TRIPS waiver and global access to vaccines because I was worried for my loved ones. I just did what most people in my shoes would do.

"But this isn't just about Paraguay. In the news, we see the funeral pyres in India, the overwhelmed health system in Uganda, more than 1,100 children under 10 have died of Covid-19 in Brazil. Each of them someone's loved one, someone's child, someone's friend. We cannot allow more people in the Global South to lose lives and

livelihoods; we need a People's vaccine now."

Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director of UNAIDS said: "Covid-19, like HIV and AIDS, is laying bare the underlying inequalities in our world and in our societies – inequalities that ultimately hurt all of us and threaten epidemic control and our long-term recovery efforts. Fixing them, however, is possible.

"As Covid continues to devastate countries, the choice our governments face today is to take lifesaving action or repeat tragic and avoidable mistakes that resulted in millions of lives needlessly lost at the height of the HIV epidemic because life-saving treatments remained out of reach for the people who needed them. I urge the Irish Government to reconsider their current position and support the TRIPS waiver – too many lives are at risk for them not to do so."

The Alliance concluded: "Ire-

land is in line to get 14 million doses of at least five different vaccines during 2021, more than enough to vaccinate our population of 4.9 million. To date, over four million doses have been administered in Ireland. This affords some degree of safety, protection and comfort in the face of rapidly spreading variants such as Delta, and emerging ones like Lambda. But to truly defeat Covid-19 in Ireland, united action worldwide is required.

"Governments and not-for-profit organisations have contributed tens of billions of Euros to the development of Covid-19 vaccines. In 2021 alone, sales of Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson and Johnson vaccines are expected to yield €50 billion.

"To produce sufficient vaccines for everyone globally, manufacturing capacity must be greatly increased; over 140 sites have been identified as having unused manufacturing poten-

tial including large reputable pharmaceutical companies such as Biolyse in Canada, Incepta in Bangladesh, Teva in Israel and Bavarian Nordic in Denmark – all of whom have asked to assist in the manufacture of vaccines.

"For this to happen, pharmaceutical companies must agree to share their know-how and all suitable qualified vaccine manufacturers must be permitted to produce vaccines free from patents.

"Members of our Alliance have decades of experience of how best to facilitate access to life saving medicines and vaccines in low-income countries during global pandemics. We reiterate our previous calls on the Irish government to meet with us in relation to their current position on the TRIPS waiver as a matter of urgency."

For more information, please visit peoplesvaccine.ie.



DOCTOR'S ORDERS

Dr Jeff Featherstone

Dr Featherstone is a highly experienced medic and award-winning doctor who works in a busy GP practice in West Cork, as well as at Mercy University Hospital and Cork University Hospital, as an A&E doctor.

Last month my wife covered the plethora of menopausal symptoms and treatment options available. Certainly ladies the take home message is that it is well worth discussing the above with your GP.

It might come as a big surprise that men also can undergo

Guys...have you lost your get up and go?

what has been referred to as a 'male menopause,' which is correctly termed Andropause – androgens being a name for hormones producing general virility. It is also known as Late Onset Hypogonadism (LOH).

As with the menopause, it is an area where confusion reigns and few opt for treatment.

How do we differentiate between normal male ageing and slowing down from a testosterone deficiency state? It is not easy!

The symptoms that might highlight a problem are legion, and include physical ones like loss of body hair, low energy, loss of height, increased sweating and shortness of breath. Others involve memory and mood changes coupled with a loss of concentration, hot flushes, changes in dress sense, and slower driving! The sexual symptoms include reduced libido and erectile dysfunction, which unsurprisingly are well known.

So, you have some of these symptoms, just take testosterone and all will be well! No, hang on a minute – the deficiency has

to be confirmed by a blood test. An early morning fasting testosterone level is needed with a Sex Hormone Binding Globulin (SHBG) to determine a true testosterone deficiency state. That is how much free testosterone you have circulating and doing its energising functions.

You will have spotted that some of the symptoms of Andropause are vague, just like the menopause; and other conditions masquerading as the Andropause, like depression, thyroid disorders, and anaemia and so on, all have to be considered. A good GP will be well aware of the steps to take to establish an accurate diagnosis. Indeed, middle age and older is definitely a good time to review your general health and get advice on aging well and retirement issues.

Should a true testosterone deficiency be diagnosed, contraindications to replacement have to be excluded as well, like prostate trouble, hypertension and heart failure.

Once treatment is considered, a discussion with your GP is needed to decide on a short trial

of treatment and, if this helps, to look at long-term replacement. Thus, treatment is tailored to your response and preferences as to whether you want to take a tablet, a gel, or a patch applied to your abdomen, an injection every two weeks, or an implant that works for three months or so.

Monitoring of treatment needs a regular blood pressure measurement, and yearly blood tests for prostate trouble, liver and anaemia tests. Most men would be advised to have these checks done regularly anyway, as I have suggested.

Too much testosterone can cause problems that are well known, like aggression, sexual hyperactivity, male pattern hair loss and skin darkening. So, it is important to get the right balance. Treatment is very much centred on the patient's response and expectations.

I have not tried to encourage a sudden rush of men to their doctors for a magic rejuvenation treatment at all, but clearly some men are suffering in silence and there is a route, and tests to be done, which can help

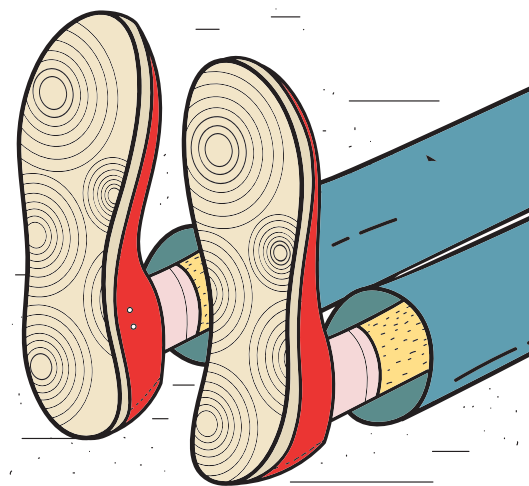
enormously in restoring vigour in hormone-depleted men.

As a population, us men are not good at attending doctors unless really pushed – it is not perceived as a manly activity for a hunter-gatherer!

The paradox of course is that in medical terms men are the weaker sex; we don't live as

long as our partners for multiple reasons, which is probably a cunning ploy by Mother Nature, as left to our own devices without a partner to look after us, we don't do at all well!

So, real intelligent manly activity involves appreciating weakness and accepting medical help and advice. Good luck.



Take good care of difficult emotions



MENTAL HEALTH & MINDFULNESS

Susan O'Regan

Susan O'Regan teaches mindfulness and self-compassion courses and workshops throughout West Cork.

For more information contact: susanoreganmindfulness@gmail.com Mob: 087 2700572.

Life, as we know, does not always go as planned, or as we think it should, so how do we learn to accept and then cope with the cards that we are dealt? One of the greatest gifts that practicing mindfulness gives us is a mental strength and an ability to accept the things in life that are out of our control. When things don't go as we hope or expect them to, this can often be hard to accept. Indeed,

acceptance can be one of the most challenging aspects of life and it takes on a particular meaning in the context of mindfulness, to include acceptance of ourselves. Self-acceptance is an area of mindfulness that many of us find very tricky as it means learning to look inwards, in an open and honest way, and acknowledge ourselves as we are, rather than how we wish we were or how we would like to be seen by others. This is hard when it comes to feeling or expressing difficult emotions, for example, many of us don't particularly like feeling angry, mean, jealous, sad, and so on.

Such unwanted feelings can be extremely difficult to manage, and we may find ourselves turning on ourselves and/or others. While it is perfectly healthy and normal to feel anger, fear, loss, grief, disappointment, etc, if we allow such feelings to linger or fester this can potentially be very damaging and harmful. World-renowned mindfulness teacher, Thich Nhat Hanh, of Plum Village in France, offers many lessons on anger and how we should hold this emotion extremely gently and really take care of ourselves when we are going through such strong emotions.

Some of us may choose to deny that we experience

difficult emotions, like anger or shame, and may tend to blame others for our own behaviour, instead of owning it and taking responsibility for it. Yet, there is a real freedom and huge learning when we firstly admit to, and then accept, even those parts of ourselves that we perceive as not so nice. And when we're not hiding them or denying them, tricky feelings tend to move on of their own accord. There can, however, be a vulnerability attached to owning our emotions and, when we are feeling vulnerable or hurt, it may feel quite exposing. Vulnerability can feel so painful that we may pretend that we are ok. Yet allowing ourselves to be vulnerable and to be really seen by others keeps our hearts open, so that we can flow with the ups and downs of life. We learn to accept that suffering is part of life, and part of being human.

I found myself recently facing some difficulties in life and struggling to accept how life was unfolding for myself and those I love. I was finding it hard to connect fully to my mindfulness and compassion skills. I noticed myself falling into a cycle of anger, blame, quickly followed by shame for being angry. Not only was I struggling with what was 'actually' happening in my life,

I noticed an added layer to my suffering, my own thoughts and feelings like, "I should be coping better", "I should be a nicer, better person", and so on. When we resist or deny pain, it actually causes us more suffering, and so, I began to turn towards these difficult thoughts and emotions with attention, tenderness and care and, in this way, began to manage them by taking plenty of deep belly breaths and baby steps.

I was lucky enough to have an opportunity to take a little break and step back from the situation and that was just enough to break the repetitive cycle/loop of thoughts, emotions and behaviour that I had gotten caught up in, which was actually quite destructive and unhelpful. I began looking at the situation in bite sized chunks, staying in the moment as best I could, and taking care of those difficult feelings instead of taking them out on myself or others. I stayed with the feelings as much as possible and relied on compassion practices to soften and soothe my emotions. Each time I noticed myself wishing things were different, I put my mindfulness skills into action, conserved my energy and dealt with the actual issues in front of me and how to accept and cope with them in a step-by-step way.

What emotions are you noticing just now? Can you invite a gentle turning towards yourself and any difficult feelings in this moment? Can you be with whatever you are feeling in a kind and friendly way?

If you need any support to begin or to deepen your meditation practice, please feel free to get in touch. My online meditation sessions via Zoom run consistently on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 8pm throughout the summer, please do consider joining in, whether you have tried mindfulness meditation before or are new to it. These small group sessions

are personal, down-to-earth, informal and donation based. Individual or group sessions are also available.

An outdoor mindfulness and forest bathing for Skibbereen Feelgood Festival will take place on August 10 in the stunning location of Liss Ard Gardens, Skibbereen. For more information on this and upcoming outdoor workshops and online courses please like my Facebook page (Mindhaven) or feel free to get in touch by phone: 087 2700572 or by email: susanoreganmindfulness@gmail.com

people Health & Lifestyle



Amanda Roe

Trauma therapist
& Mind coach

Getting underneath the surface in women's health

night, sweating profusely and dizzy at times with unbearable tension headaches. Her social anxiety was extreme, she was paranoid, avoiding close friends and afraid it was all in her head. Overthinking everything, she was tense all over, her shoulders and neck were stiff, everything hurt and massage was not helping.

When she reached out to me, she was terrified she'd collapse in public. She had been prescribed Xanax by her doctor and had tried many health supplements, as well as counselling, acupuncture, homeopathy and Reiki.

What she didn't realise was that her physical pain was psychosomatic, meaning a physical illness or other condition caused or aggravated by a mental factor such as internal conflict or stress. Within the first session of working together, all the pain and tension in her body left and she was feeling calm, confident, and able to breathe freely again.

After a short course of ther-

apy, the headaches and other symptoms disappeared and her energy levels increased. Soon she was feeling back to her old bubbly self, able to enjoy driving, and the freedom of a family holiday abroad. She was also able to support a friend with hospital appointments, as she could once again drive her car and travel in lifts freely and comfortably. With further support, she reduced from a size 14 to size 10. Her clothes felt more comfortable and she was delighted to get back into her favourite jeans without calories counting or cravings.

Of course this is only one person's story but perhaps it can give you an idea of what is possible when a person's health is viewed holistically.

As a clinical and medical hypnotherapist, acupuncturist and Chinese herbalist, I specialise in psycho-trauma (mind-trauma) and psychosomatic (mind-body) conditions: These could be A) Physical symptoms, hormone imbal-

ance and pain caused by your thoughts, stress or trauma; B) Emotional and mental symptoms that stem from physical pain or digestive issues; C) Conditions like anxiety and depression that could stem from both A or B above.

Life is challenging and it is normal to suppress unhelpful feelings and thoughts but unfortunately, as we try to contain and control them, they can build and express physically in various ways, affecting our health from heart palpitations to irritable bowel disease, skin conditions or headaches. So if you have been suffering from unusual symptoms for a while or are worried that it is all in your head, then it is worth getting in touch, as I might be able to help you.

Amanda Roe provides natural solutions for your mental, emotional and physical health. For more information call/text 087 633 1898 or email amanda@marketstclinic.com.

Understanding the stress response



Eoin Roe

Chiropractic

In order to understand how lifestyle factors such as diet, exercise, sleep and stress management contribute to health and wellbeing, we have to have some understanding of the stress response in the body.

Stress is one of the most potent contributing factors to health, especially for those suffering with other chronic health problems or injury.

When we are considering the stress response we also need to recalibrate our understanding of what stress is.

When most people think of stress, the obvious external factors that cause it come to mind, for example screaming kids, job-related pressure, relationship problems, or just trying to do too much in the time we have.

However a huge amount of stress comes from invisible internal factors such as: Lack of sleep; blood sugar imbalance; chronic pain; food intolerances; high carbohydrate diets; autoimmunity; chronic inflammation; exposure to environmental toxins.

Your body's stress response is complex and involves many factors but the main players are your nervous system, adrenal glands and hormone production, which in turn affects other parts of your body like the brain, heart, liver and muscles to respond accordingly.

Adrenal Gland Hormones

The adrenal glands produce three main types of hormone, mineralocorticoids, glucocorticoids and catecholamines.

Mineralocorticoids such as aldosterone play a role in controlling water and electrolyte balance in the body.

Glucocorticoids, the most important being cortisol, help you with a number of things including breakdown of proteins, production of glucose, breaking down triglycerides and fatty acids from adipose tissue.

They help combat a range of stressors, including fasting, exercise, fright, temperature extremes, pain, altitude, infections, trauma and disease but because they also make blood vessels more sensitive they cause vasoconstriction and therefore higher blood pressure. Finally, they also reduce swelling and depress certain immune cells but on the other side of this coin they will also slow down wound healing and connective tissue repair.

The catecholamines, adrenaline and noradrenaline, are both sympathomimetic hormones, meaning they activate the sympathetic nervous system, which is often referred to as the 'Fight or flight' response.

These hormones also help the body to resist stress and have many effects on your body: 1. They increase heart rate and force of contraction increasing blood pressure. 2. Increase blood flow to the heart, liver, skeletal muscle and adipose tissue. 3. Dilate the airways to the lung. 4. Increase the levels of blood glucose and fatty acids.

If you look at the list above you can see how it would prepare the body to either 'fight or flight' from a stressor – imagine coming across a tiger on your morning walk – do you stay and fight, or run?

Your body's ability to produce these hormones in response to stress is perfectly normal – in fact it is essential but it must be balanced with periods of rest.

Problems arise when stress becomes too great and our bodies are in a state of constant stress or put another way are always in a 'fight or flight mode' and are never able to switch off.

We are not always able to remove external stressful events from our lives but we are able to manage internal factors that will affect our ability to handle stress. The basics of eating a well balanced diet, doing daily exercise and maintaining good loving relationships and getting good amounts of sleep, all have a significant positive impact on your ability to handle stress, improve your ability to recover from injury and boost your immune system.

If you are struggling with recurrent injury and stress-related illness and would like some help, please call me on 087 9582362.

Eoin Roe is a chiropractor and functional health specialist based in Skibbereen.

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**Child Talks 2021**

Children and young people in Cork are being called to take part in Child Talks 2021 by The Ombudsman for Children Dr. Niall Muldoon. Now in its fourth year, Child Talks is an annual event held by the Ombudsman for Children's Office where children and young people up to age 18 are given a platform to talk about the issues that matter most to them. This year's theme is 'My Hopes for the Future.'

Child Talks is an opportunity for children to tell their own stories, to share their views and to have their say.

Since Child Talks began young people have talked about lots of different issues – school, disability, period poverty, culture, sexuality, family and lots more. It is completely up to the speakers.

Taking place on November 19 to mark World Children's Day, Child Talks 2021 will be a hybrid online-physical event streaming live from the RDS in Dublin.

To take part or find out more email communications@oco.ie, send a voicemail to 087 1029039 or visit www.oco.ie to fill in the online application form.

Applications close at 5pm on Wednesday, August 11.

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Genetic genealogy – The emergence of a new citizen science



THE DNA OF WEST CORK PEOPLE

Mark Grace

Mark Grace is a genetic genealogist and family historian at Ballynoe House, Ardfield, Co. Cork

Many of us have given or received a DNA testing kit for a birthday or as a Christmas present, but what are they all about? In this new column, I will be providing an easy, step-by-step guide through the basics of all forms of DNA testing for family history. What do your

results mean and how can you use them to research your West Cork (or other) heritage?

While these tests can be ‘just for fun’, there is a more serious side. Most of us have a genealogist or part-time family historian in the family. Now, the new citizen science of genetic genealogy has emerged using results from DNA tests to underpin family trees previously only been based on paper or family stories. This includes finding answers to questions that have never been asked, after a time when often such questions were never dared to be asked, or were frowned upon if they were.

While the terms ‘DNA’ and ‘science’ can be scary to some, once a few basic terms and important rules of thumb are understood, you do not need a degree in bioscience to become a citizen science, and the first to make discoveries about your own origins.

DNA testing has become popular due to affordability, as a novel gift or for those who are curious about their roots.

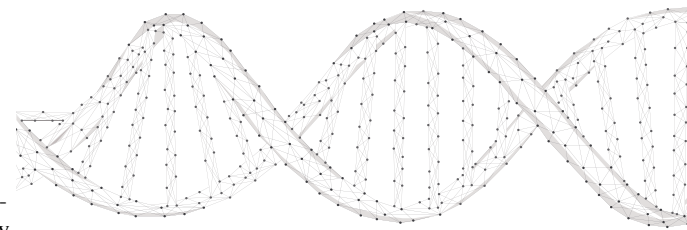
For just €60-€80 per test, with frequent special offers, testing companies such as Ancestry (who sponsor TV programmes such as ‘Long Lost Family’), MyHeritage, 23andMe, LivingDNA and FamilyTreeDNA (amongst others) can provide results based on a simple cheek swab or spit sample. Each company has a different angle of how they provide results, so the choice of which company to use will depend on whether you are more interested in your family history or what health-related markers might indicate.

My West Cork studies are based around the DNA results from my wife and her genetic cousin, which clearly indicate that her maternal heritage is from families in the Beara peninsula and her paternal heritage comes from the area cornered by Clonakilty, Ballineen, Dunmanway and Rosscarbery. She is one hundred per cent a West Cork girl!

I will be providing general examples using real case histories from my wife’s DNA or

my own wider British/Irish ancestry. Such studies are heavily reliant on testers sharing their results. This is often a barrier as so few people understand what DNA is and what their results mean. Statistically, 99 per cent of testers who are listed on testing websites are non-responders to invites to participate, even where analysis and results in projects are provided at no cost. Evidently, there is an emotional cost for many to even discuss sharing.

Testers do have a variety of reasons for testing, which will be explored in future articles. The situation today regards lack of understanding could be viewed as being akin to the early days of photography. Then, many people embraced the new technology. Others were worried that part of their soul might be taken by the images and did not want to be photographed. Today, hardly anyone has a second thought about taking a selfie and sharing the image on social media. This may also happen for DNA data one day.



If you are considering testing, you should also consider the reasons for doing so. Is it just for fun or do you have objectives in mind? Which testing company should you choose? In 2020, there were more than 26 million testers. It has been estimated by the end of 2021 there could be over 100 million.

It is a mistake that this form of genealogy is just for the older generation. The younger generation starting out can build the ideal starting dataset often not available for the older generation. In addition to their own test, they get results from their siblings, both parents and their four grandparents (the latter being the genetically closest to your most ancient ancestry).

DNA results do have potential consequences. Statistically, one in 50 (two per cent) of testers are finding that a parent they knew was not their biological

parent. For some siblings, who have ‘joked for years’ about being so different it might come as a shock, but equally it might start an exciting investigation into the truth. Importantly, despite any genetic difference in nature, I have often found that nurture remains more important to people who find themselves in this situation. How would you react?

Next time, I will describe the three basic forms of DNA testing. Future columns will discuss how to interpret your basic results, what ethnicity results mean, common concerns about sharing results, data security, and some ethical dilemmas you may find yourself in.

For any questions that can be answered as part of future articles (genealogy@creativegraces.net) or follow the West Cork DNA projects on Facebook ‘My Irish Genealogy and DNA’.

Walk to Save Lives at Sea this August

The month-long challenge of the Great Wild Atlantic Marathon Walk will take place once again this August. This is a joint initiative between Courtmacsherry RNLI Lifeboat Station and Barryroe GAA to promote the ‘Respect the Water Campaign’ and help prevent drownings at sea or on inshore waters. It is facilitated by The Great Wild Atlantic Marathon Walk committee, which includes members of both organisations.

The Courtmacsherry All Weather Lifeboat remained on active duty during the Covid Lockdown and will continue to do so in the months and years ahead. Courtmacsherry people are extremely proud of the crew, who remain on standby 365 days of the year; since January 2021, the lifeboat has responded successfully to 17 callouts. Every cent raised is of vital importance to this amazing voluntary rescue service.

Last year, in order to keep everyone safe and healthy, the organisers decided not to proceed with the walk in its usual format but invited walkers to partake in a recreational walk of any distance, anywhere in the world, and send a photo or short

video which was shared on the Marathon Walk Facebook page.

The response was amazing and the total raised by the Walk Committee last year amounted to €7,770, which went in its entirety to the Courtmacsherry RNLI Lifeboat Station. This brought the overall amount raised from four years of Great Wild Atlantic Marathon Walks to €30,953 for the RNLI Irish Lifeboats.

This year, as in 2020, there is no specific day to walk but its anytime, anywhere and any distance over the entire month of August and you can contribute on line at [idonate.ie/CourtmacsherryRNLI](https://www.idonate.ie/CourtmacsherryRNLI) support2021.

The beautiful route from Courtmacsherry to South Ring and back will be signposted for the entire month and all can view the spectacular Seven Heads peninsula at its very best.

A wonderful new trail to be recommended this year is the recently opened Argideen Valley Trail. This walk begins in Ballinascorthy, beside the Henry Ford car, goes to Timoleague and onto Courtmacsherry, traversing scenic country-side, along very quiet roads with great views of the surrounding landscape.

First of its kind mobile unit ‘DASH’ launched for Cork and Kerry

In a landmark partnership for the Cork and Kerry region, the Sexual Health Centre has launched a joint community initiative with Cork Local and Southern Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Forces. The organisations are leading out on a unique mobile health service which travels to any and every part of Cork and Kerry – making support, information and interventions available to all.

The ‘DASH’ (Drugs, Alcohol and Sexual Health) unit was launched at St. Finbarr’s Campus in Cork city in July. The project is the first of its kind in Ireland, providing community-wide mobile services such as rapid HIV testing, condom provision, drug and alcohol assessments and support from trained health promotion professionals.

Executive Director of the Sexual Health Centre, Dr. Martin Davoren, noted that DASH will provide an important link to support for communities across Cork and Kerry: “The aim of the project is to ensure equity of access. We want to break down the barriers that people

face in accessing services – be it time, location or cost. DASH is available to all sectors of the community, and is free of charge.”

Emily Barrett, DASH Project Worker noted that “DASH will bring opportunities for informal interventions in every village and town across Cork and Kerry. People deserve to get information and support around their health and wellbeing in a friendly and welcoming environment, and DASH will bridge that gap for a lot of people.”

The cross-sectoral approach of the project is central to its development and delivery, as highlighted by Joe Kirby, Co-ordinator of Cork Local Drug and Alcohol Task Force: “Drugs, alcohol and sexual health impact everyone at some point in their lives. The client groups of each of our organisations can all benefit from the ease of access and diverse expertise at the helm of the DASH project. Importantly, DASH will be available to members of the wider community, who may not have the opportunity or encouragement to consider their own

needs around drugs, alcohol and sexual health until the DASH van arrives in their local area.”

The DASH van is available to visit communities and organisations throughout counties

Cork and Kerry. For more information, contact the DASH Project Worker, Emily Barrett at 083 013 2250 or dash@sexual-healthcentre.com



people Health & Lifestyle

Hair care heroes

INSIDE OUT
BEAUTY

Sherna Malone

Skincare and beauty expert Sherna Malone shares her knowledge and expertise of all things beauty – from skin care do's and don'ts to the latest products out there.

This month, it's all about hair care. Over the past year we've seen innovation in hair products like never before and I've rounded up some of the very best on the market today. From scalp soothing shampoos to moisture-rich

masks that work in minutes, luscious locks here we come!

Aveeno Scalp Soothing Haircare

Brought to you by the much-loved skincare brand Aveeno, comes a new, unique range of haircare products – six new shampoo and conditioner duos in a collection specially formulated to nourish the scalp, while caring for individual hair type and need. Each product in the range is formulated with colloidal oats and enriched with botanical ingredients for a holistic haircare routine resulting in healthy hair that looks good and feels great. The new range is clinically proven to relieve and soothe, itchy, dry scalps, while simultaneously targeting unique hair needs. Gentle enough for daily use and even for sensitive skin, the formulas are sulphate free and pH balanced, respecting the scalp and hair's natural pH levels by gently cleansing hair without stripping it of its natural oils. Hair is left shinier and softer, and your scalp is left feeling soothed. €9.99, available in supermarkets and pharmacies nationwide.

**OGX Apple Cider Vinegar Shampoo**

The NEW OGX Clarify & Shine+ Apple Cider Vinegar Shampoo is a clarifying shampoo for greasy hair and for oily hair to help eliminate residue and build up. An uplifting blend with Apple Cider Vinegar helps to balance the scalp, remove unwanted oil, and leave hair super clean and shiny. It's a tried and tested ancient remedy brought bang up to date with a luxe formulation and an amazing fresh and fruity fragrance. For best results, follow with the OGX Clarify & Shine+ Apple Cider Vinegar Hair Rinse Treatment and the OGX Clarify & Shine+ Apple Cider Vinegar Conditioner to help leave hair vibrant, clean, and silky smooth all day long, €8.89, available in supermarkets and pharmacies nationwide.

John Frieda Miracle Drops Hair Mask

The newest addition to the John Frieda family, Miracle Drops Hair Masks give your hair some much needed TLC! Offering tailored treatments to help address your unique hair care concerns, each hair mask is formulated with a unique combination of ingredients and technologies to transform frizzy, dull, or damaged hair. The easy-to-use hair masks only take five minutes to work their magic! Choose from the Blonde Brightening Mask, designed to nourish and brighten blonde hair, the Frizz Smoothing Mask to nourish dry, frizzy hair or the Damage Repairing mask which helps prevent breakage and increases smoothness, leaving hair feeling healthy, smooth, and strong, €3.99 available from selected pharmacies nationwide and online from cloud10beauty.com

L'Occitane Purifying Freshness Dry Shampoo Mist

L'Occitane has just launched their first dry shampoo, ideal for normal to oily hair. It absorbs impurities and excess oils to allow a longer time between shampoos. Thanks to its purifying cocktail of five essential oils and a complex of natural active ingredients (peppermint, fireweed, silica), this dry shampoo mist will restore freshness and cleanliness to hair without any white residue. What's more, the formula is silicone free with 97 per cent natural origin ingredients, and the bottle is made of 100 per cent recycled and recyclable plastic with no outer carton to reduce waste, €18 available from loccitane.com

Klorane Mango Shampoo Bar

The latest launch by Klorane is another step in the brand's commitment to limiting its impact on the planet. The small but mighty shampoo bar is an eco-friendly alternative to liquid shampoo (each shampoo bar provides the same number of washes as 2 x 200ml liquid shampoos), using less water and 97 per cent less packaging. The Mango Shampoo Bar gently cleanses hair and scalp while deeply nourishing dry, dehydrated hair without weighing it down. From the first use, hair is left intensely hydrated and softened thanks to the rich mango butter in each bar. Gentle enough to use on all the family (3+ years) hair is left feeling softer, smoother and with a healthy-looking shine, €13, available from selected pharmacies nationwide.

Perfectil Hair Crush Gummies

The importance of nourishing our skin from within is well-documented and the same applies to our hair! Perfectil

Hair Crush Gummies are an easy and delicious way to ensure your hair is getting a little extra care and nutritional support each day, to keep it looking its best. Our hair is under constant stress, especially after the summer months, when hair may have been frazzled by the sun and sea as well as from daily aggressors like heat styling, drying and pollution day-to-day. These external stressors can wreak havoc on our hair. The chewable supplement is the first of its kind from the multi-award winning Perfectil range and is packed with everything your hair needs to flourish from the inside out. Hair Crush Gummies provide 21 vitamins and nutrients, including Biotin, Selenium Amino acids, and Zinc, to help support hair as well as skin and nails, all in a delicious mixed berry flavour gummy. €27.99, available from pharmacies and health food stores nationwide.

72 Hair Blow Dry Cream

Beautifully glossy hair, with minimum effort, every day. That dream is a reality with 72 Hair, thanks to years of research and development with a team of professional hairdressers. Each of the expertly formulated vegan hair products has been developed to deliver salon-style results, at home, leaving hair manageable, frizz free and shiny. Harnessing the power of professional-grade ingredients, the luxe formulas are a delight to use. The Blow Dry Cream, €18.29, is their hero multi-tasking leave-in cream that reduces blow drying time, eliminates frizz and protects from heat damage in one quick step. Available from Irish website trendsbeautydistribution.com

Olaplex Zero Intensive Bond Building Treatment

A professional-inspired treatment that primes hair for deeper repair with the highest dose of patented Olaplex technology in any take-home product. It rebuilds hair bonds, strengthens, and protects hair integrity. Olaplex No. Zero the most concentrated of all Olaplex's homecare offerings, definitely works best when used with the massively popular Olaplex No.3. It will stop breakage in its tracks, repair heat and colour damage and bring life back to lifeless hair, €27.50, available from Olaplex stockists nationwide and online from millies.ie

L'Oréal Professional Serioxyl Denser Hair Treatment

If you are looking to achieve thicker fuller hair, L'Oréal Professional Serioxyl Denser Hair Treatment might be just what your hair needs. This innovative professional serum is a daily cure that improves hair density. Suitable for women and men who have very fine or thinning hair or suffer from hair loss, it is formulated with an ingredient which has had 25 years of research: Stemoxydine is a patented molecule with a maximised five per cent concentration that awakens the dormant follicle to create new hair. Also in the formulation is Resveratrol, which protects against oxidative stress to ensure it functions correctly. Applied directly to the scalp every day for three months, it boosts the hair density in as little as six weeks, €42, available from L'Oréal Professional Hair Salons nationwide.

For all the latest beauty news follow me on Instagram and Facebook @shernamalone.ie

To make a booking for one of my facial treatments or a skincare consultation head over to www.shernamalone.ie.

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IMAGE

Louise O'Dwyer
Image Consultant

I have to start by saying that this will be a short one, despite the fact that I have been almost 20 years writing in this wonderful paper, I forgot to have an article ready. Time is literally whizzing by and I am chasing myself. I made a commitment to Munster Rugby's MAR to run everyday from April until December 21 for Youth Mental Health Awareness and while I have already run almost 700kms and am really reaping the rewards of it, my time has become even more precious and scarce. I have missed about six days so far but I'm ok with that. If you are shocked that I am running, join a long list of people, my husband, my kids and myself to begin with... I have discovered that there is a beauty to running in the rain, a connection to nature that is raw and earthy. I did have to get the professionals in

What am I?

to show me how to run; it's not as easy as you might think. So, if you have tried and failed, like I did a few years ago, it might be because of your posture, how you hold your body when you are running and how your feet land on the ground – you won't die and your lungs will keep sucking in oxygen. The cause that I am running for keeps me going when I want to give up, I think about how our young have suffered, most especially over the last year and a half. In my own house, I have spent years looking forward to a twin debs that sadly that will not come to pass. Silly, you are probably thinking but a rite of passage for them none the less. Galway appears to be the destination choice for the 'Leaving Cert holidays' when it is normally a package holiday to the sun. They are all in it together, that's what's important.

WHAT AM I? This is a question that I am asked all of the time. What shape am I? What suits my shape best? What should I avoid? I have never been someone for labels because there is always and will always be exceptions to the rule and may limit someone who would look absolutely incredible in a cut or colour that would not 'under normal guidelines' suit. Our bodies 'house' who we are and they are simply remarkable but they do not stay the way we want them to, they change, and this can lead to chaos. When

you are used to being a certain size or shape and then your body decides to move and grow in places that prevent zippers from closing and causing buttons to pop. This is the time when you have to start a new relationship with the casing that houses you. It's not like you can trade it in or anything like that... and yes, some head off under the knife but most of us will work with what we have got, frustrating as that may be at times. Those of you who know me are probably thinking that it's easy for me; yes I am lucky, my weight hasn't changed since before I had my daughter, who is now 25, but my shape has, and therein lies the quandary. Change must be met with



open arms and for many, a size up. Have you heard about the 'Rule of Thirds'? This has been putting a big smile on women's faces for years. Instead of dividing your body into a top half and a bottom half, divide it into thirds with one third on top and two thirds for the bottom. It elongates and tones your body in a flash. Choose shorter tops to fit inside higher waist skirts, trousers and jeans.

What do you do if you have a big bust? Wrap style dresses or tops draw the attention from your bust and will emphasise your waist, they will also make sure that you don't look like you are wearing a tent. Choose tops that show a little bit of skin, they will elongate your neck and balance your bust. Another great tip is to wear your jewellery a little higher up – it will draw the attention towards your face and not your bust.

How do you flatter a lower belly bulge? Choose a fitted top that is stiff but kicks out a little from halfway down your middle. Layer a long fitted top with a slightly-longer-than-normal bolero jacket that kicks open – it creates a wonderful illusion and hides a multitude.

What do you do if you want to look taller and slimmer? Wear v-necks and solid colour sheath dresses to create long lines. High-rise pants make your legs look longer and have an overall slimming effect. Wear a monochrome outfit and nude shoes to



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create one long visual line.

The question that will always top the list is 'How to style a pear-shaped body?' Here goes, sleeve (shoulder) details add volume to balance hips and high waist pants will highlight your narrow waist. Wrap dresses will show off your waist and balance your silhouette. Vertical lines are slimming and off the shoulder

tops add volume up top and distract the eyes.

I've packed quite a bit of food for thought and trial in there. A great look doesn't just happen. Research your way into becoming your own style architect – have the confidence to take control of your wardrobe.

'There's a confidence you find when you finally feel right in your body' Ariel Winter

Monkey see – Monkey do



CANINE CORNER

Liz Mahony

Liz Mahony is an experienced Dog Trainer and Holistic Therapist for all animals. In her monthly column, Liz aims to promote mutual respect between carer and dog. Contact Liz at corkdogtrainingclasses.com.

I bet at some time during your life you've emulated another person – whether it's a style of dress, mannerism, tone of voice or enunciation! That's im-

itation and is the 'best form of flattery' according to the saying. However, when your dog copies your actions, that's different. He's not flattering you – it's just the only behaviour on offer.

When my daughter was only a toddler, I came upon her copying our dog by squatting on all fours and trying to eat out of his bowl. And she started walking with an exaggerated, bow-legged gait because she was imitating a man whose natural manner of walking resembled that of a seafarer. In both cases, she wasn't so much flattering the dog or the man. Rather she was copying the behaviours on offer!

So, when I'm training with people and their dogs, the first recommendation is that they get themselves in control before they ask their pets to have self-control. After all, if you or I for that matter are totally out of control with anger, waving our arms or jumping up and down in excitement, our dog watches and performs his own

out of control actions – Monkey see, Monkey do! As far as he's concerned that's the behaviour you want from him.

If we react nervously to things, so does our dog. If we're impatient, we teach our dogs to be impatient. But, when we learn to take a deep breath and ground ourselves, our dogs pick up on that and tend to copy that calm behaviour instead.

I saw this concept in action long before I began training dogs and it fascinated me. This guy owned two female dogs, litter siblings. He was notorious for his brusque, rude, ignorant behaviour to people. His dogs mirrored his objectionable manner! They would roam off lead terrorising other owners with their dogs, approaching at speed and growling in a confrontational way. Just like him, they never actually did anything but were totally unpleasant. Their reputation preceded them. I was always on guard to protect my own dog, refusing to let them come close to her. If you stood

up to him and his dogs, they all backed off and went away!

And then for a whole week I noticed that someone else was walking these two dogs. He was a calm man, who simply got on with the job of walking them in a quiet, unobtrusive manner. During that week, not once did those dogs behave aggressively but minded their own business. That was an eye opener! (It's also worth noting here that dogs are friendly by nature. Their antagonistic manner was simply the product of their owner as it was the only behaviour on offer and he never checked them.)



I never forgot this incident when I started teaching basic obedience to owners and their dogs because it was a major clue to getting suitable responses. My first female Boxer was a great teacher for me too. I would practice all sorts of things with her and watch the signals she would give me. I wanted to put my interpretations to the test. So, one day I asked Freya to sit and stay while I walked a few feet away. Then I started staring at her and began thinking derogatory thoughts about her. I scowled and leant forward slightly in a confrontational manner totally at odds with my normal behaviour to her.

At first, Freya just looked at me in incomprehension. Then a look of hurt flitted across her face while she kept searching for a softening to my hard stare. With none forthcoming, she then stood up a little straighter, her head came up higher, her ears went back and her eyes went hard. The next thing, she made a lunge for me! And this

change in attitude took less than five minutes. I couldn't believe how speedily her demeanour had altered. I quickly bent down, softened my look with a smile, and held my arms wide in welcome. She was so relieved at the change in me and jumped all over me, licking my face and cuddling in. And I apologised profusely while I returned her cuddles. Just imagine if I'd continued being confrontational towards Freya, I might have turned her into a reactive dog!

One of my stock phrases when teaching is: 'What you put in is what you get out!'

And the above examples fully illustrate what I mean. As owners, we have a huge responsibility to our canine companions to give them good examples of the behaviour we want from them. The next time you're interacting with your pet, ask yourself which of your behaviours do you want your dog to copy.

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people Health & Lifestyle



DIY FITNESS

Tania Presutti

Danish freelance journalist and fitness professional Tania Presutti, who now resides in Clonakilty, delivers a series of efficient DIY fitness exercises you can do at home.

In this Olympic summer it is hard not to be inspired by all the athletes breaking records and making dreams come true. In the words of the under-two-hour marathoner Eluid Kipchoge, it really does feel like “No human is limited”.

And it shouldn't just inspire young athletes with Olympic dreams. You and me and all of us should be inspired to learn how far dedication and consistency, discipline and the courage to dream big, can take you.

For my summer challenge, I will embark on new running territory (a slightly longer distance of 27 km) and, while I feel capable of running my known distances (up to 21K), it does feel scary just to add a

Strong at the core

few more kms. Do you have summer goals in mind? If you do, I'll offer you two pieces of advice:

Aside from having a training plan (which you should always have when going for a goal) – 1) Find your tribe: These are people who will support you to reach your goal. Some might have experience you can learn from. Others will offer moral support. Either can be important, especially on the days where it feels progress is stalling and training is boring.

2) By the same token, ignore the people who live to eat dreams: These are people who discourage or doubt you. Most often they will just take your energy and focus from your goal, and won't offer anything in return. Ignore and avoid, and if you can't avoid, just stop discussing your goal with them.

To run well – and to do a lot of other sports well – a strong core, both physically and mentally, is needed. A strong core is necessary to keep balance, move fast (and move in general), to take a punch, deliver a kick or throw a fast ball.

So to help you reach your goals or inspire you to find one to pursue, I'm sharing with you my simple core regiment, which I do after my runs a few days a week. This includes exercises you can do in the comfort of your home without any equipment. To change the level of intensity, you can add more time or more repetitions/sets to each

exercise. Remember that the last two repetitions/5-10 seconds should feel harder to complete. If it's too easy, it won't move the needle and if it's too hard, it won't inspire you to come back for more. Finding a balance, where training progresses without being too hard, can take time but is worth finding.

Side Plank

The Side Plank is an isometric core strength exercise, meaning the core muscles are contracting and held active but are not moving (a static exercise). It helps on building abs and back strength (core) while protecting your back. The Side Plank activates three different muscle groups (shoulders, hips and side of core).

1. Lie on your right side with your legs straight and feet placed on top of each other. Place your right elbow under your right shoulder with your hand pointing away from you.

2. Keep your head neutral, breathe out and brace your core.

3. Lift your hips off the floor so that you're supporting your weight on your elbow and the side of your right foot. Your body should be in a straight line from your ankles to your head. Think of a plank lying on top of your head.

4. Hold this position for the duration of the exercise. Depending on your fitness level, aim for between 10 to 60 seconds.

5. Control the motion going back to the floor, turn and repeat on your left side.

6. Do 3 sets (one set: left + right) with 30-60 seconds break between. If it feels too easy, stay in the plank longer or add more sets. If it's too hard, take off a few seconds.

Single Leg Deadlift

This is a great exercise for runners, as it targets core, hamstrings, gluteus maximus,

gluteus medius and ankles. In short, this is just what your jeans ordered. You can add weight to this exercise by holding a weight in your hand(s), but bodyweight will also give good results.

Stand with both feet under hips/shoulders. Shift your weight to the right leg, and keep your knee in a soft bend. Begin to lift your left foot back and up like you're stamping the bottom of your foot on the wall behind you (think of a back kicking horse). Keep your leg straight. Simultaneously, hinge/bend at the waist, tipping your torso forward until it's parallel to the floor (or as much as close as you can. Imagine you have a glass of water on your lower back to help you keep the form). Keep your arms straight, at shoulder height, and parallel to the floor at all times (think of an aeroplane). At the end of the position, your body should be in a straight line from your head to your left foot.

To get back to start position, begin pulling your left leg forward while keeping it straight, and lift your torso until you're standing upright again.

For a start do 5-10 repetitions (each side) of 3 sets. Either add more repetitions, more time at the 'Fly' position or weights to make this exercise harder.

Hip Bridge

A hip bridge or hip thrust is another great core exercise for runners (and everyone else), as it targets core and glutes. If you thrust down from your heels at the top (end) of the exercise, you'll activate your hamstrings more than inner thighs and quads.

1. Start by lying flat on your back with your legs bent at a 90-degree angle and feet placed flat on the ground, toes pointed forward and your thighs are parallel to each other.

2. Breathe in, 'lock' your



belly button to your spine (imagine this is a real button). Drive down through your feet and push your hips up. Keep your core in line with your thighs (think a straight line going down from knees to shoulders. Don't overextend your spine). You should feel this variation fatiguing the inside of your thighs and on quads. If you drive with your heels, you'll target the hamstrings more.

3. In a controlled motion, breathe out and let your hips sink back down towards the ground.

As per my normal suggestions: 10 repetitions and 3 sets. Hold the top position for a few seconds to add to the exercise,

or place a weight (sandbag, book, water bottle, kettlebell etc) on your core. You can also add repetitions and sets of course.

I hope you find these inspiring in setting a goal or to start adding core exercises to your routine. Questions and comments are as always very welcome to either: taniaskitch-enfitness@gmail.com or on Instagram: www.instagram.com/trainwithadane (@train-withadane)



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Men's Sheds launch manual to better support men with dementia in our communities

The Irish Men's Sheds Association has launched a new manual 'Your Shed and Dementia' aimed at raising awareness of the condition, as well as offering advice for 'Shedders', their families and carers on supporting a member with dementia.

Developed in partnership with the HSE's Dementia: Understand Together campaign and The Alzheimer Society of Ireland, the manual offers tools to help Shedders recognise signs of dementia, as well as offering practical communication and listening tips.

Enda Egan, CEO, Irish Men's Sheds Association, is encouraging men to check out their local Men's Shed to see what it has to offer: "Over the past couple of years, as part of our work developing the Sheds for Life well-being programme, the topic of dementia has

been regularly raised by Shed members as something they would really love more support and advice on. The publication of this manual marks a significant step in responding to this need. As our 450 plus Men's Sheds across Ireland are now finally beginning to reopen, a key priority in this new chapter for us is continuing to welcome men with early-stage dementia in different ways. For example, sheds are offering a range of activities, from DIY essentials, exercise classes and live music sessions online, to gardening and social events in the great outdoors. Why not check out our website, www.menssheds.ie, to find out which activities are available at your nearest Shed, and if there is something of interest for you or your loved one?"

While primarily for members of the Irish Men's Sheds Association, anyone with an interest in dementia is welcome to check out the publication at www.understandtogether.ie, where they will also find information on supports such as a local service-finder for people living with dementia and their carers.

Live performances return to DeBarra's Clonakilty

DeBarra's Folk Club Clonakilty are back in business at last this month, hosting world-class live performances to audiences in their intimate outdoor setting, the beer garden and brand new yard garden.

Over the coming weeks, DeBarra's will welcome some of the country's finest musicians, writers, and comedians to perform on their outdoor stage. The line-up features Kulini, Wayward Folk, The Next New Low, Niall Thomas, DeBarra's Trad Session, Maria Doyle Kennedy, DeBarra's Spoken Word, Luke Bloom, Anna's Anchor, Chris Kent, Gearoid Farrelly, Lisa Hannigan, John Spillane, The Vespertine Quartet, Sharon Shannon, Junior Brother, Neil Delamare, Susan O'Neill, Jape, Míde Houlihan, and New Dad, with even more to be announced over the coming weeks.

DeBarra's are also thrilled to present a world-exclusive collaboration between story and song. Acclaimed West Cork based British writer David Mitchell (Cloud Atlas, Utopia Avenue) will virtually join one of New Zealand's most cherished singer-songwriters Hollie Fullbrook of Tiny Ruins for a unique and intimate performance.

During lockdown, Fullbrook reimagined prose by Mitchell as songs, while Mitchell reimagined songs by Tiny Ruins as



David Mitchell. Pic: Bríd O'Donovan

short fiction. If 'I Were a Story and You Were a Song' presents their cross-pollinated co-creation: a mosaic of bewitching music and reflective stories. WORD is thrilled to have commissioned this show and to be sharing it with you.

Speaking about the re-opening, Ray Blackwell, manager of DeBarra's venue says: "DeBarra's is like a big old mythical creature and she's been asleep for a while...now she's waking she needs her belly rubbed and ears scratched regularly.

"It's great to hear music and laughter and applause in her once again, to witness experts in their craft and trade back doing what they do best... It stirs the

beast, tends the itch for now, and gives us some hope for tomorrow. Onwards!"

This programme is supported by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht Sport and Media. All shows have limited capacity so early booking is advised. Tickets will be made available to DeBarra's members before going on general sale. Find out more about becoming a member at debarra.ie

Tickets for the world-exclusive viewing of "If I Were a Story and You Were a Song" by David Mitchell and Hollie Fullbrook (Tiny Ruins) are available at www.wordchurch.co.nz www.debarra.ie

Words go live at DeBarra's

Once again, we have entered a new era. DeBarra's Spoken Word has been, and still is, very active on Zoom with a lot of international engagement but at long last it is back live(-ish) says **Moze Jacobs**, with a capacity outdoor gig in the beer garden of DeBarra's Folk Club in Clonakilty on August 17. This concert will offer a mixture of spoken word and music.

Paul McMahon, award-winning poet and songwriter, originally from Belfast but now resident in

Clonakilty, will sing and recite poetry, accompanied on double bass by Pat Barrett who has played with a dizzying array of

performers in various styles.

Myself, Moze Jacobs, will do a bit of woodwind playing (sax and clarinet) and a stand-up interview with the special featured guest, upcoming poet Daniel Galvin from Ballinspittle, a spoken word and slam champion whose work is due to be published in literary magazines such as The Moth, Honest Ulsterman, A New Ulster, Acumen, The West Texas Literary Review, Quarryman and Ofi Press Mexico.

Daniel was shortlisted for the Red Line Poetry Competition 2018 and is currently completing an MA in creative writing at UCC. One of his poems appeared in The Disposable Stories, a publication featuring work by the students of the '20-'21 academic year, edited by Emily Titsworth.

More info: debarraspokenword@gmail.com or visit Facebook.



Poet Daniel Galvin

From Zoo to Zoom

The early days of Cape Clear International Storytelling Festival

After moving to live on Cape Clear, Chuck and Nell Kruger wished to offer something to their adopted island; they considered a small animal zoo on their farm or even a craft centre, but finally – with the blessing of the islanders – settled on starting an International storytelling festival.

Chuck had heard that Ireland was full of storytellers and, at one time, the island was too. Fisherman and farmers told, how of an evening, a kitchen would fill with neighbours and more, "until adults and children were sitting on the ship timber settle, the hearth, the flags, up the narrow stairs, and tales were told into the wee hours, even through the night. But no more. The storytellers, they said, are all gone, the very tradition of storytelling gone.

The publican of the then southernmost pub in Ireland, Paddy Burke, bless him, told me how he could remember his parents' pub filling with locals,

and then the stories being told, one leading to another – until, he added, looking away, "the fella with one eye sat down in the corner." He enigmatically referred to no neighbour, neither living nor dead, but to a certain soulless seanachie still making the rounds." Chuck Kruger

Some may not know who the "fella with one eye" is, but television took over the entertaining countryside. The International Storytelling Festival, started in 1994, has brought people back together, shoulder to shoulder, to hear myths, legends, folklore, history and wonder tales, keeping the oral tradition alive, creating sparks as audience members go away and return to tell stories of their own, inspiring the increasing numbers of visitors to marvel at the world of words, and be captivated by the natural beauty of Cape Clear and the kindness of people living there. No wonder visitors keep returning.

Such a fine legacy to leave behind. Storytelling is alive and flourishing. Now the tide has

turned and the organisers are unable to host the real event in Cape Clear due to current restrictions. Is the "fella with one eye" taking over again? "This new fella, Zoom, has a multi-faceted eye, so we can at least see each other," say the organisers. Liz Weir has been instrumental since the start of the Festival and has turned her eye and creative skills to holding Zoom storytelling events throughout the lockdowns. Now the festival committee is confident enough to hold its own Virtual Storytelling Festival on Zoom.

September 2-5, 2021... Yes! Including Thursday.

There promises to be a fine mix of Live Story Sharing, and a Family Session for younger listeners, for which donations are asked for. Then a Storytelling Workshop for adults, and a Concert featuring Welsh legend Daniel Morden and Cork legend John Spillane will be ticketed events.

Please see website, FB and Twitter for details of the programme, coming soon.



ASTROLOGY

Kate Arbon

Kate Arbon is an astrologer, writer and spiritual teacher. Living in West Cork for over 20 years she gives personal consultations locally and internationally using traditional natal and Horary astrology.
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August Sun Signs

This month we have a true Blue Moon. It's the second Full Moon in the sign of Aquarius. The first was on July 24. This keeps the Aquarius theme, which has been prominent since late 2020, on the front burner. We also have further activation of the tense square between Saturn and Uranus, which is the ongoing backdrop to 2021.

It's a big month for people with personal planets in the middle degrees of the fixed signs (Taurus, Leo, Scorpio, Aquarius) as the intensity is heightened here. The mood in August is towards thinking differently and being creative with your ideas and self-expression. There may be a re-working of the terms and conditions that you accept or reject in life. What is set down now will last into the future. It's a month for committing to a lifestyle plan or teasing out the finer points and details before the next phase is established.

The first days of the month sees Mercury very active as it passes by the Sun and starts its new cycle. The little messenger planet is

travelling at high speed, connecting the dots between the Sun, which gives life and inspiration, Saturn, planet of structure, limitations and tradition, and Uranus planet of innovation deviation and change. This dynamic combination can create nervous tension and anticipation when so much has to be considered. It's hard to pin things down during this first week. The sense of potential is there but things keep changing. You probably have a sense of shifts that still need to take place and which areas of life you experience a resistant to new patterns. Holding on and hoping for stability or continuity is going to create stress. Being open to new information and possibilities can allow for growth and exciting developments.

The New Moon on August 8 brings a breakthrough. It could be an unexpected new beginning or a flash of comprehension that offers some liberation. The effects can be slow to materialise but the seed has been sown now and the following weeks will eventually provide the

rewards.

Mercury is still the celestial body of interest around August 10, as it opposes Jupiter the planet of expansion, opportunity and ideals. This is followed up by a conjunction with Mars, the action planet on August 19. This week may see some kind of super hyped-up news story or exaggerated commentary followed by some serious analysis and pragmatic responses being put forward. This mid month time frame is perfect for problem solving and resolving complex scenarios.

With Venus in Virgo for the first half of August it may be difficult to feel compassion, as it can seem like you are the only one making the right kind of effort. Social connections can be strained and criticism of others is rife. This is the prevailing theme until after August 16 when Venus moves into her own sign, Libra. The next three to four weeks is the time to build bridges make social connections and enjoy life. A dose of shared leisure and pleasure is the best remedy to recent ailments.

Uranus, one of our big players this year and representative for freedom of expression, will start an annual retrograde on August 20 and this continues through the remainder of 2021. This takes the energy of rebellion and assertion of individuality inwards for a more personal expression. Over the next six months, as the square to Saturn persists, the ongoing tension between oppression and autonomy will become an issue for each one of us to address in our unique way. Making a statement by embodying what is most true for you will be the way of the future. This is a time when resistance is private and flexibility is powerful.

The last weeks of the month bring some positive energy patterns even with its challenges. The Full Moon on August 20 is the second one in Aquarius and it strengthens the indications that we are reaching some kind of culmination in the current Aquarius theme. It's all about the bigger picture with its idealism for the new improved future. The Full Moon is joined with

Jupiter. This expansive, optimistic planet represents faith, beliefs and ideology and it just moved back into Aquarius at the end of July. We may see a return to the altruistic thinking and propositions from late 2020 with a heightened focus on the social reset and 'building back better' for the greater good.

With both Mercury and Mars making a positive connection to Uranus this can spark new thoughts and sudden insights as the rational, logical mind gets exposed to something radical or unexpected. Venus connects to Saturn; Mercury connects to Neptune and Pluto in this last week. Intuitive knowing, spiritual attunement and a sense of connection to a higher source of power are all possible under these conditions. This could be a fast paced few days and the positive effects will become apparent in the coming months.

August has a New Moon at 17° Leo on August 8 at 2.50pm and a Full Moon at 30° Aquarius on August 22 at 1.01pm.



Aries: You're energised and inspired, creatively and emotionally approaching this New Moon time. You want to bring forth all that's deep within you. You express yourself more freely, playfully, and spontaneously and are more willing to take chances. Lady Luck is in your

corner so be sure to look for good deals. Social activities, travel and attending different cultural events will all lead to meeting people who can help further your goals. The dramatic and performing arts, sports and games, or other forms of self-expression and entertainment appeal strongly to you now. You can accomplish much if you set your mind to it.



Taurus: From the beginning of this month you will have been enjoying the success that you worked hard to achieve. Don't be too quick to put your energy into new projects, as you approach the New Moon, wait until the end of the month. All kinds of creative work

are favoured and you might find yourself more closely involved with children at this time. There is likely to be some conflict between your personal enjoyment and what others think you should be doing for fun. Those things that need to be discussed and settled with the family can be dealt with in the next few weeks.



Gemini: Take a trip back into your past and you will find the answers you are looking for. Now it's time to make changes instead of doing a repeat performance. Taking time to talk with neighbours and folks you

cross paths with daily may result in more positive and smoother-running relationships generally. You'll want to fritter away your time on fun and social events over the New Moon, but this may not be at all bad, things have been serious enough for you to want to take a break now. This is a good time to participate in or contribute to any community events in your area.



Cancer: Money, possessions, financial security, and practical matters are a focus for you now. You can make some very interesting professional or business moves this month. Be ready to put your money on the table in order to get ahead. If you have tended to be generous or

extravagant with your resources, you may begin to see the light at the end of the tunnel. At the least, it should become clear to you what your next steps should be regarding your finances. Your astute vision will enable you to correctly assess the right investment, job or any other money matters that arise after the New Moon phase.



Leo: With this New Moon in your sign you can make an impression on others by making a strong statement to the world about who you are. People recognise you and are likely to follow your lead, or at the least they stay out of your way. You are likely to feel more confident and vital

now. However, you may be so preoccupied with yourself and your own desires that you unintentionally ignore other people and their needs. Include the ones you love in your plans and things will get progressively better. You should be able to strengthen the bond with someone who has been an influence in your life.



Virgo: You'll be torn between what you want to do and what you have to do. Retreating from the world for a while and spending some quiet time alone to relax and rejuvenate appeals strongly to you now. You may feel like you are at low ebb and as if nothing is happening or

you may simply not want to be 'where the action is'. Don't overreact, overdo or over-indulge to compensate for things not going according to your plans. Sometimes it's best to do what you must, get it out of the way now. You'll get your turn to please yourself. Competitive ambitions and ego drives are on hold now.



Libra: Get involved in community events or social action groups that interest you and you will make headway in many different areas of your life through the people you meet and the information you discover. You may be asked to take responsibility or even a leadership role

or to contribute and participate more fully than you have in the past. You will enjoy being part of a team or group effort now. Being part of a community or circle of friends and building your social network is important to you at this time. Benefits from past efforts come home to roost.



Scorpio: Over the New Moon don't mix business with pleasure if you want to avoid trouble. Not everyone will be on your side over the next few weeks so you may want to choose your friends carefully and keep your personal thoughts and opinions to yourself. With your

career and reputation very important to you at this time, you can make significant gains regarding your ambitions. Recognition for your efforts and receiving credit for your accomplishments are likely now, but only if you've 'done your homework'. This is an excellent time to look for promotion, or to engage the support of those in positions of authority.



Sagittarius: This is a time to lift yourself out of your usual mundane concerns in order to get a larger perspective on your life. Although it may all seem overwhelming for a while remember that as long as you keep plugging away you will make gains. You really can get

things up and running if you try. A chance to do things a little differently will make all the difference in the world. Don't slow down because someone can't keep up with you. You have to maintain the momentum. A teacher or mentor who appears this New Moon may be particularly important to you later.



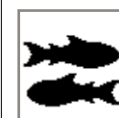
Capricorn: Don't push your luck now. Joint financial affairs and investments are likely to be an issue at this time, and it is a good time to clarify each person's expectations and to take care of any legal business, insurance, wills, and so on. On a personal level, there is a desire to

intensify the level of intimacy and honesty in your closest relationships and to clear away anything in yourself, which is impeding that deeper union you seek. Any temptation to make abrupt decisions and changes could lead to additional problems that you can do without. Stick to what's clear and avoid taking on other people's responsibilities.



Aquarius: Partnerships, marriage, and one-to-one relationships get your attention now. You'll be called upon to co-operate and perhaps to relinquish some of your own personal interests for the sake of harmony and mutual benefit. You may end up questioning yourself

as well as the motives of the people around you. Get to the bottom of things before it's too late. Once you have all the facts you will be in a much better position to make a decision. Don't let anyone pull you in a direction you don't want to go and do what's best for you but the emphasis is on 'we' rather than 'me'.



Pisces: Doing your best work and taking pride in it are a focus for you now. You should be able to make some worthwhile career moves or at least secure your current position so that you don't have to worry about your financial future. This is a good time to examine how you

use your time and energy, with an eye to improving your efficiency and productivity. Watch out for health matters as you are concerned with your body now, and you may be inspired to begin a self-improvement program, create better habits, or begin a new diet or fitness plan.

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people Arts & Entertainment

IWA organises upbeat Ceol for the Soul event for service users



Musicians Eithne, Mary and Kevin.

The Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA) excelled in creativity last month by putting on four music gigs, in various locations, for people who attend their service in Clonakilty.

From talking to service users daily, either over the phone or face-to-face, Service Support Officer Sinéad Burke felt that they really needed a boost. "Lockdown has been hard on every single person in Ireland and people with disabilities have felt very vulnerable during these times. Our service users were isolated from any social interaction, which had such a negative impact on people's wellbeing."

Staff at IWA understood that people needed something positive to focus on, something other than the fear that COVID was bringing into their homes. The power of music struck a chord with Sinéad, "We wanted to bring music to people's front doors, gardens or local park, so they could just feel human again and forget their worries,

even just for a day. We applied for Cork County Council funding to allow musicians to play some upbeat, feel good tunes, and this is how 'Ceol for the Soul' came about."

Although IWA had applied for funding in lockdown, by the time it came through restrictions had lifted somewhat, so there was more flexibility to hold music events in public places for everybody to enjoy. The locations were based around the number of service users in those areas and included a forest! "We wanted to include all of our regular service users and so we extended the invite to Assisted Living service users too," Sinéad explains. "IWA staff supported with transport where needed, so nobody was excluded."

IWA could not advertise these events but word spread between service users and their families. Members of the public who were lucky enough to be passing at the time also got to experience the positivity of 'Ceol for the Soul'.



Meadhbh and Ruadh Bancroft

Three talented musicians, Mary, Eithne and Kevin, who also play with the celebrated West Cork Ukulele Orchestra, provided the group with some beautiful tunes. "They gave this event their heart and soul, and played with such positive energy," Sinéad says. "Everybody couldn't help but sing along and acknowledge how much we have missed music being part of our lives over the past year and a half."

IWA would like to thank local videographer and photographer Rob Murphy of RM Media who volunteered his time to record the event so it could be shared on social media, bringing awareness of

inclusiveness for people with disabilities. It also thanks Cork County Council and local authorities for supporting the event.

Poetry Ireland announces Bandon as a Poetry Town

Poetry Ireland has announced details of Poetry Town, a new initiative, which will see more than 100 free poetry-related activities take place in 20 towns across Ireland from September 10-18. Bandon will be among the towns, with activities being organised by Poetry Ireland in partnership with Cork County Council Arts Office.

Poetry Ireland, together with its local authority partners, will appoint a Poet Laureate for each town, announced next month, who will either be from the respective local area or have strong connections with it. They will be commissioned to write a poem honouring their Poetry Town and its people.

Each poem will be presented at a series of flagship online events, one of which will be hosted in each town, which will feature contributions from local poets, artists and musicians.



There will also be a wide variety of additional activities in the Poetry Towns. These will include a series of poetry events involving local poets; poetry workshops; public poetry displays, including 'Poetry Underfoot'; and a range of physical activities called 'Poems that Move You', which will vary from town to town. Local businesses, including cafés and chemists, will also be participating in the activities to celebrate their towns by distributing 'pocket poems' to customers.

The full programme for each town will be made available on the Poetry Town website during the last week of August. www.poetrytown.ie.

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people Sport

SPORTING
TALES

Paul Lordan

Paul Lordan is a sports and history enthusiast, and he is delighted to combine his passions in his column. Paul is well placed to comment on sport as a former hurler and footballer with Shamrocks. He is also a former Munster Senior League soccer player and manager with Avondale United, Casement Celtic, Garryduff and Passage AFC. Paul's grá for all things West Cork results from the fact that he is descended from a family of farmers in the Coolmountain area.

Over the years, it is unsurprising that many of Ireland's best and brightest have identified West Cork as an ideal area for relocation. It is impossible to argue against the fact that many of these individuals have left an indelible mark on the area's socio economic landscape. Affectionately known as 'blow ins' to some, this piece aims to highlight the sporting story of two of West Cork's most notable adopted sons. In addition to their on pitch excellence, both men have also made a significant impact off the pitch as managers in their respective codes.

West Cork's finest sporting imports



Larry Tompkins

Larry Tompkins

Originally hailing from county Kildare, Larry Tompkins managed an amazing haul of county Junior B, Junior A and Intermediate titles in successive seasons with his native Eadestown. He went on to play minor, under 21 and senior football for Kildare, before relocating to New York in the mid 1980s where he would play for the Donegal club. It briefly looked like Tompkins' intercounty career was over when a widely derided decision by the Kildare county board to stop paying for his return flights home, rendered him unable to represent his native county. A number of opportunistic and persistent Castlehaven natives based in New York managed to persuade their teammate to line out for the Union Hall club for the 1987 championship.

Cork manager, Billy Morgan had played against Tompkins in New York, and wasted no time in drafting his old adversary into the Cork panel. The impact made for his adopted club and county was nothing short of astounding. Over the ensuing years, he won two County Championships and three Munster Club Championships in Castlehaven colours. As a key component in Cork football's

golden era he won six Munster Football Championships, one National League Title, three All Star Awards and two All Ireland titles. He was also named at Centre Forward in the Cork Team of the Millennium. Larry Tompkins was widely credited with being a driving force in Billy Morgan's mission to change the culture and internal mindset of the Cork Senior Football team. His gruelling lunchtime runs in the Vernon Mount dirt bike course are the subject of many local yarns. Tompkins' career longevity, freakish ability to recover quickly from injury and willingness to play through the pain barrier are oft discussed. He managed to play inter-county football until the age of 33, despite experiencing two cruciate knee ligament injuries and severe hamstring injuries earlier in his career.

Immediately after the conclusion of his playing career in 1996, Larry Tompkins succeeded Billy Morgan as Bainisteoir of the Cork Senior Football Team. After several of his teammates from the Morgan era followed him into retirement, the early years of Tompkins' tenure served as a rebuilding phase for Cork. Over the coming years, he successfully introduced a series



John Caulfield

of exciting young players such as Anthony Lynch, Eoin Sexton, Sean Og O Hailpin, Nicholas Murphy, Micheal Ó Croinin, Phillip Clifford, Graham Cauty, John Miskella, Alan Quirke, Fionan Murray and Brendan Jer O'Sullivan into the Cork senior setup. Despite early championship exists in 1997 and 1998, 1999 represented a high point for Tompkins' Cork side with a Munster Championship victory and an All Ireland final appearance against Meath. Another Munster Championship victory followed in 2002. Although Tompkins departed his role at the conclusion of the 2003 season it is worth noting that seven years later many of the players that he introduced to the intercounty game were still key men for Conor Counihan's 2010 All Ireland winning side.

John Caulfield

After John Caulfield's arrival in 1985, few would have envisaged the impact that West Cork's newest resident would have on soccer in Cork. Born in New York, raised in Roscommon and introduced to the League of Ireland in an Athlone Town shirt, John Caulfield came to Ballineen and Enniskeen to work as a manager in Soundstore. After a season playing in

the Munster Senior League, he made the move to Cork City FC in 1986. After netting the club's first ever hat trick, John Caulfield would go on to enjoy a stellar 15-year League of Ireland career and he eventually retired as the club's all-time leading goal scorer in 2001. Over the course of his time with the club, Caulfield won one League of Ireland title, one FAI Cup, three League Cups, and eleven Munster Senior Cups. A tough, quick and clinical striker, the fact that he managed to top the League of Ireland goal scoring charts on two occasions in an era of Big Centre forwards and long ball football is a testament to his undoubted quality.

Upon the conclusion of his League of Ireland career, he obtained a management position with Munster Senior League sleeping giant Avondale United. He quickly transformed a struggling first division side into a star-studded outfit that dominated the local and national amateur football scene like no team before or since. He followed this up with a highly productive spell in charge of UCC. In November 2013, John Caulfield was appointed as manager of Cork City FC. The appointment had an air of inevitability to it, and he departed the amateur

game as arguably the most successful manager that the Munster Senior League has ever seen. The main objective and expectation of Cork City prior to his arrival was Premier Division survival. Over the course of his five-and-a-half year tenure John Caulfield's Cork City never finished a season below second place in the Premier Division. He won one League of Ireland Premier Division title, two FAI Cups and three President's cups. An admirable haul by any standards and a feat unmatched on Leaside since the Cork Athletic and Cork United sides of the 1940's and 1950's! Although his robust and direct style of football meant that he had no shortage of detractors on Leaside, John Caulfield was a spectacular success. He left Cork City by mutual consent in May 2019, and many still view his departure as a turning point in the decline of the club which today sits in lower half of the first division table.

Although it is easy to wax lyrical about his contribution to League of Ireland soccer in Cork, this piece would not be complete without highlighting John Caulfield's contribution to sport in West Cork. It is widely known that he is incredibly generous with his time when it comes to assisting with the coaching of local teams, aiding the fundraising efforts of local clubs and assisting with coaching West Cork Interleague teams. In Ballineen and Enniskeen, he has represented the St Mary's footballers with distinction. He has also played senior divisional football with Carbery, and represented the Cork junior team at inter-county level.

West Cork's sporting souvenirs and stories wanted for Europe's biggest online sports collection

EPIC The Irish Emigration Museum is inviting sports fans, aficionados, experts and collectors throughout West Cork and abroad to become part of the Europeana Sport collection, a major project undertaken by museums, libraries and cultural organisations across Europe.

Souvenir programmes, tickets, medals, photographs, jerseys, keepsakes, song sheets or other sporting memorabilia and the stories connected with them are all welcome.

Those with sporting memories or memorabilia to share are invited to have them assessed, digitised and uploaded to the Europeana Collection either online via the EPIC Website or at the CHQ Building on August 21, as part of Heritage Week, and September 25, as part of the Dublin Festival of History. It is also possible to show off your collection via a zoom call.

It will be shared as part of Europeana - Europe's platform for digital cultural heritage and be recognised as part of Ireland's sporting

history.

People can find out more at www.epicchq.com/storyofsport



The first Irish National Surfing Championships, held in Waterford in 1967

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Heroes welcome for West Cork's Olympic champions



Phil Healy.
Pic: Harry Murphy/Sportsfile

While it was more a subdued homecoming without all the usual fanfare of media attention and crowds for our Olympic medalists, who were welcomed back to Skibbereen by the local rowing club at a function in the town this week, the feeling of



Gold medallists Fintan McCarthy, left, and Paul O'Donovan in action in Tokyo. Pic: Seb Daly/Sportsfile

pride in West Cork is certainly not restrained. As we bathe in the glory of their Olympic success, even the postboxes in Skibbereen have turned to gold!

Speaking after his final race, Paul O'Donovan said, "It feels pretty good. We can't complain! We had a really good race – but a tough one. The Germans were flying so it was hard. I was really excited when we first crossed the line and there was a bit of relief as well. We have had a good time all week, so we are a bit sad that it is all over. We hadn't had too much time to

think about it but it feels pretty good and hopefully it will be that way for a while."

West Cork also has the homecoming of Ballineen bullet Phil Healy to look forward to, who although she lost out on a place in the 400 metres semi-finals by the narrowest of margins, an agonising 0.07s, gave no less than a heroic performance in all of her events. While it wasn't to be for the Bandon athlete, she leaves the Games as an Olympic finalist, and the first Irish woman to compete in three track and field events at one



Bronze medallist Emily Hegarty

Olympic Games.

After her race in the 400 metres, Healy knew that fresh legs would have made the difference, but was content with her time and performance: "I went out there and gave it my all and that's my second fastest outdoor time ever, but I know if I was fresh it would certainly have been a PB. To fall short again is

disappointing, but it definitely gave me comfort today knowing what I did on top of yesterday."

After the exceptional performances of Skibbereen's Paul O'Donovan, Fintan McCarthy, Emily Hegarty and teammates and Bandon athlete Phil Healy in Japan, it's safe to say that West Cork will be dining out on their success for quite a while.

people Motoring

Electric offering from Mercedes



CAR
REVIEWS
Sean Creedon

Mercedes were a bit slow to the electric market, but they are planning to launch several new electric models in the coming years. Last year the German manufacturer launched their massive electric people carrier the EQV and now they have the impressive EQA 250 SUV electric car on sale.

I drove it last week and was

very impressed. In the recent past the problem with many electric cars is that they were not very attractive to look at. But the EQA looks like a regular Merc. The only external clue is the normally attractive grille is now much duller.

The famous Mercedes three-point star has long gone from their cars, but there is a badge on the bonnet and their logo now brightens the rather dull looking area where the grille used to be.

As usual with electric cars, the first questions I am always asked refers to range and price. Well the range in the EQA is decent at approximately 380km and the price is €56,120. Road tax is €120.

Now that's certainly not cheap, but what you are getting is a really classy-looking Mercedes. Basically it looks like a regular Mercedes with the gear lever where I always think the indicator lever is. But you get used to it after a few hours driving.

My test car came in a very



attractive denim blue colour. Inside you would need sunglasses, as the cream leather seats are so bright. By now I am very familiar with the controls on the dash of a Mercedes, which are really user-friendly. I love the way, at the touch of your finger, all the radio stations come up on screen.

The boot is huge, but with all electric technology to be accommodated, there is no room for a spare wheel. Two silver roof rails add to the SUV look.

You probably saw Minister Eamon Ryan on television re-

cently launching a range of new charge points at the Mayfield service station near Monaster-evin. We need fast charging points at every cross roads in the country if we are to go fully electric by 2030.

There used to be a joke in the telephone section of the old department of Post and Telegraphs that each application for a phone took the P&T by surprise. Cruel, but it was often true.

Now if we are to be fully electric by the year 2030 we need some 'joined-up' thinking

and planning and allow space for charge points in the various five and six-storey apartment blocks being built in every large town and city around the country.

Meanwhile take a test drive in this gorgeous Mercedes EQA, I guarantee you will not be disappointed. When I was a young lad it seemed that only managing directors of companies drove a Merc. Now Mercedes has a car for everybody.

One problem with all electric cars is that they are so quiet.

How do you warn pedestrians of an approaching vehicle and can anybody produce an audible warning that is both effective but still gentle?

There is a man named Laurent Worms, who is Renault's Audio Strategy Manager and he is working on this project. But we will have to wait for Renault's new Electric Megane to hear what sound he comes up with.

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people Home & Garden

Reaping your rewards in a beautiful bouquet

Mags Riordan of Bumblebee Farm is guiding us through the planning, planting and caring of a bed for cut flowers. This month she focuses on displaying your bounty.

Last month's live tutorial was all about creating a bouquet from your cut flower patch. There are certain considerations when choosing your flowers to create a pleasing look. These are my suggestions from Ollie's Garden but feel free to add your own; do work in threes, as otherwise it can end up a tangled mess.

Ingredients:

- 4 calendula
- 3 spray cornflower
- 6 mint stems
- 3 marigold
- 3 antirrhinum
- 2 orlaya (I substituted with D. carota)



- 3 fewerfew
- 3 nigella/pods
- 3 cosmos (I substituted with button marigold)
- 3 stems nasturtium

Method:

Cut flowers early in the morning or late in the evening and allow to drink and condition in water for a couple of hours before arranging. When you cut, you're severing the flowers' means of drinking, so by allowing to stand and rehydrate, the flowers will last longer in a vase.

Strip foliage above water level,

as the leaves below the water line will sour the water.

Lay the flowers out in their groups. Starting with calendula, place between your finger and thumb, add at an angle a mint stem, turn and add another, turn again and add the third. Next add the nasturtium, being mindful of angled placement and even distribution. Working in threes gives an overall pleasing appearance.

Continue adding your ingredients, cutting stems to the length suited to your vase and either tie off with string or place



to fall naturally in the vase. Change your water every three to four days and recut stems. Your bouquet should last seven to 10 days by doing this.



I hope your home is blessed with a bountiful harvest and your pollinators are well fed. Next month, on August 22, we will be focusing on the



edible qualities of the plant selection and ways to use them in the home.

Bee Kind

**GARDENING**

John Hosford

The Weekend Garden Centre

August is often a holiday month but it's important to remain vigilant with watering of containers, deadheading and pest control.

Jobs for the month

Sweet Peas: Regular picking of sweet pea blooms will encourage a good succession of flowers.

Gardening in August

Cut the blooms with a sharp scissors or secateurs and feed your sweet pea plant on a weekly basis with an organic, seaweed based liquid feed, directing the feed to the roots, keeping it off the flowers and foliage. Watering with lukewarm water is recommended and keep well-watered during prolonged dry spells.

Birds: Keep a regular supply of water to the birds and regularly clean drinking vessels.

Roses: Prune rambling roses after flowering. Dead-head roses frequently and remove suckers, which are generally of a lighter foliage colour and will have seven leaflets rather than the usual five, which make up the more cultivated varieties. Keep a careful eye out for blackspot, mildew and rust and pick up and destroy fallen leaves. When pruning, cut

out any stems with black spot on and mulch well in late winter.

Hedges: Trim hedges during August.

Deadheading: Deadhead perennials, dahlias, bedding and patio plants. Dahlias will flower continuously until the first frosts. Regular deadheading will direct their energies into continuous flower production and a succession of regular blooms well into the autumn. Check your Dahlias are securely and robustly staked. Don't use weak, flimsy canes, instead use robust 2" or 3" diameter stakes. Tie in with garden twine. If you have put netting in place, this should be adjusted according to the height of the plants. Protect against slug and caterpillar damage using organic control methods. Dahlias come in a wide variety of heights, colours, flower types and flower shapes. Height varies from 30cm-120cm (12"-4ft). You can have a petit pompon variety or a giant dinner plate bloom.

Watering: Hanging baskets, window boxes and patio containers will require watering and feeding now. If you are on holidays, do arrange to get someone to water frequently while you are away. Water fruit and vegetables on a regular basis in prolonged dry spells, paying particular attention to recently planted vegetable plants, fruit trees and bushes. Tomato plants will now require regular watering and liquid feeding. Use a designated seaweed based, organic tomato feed and feed at least twice a week, as fruit sets and matures.

Greenhouse: Regular ventilation is important both in terms of disease, pest and of course temperature control. If you are away on holiday, ask someone to open and close the greenhouse in the morning and evening. Or you can install an automatically controlled vent. It is a good idea to make early plans for a new greenhouse, polytunnel or conservatory in August. Choose a sunny, sheltered site convenient to the house. Greenhouses are best orientated east-west to maximise light transmission. Consider proximity to electricity and a reliable water supply.

Spring Bulbs: Spring flowering bulbs start to arrive in the shops and garden centres early this month. Daffodils, Narcissi and Crocus can be planted right away. Even though Tulips are in stock now, they are best planted in the cooler months of November and December.

By all means be an 'early bird' and secure your tulip bulbs early while there is a good choice of varieties. Store in a cool, dry place until planting time. Ensure all varieties are well labelled with details of variety, colour, height and type. Choose heights and varieties according to your aspect. If you are in an exposed place you are best to choose a dwarf variety preferably under 30cm (12"). You can have tulips in flower from February to May by selecting varieties to flower each month. A wide colour range is available from pure white to almost black. Colour range also embraces red, yellow, lavender, pinks, green and white, pastel shades, vibrant oranges and flame

colours.

Plant Hyacinths for Christmas: Keep to one variety/colour per container to ensure a co-ordinated look. If the container doesn't have drainage use bulb fibre which contains charcoal and oyster shell. Hyacinths come in red, pink, blue, white and yellow shades. Plunge your pots/bowls outdoors in sand/gravel. Bring indoors after 10/12 weeks into a cool, bright situation, avoiding an over-warm room. The coolness keeps them more robust and, when it comes to flowering, the blooms will last much longer.

Autumn Flowering Bulbs: Autumn Crocus, Colchicum, Sternbergia and autumn-flowering Cyclamen are all tremendous additions to the garden providing a continuation of colour and expanding the tapestry of interest in the garden. They should be planted now without delay. **Weeds:** Weeds had a slow start this year but they certainly played catch-up. Young, emerging weeds can be controlled by regular hoeing with a sharp, Dutch hoe. Hoe early in the day on a morning that you expect good drying with either sun or wind. Long term control of weeds is achieved by removing weeds before they flower and go to seed. Many weeds will disperse in the wind such as willow herb, thistles, groundsel, ragwort. The secret is not to let them race ahead of you and avoid them going to seed.

These weeds can remain in the soil for several years!

Fruit Garden: Pick strawberries, blackberries, blueberries, raspberries, gooseberries, black-

currants, redcurrants, figs, plums, damsons, cherries, peaches and early apples. Continue pruning of restricted forms of apples and pears, supporting heavily laden branches as you do so. Immediately after wall-trained peaches and nectarines have fruited, cut out the shoots, which have borne fruit and dead wood, and tie in replacement shoots. Prune plums and damsons after fruiting and cut out any broken branches. Remove dead wood on fan-trained plums, shorten pinched-back shoots and tie in. Prepare new strawberry beds and plant out rooted runners. Continue pruning and tying-in of raspberries.

Lawns: Prepare ground for a late August/September sowing of a new lawn.

Vegetable Garden: Sow spring cabbage until August 15. Don't sow or plant where cabbage has been grown before. Watch out for flea beetle on emergence. Organic suppliers have a protective, organically safe solution. Choose a dry day and harvest onions. Leave in a good, drying area where they get the full advantages of the drying wind and sun. If the weather is wet, bring them indoors to a shed or greenhouse where they will dry out in order to store well.

You can sow Japanese onions to harvest early summer next year.

Keep a watchful out for caterpillars especially on cabbage, geraniums and nasturtiums.

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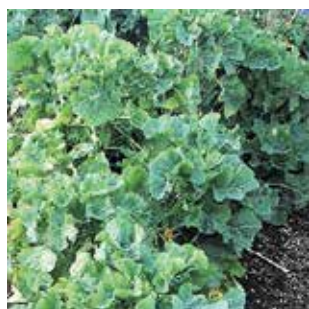
With the heatwave of late, gardeners are outside in their gardens more than ever, albeit hunting out in any shadier, cooler corners! Unlike us, plants can't up and move out of the baking sun or dive in for a dip in the sea to cool off. How and what can be grown in a changing climate of extreme weather is something you can see and learn about in the gardens of the West Cork Garden Trail, especially in the likes of **The Garden of Re-Imagination** outside Glengarriff. The team behind this edible garden, share some delicious edibles, which are more resistant to the increasing bouts of extreme hot, cold, dry and wet that are and no doubt will be coming our way.

First things first – perennials! Perennial food crops, that is those that come back year after year, tend to have much more extensive deep root systems, which can tap into water and food much more readily than annuals. This makes them much less susceptible to stress as a result of dry, hot spells. Take for instance Kale. The team grow both perennial and annual varieties of kale and have watched the annuals bolt (go to seed as a result of water stress) over the last few weeks, whereas perennial varieties (read on for recommendations!) are still producing leaves with no sign of bolting.

Second to choosing perennial crops, the best way to boost crop resilience is to banish bare earth. Whether you choose to cover soil with seaweed in the autumn, compost in the spring, layers of cardboard or wood chip – whatever you have to hand – give your ground a good thick mulch, ideally a minimum of three to four inches. A good mulch will dramatically reduce the need for watering, helping your plants survive longer without the need for a drink, as well as helping to feed soil life and in turn your plants as the material breaks down over time. Mulching also helps prevent soil erosion, an issue when the heatwave breaks and the heavens open. You can also use groundcover crops as 'living' mulch – a couple of ideas below!

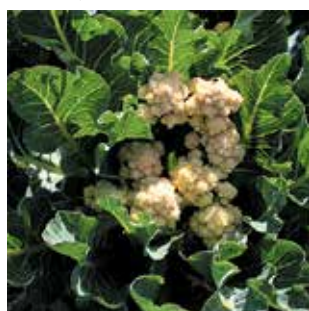
To whet the appetite, here are some of the teams tried and tested edibles, which have been bountiful as well as beautiful throughout summer.

• **Daubenton Kale (*Brassica oleracea* var. *ramosa*):** A fantastic, non-fussy perennial kale with large leaves, that's quick growing and doesn't seem to bat a brassica leaf at cold or hot weather. There are two forms, one being variegated with beautiful pink and white tipped frilly leaves. If you have a sweet tooth, then this is the one for you, or if not, then it's



the non-variegated you want to go for.

• **Nine-Star Perennial Broccoli (*Brassica oleracea*):** More cauliflower than broccoli it must be said, but the team have a



selection of plants which three years in are still producing tasty florets and leaves. Just make sure you do pick the florets to help keep the plants energy reserves up for growing again the following year.

• **The Siberian Pea Tree (*Caragana arborescens*),** sounds like it should be tough, and it is! The peas are delicious but unfortunately are a little



tough straight from the pod so best dried for storing and then cooked as needed. The tree is hardy to minus 40, can happily tolerate a drought and is able to withstand those wild westerly winds we often get. The flowers are scented and the roots improve your soil by fixing nitrogen. It does need drainage so make sure you plant it slightly raised and add grit to the soil.

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Most gardens are open now until the end of the Summer and offer season tickets, check for individual gardens, their location, opening times and events at www.westcorkgardentrail.com or West Cork Garden Trail Facebook page.

• **Nepalese Creeping Bramble (*Rubus nepalensis*):** Lower growing, less thorny and non-invasive compared with its cousin the Chinese Creeping



Bramble. This is the one to go for for sweeter, raspberry-like fruits. Fantastic groundcover fruit crop.

• **Sweet Woodruff (*Galium odoratum*):** Elegant, low growing relation of the well-known hedgerow herb 'cleavers. Sweet woodruff is a fantastic groundcover tea crop producing carpets of sweet scented white flowers throughout spring and into early summer. Leaves and flowers can be picked, then dried, to make a tea.

The above are just a few, there is a whole world of perennial and annual edibles you can grow in your garden and enjoy as food and drinks! For more ideas visit the beautiful gardens of West Cork Garden Trail. Details for gardens, locations and opening times you can find at www.westcorkgardentrail.com or find brochures in your local garden centres or any of their gardens.

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A lot of clients have asked me lately how they can give their kitchen a new look without it costing them an arm and a leg. Are you thinking about giving your kitchen a makeover? If you don't want, or need, to rip everything out and start again, it's easy to refresh the space with just a few small

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changes. Here are some ideas to get you started:

Change your cabinet handles: My first tip if you are happy with your cabinets but just want to change it up a little is to swap out your handles. There are numerous handle options out there from ceramic to chrome, brass or even leather. Have a look around your local craft or hardware shop to see what's available but choose a handle that complements the look you are trying to achieve.

Paint your kitchen doors: If your cabinet doors are in good condition you can achieve a totally new look by painting them. If you are a neat painter there is no reason you can't do this yourself but if you tend to be a bit 'slap dash' it might be best to hire a professional decorator!

If you are taking on the project yourself make sure you prime the doors first. A good primer is the Zinsser BIN primer, available in most local paint stores.

Think about how much of a change you want. If you want to feel you have a whole new kitchen, change dark toned cupboards to a light colour, and vice versa. Alternatively you could paint your main units in a light colour and your island or breakfast bar in a darker shade, or try bold colours on both! For ideas take a look at a colour wheel that shows complementary colours, that is two colours that sit opposite each other on the wheel. Typically one colour should be the dominant shade and the other an accent colour. There are great websites and apps available that allow you to create a colour scheme digitally before you invest in supplies.

Replace doors: There is no point painting if your doors are in bad condition to start with. A much wiser investment is to leave the units as is and replace the doors and drawer fronts. Please take into account who uses the kitchen when choosing your doors, don't pick a soft wood if they will receive daily bumps and knocks from little people.

Add storage: Firstly, look at what you have. Clear out your cupboards and you may find you have enough if you get rid of unused junk! If you need extra storage put up some free floating shelves on empty walls or maybe add a food larder to a utility room for rarely used items. I always say to people, clear your worktops and keep your foodstuff in cupboards to present a stylish kitchen.

Replace worktops: This is another easy way to refresh a kitchen, as there are various options available when replacing worktops. Based on your budget, your material choices here include laminate, solid wood, granite, quartz, glass, composite stone and stainless steel. I always remind my clients that a worktop



INTERIORS

Maura Mackey

Maura Mackey is a Cork-based interior and retail display designer. A professional with an eye for detail and interior styling, she thrives on giving any home the 'showhouse feel' when up for sale or rental from a home staging point of view. On the other hand, if you are looking to give your home a makeover or restyling, 'Maura Mackey Design' will help you achieve the home of your dreams. P: 087-7699714. maura@mauramackeydesign.ie

works extremely hard – think about how many people will be using it and what they are using it for... you don't want to install a worktop that is not fit for purpose. This is an area I suggest you spend money on.

Replace taps and backsplash: Your kitchen tap can add great character, and extra functionality to your kitchen. There are so many styles out there from funky to modern to antique... choose one that doesn't clash with the rest of the interior design. The same goes for your backsplash. If you are designing a modern kitchen have a look at painted glass or stainless steel. Penny tile designs work well for both modern and traditional looks.

Replace/update your flooring: Tired of your tiles but dreading the idea of the kango hammer and the dust? Leave the floor as is because you can lay new flooring on top of your current one – your local flooring expert will help you with this. I have

completed a few kitchen designs recently where I recommended luxury, light-coloured vinyl tiles to cover over existing dark tiles and it has worked out fantastically well for clients.

Kitchen table and chairs: Paint your table and chairs to blend in with your new kitchen. Maybe add a splash of colour with seat pads and cushions. However, if you've always found your chairs a bit uncomfortable, or they look old-fashioned in a new modern kitchen, now is your excuse to replace them altogether!

Walls: A quick and easy way to brighten a kitchen is to go for neutral paint colours on the walls. Take into account the colour of your kitchen units and worktop here, and choose a washable matt. If your kitchen is already a bright space maybe you could add a feature wall, adding a blast of colour into that space.

Window treatments: Shutters are available in a wide variety of colours or go for fabric blinds with interesting prints. Choose 'perfect fit' blinds that are insert into your window frame if

you don't want to spoil a view, available from most good blind companies.

Lighting: As the workhorse of the house, your kitchen needs sufficient lighting at all times of the day and night. Really more is more here but you can still create different moods in different parts of the room; think about installing softer pendant lights over your dining table versus bright ones over the kitchen island where you will be working. You can also add LED lighting under your cabinets or recessed lighting wherever you can fit it. A lot of these can be added when remodelling, just ensure you employ a trained electrician.

Also remember that a bold coloured light fitting over an island is another interesting way to achieve a pop of colour!

Accessories: Don't forget that accessories brighten a kitchen in an instant and can pull a look together. Open shelving, counter-tops and tables all provide an opportunity to display them... but less is more so choose carefully!



Bandon Community Group declared a Growing champ

In the spring of 2021, a call out to budding GIY'ers across the country was made by Energia and GIY as they wanted to 'Get Ireland Growing' by supplying the knowledge and food growing tools and seeds for individuals and groups to get growing.

Six Get Ireland Growing Champions from all across the country have been announced as the winners including Bandon Community Group, which consists of people of all different backgrounds brought together by their interest in growing and gardening. The group says that they are looking at how they can be as sustainable as possible when looking after their garden with the aim to donate produce to their local food bank, Feed Cork.

Each of the new champions has been awarded funding from Energia to enable them to further develop each of their food growing projects.

