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pages 16-18



Matt Churchill of The Church plays at Clonakilty International Guitar Festival, while watched by appreciative audience member, Ruth O'Neill, aged two.
Pic: Sean Casey

Boost for West Cork with walking trails announcement

West Cork is set to benefit from the Government's announcement this week on a major initiative for Rural Ireland, which includes the addition of 31 new walking trails to her Department's Walks Scheme and funding for a number of new Rural Recreation Officers.

The funding will connect the Slí Gaeltacht Mhuscraí walking trail between Cork and Cavan and create an additional Rural Recreation Officer post in West Cork.

The Slí Gaeltacht Mhuscraí walking trail is a 50km stretch of walkway connecting the Beara Peninsula through to the Bere Brefini in County Cavan.

The announcement delivers on commitments in both the Programme for Government and Our Rural Future to increase the number of trails under the 'Walks Scheme' in order to boost outdoor recreation and tourism in rural towns and villages.

Cork South West Deputy Christopher O'Sullivan and Senator Tim Lombard both welcomed the news.

"One of the most important part of the announcement by Minister Humphreys is the decision to appoint an additional Rural Recreation Officer in West Cork, as well as improving the salaries of the Rural Recreation Officers that are already carrying out great work across the

country," said Senator Lombard.

"Funding to connect the Slí Gaeltacht Mhuscraí walking trail between Cork and Cavan will be a huge tourist boost and help open the county to more local walkers, hikers and tourists," said Cork South West Deputy Christopher O'Sullivan.

"The Beara way has been a huge success so far and we're getting closer and closer to connecting the entire way, which will bring walkers from the top of the Beara Peninsula up to Bere Brefini in county Cavan," continued Deputy O'Sullivan.

"This a huge attraction for West Cork and it will eventually rival the famous Camino to Santiago in Spain."



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Sheep's Head walkers raise €2,000 for people living in poverty overseas



A sponsored walk on the West Cork coast has raised around €2,000 for an aid agency's work in some of the world's poorest communities. The Christian Aid Sheep's Head Hike is an annual event, which has attracted around 300 walkers in recent years but this year was scaled down to comply with Covid guidelines.

Fifteen walkers set off from Kilcrohane on Saturday, September 4 led by volunteer organisers Margaret Skuce and David Hayward. The group walked the 8km Cahergal Loop, which brought them to a height of 370 metres, skirting past dramatic cliffs, a disused copper mine and the remnants of former settlements including the famine hamlet of Crimea. The sum

raised this year brings to almost €75,000 the total raised since the event began in 2009.

Christian Aid Ireland's Bandon-based Church and Community Officer Andrew Coleman thanked the walkers and all those who had sponsored them. "We're grateful for all the donations received from supporters and church communities across West Cork and beyond. We especially appreciate the support of the Kilcrohane Community Council, the Sheep's Head Way Committee, local parishes and the wider communities of Kilcrohane, Ahakista and Durrus."

Andrew hopes that the event will return to its normal format next year. "We hope to hold a full-scale walk on Saturday, September 3, 2022. Save the

date because we hope to see you there."

Christian Aid Ireland Chief Executive Rosamond Bennett added her thanks. She said:

"Each year our supporters in West Cork pass the ruins of a famine village, as they hike the Sheep's Head peninsula to raise funds for our work. Their kindness is supporting Christian Aid Ireland as we work to reach people on the frontline of today's hunger crisis – in countries such as South Sudan and Afghanistan."

To help Christian Aid Ireland reach more people, please visit caid.ie/Hunger or telephone 01 496 7040 to make a telephone donation.

Irish fishing communities document their stories to raise awareness of the exploitation of Irish fishermen

Following on from the protest flotillas held in Cork and Dublin earlier this year, Irish Fishermen have enlisted the help of Sean Moroney, Santander Media from Kilmore Quay to document and highlight the continuing issue of the unfair and disproportionate share of fish that Irish boats can catch in our own waters.

Sean Moroney is the creator of The Fishers Voice, a social media initiative created to garner support for the plight of Irish fishermen who feel they go unheard by our government and representatives. With the support of Niall Duffy, Editor of The Skipper, Sean travelled the country to record the voices of Irish fishing communities in crisis.

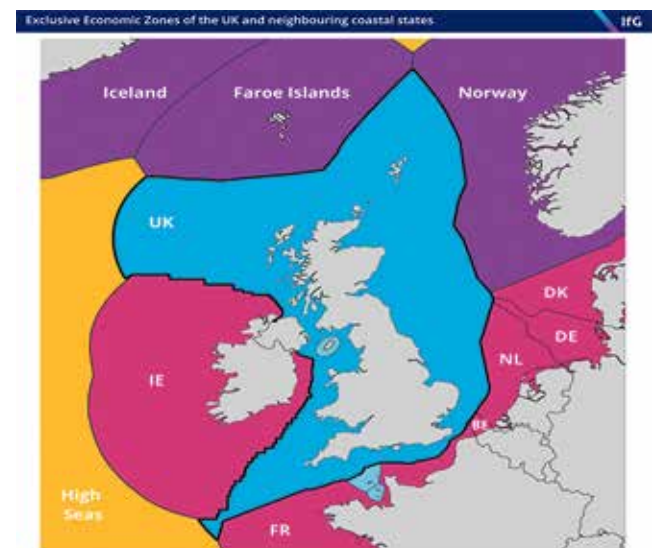
The result of this collaboration is a 26-minute documentary that was screened to TD's and media on September 29 at Buswell's Hotel before being released on social media to the public.

Five months in the making, this documentary lifts the lid on decades of unfairness, whereby the EU, under the Common Fisheries Policy, allocated the lion's share 85 per cent of the Total Allowable Catch (Quota) to the mainland European countries, despite the majority of this fishing taking place in Irish Waters.

You will see the effect on entire coastal communities of Irish fishermen denied the equal rights and equal opportunities to fish in our own Irish Waters, while having to watch French, Dutch, Belgian, Spanish and other EU vessels land tens of thousands of tons of fish on Irish piers and drive them away in trucks, for processing in Europe, all with the full backing of the Irish government over decades.



Castletownbere fisherman Damien Turner. Pic Niall Duffy



EU fishing zones

Belgium, as a case in point, has 0.1 per cent of EU fishing grounds while Ireland has 10 per cent. Yet the Belgian fleet has a greater quota for some prime species in Irish waters than local Irish fishermen.

In the documentary, individual fishermen and business owners, who rely on the fishing industry for their income, speak out about how the continuing lack of access to the raw

material i.e. fish in Irish waters is causing a crisis in our coastal communities where some towns derive as much as 90 per cent of the local economy from fishing.

From the Malin Head Peninsula in Donegal to the Beara Peninsula in West Cork, fishing communities say they have been suffering in silence for too long. With this documentary they finally feel their story is being told.

Castlefreke Forest paths to be upgraded

The Government has announced €1.2 million in funding to support recreation facilities and outdoor tourism in forest parks and other Coillte sites.

The investment includes the upgrades of pathways, trails, access roads, boardwalks, car-parks and toilet facilities at 33 Coillte sites nationwide, including €40,000 for a full upgrade of forest paths at Castlefreke Forest.

This additional funding means that the Department of Rural and Community Development will be investing

€3.2 million in total in outdoor recreation facilities at Coillte sites this year.

Over 18 million individual visits are made to Coillte forests every year with the visitor numbers increasing by 40 per cent during the pandemic. Between March and December of last year, some 2.2 million people visited the top 50 Coillte forests.

Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, also announced the publication of a report outlining the activities funded by her Department and delivered by Coillte in 2020, as part of a

five year strategic partnership to improve outdoor recreation facilities: "For so many of us in rural Ireland, the Pandemic has taught us just how fortunate we are to have big open spaces on our doorsteps.

"From our fields, hills, mountains, rivers, lakes and forests – our unique outdoor amenities are amongst our greatest assets.

"By investing in our wonderful forests and parks, we are making rural Ireland a destination for outdoor pursuits and adventure tourism, as well as supporting rural economies."

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At home in a van

When Maggie McColgan and her husband Michael decided to up sticks from Minnesota in the US and relocate to Ireland at the beginning of 2020 with their pet Labrador Iris, little did the couple, recently married, imagine that their new life would involve circumnavigating a pandemic in a 16 by 6 foot converted ambulance, and eventually find them settling permanently in the village of Ballydehob in West Cork.

“That first winter was so cold,” recalls the development consultant and grant writer “and there were more than a few times when we wondered what we had done, leaving our comfortable three-bed house behind us in Minneapolis to freeze in a van in rural Ireland...but living in a van during this pandemic has given us the privilege of isolating ourselves in nature for long periods of time. We feel really lucky to have landed in West Cork, where we have experienced so many acts of random kindness.” The van has no toilet, shower or oven and Maggie and Michael were surprised by the number of invitations they received to avail of facilities in people’s homes.

Michael has family in Ireland, which was the initial appeal with moving here, but the couple were also looking for a new adventure, a breath of fresh air as such, after living through the Trump era in the US.

“The idea behind the van was that it would facilitate our adventure while also helping us discover what we could live without,” explains Maggie. “We were coming from a three-bed house in Minneapolis that was too big for us so we wanted to rethink our consumption. This process has helped us simplify our existence and quieten our minds. While our small living space has forced us to get closer physically, it has also helped us get closer emotionally and evolve as a couple.”

Maggie had been working as the membership director for a youth intervention programs association in the US but moved into consulting work to facilitate working remotely in Ireland. Michael’s work in video editing also translated easily to a remote working situation.

After arriving in Ireland, the couple collected their new transport-home-workplace all rolled into one and, after a short spell parked up outside Michael’s cousin’s house in Dublin waiting for the insurance to come through, began their trip down the coast, reaching Tralee just as the first lockdown was announced.

“Like everyone else, we didn’t know what was going to happen so we parked up just outside the Killarney National Park,” explains Maggie. When the lockdown was extended in April, the couple realised a more permanent base was needed so they started looking up Airbnbs. After coming across the ‘tractor shed’ located in Glensallagh, just outside Ballydehob, they booked in, checked in with Bantry Garda Station to let them know why they were travelling, and hit the road.



The couple were able to combine working in the gardens at Glensallagh in return for their board with their own respective jobs and quickly made friends in the local community.

“We feel really lucky as everyone is so friendly and open here and there are so many people doing really creative and sustainable things, which is pretty inspiring,” says Maggie.

The van is now parked up outside their new rental house but Maggie says they’re not ready to let go of it just yet. “Living in a van means that wherever we go, we are always at home, so we hope to have a few more adventures in it around Ireland...but during the weekends!”

A nature enthusiast, a lot of the projects Maggie is now involved in have some connection to nature or the local community and are things she feels strongly about, from helping a kelp harvesting farm scale up to advising a sustainable clothing company in its infancy. She has also kept on some of her US clients and is still consulting for companies who are involved in policy-making. Making policy accessible to people is something she’s really passionate about and would like to get involved with here. “Policy governs so much of our day to day lives and yet in some ways it’s so removed from us,” she says. Grassroots organising is a really important part of this,” she says. In her previous role, Maggie

took part in lobbying for money to be diverted from the criminal justice system into preventative youth programmes. “We were really successful because we had a swell of organisations all saying the same thing – we need to invest in our young people.”

When she’s not engaged in doing consulting work for businesses, Maggie volunteers as the development director for Cork Nature Network (CNN), an organisation that works at protecting and promoting Ireland’s wildlife through education, conservation, and research.

She is also really excited about the ‘Born to Rewild’ project planned for Glensallagh, which will be in partnership with CNN. “We have a draft agreement and have already started to raise funds for baseline surveys on butterflies and moths, birds, stream quality and so on.”

There is huge value in being outside and connected to nature, which many people got to experience during the pandemic. “Seeing yourself as a part of nature instead of separate to it is really important for people, particularly young people,” says Maggie, who sees the Born to Rewild project as having a valuable part to play in education and preventative youth programmes, which she says offer a huge return on investment.

“It’s the same with climate and social programmes,” says Maggie. “It does make sense to invest in community. When there are opportunities and education and jobs for young people, there is going to be less crime.”

While the couple have recently returned to the States; the five-week trip will be centred around selling their house in Minneapolis and catching up with family and friends before returning ‘home’ to Ballydehob, where Maggie has dreams of one day running her own ‘green’ cottage industry.... but that’s a story for another day!

To watch some of Maggie and Michael’s adventures over the past year you can subscribe to their Atomic Kinship youtube channel and follow them on instagram@atomickinship.



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Fuel Allowance

Who qualifies for Fuel Allowance and how is it paid?

Fuel Allowance is paid under the National Fuel Scheme, operated by the Department of Social Protection. It is intended

to help people who are dependent on long-term social welfare payments and who are unable to meet their heating needs. The fuel season usually starts at the end of September and runs for 28 weeks until April of the following year.

Under the scheme, a Fuel Allowance of €28.00 per week is generally paid with your social welfare payment. In certain circumstances you can also opt

to have the total allowance of €784 paid in two equal lump sums. The first lump sum is normally paid in early October and the second payment is in January.

Fuel Allowance is a means-tested payment. If you are getting a non-contributory social welfare payment, you are accepted as satisfying the means test.

You must live alone or with someone who also qualifies for the allowance – you cannot get the allowance if you live with someone who does not qualify. Where two or more people living in the same household qualify for the allowance, only one allowance is paid. If your heating needs are met in other

ways (for example, if you live in local authority housing where heating is provided), you do not qualify for Fuel Allowance.

If you think you are eligible, you should apply immediately because the allowance will not be backdated after the start of the fuel season in October. The application form for Fuel Allowance (NFS1) is available from your local Citizens Information Centre, post office or by texting FORM FUEL followed by your name and address to 51909. To get your Fuel Allowance paid in two lump sums, fill in the Change the Payment Frequency form at least one month before the first lump sum is due.

If you apply for the Fuel

Allowance after the start of the Fuel Allowance season, it will not be backdated.

If you are getting a payment from the Department of Social Protection or a social security payment from a country covered by EU Regulations or a country with which Ireland has a bilateral social security agreement, the Fuel Allowance will be included in your weekly payment. You do not need to reapply for the Fuel Allowance each year as long as, your circumstances remain the same and you continue to get the same social welfare payment.

Know Your Rights has been compiled by Citizens Information West Cork which provides a

free and confidential service to the public.

If you need further information about any of the issues raised here or you have other questions, you can call a member of the local Citizens Information Service in West Cork on 0818 07 8390. They will be happy to assist you and if necessary arrange an appointment for you.

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The offices are staffed from 10am-5pm from Monday to Thursday and on Friday from 10am-4pm. Alternatively you can email on bantry@citinfo.ie or log on to www.citizensinformation.ie



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Theft of Stop Signs can have deadly consequences

Cork County Council wishes to alert people to a recent spate of Stop Sign thefts, as a very serious road safety issue, that puts lives at risk. The Council has reported the incidents to An Garda Síochána after Stop signs were stolen from multiple locations.

Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr Gillian Coughlan highlighted how “What has happened across these locations is of immense concern. Cutting

down or stealing a Stop Sign is not a game. It puts all our road users at risk. It can lead to serious crashes if drivers are not aware that they need to stop at a junction. Cork County Council is taking these incidents extremely seriously and have reported the matter to Gardaí. I am urging people to report any suspicious activity and to please think of the possible ramifications of how these actions could impact on innocent victims.”



Irish students triumph at European Union Contest for Young Scientists

Winners of the 2020 BT Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition, Cormac Harris and Alan O'Sullivan, have triumphed, taking home first prize at this year's European Union Contest for Young Scientists (EUCYS) with their project entitled: 'A statistical investigation into the prevalence of gender stereotyping in five-seven-year-olds and the development of an initiative to combat gender bias'.

Winner of the 2021 BT Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition, Gregory Tarr from Bandon, also took home a third prize for his technology project entitled: 'Towards detecting state-of-the-art deepfakes'.

Cormac Harris and Alan O'Sullivan from Coláiste Choilm, Co. Cork won the BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition 2020 with their social sciences project that aimed to identify how early gender stereotyping can be identified. The findings of their project identified the need to focus on all children, boys and girls, from a young age, in order to combat



BT Young Scientists Cormac Harris, Ian O'Sullivan and Gregory Tarr
Photo Chris Bellew / Fennell Photography 2021

the development of gender stereotyping.

Gregory Tarr won the BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition 2021 with a project that uses artificial intelligence to detect 'deepfake' videos, which have become harmful in spreading disinformation across social media channels.

Mari Cahalane, Head of the BTYST, said, "I am incredibly

proud of our BTYST alumni Cormac, Alan and Gregory who have represented Ireland so well at this year's European Union Contest for Young Scientists. Cormac and Alan are now Ireland's 16th winners in the competition's history, and it is Ireland's second consecutive first prize win – a fantastic achievement and a credit to level of innovative and STEM

talent that the BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition showcases each year”.

This year's EUCYS was hosted virtually in Salamanca, Spain and young scientists, aged between 14 and 20 years, competed from 39 countries across Europe and the world. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's event brought together contestants from 2020 and 2021.

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Opening of Bennet's Mill Field Biodiversity Garden celebrated in Clonakilty



Mayor Gillian Coughlan with Clonakilty Tidy Towns members at the opening of the new Biodiversity Amenity Garden 'Bennetts Field' in Clonakilty



Mary Burke, Kieran Allman and Mrs Allman at the bench dedicated to Mary's daughter, the late Chloe Burke, at the new Biodiversity Amenity Garden by Clonakilty Tidy Towns in Clonakilty.

Opened with fanfare on September 11 by Jean Connaughton (daughter of field owner Wesley Bennett), to the strident sounds of the Clonakilty Brass Band, Bennett's Mill Field Biodiversity Garden is the latest addition to Clonakilty's vibrant public spaces. Complete with information board, memorial benches, a community vegetable garden and gazebo, the garden, created by Clonakilty Tidy Towns (supported by the Clonakilty Area Sports Group and Community Employment (CE) scheme), reflects a keen interest in permaculture and sustainability in the community. It also reflects

a continuing effort in the town to better utilise potential public spaces.

Led by project manager Mke Deasy, the garden was brought to fruition by multiple groups, including Clonakilty Tidy Towns, Clonakilty Area Sports Group, Clonakilty Macra na Feirme, Clonakilty Triathlon Club, residents of Clonakilty Lodge centre, and Community Employment (CE) scheme workers. According to John Loughane, of Clonakilty Tidy Towns, the group saw the need in recent years to create a green space in the town for biodiversity in a natural setting. Chair of Clonakilty Tidy Towns,

Diarmaid Cregan, stated: "We believe it will be a great asset to the town and we want both locals and visitors to enjoy this wonderful facility. We especially look forward to local schools coming here to use it as a valuable learning resource." Reverend Kingsley Sutton congratulated "Clonakilty Tidy Towns as a brilliant organisation, which anyone could get involved with, no matter their age," and, he said he "would encourage anyone to join them." County mayor Gillian Coughlan also spoke and praised the "sharing" ability of the people of Clonakilty, in bringing the garden to life.

October 2021

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requisite of this position, in developing core Individual Action Plans to support learner's decision-making processes.

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Experience of working with young people with additional support needs including intellectual disabilities mild to moderate and ASD.

Experience of delivering QQI certified learning

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OR **087-2989953** for more information
OR send your CV to bantry@nlh.ie





A WEST CORK LIFE

Tina Pisco

I often feel a sense of sadness at this time of year. It's a melancholy that is both nostalgic and foreboding: nostalgia for the summer that's gone and foreboding of the winter ahead. This year however, I can't complain. September has been such a beautiful month, stretching summer out for a few extra weeks, that I hardly noticed the change in the landscape. It's still warm and sunny outside, with the bonus of that gloriously golden light that you get at the Equinox. This is Autumn at its best; still warm enough to go to the beach, or lounge on a terrace with friends.

Speaking of friends – I've seen more friends in the last month than over the past 18 months. I've also gone to events, both local and in the city. I've eaten indoors in a restaurant and have even sat inside a pub tapping my foot to a trad session. This has been both delightful and disconcerting. Though the numbers were small, being inside enjoying the company of other people still feels strange

Are we there yet?



(as does table service in my local!). As I wrote last month there is an 'uncanny valley' feeling to this whole lifting of restrictions. It's that feeling you get when things are both comfortingly familiar and yet deeply strange. The familiar is telling you to relax and enjoy, while the strange is telling you to run away as fast as you can.

It's been an interesting month. I've learned a lot about myself. Back in Lockdown One, I thought that I would rush out to every social occasion as soon as we were allowed to do so. We joked that once the pubs were open again, we would go on a marathon pub crawl, starting at the top of the town and working our way down main street. We imagined boisterous reunions and loud singsongs. Not only has this not been the case, but I've also felt a real reticence to get down and party. This is deeply strange, as I've always been one for the craic. Truth be told the craic is not back yet. Pubs and restaurants feel more like France than Ireland now. However, I think that I would steer clear if

I found myself back in a venue packed to the rafters with revellers. Like a prisoner who has finally been freed after months of solitary confinement, I'm taking it slow. Thankfully there have been several wonderful events to help me get used to being in public again, not least the Clonakilty Guitar Festival. Clon Guitar Fest is my favourite festival in the world. This year's offerings, though small and socially distanced, where no less wonderful. In fact, from the tiny sessions, to the slightly larger outside gigs, the festival was like a 12-step programme to recovery. Listening to John Spillane sing "Well done everyone..." (and singing along) was like being welcomed back to the world after a long and cold absence. I felt quite emotional. I also felt absolutely knackered. After only a few hours of music, conversation, singing and toe-tapping, I found that I was ready for bed. In the Before Times, the guitar festival was three days of running from one venue to the next, full-on craic, and at least one late night session. This year we were ready for a hot chocolate and a re-run of Michael Palin's travel show after only one afternoon of moderate excitement. Still, it felt great! I'm hoping that, like getting back to the gym after months of sitting around in lockdown, my stamina will go from strength to strength as the last restrictions are lifted in October.

To help me along with my recovery, I've decided to take the next big step. Next week we are leaving the country for a week's holiday. The last time I travelled was in February 2020. Flying out, Cork airport was as busy as ever, but only a few days later flying home, I had a stopover in Heathrow and I remember it being very quiet. The only masks were worn by Asian travellers. This time we'll all be masked and vaccinated. I'll admit that I am both looking forward to it and feeling a little wary. I expect the former to outweigh the latter, once we are settled on a terrace overlooking the Med, contemplating what local dish we might try. By the time I get back, tanned, and stocked up on Vitamin D for the winter ahead, I should have completed my recovery and be fighting fit for the fun to finally start.

Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the October edition of West Cork People,

I'm still hanging on to my sandals even though there is a definite nip in the air. Slow to leave the summer behind...although a fur-lined pair of Birkenstocks did just catch my eye in a local shoe shop...I wonder if I'm brave enough!

The fighting has started over the promised pandemic bonus, warnings are being issued about possible energy blackouts this winter and there's a rumour about a shortage of toys for Christmas but apparently our Irish resilience has marked us down as being the best place to be in the world during Covid, so no doubt we'll get through whatever else is thrown at us...and sure an extra bank holiday will make it all better!

Moving from swiftly, now is the time to clean and maintain your chimneys and appliances. From 2022 new standards for solid fuels will apply in Ireland. It's up to all of us to play our part, no matter how small, in protecting the planet for future generations and ensuring we contribute as little as possible to climate change, so please keep that in mind when choosing fuel for your fire, or better still, try not to light a fire so often.

Inside this issue our Green Homes feature will take you through some of the eco-friendly choices available when building or renovating your home.

As usual, you'll find our usual mix of news, views, lifestyle and entertainment and even a crossword, so I hope you enjoy the read,

Until next month,

Mary



Mary O'Brien
Editor



Sheila Mullins
Creative Director



Natalie Webb
Sales Consultant

Reopening of Ryanair Base at Cork Airport a vote confidence

Commenting on the announcement that Ryanair is to reopen its base at Cork Airport, Conor Healy, CEO of Cork Chamber said: "The announcement by Ryanair that it is to reopen its base at Cork Airport is a huge vote of confidence in the region. It will help to position Cork on the road to economic recovery as the airline facilitates a great deal of business and tourism not only in Cork but throughout the entire southern region. Today's news means that Cork Airport can begin to build on the momentum and

success it was experiencing prior to the pandemic when passenger numbers were reaching record highs and the airport itself was Ireland's fastest growing airport."

Mr Healy continued: "As the country begins to emerge from the effects of COVID19, Cork Airport will once again become a key driver of the Cork economy ensuring strong regional and national connectivity. It is essential now that government continues to robustly support Cork Airport through Traffic Recovery Support Scheme and marketing funding."

Contributors

Kate Arbon
Karen Austin
Hannah Dare
Tina Pisco
Louise O'Dwyer
John Hosford
Sean Creedon
Tania Presutti
Noah Chase
Shane Daly
Pauline Murphy
Kieran Doyle
Sherna Malone
Tommy Moyles
Fiona Hayes
Grace O'Sullivan MEP
Dr Rosari Kingston
Dr Jeff Featherstone
Paul Lordan
Eugene Daly
James Waller
Liz O'Mahony
Elizabeth Walsh
Mark Grace

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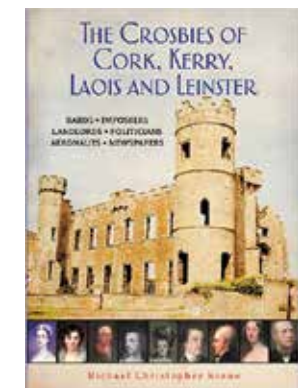
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Launch of new local history book on the Crosbies of Examiner newspapers

A new local history book on the Crosbies of Examiner newspapers, along with the story of some colourful Kerry Crosbie ancestors, has just been launched by retired UCC lecturer Dr Michael Keane. It reveals how the young Thomas Crosbie arrived from Kerry as a talented young journalist to join the fledgling Examiner in the early 1840s and then created the family dynasty that led Examiner newspapers over five generations until its sale to The Irish Times in 2017. For the last 180 years, astute management has ensured that Examiner newspapers titles have long been embedded as an essential part of the fabric of Cork life. Politically the Examiner has taken a constitutional nationalist stance throughout its history. As reviewed in the book, this has been reflected in its coverage of all the major historic events of its time, including the Great Famine, the Land Wars, the dramatic events of 1916 and 1918 to 1923 and the more recent Northern troubles.

Along with the Cork dimension the book also details the history of the North Kerry Crosbies from where Thomas Crosbie originated. They were leading and often controversial landlords for over 300 years,



while representing Kerry in Parliament in both Dublin and Westminster for much of that time. Although supportive of Home Rule, with one Kerry Crosbie being an Irish Parliamentary Party candidate for the Cork City constituency in the December 1918 general election, both of their Kerry mansions, Ballyheigue Castle and Ardfert House, were burned down during the War of Independence and the Civil War.

The new book, 'The Crosbies of Cork, Kerry, Laois and Leinster', along with the author's earlier Cork local history book, 'The Earls of Castlehaven', are available in local bookshops, as well as online (omahonys.ie and hannas.ie) or direct from the author (mjagkeane@gmail.com). Dr. Keane's first local history book, 'From Laois to Kerry', was winner of the Nils-son Heritage Prize at Listowel Writers Week 2017. A native of Kerry, he now lives in Farran, Co Cork.

Bantry Flood Relief Scheme specialists just weeks away

According to Cork South West Deputy Christopher O'Sullivan, progress is being made on the Bantry flood relief scheme, with flood relief design specialists expected to be appointed in just a matter of weeks.

"Specialist consultants are expected to be appointed to design the scheme in the coming weeks, and funding is ring-fenced for this project," said O'Sullivan.

"I brought it up in the Dáil again last week, asking for the works be progressed. I also asked Minister McGrath to consider including the scheme in the upcoming National Development Plan. I'm very hopeful this will be the case."

The Bantry Flood Relief Scheme is being implemented as part of the first tranche of similar prioritised nationwide schemes following the release of the Flood Risk Management Plan.

The Plans, which outline design of possible measures, estimated a preliminary Total Project Cost of €6.7m and a scheme to protect some 198 properties.

Once specialists are appointed to progress the Flood Relief Scheme for Bantry, consultation with the public, as well as statutory and non-statutory bodies will take place to ensure all parties have the opportunity to input into the scheme's development.

The flood relief scheme will be funded from an allocated €1 billion for flood risk management over the period of the National Development Plan, 2018-2027.

Cork audit of memorials

Across County Cork, monuments, plaques, and statues serve as powerful reminders of key aspects of the county's history a century ago. They function both as an indication for passers-by that something of historical significance took place at the marked location, or that an individual from that community had been so remarkable in life, that their memory was marked forever. In the Irish War of Independence and Civil War, a struggle of national and international significance was played out in the local areas of the county, with activists often fighting from their own community. Now, as part of an exciting new project, these memorials are set to be comprehensively documented. As part of the County Cork Commemorations Work Programme 2021, Cork County Council's Commemorations Committee, has appointed Mac Conmara Heritage Consulting, experts in the fields of memory, commemoration, and history, to audit commemorative sites across the county.

The project will record memorials relating to the Irish revolutionary period including the War of Independence and Civil War. On completion, it will provide Cork with a powerful resource to interpret how events a century ago – sometimes contentious, sometimes unifying – have been remembered ever since. The audit will place a central focus on local knowledge and community memory within Cork's local communities. Dr Tomás Mac Conmara, Project Lead with Mac Conmara Heritage Consulting spoke after their appointment to the project:

"We are very aware of Cork's central and intense role in the revolutionary period and also how

that memory has been treasured by the people of the county over the last 100 years. We are thrilled have been given this opportunity by Cork County Council and will work very hard to ensure that we fully reflect the depth of memorialisation and memory across the county, relating to this pivotal period in Irish history. The Audit will deliver a comprehensive and data-rich listing of all known memorials in the county associated with the 1912 to 1923 period and will enhance our understanding of the broader revolutionary period in Cork."

Mac Conmara, who is himself a historian and author on the Irish revolutionary period, further explained:

"The central focus of the audit will be to document what has been memorialised across the public landscape of memory in Cork over the last century. The output will include a wide-ranging database, as well as contextual, geographical, historical, and cultural descriptions of identified memorials. By undertaking this audit, we will be able to see what has been publicly remembered and of course, what has not. This will generate a greater understanding of both history and memory in Cork."

Mac Conmara Heritage Consulting has developed a project methodology based on rigorous academic and archival standards. Ultimately, they are aiming to develop a master database to include information on each memorial, including who and what it memorialises, who constructed it and why, detailed information about its condition and location and, in time, geo mapping to allow the people of Cork and beyond, to engage with their history in an

enjoyable and interactive way.

Conor Nelligan, Heritage Officer who is part of the Project Team from within Cork County Council, emphasised the importance of local support for the project:

"Over the last number of years, as part of the Decade of Centenaries, we have seen clear evidence of how connected the people of the county are to the memory of the revolutionary period. While there has always been a strong connection across the communities of County Cork, this has intensified over recent years and we feel that now is an appropriate time to take stock of the level of memorialisation across the county. Mac Conmara Heritage Consulting are leaders in this area, and we are delighted to be working with this on this important project."

Memorials, statues and wall plaques, as well as church inscriptions will be included, where relevant. Grave markers, where there is a clear reference to the individual's connection to the period, will also be documented. The County Cork Commemorations Work Programme 2021, of which this project is part, is being led by Cork County Council's Commemorations Committee, supported financially by both Cork County Council and the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport & Media, under the Decade of Centenaries 2012-2023 Initiative.

If you are a local heritage or community group, or individual who wants to ensure your local memorial or monument is included, you are asked to email memorialaudit@corkcoco.ie or call 087 9160373 for more information.

What are human rights?

At the time of writing, a shocking disrespect of the human rights of a group of vulnerable people is playing out in Europe. Thirty-two Afghans are stuck at the Polish-Belarus border following pushbacks by Polish authorities to Belarus in August. They have been stranded for weeks without adequate shelter, food, water or medical care. Polish and Belarusian border guards have kept them in a strip of land at the border, limiting their access to lawyers, humanitarian, and healthcare workers. These vulnerable asylum-seekers are being ping-ponged between borders. While the European Court of Human Rights has ordered Poland to provide the group with food, water, clothing and adequate medical health care, Polish authorities have so far failed to comply with this request.



Human rights are rights or entitlements, which belong to us all because we are human beings; Human rights are universal: they apply to all people, everywhere, without exception, in all countries of the world; Human rights are inalienable: you cannot lose or transfer your human rights.

Human rights can be civil and political rights, such as the rights to life, liberty and privacy. There are also economic, social and cultural rights, such as the rights to social security, health and adequate housing. Then there is the right to be free from torture, the right to freedom of expression, the right to education and the right to seek asylum.

Underpinning all of these is the right not to be discriminated against. There is no hierarchy of rights. If some people were allowed less rights than others

just on the basis of their race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status – then there would be discrimination.

Mary Robinson, former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, former President of Ireland, and our first woman president, said: "Human rights are inscribed in the hearts of people; they were there long before lawmakers drafted their first proclamation."

A huge step towards establishing human rights as the basis for a better world was the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). After the horrors of World War II, it was widely felt that an international charter on human rights would reduce the chances that such atrocities would be repeated. By 1948, a Universal Declaration of Human Rights had been drawn up. On December 10, 1948 the UN Commission on

Human Rights, guided by Eleanor Roosevelt's forceful leadership, produced the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that outlined our fundamental rights and freedoms. Its preamble states ... "Recognition of... the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world."

Clearly, from the description above, human rights are fundamental, important things. Important to individuals, important for the proper functioning of society, important for moral reasons and important for fairness. Many people are fortunate enough to live in countries where human rights are broadly respected even though, in some cases, there may not be a framework of legal enforcement of all human rights. However – despite the enormous importance of human rights – many people do not enjoy full human

rights and many countries fail to provide a legal basis for the enforcement of many human rights.

Because of this, human rights – even though they should be available to everybody – often have to be fought for. Even where human rights have been achieved, they often have to be defended. And the defenders of human rights often need protection. The best way to keep human rights live and centre-stage is to know what they are (www.amnesty.org), speak up for them when you have the opportunity, and support organisations that promote human rights and support the defenders of human rights. For example Amnesty International, who campaign for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all, or Reporters Without Borders (RSF) (rsf.org), who focus on freedom of opinion and expression. Freedom of information is the freedom that allows you to ver-

ify the existence of all the other freedoms and human rights.

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Traditions and customs of Samhain (Hallowe'en)



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 ancient festival of 'Samhain' – the first day of Winter for the ancient Celts – was traditionally kept on November 1, now the Feast of All Saints, and the vigil of this day, 'Oíche Shamhna' (Hallowe'en), is still celebrated on the last night in October.

Hallowe'en was originally a season, not a single night; it was celebrated during the last fortnight in October and early November. 'Bealtaine', May 1, and the beginning of Summer, was celebrated as a Fire Festival by the ancient Celts; similarly 'Samhain' was an occasion when bonfires were lit to guide people home, or to welcome travellers. The name 'Samhain', or Summer's End, marks the closing of the door to the year which opened at 'Bealtaine' or May Day.

Hallowe'en was also known as 'Oíche na Sprideanna' (the night of the spirits), or 'púca' night, because of old peoples' belief that both the fairies and the spirits of the dead were active then, and could cross easily between this world and the Otherworld.

'Samhain' can feel like a time of decay, of disillusion and of the death of nature. Yet, as far as Nature itself is concerned, it is a time of richness and plenty, of renewal and fertility. The wild fruit, hips, haws, sloes, berries and seeds

are all falling to earth to feed the small creatures, to nourish the soil, and to sow their seeds for the next cycle.

Hallowe'en was a night when the housewife made a little feast for the family. The vigil of the Feast of All Saints was for many centuries a day of abstinence, that is to say, a day on which no meat was eaten. Thus, the traditional dishes at Hallowe'en did not include meat. A favourite food was col-cannon (pandy, champ) that is mashed boiled potatoes, mixed with cooked green cabbage and chopped raw onion, and seasoned with salt and pepper. Stampy cakes were made from a blending of grated raw potatoes and flour, flavoured with sugar, caraway seeds and cream; boxty was similar, but made with cooked mashed potatoes and grated raw potatoes. Oatcakes and pancakes were favoured too, as were dumplings, apple cake, blackberry pie and puddings of all sorts.

Hallowe'en was a night for children's games. In one game, a dish of water was placed on the kitchen floor; a silver coin or two were thrown in and large apples set floating on it; children, with their hands behind their backs, endeavoured to take up the former with their lips and the latter with their teeth; if they succeeded they were allowed keep the prize. This was known as 'dunking'. Another game was 'Snap-Apple'. In this game an apple was attached to the ceiling with a string and the children tried to grasp it in their mouth without any assistance from their hands.

Hallowe'en was also known as 'Oíche na haimléise' (the night of mischief). In places it was a custom for teenagers to assemble in gangs and headed by a few horn blowers, to visit the farmers' houses and levy a kind of blackmail, good-humouredly asked for, and as cheerfully given. This was a night when individuals were dared to commit a prank on some individual known to be cranky or hot tempered. They used

to knock on his door and run, maybe to climb up on the roof and pour water down his chimney and then to escape by running off. The cart-wheels might be taken off the cart and thrown on the roof or the plough might be thrown into the manure heap.

Other pranks were suggested by the belief that spirits were abroad. The wandering about of the fairies gave rise to their impersonation by groups of boys and young men bent on mischief. Houses and farmyards were visited by the 'spirits', dressed in weird garments, and with masked or blackened faces. They howled and moaned at the windows or down the chimney or set up a carved turnip head made ghastly by a lightened candle within. Now we have pumpkins instead of turnips.

Games and pastimes, which included divination (or looking into the future) were sure to be performed in any household which included young people. The best known of these and the only one today, is the inclusion of certain objects in the 'báirín breac' (barm brack), a ring, a small silver coin, a button, a thimble, a chip of wood and a rag were mixed in with the dough and foretold the finder's future. The ring meant early marriage, the coin wealth, the button bachelorhood and the thimble spinsterhood, while the 'cipín' (stick) revealed that the finder would be beaten by their marriage partner and the rag meant poverty. Some put in a pea and a bean to tell of future poverty or wealth, the pea meaning poverty,

The most common children's custom today is 'Trick or Treat' when children dress in old clothes and wearing masks, go from house to house and are rewarded with sweets, nuts and some coins. This was an old Irish custom and was brought to the USA by the Irish and has returned, 'Americanised' as 'Trick or Treat'.






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Young patriots lie still at Cork's seat of learning

As the 2021 college year begins at University College Cork, a new wave of students may not realise that their campus is a place where executed men, fighting for Irish freedom, were buried 100 years ago.

Pauline Murphy reminds us of their names and the part they played in history.

In early 20th century Cork, the County Gaol stood side-by-side with Queens College Cork (now UCC). All that remains of the gaol today is a large grey portico at Gaol Cross and a burial plot holding the remains of IRA Volunteers executed in 1921.

The patriots were executed by a British firing squad at Victoria Barracks (now Collins Barracks) on the northside of the city before their bodies were transferred south of the river to the County Gaol, to be buried in a patch of waste ground within its walls.

In the 1940s the gaol was closed and partially demolished.



The unveiling of the Republican Grave Monument at UCC in 1948.

The property was handed over to UCC to expand its campus, and a plan was put in place to properly mark the final resting place of the IRA Volunteers.

In 1944 the Old IRA Association began raising funds for a memorial and in 1948 a stone monument was unveiled by Eamon de Valera, in the presence of a large crowd that included relatives and comrades of the executed men.

The IRA Volunteers who lie in the UCC Republican plot are: Cornelius Murphy, a 30-year-old IRA Captain from Bally-

daly. He was a member of the Milstreet Rural District Council and the local IRA active service unit. He was captured in January 1921 and executed a month later on February 1, 1921.

Sean Allen from Tipperary town was a Gaelic League activist and GAA player. He worked in the family trade as a cobbler and was a member of the IRA's famed Third Tipperary Brigade. He was captured in January 1921 and executed on February 28 in Victoria Barracks.

Timothy McCarthy was a

21-year-old Gaelic League activist from Donoughmore. He was wounded at the ill fated Dripsey Ambush in January 1921 and captured by the British. McCarthy faced the firing squad at Victoria Barracks on February 28.

Daniel O'Callaghan was a 23-year-old farm labourer from Dripsey who played hurling with Inniscarra. He was captured at the Dripsey Ambush and was executed on February 28.

John Lyons was a 26-year-old farm labourer from Coach-

ford who played hurling with Aghabullogue. He was captured at Dripsey and executed on February 28.

Patrick O'Mahony was a 30-year-old from Berrings and active in the Sinn Féin Courts. He was captured at the Dripsey Ambush and executed on February 28. O'Mahony's comrades would later recall how he displayed immense courage by allowing them to escape from the advancing enemy as he stayed behind, firing until his last bullet was spent.

Thomas 'Sonny' Mulcahy was an 18-year-old farmer's son from Burnfort. He was wounded at the Mourneabbey Ambush on February 15 and captured. He was executed on April 28.

Patrick O'Sullivan was an accountant from Cobh and played GAA with Collegians (today UCC). He was captured after the Battle of Clonmult in February 1921 and executed on April 28.

Maurice Moore from Cobh was Patrick O'Sullivan's best friend. He worked as a plumber at the Haulbowline Dock. Moore was captured after the Battle of Clonmult and was executed alongside his friend on April 28.

Patrick Roynane was a

24-year-old farmer's son from Burnfort. He was part of the IRA party that captured the first RIC barracks in Ireland at Mallow in 1920. He was captured after the Mourneabbey Ambush in February 1921 and executed on April 28.

Patrick Casey came from a staunch Republican family in Co. Limerick. He played hurling with Federmore GAA Club and, while working in Cork, with St Finbarrs. Casey was captured at an engagement at Shraherlow and executed 24 hours later in Victoria Barracks on May 1, 1921.

Daniel O'Brien was from Liscarroll and a much wanted man because of his exploits with the north Cork IRA active service unit. The British captured O'Brien at Liscarroll and he was executed on May 11. He was the last man buried in the Cork County Gaol grounds.

In this centenary year it is important to remember that those who lie in the UCC Republican Plot were the same age as many of the students who pass by it today, enjoying the freedom those young men died fighting for.

Dr Éamon Lankford receives the Clans of Ireland Award

Dr Éamon Lankford was awarded the Companions of Clans of Ireland Order of Merit Medal in a ceremony held in Baltimore Castle on Saturday, September 17. The founder and voluntary director of Cape Clear Island Museum and O'Driscoll Memorial Archive, Éamon was nominated for the award by the Baltimore 2000 organisation in recognition of his 35-year association with the annual O'Driscoll Clan Gathering and his initiative to gather the story of O'Driscolls worldwide, beginning in 2005 with the book 'O'Driscolls, Past

and Present'.

As Cape Clear Island is at the heart of the territory that was left to the O'Driscolls after the Battle of Kinsale in 1601, Cape Clear Island Museum and Archive has, since 1986, participated yearly in the programme of events of the annual O'Driscoll Clan Gathering in Baltimore and the islands.

On the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Clan Gathering in 2011, the O'Driscoll Heritage Exhibition was mounted at the island museum. On that occasion, Bernadette O'Driscoll of Baltimore

unveiled a plaque celebrating O'Driscoll Worldwide Heritage. That event gave impetus to a renewed consideration of their family history by clan members. Former Chieftains of the Clan were invited to join a voluntary O'Driscoll Clan Advisory Council to promote the Clan Gathering and assist the establishment of the International O'Driscoll Memorial Archive and O'Driscoll Remembrance Ceremony. The www.odriscoll.ie site was created to inform the international O'Driscoll family that they have an archive and remembrance ceremony dedicated to remembering their deceased loved ones. Collecting of O'Driscoll-related material continues to be a work in progress.

Speaking at the award ceremony, Dr. Lankford expressed his pride in the co-operation between the island museum and the worldwide O'Driscoll Clan that had led to the compilation of some 36 bound volumes of O'Driscoll lore and history. Recalling past members of Baltimore 2000 Organisation, the late Bernard O'Driscoll, Richard and Eileen Bushe, Ewen Jacob and others, he said that it had been his good fortune to become involved in their work, which had given him a focus for



Eamon Lankford receiving the Clans of Ireland Order of Merit award.

pursuing his interest in helping people reclaim their family stories. He also referred to the friendships he had forged over many years with clan members as a great blessing in his life.

The O'Driscoll Clan Gathering organisation is a registered member of Finte na hÉireann/Clans of Ireland, the independent permanent authority established in 1989 to register Irish clans and historical families. Their work has led to the revival of many ancient Irish

clans and the recognition of the cultural significance of many Irish historical families.

Representing Finte na hÉireann at Baltimore, Cathaoir Ó Tighearnaigh, CIOM, KEG, Rúnaí, Finte na hÉireann/Clans of Ireland presented Dr. Lankford with the Order of Merit and Insignia of their organisation. There too was Marie O'Driscoll-Deese, current Chieftain of the O'Driscoll Clan, as well as past Chieftains, Tim Driscoll, UK and Paul Driscoll, UK and

Vincent O'Driscoll, Sherkin. Cecilia Ó Drisceoil and Patsy Ó Drisceoil represented Cape Clear Museum. Marian Bushe, the current coordinator of Baltimore 2000, was referred to as the anchor-woman, without whom the Clan Gathering would not have become the vibrant occasion that it is.

The event was hosted by Donna and Paul Driscoll at Baltimore Castle.

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How did Germany emerge from the ashes of World War Two?



HISTORY & POLITICS

Kieran Doyle

One of the pleasures of teaching English in secondary schools is the great choice of texts. The Leaving Cert choice is particularly eclectic and varies every two-year cycle. Those beginning their senior cycle this year could find themselves studying novels that explore the modern world we live in, like how far we can push science in the ‘interest of humanity’ in the book ‘Never Let Me Go’. There are some old-time classics such as ‘Wuthering Heights’ and ‘Frankenstein’. There are novels that have captured people’s hearts in recent times, such as the acclaimed ‘Where the Crawdads Sing’ by Delia Owens, and a book that has resulted in huge commercial success for Netflix, Margaret Atwood’s ‘The Handmaid’s Tale’. Great Irish writers from the contemporaneous Joseph O’Connor to the legendary Oscar Wilde can also be studied.

A play listed amongst Shakespearean timeless pieces or more recent populist drama is one I had never heard of – ‘Kindertransport’. I nearly ignored it given the wealth of choices. ‘Kindertransport’ was written by Diane Samuels, a Jewish woman, who was born in Britain in the 1960s. She was taught Jewish history and learned about the Holocaust; but the ‘Kindertransport’ remained an unused term – as if it didn’t exist. Simply put, the ‘Kindertransport’ were German Jewish children, approximately 10,000 of them, who in 1938 were sent by their families to Britain and other European countries. The aim was to protect them from the emerging discrimination against and repression of Jews. If only they had a crystal ball, perhaps more could have been saved before the Nazi machine began its mass arrest and extermination of Jews a short few months later. But then again, many countries across Europe in that era did not readily welcome Jews.

Samuel’s play explores the emotional suppression of the past and the weight carried by those who display what we now term ‘survivors’ guilt’. The play ultimately captures the genera-

tional damage such trauma can cause. In an interview Samuels spoke about coming face to face with some of these survivors. She observed that they displayed emotional paralysis with their own children, a feeling of abandonment that never lifted, and a detachment of who they once were, before the ‘Kindertransport’.

The revelations in this play highlighted another level of destruction inflicted upon the German people: in this case on their Jewish citizens. It is difficult to perceive, given Germany’s dominant presence now at the heart of the EU and its role as a world power, that 75 years ago it had been utterly destroyed. This makes it all the more incredible that Germany has risen like a phoenix out of the ashes.

So how did Germany manage to transcend much of the trauma, the physical annihilation of their land, the Nazification of their institutions, the exhaustion of their finances, as well as dealing with millions of displaced peoples and demobilised soldiers? While books on World War Two, Hitler, or the Holocaust, can fascinate us all, we rarely wonder how on earth Germany emerged from this rubble. It was a broken, dysfunctional society in 1945. It was divided and occupied by foreign forces, yet today it is considered one of the finest states in the world. Even as a kid, I used to wonder how did West Germany manage to win the World Cup in Switzerland, just nine years after World War II ended? (Interestingly, two former Nazi soldiers played on that team). Three years later in 1957, West Germany was central to the formation of the EEC along with five other countries. This has developed into the EU, single market and travel free zone we enjoy today.

Harald Jahner’s book ‘Aftermath – Life in the Fallout of the Third Reich 1945-55’ sheds light on how this miracle was achieved. Though I found the writing somewhat clunky and tautological in places, the history was fascinating. The meteoric rise of the Nazi party was remarkable. After achieving power in 1933, over the next six years they utterly transformed a nation into one that supported their philosophies and policies. Some of this falling into line was due to conditions that favoured the cult of a strong leader like Hitler: massive unemployment, disillusionment with democracy, the vicious financial constraints due to the reparations they had to pay for their part in WWI. Add in the devastation of the 1929 Wall Street Crash and you have a people craving for better times and old glories. While the Nazis



West Berliners stand amid the rubble of WWII and watch U.S. Air Force transport planes land at Tempelhof Airport during the Berlin Airlift in 1948.

had their supporters, they still faced a huge, covert opposition. The trouble was that this opposition were bound by fear to toe the line. The Nazis dismantled the political class, unions and communism. They played on the anti-Semite tradition (which historically was stronger in other European countries such as France up to that point). They rewarded loyal Nazis, elevating them to positions of power, and purged dissidents from state jobs. They reinvented the education system to rewire the youth. Somewhat like Trump’s use of twitter to gain popular support in the 21st century political arena, the Nazis used film, the new technology of the 1930s, to hypnotise a population.

How do you untangle all this? Harald Jahner does a good job. When we think of Germany rebuilding after the war, we can forget about the damage. There was so much rubble in Berlin after the Allies razed it to the ground, that it took 22 years and 800 lorries a day to clear it. Dresden, whose destruction was nothing short of a war crime, took 35 years to clear. Jahner writes of a communal togetherness. He shows a people that, instead of falling into despair, bonded together as a community to begin the long arduous road to recovery. In this atmosphere of sharing, co-operation and hard work, the first seeds of the new Germany germinated. It wasn’t just men carrying the load. The Trummerfrauen or ‘rubble women’ were particularly numerous in Berlin; up to 26,000 women worked in the clearing.

There is another harrowing fact that often is forgotten. Germany, in a short space of time, was engulfed in millions of demobilised and perished

soldiers, millions of displaced people who had migrated from the Soviet-controlled east Germany and hundreds of thousands of former forced labourers, taken from countries to work in farms and factories in Germany. Where could they go? And even if they had a home left, how could they get there given how the roads and trains were in ruins? Simply put, the impoverished Germans who still had ‘something’ were made to contribute half of what they owned by their government, so those who had ‘nothing’ could survive. This type of socialism, and compulsory redistribution of wealth, may have been unpopular, but it paved the way, in the long run, to creating a more equitable society for all. Imagine Irish people being asked to give up the value of half their house to solve the housing crisis? What the Germans did was remarkable.

Society also had to be de-Nazified. As well as ridding the system of an evil ideology, one could not reward those who had been loyal to Hitler, at a cost to German society. Jahner claims that in Bavaria, 64 per cent of officials and 46 per cent of clerks who had been Nazis were dismissed. It’s true to say that many Germans joined the Nazi party out of fear, coercion, or just survival, and therefore were not ideological Nazis. Thus some did retain their jobs in the absence of qualified replacements. The Soviets in the east took it further, giving an amnesty to ordinary men and women who were Nazi Party members, believing they had been manipulated by their state. The communist philosophy of a classless society allowed them to believe in the conviction of human goodness, ‘even amongst

Germans’. Strange as it may seem, initially the Americans were a lot less forgiving, believing the Germans to be a ‘militaristic, authoritarian and hard-hearted character’. Yet it was the American presence that liberated the minds of many Germans. As an occupying force, not only did they spend their wages within the broken economy but the American music, dance, and films of the soldiers helped young Germans beat the gloom and reach for more.

Despite the economic miracle that would reinvigorate the German economy; despite the buoyed population that strove to work together and share

together, for betterment of society; despite the marvels of sport unifying the Germans in the 1954 World Cup – one issue was buried by this generation: The guilt about their former Jewish neighbours. There was shame, yet also repression. Finger-pointing at Hitler, yet no dialogue with each other. Just like the blackout of the Kindertransport who left in 1938, a veil of silence fell over the new German Republic. It wasn’t until the 1960s and 1970s when their sons and daughters started asking questions, that those issues began to be spoken about. However, as Diane Samuel’s play shows...sometimes the trauma is never dealt with.

Christopher
O’Sullivan TD

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Tel: 023 88 11011 Email: christopher.osullivan@oireachtas.ie



The tragic lives of the children who swept chimneys



THE HISTORY CORNER

Shane Daly

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

The Great Fire of London is the worst in London's history. First igniting in a baker's shop on Pudding Lane belonging to Thomas Farriner, the fire swept through the city from September 2 until September 5 in 1666. While only six deaths were recorded, it destroyed a huge area, including most of the civic buildings, old St. Paul's Cathedral, 87 parish churches and 13,200 houses. The famous diary of Samuel Pepys gives a first-hand account of the event.

As a result of this fire, building codes changed, requiring chimneys to be built much narrower than previously. While this may have lessened the risk of fire, the ramifications of the new narrower flues set in motion a dark period of history that is often overlooked – a time when children were horrifically exploited and many lost their lives in the dangerous labour of sweeping chimneys. Despite deaths, extreme ill health and obvious disfigurement, as well as public outcry from the families of the children in the interim, the exploitation of children for their labour in this position lasted close to two hundred years. It wasn't until the introduction of a flexible cleaning mechanism by American inventor and anti-child labour campaigner Joseph Glass in 1828 and, with his help, the implementation of the 'Chimney Sweepers' and Chimneys Regulation Act' in 1840, that it became illegal for anyone under 21 to work as a chimney sweep.

Measuring only 18 inches in width, the new chimney flue essentially made it impossible for grown men or women to do the job. It was also a dangerous job with few willing to accept the risks that came with it. However the newly-designed chimneys still needed to be maintained, which led to unscrupulous people in the trade buying orphans

from the local parish or from poverty-stricken parents. Offered money by the 'Master' sweeper for one or more of their children, financially struggling families were taken in by the promise that the child, ideally age six when starting, would learn a trade and become the Master's 'apprentice' and therefore live a better life than they could provide. At the time, the price of a child ranged from seven shillings to four guineas, a one-off transaction. This was an unpaid position, so for all intents and purposes the child was a slave, bound to their master until adulthood.

The bulk of a chimney sweep's job involved climbing up the flue with a large brush held over their head. The flues were incredibly narrow so it was common for the child to complete the work naked. As they moved through the flue, they knocked loose soot to the ground, which was collected afterwards and resold by the master at a profit, mainly to farmers as fertiliser. The soot was also used for other things like shoe polish and toothpaste. Victorians believed for a time that soot made your teeth white, however, this was likely a misunderstanding, as the chimneys sweep's teeth looked much whiter due to them being covered in soot. The soot trade was an enormous business in Victorian Britain.

Under law the Masters did have some obligations to the children. They were supposed to teach the apprentice the craft, feed them, clothe and shelter them and allow them to attend church, among other things. How well any of these things were enforced is not well documented. What is documented is that after a seven-year apprenticeship, the sweep could graduate to 'Journeyman', eventually going on to work for a Master of their choice.

What is also known is that the working conditions for these children were horrific. Asthma and other breathing-related ailments were common, as were sores and other inflammations on the eyelids. In almost every case, the child's growth was stunted, as a result of the work they carried out. This work required the sweepers to remain crouched in unnatural positions inside the tight chimneys, which damaged their growing bones and joints. A later study showed that the knees and ankles were the most heavily affected areas. Furthermore, the job itself would have been particularly frightening for the children. If the child was taking too long to complete a certain job, it was common for their master to light a fire at the base of the chimney, so that the heat and the smoke now rising up the chimney flue would encourage the sweep to work faster. This is where the saying 'someone lit a fire under him/her' originated.

Obviously the inside of the flues were pitch black and the chimneys were incredibly claustrophobic and often confusing to navigate on account of the inherent darkness. Moreover, even if the child was small enough to get into the chimney flue they were required to clean, there was no guarantee they would be able to get back out. The chimneys were often built in rows along the sides of buildings and their flues often merged together at points in their structure. A chimney sweep who climbed from the beginning of the flue all the way to the roof to clean it, could very easily return down the incorrect flue. Additionally, a sweep could take the correct flue but take a wrong



Offered money by the 'Master' sweeper for one or more of their children, financially struggling families were taken in by the promise that the child, ideally age six when starting, would learn a trade and become the Master's 'apprentice' and therefore live a better life than they could provide.

turn at an interconnected point on the way back down. Sweeps who entered the wrong chimney or got lost in the flues could suffocate or burn to death.

Many young chimney sweeps were fatally lost in the darkness. If a sweep did get stuck in a chimney, the standard operating procedure was to either let him/her perish or send in a second sweep to try and rescue the first child. These rescues were often unsuccessful and in such cases both sweepers would be lost. If this were the case, the house or the walls of the building would be torn down so that they could be removed.

While the 'Chimney Sweepers' Act' was introduced in 1788, it wasn't properly enforced and therefore was largely ignored. Even with so many deaths in the trade, the invention of a mechanical chimney sweep by George Smart in 1803 was also ignored.

Joseph Glass' improved sweeping mechanism in 1828 finally brought about some change. This basic, yet ingenious device consisted of cane rods connected by brass interlocking joints; the final product was a flexible wand that was capable of navigating the complex flues. The device, which Glass didn't patent, was approved by the government and, in 1829 Robert Peel ordered it to be used in all government buildings. More acts were introduced and amended in the intervening years. In 1824 the 'Chimney Sweepers' Act' was introduced largely under the testimony of Joseph Glass. This law prohibited the Masters from hiring any boys under the age of 14 to become an apprentice. While progress was being made, protection for children was still insufficient.

Finally, in 1840 the 'Chimney Sweepers' and Chimneys Regulation Act' made it illegal for anyone under 21 to work as a chimney sweep. However, the trade continued surreptitiously for another 35 years until 1875: In February of that year, George Brewster, a 12-year-old chimney sweep, became the last child in England to die on the job. His master, William Wyer, sent him into the Fulbourn Hospital chimneys, where he got stuck. A wall was pulled down in a desperate attempt to rescue him but George died shortly after his rescue. Due to huge public indignation, Wyer was charged with manslaughter and, in September of 1875, a bill was pushed through which eliminated the practice of using children as chimney sweeps entirely. This bill required adults who wished to continue in the trade to be licensed to do so by the police.

Joseph Glass's invention is still used today.

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Social Enterprises funding boost with capital grants scheme

Cork County will receive funds in excess of €40,000 in funds to help local based Social Enterprises to improve their services, Cork South West Deputy Christopher O'Sullivan said.

The Social Enterprise Capital Grants Scheme 2021 is being administered by Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) in each Local Authority area.

"The Social Enterprise Capital Grants Scheme 2021 will provide

funding for the purchase of equipment or the carrying out of repairs or refurbishments to enable social enterprises to improve their service delivery," Deputy O'Sullivan said.

"I'm encouraging our valuable social enterprises across Cork South West to apply for funding under the scheme.

"This scheme will provide small grants to social enterprises to help with the cost of refurbishments, repairs or the purchase of new equipment."

The scheme - part of a €1 million, nationwide scheme - supports one of the key commitments in the National Social Enterprise Policy for Ireland 2019-2022 - "Growing and Strengthening Social Enterprise".

The Department of Rural and Community Development is now inviting social enterprises across the country to apply for funding under the scheme.

Groups should check with their LCDC for further details.

New West Cork Trail signposts the life of Michael Collins

A new trail has been launched in West Cork to guide people to sites in the area associated with the life of Michael Collins, ahead of the centenary of his death next year. The 'Michael Collins Trail' consists of 140 signs and waypoints linking points of interest relating to his life.

The trail has been developed by Cork County Council and has been designed to act as a historical guide, linking locations and providing tourists with an easy way of following the route and immersing themselves in the life of one of Ireland's most important historical figures.

The Trail follows Collins' birthplace, the West Cork Regional Museum and Michael

Collins House in Clonakilty, while also linking to the ambush site at Beal na Blath, the Independence Museum in Kilmurry and the Michael Collins Centre outside Clonakilty. There are alternative routes signposted which take in Bandon and Newcestown, and the trail is also signposted from the N22 at Crookstown.

Welcoming the new heritage trail, Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Gillian Coughlan commented, "The story of Michael Collins is one that is well known, but the Michael Collins Trail will be a new way of following in his footsteps. From the place of his birth, to where he spent his formative years, to where he met a tragic end, these new signposts will help

bring history to life. This new, free historical experience will allow visitors to remember the effort and sacrifice of one of the founding fathers of the modern Irish state."

Chief Executive of Cork County Council, Tim Lucey says, "Every sign on this new trail tells a unique part of the life of Michael Collins. As we move through this period of commemoration of the events that led to the foundation of our state, it is only appropriate that Michael Collins is appropriately remembered in his native West Cork. We look forward to there being a renewed interest in his life as we formally commemorate the centenary of his death in 2022."



Pictured at the launch of the new the Michael Collins Trail are: the Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Gillian Coughlan along with Cllr. Alan Coleman, Cllr. Kevin Murphy, Cllr. Paul Hayes, Cllr. Marie O'Sullivan, Cllr. John O'Sullivan, Cllr. Eileen Lynch, Cllr. Gobnait Moynihan and Cllr. Michael Looney. Pic: Brian Loughheed

people Farming

Cultivate farm loan offering goes from strength to strength

Cultivate, the collaborative credit union finance-lending platform for farmers, recently announced very positive results for the first half of 2021. In the six months of January to June 2021, credit unions received almost as many loan applications (94 pc) as in the entire 12 months of 2020.

The average Cultivate loan application was for €26,791, with repayments spread over a six-year period. The most popular loans were for stocking and working capital (25 pc), followed closely by farm buildings (24 pc) and tractor purchases (17 pc).

Beef farmers continue to drive the majority of Cultivate loan applications, accounting for 70

pc, while dairy farmers accounted for 21 pc, sheep farmers for seven pc and tillage farmers for two pc.

Bantry Credit Union is one of 36 credit unions nationally that offer farm loans under the Cultivate brand. Bantry's Manager Finbarr O'Shea is Chairperson of the Cultivate National Marketing Group.

Announcing the results in a new report on behalf of Cultivate, Finbarr said:

"We are thrilled with this consistent growth in Cultivate farm loans. These half-year results confirm what we have long believed: that there is strong demand among Irish farmers for an alternative flexible finance

lender."

The success of Cultivate is also shown by the growth in the number of credit unions participating in the brand. During 2021, in the most difficult of operating environments, 10 credit unions have joined Cultivate, bringing the number of participating credit unions to 36 – an increase of nearly 40 pc in one year. Between them, these credit unions have over 110 offices throughout the country.

Commenting on this growth, Finbarr said:

"We are delighted with the expansion of Cultivate's national footprint. The brand is quickly becoming the national credit union offering for farmers. The



Growing up fast – Tom, Helena and James capture the mood as Cultivate announces a further growth of its loan offering to more than 100 locations nationwide. Bantry Credit Union is one of 36 credit unions in Ireland providing unsecured loans of up to €50,000 to farmers under the Cultivate brand

reality on the ground is that, despite Covid-19 and Brexit, there is a growing demand among farmers for access to local, friendly finance with quick

decision making.

Continuing, O'Shea pointed out: "Unlike other financial institutions we are not closing our offices, instead we are

innovating and looking at ways to add value to our communities through much needed products like Cultivate."

West Cork agtech company wins top innovation award

Kinsale-based Moonsyst has claimed the ifac Best Newcomer Award at the Enterprise Ireland Innovation Awards 2021.

The West Cork-based agtech company has developed a Smart Rumen Monitoring System that collects real-time information from inside cattle. This information enables farmers to accurately detect heats, monitor health conditions, and improve productivity, all of which help

with livestock management 24/7. Using artificial intelligence, the Moonsyst Smart Rumen Monitoring System is supported by cloud-based software that can be accessed on a phone and PC.

As part of its prize, Moonsyst will receive 12-months of complimentary consultancy services, with access to the full range of skills and expertise within ifac. This includes ifac's Business Growth Strategy process, to help

further develop their go-to-market capability. Ifac also works with winning companies on their funding applications, such as for the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) or Enterprise Ireland, as well as providing tax and personal finance advice.

For the past three years, ifac has partnered with Enterprise Ireland on the Best Newcomer Award, which takes place annually at the National Ploughing Championships. The

awards recognise the future of the Irish agtech sector - Irish businesses and entrepreneurs that are leading the way with their agtech and ag-engineering products for the industry.

David Leydon, Head of Food and AgriBusiness at ifac said: "We're delighted to be working with the team at Moonsyst this coming year – their technology is part of the drive towards individualised animal care and has a very big future ahead."

"The Enterprise Ireland Innovation Awards are an important element of the agtech calendar. As Ireland looks to build its agtech ecosystem, these awards play a key role in highlighting emerging technology and showcasing innovative products, services and companies."

Desmond Savage from Moonsyst said: "We are delighted to be recognised for our work to date and we are looking forward to working with ifac to progress

the business over the coming year."

The ifac Best Newcomer Award 2020 went to Michael McInerney at StrongBó Agritech, based in Bishopscourt, Co. Cork. StrongBó Agritech provides farmers with cutting-edge technology for collecting and analysing live data through its automated weighing systems.

people Farming

Agri-culture alive in Ardfield

A West Cork Farming Life: Victor Sprake and Deborah Ní Chaoimhe, Camus Farm, Ardfield, Clonakilty

*Interview by
Tommy Moyles*

Tell us about Camus farm... what does it consist of?

We moved down from Kildare and bought the 30-acre farm here about 15 years ago and began converting it into an organic farm. We're certified with the Irish Organic Association. There was a two-year conversion. We comply with all the Department of Agriculture rules regarding organic farming. Two thirds of it is in permanent pasture, which we reseeded when we came here. The seed mix wasn't just rye grass – there's about 12 different varieties that would have been used in most pastures in the past. This year we have an acre that is gone over to horticulture, which is supplying the spuds and the greens and salads into the restaurant now on the farm.

We also set about planting trees and hedges when we got here and the balance of the farm is planted at this stage. There were very few trees here when we arrived and we began planting Sitka spruce around some of the boundaries to act as a windbreak and shelter. Since then thousands of trees, all native species like Oak, Ash, Elm and Birch, and Blackthorn and Whitethorn hedging have been planted.

What inspired you to go down the organic route?

We were looking at bigger farms on our journey down from Kildare and all the small

fields were done away with. It looked like in the direction that Irish farming was going, Ireland would soon be one big field. So we were trying to reverse that by going back to land with lots of hedges and smaller fields. You can say it is inefficient farming but the output of the land is not the only factor there.

We're both from a mind-set of trying to live in harmony with nature rather than battle against it. The idea was always to have a place to share. That was one of my drivers for the hedges; so our kids get to experience what I did with nature when I was a child.

Hedge work is time consuming but it's a beautiful thing. Skills such as hedge laying and feding have been lost. We combine hedge planting and the use of electric fences to ensure the boundaries are stock proof. People love nature, you see it with Wally the Walrus or the starling murmuration in Timoleague a few years ago – people are drawn to nature.

What does the cattle herd here consist of?

There are between 20 and 30 cattle, between Dexter cows and calves. It was an elderly neighbour who told us about the Dexters. They're an Irish breed, and small, easy to manage, and light on the land, so it tied in with our organic farming ideals. I worked on a dairy farm in my teens so I had experience of dealing with livestock.

We don't castrate and we don't dehorn the cattle either. This year we have eight

calves and the heifers are either all retained or sold as in-calf heifers. There's a strong demand from other breeders for the heifers. All the males go to beef at two years or two-and-a-half years and they're fed only on our species-rich meadows, so they would be different in that regard to most of the beef people would be familiar with. I began by selling the beef in the market in Clonakilty and sold it from home and now, with the restaurant open, it is sold there. So we don't sell to the public directly anymore.

That leads neatly to the next question. How did the concept behind having a restaurant on farm come about?

The idea was simmering for a long time. We've run heritage craft workshops such as willow basket making here before and had some live music here in the past and the idea of a tearoom was discussed; it evolved from that. A restaurant rather than a small tearoom made sense when we had to meet all the building regulations to build something like this so we've now got a 120-seat restaurant 'The Field Kitchen'.

Set among the trees, as restaurant locations go, the Field Kitchen setting is pretty spectacular. It's like it's enveloped in woodland. Has all the planting paid off and will it continue?

We created the location too, there is years of work gone into it and we're still doing bits. What has become a family



Victor and Deborah with their herd of Dexter cattle at Camus Farm Ardfield.

tradition here is to go out on St Stephen's day and plant hedging. We probably plant 1,000 every year. When family and friends have visited, they have planted trees, and even the city slickers who come down always look out for what they planted. Every year you get more back because the hedge and trees are bigger. We're really getting the

reward back now for the effort put in. Between kitchen, garden and serving staff we have a staff of 17 working between full and part time positions over the summer."

You're certainly disproving the labour difficulties some sectors in Irish farming are experiencing. What are the

challenges that could become opportunities for you?

We want to put organic goose on the menu for Christmas and would need approximately 100 organic geese but they're not available; so for next year we're open to suggestions. We'll expand the horticulture area but beyond that the produce we use is local as well.

Biomethane: a sustainable solution for Irish farmers and energy security

More than 270 interested parties, including farmers, developers and industry bodies, heard how agriculturally produced biomethane can be delivered sustainably and at scale to decarbonise Ireland's energy system, during Gas Networks Ireland's biomethane industry webinar in September.

Attendees received an update on the national and European biomethane policy landscape and learned of the importance of the ongoing consultation on the proposed Renewable Heat Obligation, which, if enacted, will support biomethane production at scale and help Ireland achieve its climate ambitions.

Speakers also discussed the process for producing and injecting biomethane into the national network, the proposed

Mitchelstown Central Grid Injection (CGI) facility and how certification is attained and recorded in the national registry.

The line-up of experts included Gas Networks Ireland Innovation Engineer, Niamh Gillen, who last year represented Ireland at the international finals of Institution of Gas Engineers and Managers' (IGEM) Young Professionals Competition.

Ms Gillen was joined by Gas Networks Ireland colleagues Declan O'Sullivan, Ian Kilgallon, Yvette Jones and Brendan O'Riordan, as well as KPMG's Russell Smyth and Devenish Nutrition's David Hagan.

"Ireland has the highest potential for biomethane production per capita in the EU according to the European Commission, providing a strong opportunity to develop

a thriving indigenous biomethane industry, support energy security and, importantly for Irish farmers, reduce agricultural emissions," Renewable Gas Project Manager, Yvette Jones, who is leading on the Mitchelstown CGI project, said.

A carbon-neutral renewable gas made from farm and food waste through a process known as anaerobic digestion (AD), biomethane has already begun to seamlessly replace natural gas in the national network.

Gas Networks Ireland's Innovation and Business Development Manager, Ian Kilgallon, said that across Europe, biomethane is seen as a vital solution for decarbonising energy systems while also providing a more sustainable solution for farmers to reduce their waste and emissions.

"In countries around Europe, including the UK, Italy, France and Germany, biomethane is playing an important role in decarbonising sectors such as heat and transport," Mr Kilgallon said.

"Within both the EU's Farm to Fork Strategy and Irish agri-food industry, the development of biomethane and the production of a nutrient rich bio-fertiliser digestate, which is a by-product of anaerobic digestion, is seen as a key element in decarbonising agriculture."

By replacing natural gas with renewable gases such as biomethane and hydrogen, Ireland can sustainably deliver a net-zero carbon gas network to complement intermittent renewable electricity generation, meet its climate action targets and support a cleaner energy

future while ensuring a secure energy supply.

Gas Networks Ireland introduced domestically produced biomethane into the national network in 2019, via the country's first dedicated renewable gas injection point in Cush, Co. Kildare. A second renewable gas injection facility in Mitchelstown was approved by Cork County Council and An Bord Pleanála in 2020.

Together they have the capacity to heat 75,000 homes, while also supporting the decarbonisation of local agriculture.

A domestic biomethane industry would also provide significant opportunities for local communities from the sale of biomethane, feedstock used to produce the renewable gas, and a bio-fertiliser that is a by-product of the process, and facilitate

sustainable circular economies, with businesses powering their operations via renewable gas made from their own waste.

To support the development of an indigenous biomethane industry in Ireland, Gas Networks Ireland has established a Renewable Gas Registry that records the volume of biomethane injected into the network each month and issues certificates to producers.

The Registry facilitates producers in monetising the renewable value of their gas and enables title tracking of the renewable value of biomethane in the network, guaranteeing that the equivalent amount of renewable gas has been injected into the gas network.

For more information, visit: gasnetworks.ie

people Farming

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.

In association
with



The saying 'a wet and windy May fills the barns with straw and hay' has indeed lived up to its billing. Weather has held up well through September and grain was harvested in good conditions. This, on top of a solid grass-growing spell in August

Farmers hoping for signs of order out of chaos

and September, should stand farmers in good stead. What the final quarter of the year throws at us weather-wise is to be seen, but on farm has been enjoyable over the last few weeks.

CAP

It's a contrast to everything else that is going on. Prices remain strong across the board but input prices have eroded the margin in a lot of cases. We are also in the midst of discussions at political level that will set the scene for agriculture in Europe until 2027. Covid-19 delayed the finalising of the next Common Agricultural Policy. This CAP differs from its predecessors, in that it has a much larger environmental focus. Prior to this farmers received a set payment per hectare based on the number of entitlements they held. These were referred to as pillar one payments. Environmental schemes such as REPS and GLAS required farmers to do certain measures and were referred to as pillar two payments. This CAP will see the introduction of eco-schemes for the pillar one payments.

Eco scheme payment

The Department of Agriculture recently revealed five measures under consideration for future eco schemes. In order to maximise their full eco-scheme

payment, farmers will have to select two of the following five measures:

- 1) Non-productive areas and landscape features – Farmers would devote an increased proportion of land to non-productive area and features.
- 2) Extensive Livestock production – Farmers will have to comply with a specified over all stocking rate for the calendar year.
- 3) Limiting chemical nitrogen input – Farmers will have to comply with a specified chemical nitrogen limit for a calendar year.
- 4) Planting of native trees – Farmers will have to plant a minimum number of native trees per eligible hectare.
- 5) Use of GPS-controlled fertiliser spreader to apply chemical fertilisers.

The department has said that if a farmer only selects one, or selects two but only complies with one, the current expectation is that the farmer will only receive a half rate eco-scheme payment. On compliance, the farmer will receive a payment on all eligible hectares on their holding.

On first view, picking two of the above should be manageable on most farms. Overcoming the mindset of some farmers will be



New changes proposed for the next CAP will see the planting of native trees offered as an eco-scheme option to farmers.

a bigger obstacle than the measures themselves. The devil will be in the detail though. At least it's a bit of information.

Policy

At policy level, the decisions made over the next few months are likely to impact the rest of my farming career and, it's as if they are all coming at once.

I spoke to one farmer recently who was fed up of all the regulation and policy changes coming all at once. They hit the point where they just wanted decisions made so they could plan properly for their business for the next few years. I couldn't blame them. Brexit, beef protests, African swine fever, Covid-19,

CAP, climate action bill, Nitrates action programme, labour issues and concerns over natural gas supply. We're in the middle of a very chaotic decade and there's probably more to come.

Natural gas supply issue

The natural gas supply issue is the most recent and one that has a direct effect on the food chain, principally in two areas: Natural gas is the main raw material for artificial fertilisers used in growing much of the world's food; and its by-product, CO₂, is used in the drinks and meat sector. CF industries in the UK and Norwegian fertiliser manufacturer, Yarra, are predicting a reduction in production in the region of 40 per cent for 2022.

If that plays out, it will force farmers to pay more or think differently. The nervousness some farmers have around clover could disappear at a faster rate

if the natural gas flow remains under pressure.

Suckler farmers

Suckler farmers were upset by comments made by departing director of Teagasc, Professor Gerry Boyle, who said the organisation was advocating a switch from suckler beef to dairy beef. The words confirmed what many suckler farmers have witnessed from Teagasc since the abolition of milk quota. I feel sorry for the advisors based in the suckler heartlands, who already face an uphill challenge in trying to retain clients, but now have to take the heat for the directors parting words.

Hopefully over the coming months there will be more clarity appear on the various policy positions that seem up in the air at the moment and we'll be able to focus in on actual farming for a bit.

Ballinascorthy's Caroline Walsh is Top Grassland Farmer

The winners of the Grassland Farmer of the Year 2020 competition were presented with their awards by the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue TD, in Teagasc Moorepark last month. The Overall Winner, and Grassland Farmer of the Year 2020 was Caroline Walsh from Ballinascorthy.

The competition recognises the top grassland farmers in the country who are growing and utilising more grass on their farms. The awards are supported by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine with an overall prize fund of €30,000.

John Galvin from Dunmanway was named winner in the Sustainable Farming Category.

The Grassland Farmer of the Year awards are part of the Teagasc Grass10 campaign, which is supported by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Teagasc, AIB, FBD, Grassland Agro and the Irish Farmers Journal.

Padraig Walshe, dairy



Pictured in Teagasc Moorepark, Fermoy are Charlie McConalogue, Minister for Agriculture, Food & the Marine with Overall Award Winner Caroline Walsh and her husband Joe. Photo O'Gorman Photography.

farmer and chair of the Teagasc Grass10 stakeholder committee said: "Grass10 is a very important project for the promotion of best practise in grassland management. There are challenges ahead for all grassland farmers, inside and outside the farm gate, however, the farmers who

have participated in the Grass10 grass groups have improved their grassland management decision making."

Speaking on behalf of the competition judges, Aidan Brennan Irish Farmers Journal said: "The judges noted a shift in attitude this year towards

protecting the environment. This was seen as important as grass production itself and it probably reflects the changing attitude among farmers in general. There was a massive uptake of low emission slurry spreading and protected urea among the contestants."

Male farmer mental health help-seeking limited by masculinity and identity

Irish male farmers experience some of the highest levels of adverse health outcomes relative to other occupations – particularly in relation to heart disease, cancers and mental health. Despite this, many farmers do not seek help until their illness reaches crisis point. A recently published Irish study throws new light on the socio-cultural environment that shapes male farmers' health seeking behaviour.

The study was conducted by a collaborative group from Teagasc, the National Centre for Men's Health (NCMH) at Institute of Technology, Carlow, and the Centre for Health Behaviour Research in Waterford Institute of Technology.

Lead author and Teagasc Walsh Scholar Conor Hammersley commented: "Many farmers view seeking help as an 'admission of failure' and a betrayal of a masculine image of themselves as men and farmers. They tend to prioritise farm work and the health of their animals over their own health and safety."

The study identified a sense of obligation on the part of male farmers to put their 'bodies on the

line' and, consequently, sacrifice their health.

The study found that how (male) farmers socially identify and express themselves, can lead them to delay seeking help for physical and mental health needs. For many farmers the act of opposing health-enhancing behaviors, or help-seeking behavior could be seen as an active demonstration of manliness and part of 'being a farmer'. The authors' argue that the associated behaviours of what many perceive to be 'manly' behaviour needs to be exposed as a construct that is inherently unhealthy.

Additionally noting that without further attention to male farmers' health and the factors that make them particularly vulnerable, they will be left unsupported, and in danger of adding to the poor health statistics.

The next stage of the project aims to develop a training programme, titled 'On Feirm Ground', to take into consideration farmers' concerns by providing farm advisors and consultants with the knowledge and skills to support farmers to be proactive in managing their health.

people Environment : Making a difference

The wonder that is the Common Starling



BirdWatch Ireland
West Cork Branch
www.birdwatchirelandwestcork.ie

This month West Cork Branch Chairman **David Rees** looks into the life and behaviour of the Common Starling.

The Starling is one of most common and recognisable birds. It is found throughout the country and is will often nest close to our homes, in sheds, outbuildings or gaps in houses. Because it is so common, the humble Starling can be easily overlooked. But look more closely and the Starling is surprising bird. For a start, its plumage is not a uniform dull colour. When it catches the sun, it has a beautiful shimmering blue/green/purple colour with white speckles. The young birds are a uniform brown colour but, as the summer progresses, they are a strange halfway mix, with brown heads and upper part of the body, while the rest of the body takes on the beautiful adult feathering. The Starling's song is also a surprise.

If you listen carefully, you can pick out elements that it has borrowed or mimicked from other birds, as well as snatches of man-made sounds such as car alarms or phone ringtones. But it is in winter that the most astonishing aspect of the Starling's lifestyle takes place, when it gathers in large flocks and performs an amazing 'dance' or more correctly a murmuration, just before the birds go to roost en masse.

The Starling is an early nester and the young birds are on the wing in July and, at this stage, small groups start to gather together and form flocks. As the summer turns into autumn and autumn into winter, these flocks can get larger and larger. And it is then that some spectacular murmurations can take place. A murmuration is when a large flock, numbering in the tens or even hundreds of thousands can be seen swooping and swirling over an area just before the birds settle in for the night in their chosen roost area. These murmurations can be truly spectacular and a search on YouTube can show some astonishing clips of the birds, rivalling some of the greatest wildlife spectacles in the world. Last winter, images of a Starling murmuration at Lough Ennell in Co Westmeath went viral, as one of the images seemed to show the birds forming a giant bird shape. The



Common Starling adults. Pic: Nicholas Mitchell

numbers of birds involved in these murmurations can also be truly staggering with the well-known roost in Rome thought to number in the millions.

So why do they do this? Well first of all, roosting in large numbers in the winter can be a great advantage, as the warmth generated by so many birds can help individuals to stay warmer during the cold winter's nights. Secondly, an individual's chances of being picked off by a predator is greatly lessened if it is surrounded by thousands of other birds. It is thought that the murmuration can act as a

draw, a sign if you like, to other Starlings, as where to find the roost and increase the numbers at the roost. Birds can travel some 20 kilometres or more to meet up with the main flock. Ireland's breeding Starling population is thought to be around two million birds, but birds from Scandinavia, northern and central Europe will migrate to Ireland for the winter to greatly increase the numbers of birds here. The 'how do they do it?' is equally fascinating, and it is now thought that each individual is reacting to seven other birds in its immediate

vicinity. So, if one bird changes direction, the seven around it also change in unison, as do the next seven and so on and so on. In this way the whole flock can move around in swoops, dives and acrobatic waves in a mesmerising ballet of movement. The presence of so many birds will attract the attention of predators. Barn Owls, Peregrines, Sparrowhawks and Hen Harriers have all been recorded hunting around these murmurations. Their presence can add to the ballet of movement, as the Starlings closest to the predator move to

avoid being caught so that the whole flock can split and then come back together again as the predator moves through the flock.

Starlings will roost in a variety of locations including reed beds, large buildings, piers and blocks of woodland, and can also occur almost anywhere in the country. These gatherings can be a little bit unpredictable and while they can return to the same area for a number of years in a row, there is no guarantee that they will be there every year. In recent years, we have been lucky enough to have a roost occurring just outside Timoleague (go to our Facebook Page for footage recorded by Peter Wolstenholme in 2017. So, as dusk draws in during the winter evenings, keep your eye out for a dancing, swirling flock of birds and witness one of the natural world's most spectacular sights; it could occur near you. If you are lucky enough to see one please report it to us, either through our Facebook page or the main Birdwatch Ireland website.

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.

Sign the 'Healthy Planet, Healthy People' petition

In 2015, world leaders gathered at the annual UN conference on climate change, known as a Conference of the Parties (COP), and made a historic agreement to limit global warming to less than two degrees Celsius and preferably to no more than 1.5 degrees. Unfortunately, the actions they agreed to take fell a long way short of what was required to achieve that target and the actions actually being taken by all nations, including Ireland, fall a long way short of what they promised to do. This is already having a devastating impact around the world. So far this year, we have seen heatwaves, wild fires, floods, hurricanes and droughts. But it is the people in the developing countries says Trocaire volunteer **Roger Morton**, who have been hit first and hit hardest – those who have contributed least to the crisis and who have the least resources to cope. Lives and livelihoods are being lost right now.

Trocaire, the overseas development agency of the Catholic Church in Ireland, is supporting developing communities to deal with the impacts of climate change and is working with vulnerable communities living through worsening droughts, storms and disasters.

The next major UN Climate Conference, COP26, will be held in Glasgow at the beginning of November. It is essential that world leaders address climate change with the seriousness and urgency that has been lacking so far. In particular, they must agree deep cuts to the emissions of carbon dioxide and methane, following this through with concrete actions. In addition, the richer nations – the ones who are historically responsible for the crisis – must provide adequate funds to the poorer nations to help them mitigate the consequences of climate change and adapt to the new conditions.

What is less well known is that climate change is only half of the global crisis. The other part is a catastrophic biodiversity crisis – the rapid loss of animal and plant species. This is so devastating that it has been called the planet's sixth mass extinction. This, too, is being caused by human activity including the destruction of rain forests, the pollution of air and water with toxic waste and the over-exploitation of natural resources. This collapse in biodiversity is also impacting people in the developing world most.

There is also a series of UN Conferences on biodiversity and the next one, COP15, is being held this month in China. It is essential that world

leaders use this COP to agree and fulfil ambitious targets to protect wildlife and the natural environment. This would involve us in the wealthier nations drastically changing our consumerist lifestyle which is one of the main drivers of this crisis.

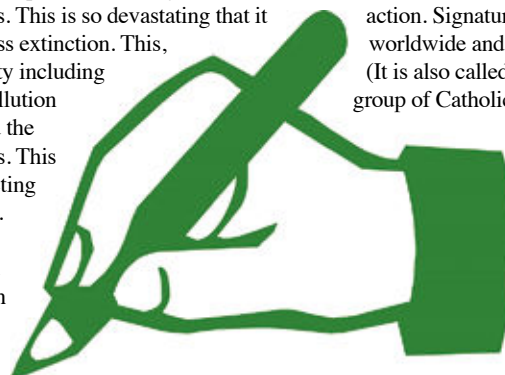
These climate and biodiversity crises are not independent but are intricately enmeshed. Climate change leads to more loss of biodiversity which, in turn, exacerbates climate change. For example, loss of tree cover means less carbon being absorbed by the leaves which leads to increased climate change which leads to further loss of species. Therefore, governments must approach them as two aspects of the same problem and respond with integrated solutions.

Governments are more likely to act when they know that their public tell them it is important and they want change. For this reason, there is a global petition called 'Healthy Planet, Healthy People' which will be presented to leaders at both COP15 and COP26 to show them that the world expects and demands that they take urgent action. Signatures for this petition are being collected in countries worldwide and it needs to be promoted more widely in Ireland.

(It is also called the Catholic Petition, because it was started by a group of Catholics, but everyone who cares about the planet and all its life should sign, irrespective of faith or none.)

The petition can be signed online at the-catholicpetition.org.

I ask that all readers of the West Cork People sign urgently and encourage friends and family to also sign – for the sake of our future generations, for all our fellow creatures and for our planet, our common home.



people Environment : Making a difference

Government inaction on climate change fueling eco-anxiety in young people



ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

Fiona Hayes

You may have heard of the recent court appearance of 19-year-old climate activists Orla Murphy from Whitechurch, Co Cork and 21-year-old Zachery Lumley, from Cork City.

In March of this year these two young people carried out and live-streamed a graffiti attack at the Department of Foreign Affairs. The Graffiti on the entrance to the Department building read 'no more empty promises'.

They were campaigning to hold the government to its promise to create a path to net-zero emissions no later than 2050, and to a 50 per cent reduction in emissions by the end of this decade. The two student activists felt that governments easily make climate mitigation promises that are then promptly ignored.

Meanwhile at the UN General Assembly 2021, António Guterres the secretary general of the UN, warned of planetary crisis quoting studies that show greater than 60 per cent of our young people feel betrayed by their governments and feel afraid, sad, anxious, angry, powerless, helpless, and/or guilty.

The lead author of the global study, Caroline Hickman from Bath University, states that the study shows eco-anxiety is not just for environmental destruction alone, but inextricably linked to government inaction on climate change.

The young feel that people have failed to care for the planet, that the future is frightening, that governments can't be trusted and are failing young people.

António Guterres states "We are weeks away from #COP26, but seemingly light years away from reaching our #Climate-Action targets. We need more ambition from all countries in three key areas — mitigation, finance and adaptation." He states that the climate alarm bells are

ringing at fever pitch, that we must get serious and we must act fast. He urges governments at the UN, "Don't wait for others to make the first move. Do your part."

However, an altogether different side of the Environment Action/Climate Action and National Governments' stories plays out in the corporate world.

Go to tcenergy.com to find out how the company TC Energy, responsible for the Keystone Pipeline is going to great lengths to combat climate change and protect our planet!

It states on their website that "TC Energy supports the goals of the Paris Agreement, and we believe there are substantial opportunities for our company in the shift to a low-carbon future. As we undertake the challenge before us, we remain committed to our long-standing principles of environmental stewardship, protection and performance."

What their website doesn't tell you though, is that TC Energy spent \$900,000 in lobbying government to approve the Keystone Pipeline and is now suing the American Government, and thus taxpayers, for \$15 billion for the cancellation of the Keystone Pipeline. This legal action coincides with President Joe Biden's announcement to increase international public climate finance to \$11.4 billion a year.

How is it that Energy Companies can on the one hand be presenting to the world that they are helping to solve the current climate and environmental crisis and at the same time be suing governments for putting in place vital measures to protect our planet? Measures being called for across the world by the UN summit? It makes no sense!

Suing governments happens not just in the US. German energy companies RWE and Uniper are suing the Netherlands for phasing out coal. Rockhopper, a UK company is suing Italy for banning offshore oil drilling close to the coast. Ascent Resources, also a UK company, is suing Slovenia for requiring an environmental impact assessment on fracking plants, even though EU law requires that an environmental impact assessment be carried out.

These companies don't sue through the regular court system. They use corporate courts formerly known as 'Investors State Dispute Settlement' or ISDS to bring these cases. This is possible because it is written into the rules of trade and in-



The lead author of the global study... states that the study shows eco-anxiety is not just for environmental destruction alone, but inextricably linked to government inaction on climate change. The young feel that people have failed to care for the planet, that the future is frightening, that governments can't be trusted and are failing young people.

vestment deals via 'The Energy Charter Treaty (ECT)' that they allow foreign corporations to sue governments outside of the national legal system. The ECT is an international agreement for the energy sector created in 1994. It sets out the investment rules, which currently apply to 53 countries from Western and Eastern Europe, Central, Western and Northern Asia, and Japan, Jordan and Yemen, as well as the European Union.

The ISDS is custom made such that the tribunals are only to look at whether 'investors interests' have been affected by a new law or policy. It matters not in these courts what the reasons are for the new law or policy. They ignore public health, climate action and worker's rights and simply look to determine whether the investors financial interests are being affected.

These tribunals can often make much larger financial awards to the company than would be awarded by any other court.

So, on the one hand companies like TC Energy, on their websites, push the claim that they are protecting our planet and creating a sustainable future and on the other hand they lobby governments and take them to court for putting in place responsible measures that will enable future generations to live on this planet.

Many of these case studies are reported on the website Global Justice Now at globaljustice.org.uk.

The Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) is a think-tank that produces annual terrorism and peace indexes. It produces an Ecological Threat Register using data from the United Nations and other sources to assess eight ecological threats and predict which countries and regions are most at risk.

It estimates that by 2050 more than one billion people will be displaced by climate change; and this will create mass migration.

One Billion Refugees looking for a home!

It is judged that Pakistan will be the country with the largest number of people at risk of mass migration, followed by Ethiopia and Iran. The IEP states that in such countries "even small ecological threats and natural disasters could result in mass population displacement".

In his opening speech at the UN General Assembly, António Guterres painted a stark picture of unsustainable inequalities, runaway climate change and

even billions in claims that are paid out of taxpayer money.

Meanwhile nearly half of youth studied in a global report state that climate change anxiety affects their lives, 60 per cent stating they feel betrayed; and that their governments are not doing enough to avoid a climate catastrophe, whilst two student climate activists from Cork report every single day to their local Gardai office as part of their conditions of bail, whilst they await their next hearing in court set for October 12.

Will we continue to be horrified that angry and frightened youngsters who see a bleak future, deface a public building in desperation at not being heard, whilst we ignore the real crime in our midst; that of allowing a few corporate bodies to push the world towards Ecological and Climate instability and disaster?

In Europe we will continue to betray our young people for as long as the individual countries in Europe and the European Commission are signed up to the Energy Charter Agreement.

With COP26 fast approaching we can encourage the EU and our own government to pull out of the Energy Charter Treaty and stop its expansion to other countries!

There is a petition at www.tni.org/en/ECTpetition and write to your TD and MEP.

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people Environment : Making a difference



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SuperValu Bantry introduces circular economy solutions with Tru Eco

O’Keeffe’s SuperValu Bantry has introduced circular economy solutions and launched a bespoke refill station of Tru Eco range of eco-friendly household cleaning and laundry products made in Ireland.

The Tru Eco range of products is made from plant-based and biodegradable ingredients and each bottle is made from 100 per cent recycled plastic, creating a circular economy product that is reusable, recyclable, and refillable. The range includes an All-Purpose Cleaner, Washing-Up Liquid, Non-Bio Laundry Detergent, and Fabric Conditioner.

SuperValu Bantry shoppers can now bring their empty bottles of Tru Eco household cleaning and laundry products to refill in-store at a cheaper cost. By refilling, people can reduce their environmental footprint, minimise plastic

waste as well as lowering carbon emissions.

Jim O’Keeffe, SuperValu Bantry Owner says: “Sustainability is at the forefront of our business strategy. We see more and more of our customers seeking greener solutions while shopping so we are thrilled to offer our customers a simple refill solution for their household cleaning products that will help them protect the environment and save them money too. We aim to reduce plastic waste and to offer convenient green options for our customers.”

Bantry is the first SuperValu store in Cork to offer customers a Tru Eco refill station. The product range is available in SuperValu stores nationwide.

Russell Walsh, Joint Managing Director, VivaGreen says: “Our Tru Eco range is for people who are mindful about the environmental and health impacts of cleaning products,

and who are seeking a safer and kinder way to clean their homes. By buying our products, consumers are supporting a local, eco-friendly Irish business, and reducing their plastic waste footprint, environmental impact as well as lowering carbon emissions.”



Walsh adds: “We are delighted and so proud that our Tru Eco range and a new refill station are available to the people of Bantry and surrounding areas. We see our refill solution like the plastic bag levy – you buy our Tru Eco product once and then you return to refill your empty bottle in-store at a cheaper cost. This not only saves consumers money, but it reduces plastic waste in our communities”.

The bespoke Tru Eco refill station is made by Irish wood and design manufacturer, Bear Creation and holds 20L drums of all four Tru Eco range products. VivaGreen collects, refills, and returns the drums to the store to start the loop again – a truly circular economy product.

For more information and its full range of eco products visit vivagreen.ie or join the conversation on Instagram @vivagreen.ie

With shared global action there can be hope for a sustainable future



GROUNDLED

An occasional column by
MEP Grace O’Sullivan

Grace, a mother of three from Tramore, Co. Waterford, spent 20 years working with Greenpeace and was a crewmember of the Rainbow Warrior, when it was bombed by the French Foreign Intelligence Service in 1985. She served as a Senator for three years, before being elected to the European Parliament, where she is a proactive and outspoken member of important committees on Fisheries (PECH), and Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI). She is also a member of delegations on Mercosur and Palestine, and a member of a number of working groups. She is Green Party Spokesperson on Environmental Protection, Natural Resources, Marine and Tourism.

Over the course of the recent global week to ACT4SDGs, I addressed the European Assembly at the Global People’s Assembly. It was an event, which was run as part of a three-day programme running parallel to the UN General Assembly.

Featuring speakers from 80 countries, it was an incredible showcase of ambition, creativity and ideas, a space where people working on issues benefiting humankind and the planet, shared their ideas and input into a ‘Declaration’, that will ultimately be shared with the UN, as well as governments worldwide.

Following on from the recent State of the European Union Address from EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, it struck me that this sort of ground-up, community and stakeholder-led engagement, has a huge role to play going forward. One of the criticisms of Commissioner von der Leyen’s address was that it was short on specifics around ways to progress the European Green Deal. It’s all very well to have ambition and lots of lofty ideas and aspirations, but without concrete, specific actions,

targets and deadlines, we’re all just covering the same ground over and over, like hamsters spinning inside our wheels.

At the heart of what I spoke about at the event, was the idea that we are all interconnected. The title of my talk was: ‘So Close and Yet So Far’. That spoke to the idea that when we speak about home, we are also speaking about ‘the planet’, home to us all. When we speak of family, we are speaking of humankind throughout the planet.

My life, my work, my activism, my political campaigning and action are, at their core, about creating connections. There is no doubt that we are living at a time in history, when the world has never been closer, with technology, information, digital access, communications and travel opening up the world and bringing us into closer proximity and awareness of each other and nature.

These connections and ‘conveniences’ certainly make the world seem a little smaller, but they lead me to the question – do they serve to make the world more generous, more fair, more sustainable?

We are inextricably linked,

as humans and other biodiversity, as global co-inhabitants of our planetary home. We have shared-goals and common ground and yet it is fair to say that for so many, the distances between us are oh so far.

In this modern world of extremes, where we see an exhaustingly skewed focus on making money, where the gaps between the haves and have-nots grow ever wider, it can be hard to truly see the interconnectedness of humans with each other and with nature.

My current work in the political arena focuses on human health and the health of the environment, which, of course underpins our ability to survive and is a priority for me as a legislator.

Climate change is threatening our survival. Biodiversity decline is spiralling out of control. Images of conflict and evidence of widespread brutal disregard of basic human rights fill our screens, day in, day out. We are far away from equality, from equity, from ecological, economic and social balance, sustainability and fairness.

My work is a daily reminder that we are perilously close to pushing our planet past its

tipping point and that all decision-making, from the ground up and the top down, must respect and comply with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and work within the planetary boundaries.

At the moment, as part of my work on the ENVI Committee for the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, I’m in trilogue negotiations with the European Commission and Council, as the European Parliament’s lead negotiator, the Rapporteur, on far-reaching environmental legislation, the 8th Environment Action Programme (EAP).

The EAP tackles many issues related to the environment, but over the past few days, as I’ve listened to speakers addressing many topics including pleas for a global call-to-action on poverty and the Sustainable Development Goals, I’ve realised just how important it is to address the way we measure success.

A key area of the EAP focuses on our economic model, and how we need to look beyond it. The current global economic model uses GDP growth as the sole measure of progress. GDP, to my mind, is essentially about production at any cost. That model operates at a detrimental cost to the planet.

The OECD says that GDP growth is tightly coupled with increased environmental degradation. And while the impact of

this outmoded way of viewing progress impacts on the planet, so too does it impact on people, with the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer.

Against the backdrop of our global climate and biodiversity emergency, it’s a sad and shameful fact that the geographical areas worst impacted by the ravages of climate change, are inhabited by people already at a social and economic disadvantage. The world’s poorest, who struggle to survive with food and water shortages and other challenges, are also the people now dealing head-on, with the catastrophic direct impacts of climate change.

Instead of GDP, a sustainable wellbeing economy uses the wellbeing of people and the planet as a measure of progress. It puts wellbeing at the heart of decision-making. It’s a fairer and more humane way of moving towards a growth model that is sustainable on every level.

I do, truly believe, there must be hope. Shared global action that brings us together, that brings us closer, can ensure that life on the planet will survive and develop in a sustainable way, into the future, where the aspirations of the Sustainable Development Goals can come into widespread fruition.

Special Feature GREEN HOMES



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Even small steps bring big change

With housing representing a quarter of all CO₂ emissions in Ireland, improving the energy efficiency of our homes is essential and SEAI is encouraging homeowners to avail of their home energy upgrade grants to reduce energy consumption and costs and make homes more comfortable, as well as greener. West Cork People shares Xavier Dubuisson and Susan O'Flaherty's journey retrofitting their old stone farmhouse over a 20-year period; gradually adapting and upgrading for an expanding family and for energy efficiency and eventually reaching an A3 BER rating.

After moving to Clonakilty from Brussels with their young family in 2001, Xavier Dubuisson and Susan O'Flaherty bought an old stone cottage in Ballinglanna. Although set in a stunning location overlooking the Atlantic, there was a downside to the charming coastal property: as is the case with so many old cottages in this country, it wasn't very energy efficient. Over the past 20 years however, the couple has demonstrated that where there is a will there is most definitely a way and they have successfully turned the old stone cottage (pre-WWII) into an impressive A3-rated house.

While Susan and Xavier may have an inside track when it comes to making the transition to a low-carbon, resilient future – Xavier is an engineer who specialises in sustainable energy and they are the company behind RetroKit, a digital solution in supporting energy upgrade projects – Susan is keen to point out that an energy upgrade is achievable for anyone, whether you have the technical knowhow or not and whatever your financial situation. “We felt that it was important to be

walking the talk,” says Susan “and demonstrate that upgrading your home doesn't have to be done all in one go. Just small steps to start like attic insulation can make a difference. It took us 20 years to complete all the steps, using Superhomes as a one stop shop, but we now have a 100 per cent renewable energy supply in our home.”

One of the first changes the couple made on moving into the old cottage was to install rooftop solar thermal panels (for hot water) and replace the old oil fired range with a condensing oil boiler. It was smelly and noisy,” says Xavier of the old oil boiler. While taking out the Stanley stove, they also broke through the kitchen wall and opened up the living space for light and heat, overall making it a more pleasant and comfortable space. They also installed two wood stoves, which are now only used occasionally.

“At the time we changed the oil boiler, heat pumps were not applied in existing homes, and were very expensive, or we would probably have gone for one instead of the condensing oil boiler,” explains Susan. You also need a certain level of insu-



Xavier Dubuisson and Susan O'Flaherty at home in Ballinglanna.

lation in a house before putting in a heat pump or you won't see the benefits; your energy usage and cost will be high,” says Xavier.

To avail of an SEAI grant to install a heat pump system, homeowners will first need to ensure their home is well-insulated. SEAI also provides funding towards a technical assessment of your home by an independent SEAI registered technical advisor, who will help you make an informed decision and ensure your home and the heat pump system are a good match.

“Having the likes of a one stop shop through SEAI should make things easier, as homeowners won't have to deal directly with contractors,” says Susan.

While their attic has been

insulated with cellulose insulation, a natural material that's designed to minimise energy loss more effectively than mineral fibres, external insulation is still on the wish list. “It was too expensive for us at the time to externally insulate the old stone walls but the cavity walls on the single story extension, which

“Getting a good quality of air tightness is relatively easy, if you've done the low-hanging fruit jobs in terms of attic insulation, appropriate cavity insulation and so on.”

only had one inch of insulation, were pumped with polystyrene bead insulation,” says Xavier. The couple also replaced the front and back doors with passive house standard doors that reduce the heat loss from the glazing and are also much more airtight. “Getting a good quality of air tightness is relatively easy,” says Xavier “if you've done the low-hanging fruit jobs in terms of attic insulation, appropriate cavity insulation and so on.” The cottage windows are PVC and double glazed so if they decide to replace them with triple glazing that will done at the same time as the external wall insulation.

“That's why having a plan is really important,” emphasises Susan. “So you have logical steps to follow that will save you money in the long run.”

The demand control ventilation (DCV) system they installed ensures airtight homes are adequately ventilated. “It manages the air quality very well in terms of moisture and smells,” says Susan.

By 2016, Susan and Xavier had achieved a C1 building energy rating (BER) but wanted to take their home a step further and move away from oil. They decided to replace their oil boiler with an air source heat pump and controls.

A heat pump system harnesses energy from free renewable sources outside the building, for heating your house and producing your hot water. Most heat pump systems have integrated heating controls, helping you to accurately match your space

Continued on next page...

Special Feature GREEN HOMES

Cont'd from previous page...

heating and hot water schedules to the working and living patterns in your home, so when heat and hot water are required, it is there; and when it is not required, it is turned off. Using the heating controls in your heat pump system will typically reduce your energy usage by up to 20 per cent.

"I was a little bit worried at the beginning about the hum (noise) off the pump but it's not

at all intrusive," shares Susan, who does advise asking your energy provider about getting an Equaliser, which will enable you to spread your electricity costs out across the year.

"Your electricity bill will definitely go up in the winter, as your heat pump has to work harder, so in my opinion an Equaliser is really important," she says.

Another piece of advice is

to get your windows serviced if you can't afford to replace them. "It made a big difference when we had the job done," says Xavier.

"It's good to be prepared," says Susan. Most people won't replace their oil burner or windows and doors unless it's absolutely necessary. In the meantime, think about doing some research and putting a plan in place so that if the worst



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does happen, you'll be ready for it and in a position to upgrade rather than run out and buy another oil boiler!"

The couple also opted to install ground-mounted solar PV panels in the garden. The PV panels feed electricity into the house and, whenever there is demand, it is used. Any excess electricity produced goes into the domestic hot water tank.

Xavier and Susan's advice to anyone not sure where to start when it comes to a home energy upgrade is to get an energy assessment done. "As well as giving you different options, you'll also find out how many years it will take to pay back the investment."

Xavier and Susan were also able to switch their AIB mortgage in-house to a better fixed rate because of their A3 rating. "It was really easy to do," says Susan.

Right now they're producing more energy than they need, so the future plan is to invest in batteries [to store excess electricity] and then to invest in an electric car.

"Getting independent advice before you move forward is the most important piece of advice I can give," stresses Xavier. "A one stop shop should offer independent advice, as well as technical delivery and quality."

The family are delighted with the comfort they have now in such an old house. Xavier says it's fantastic not to be relying on oil. "I can't remember how many times we ran out of oil and you'd be in the cold for a few days waiting for the delivery man to arrive and then there'd be a dirty mess getting things running again."

Susan and Xavier now have a carbon footprint to be proud of. In fact, not only is their home energy efficient but the couple work mainly from home



An example of a heat pump. Pic: superhomes.ie

helping others to reduce their carbon footprint. Together with a very talented team of engineers, software developers and designers, and with research funding from SEAI, they have created RetroKit – a software solution designed for engineers and managers in local authorities and housing associations, to help them decide on the best way to invest in the energy upgrades of their housing stock.

It is imperative that the residential sector reduces its carbon emissions to net zero carbon by 2050 and that fuel poverty is

eradicated (16 per cent of Irish households surveyed by the Society of Vincent de Paul say they are not in a position to heat their home adequately).

Despite these challenges, right now only two per cent of Irish homes receive an energy upgrade annually and 70 per cent are still in need of an energy retrofit – something RetroKit is working towards changing.

For more information on SEAI Home Energy Grants go to SEAI.ie.

Special Feature GREEN HOMES



Con O'Neill Sherry Fitzgerald O'Neill
Clonakilty and Skibbereen

Tell us about yourself and when and why you got into the industry?

I spent my summers as a teenager working in the business and always had a draw towards it. In many respects, it is the ideal job to combine an obsession with history. Every new property offers a new area to explore, people to meet and stories to gather. After completing an MSc Computation Finance in the University of Limerick in 2011, I spent five years working with Irish Fin-Tech firm First Derivatives, which included stints in Moscow, Dubai, Stockholm and Dublin. While in Dublin, I studied an MSc Real Estate from the University College of Estate Management in Reading, which I graduated from in 2017. I joined the team at Sherry Fitzgerald O'Neill in January 2018 and haven't looked back since.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

The most enjoyable part of the job is helping guide sellers and buyers through what is an extremely stressful process. There is so much outside your control and often it feels like the job is more akin to a therapist, helping people to remain calm and focused.

Can you share a few highlights...some of the properties that you're particularly proud of making a sale on?

There is great enjoyment in seeing new businesses start up or expand and meeting the people behind those businesses. It might slip under the radar, but the pandemic has seen lots of new businesses open up or expand. Clonakilty has seen the Kirby family take over The Whale's Tail, the Mehigans taking on Richy's under the name 'Berts', Michelle Whyte open Platinum Hair Studio, Casey's Bar make

the move to Pearse Street, and Crudge's Barber Shop open up at Astna Street. In Skibbereen, the Simply Café has been a great addition to North Street while 'Flour and Water' is thriving on Bridge Street. In Bantry O'Connors Seafood Restaurant is getting great reviews under head chef, Shane Spillane.

Why should someone choose you as their estate agent?

Whether we're selling a three bed semi-d or a one-million-euro country home, our marketing strategy doesn't change, and we never compromise when it comes to marketing any property. This, combined with hard work, a database of active buyers, and regular communication with vendors and buyers, gets results; and ensures you will get the best price for your property.

The pandemic has fuelled huge interest in the West Cork property market. What are buyers now looking for in a property in West Cork?

West Cork is just so varied, it literally accommodates every type of buyer. The major difference between pre-pandemic and now is that the buyers that are in the market are extremely active and every type of property is moving quickly once marketed correctly at the right price. The majority of buyers are local or have local connections but there are exceptions and there are three specific markets where we have seen a dramatic change in buyer behaviour:

1. The market, which has seen the most dramatic change, are detached houses in the countryside with a little bit of ground surrounding Bandon and north of Clonakilty which are within a 45-minute commute of the city. If the property is turnkey and under €400,000, we are seeing significant numbers of first-time buyers from the city.

Meet the Agent

2. The run on coastal properties has been well documented. High level executives in Dublin, Cork and internationally have realised that they can work from home for a couple of months every summer and where better to spend that time than West Cork. Parents can work from their holiday home while their children go sailing in Glandore, Baltimore or Schull.

3. The third market where we have seen a major shift is with large, detached properties, over say €500,000, which are within safe walking distance of towns and villages. We are seeing a high numbers of couples in their fifties or sixties, typically cash buyers, either relocating from rural properties to the town or making the move to West Cork to retire. We are now seeing the other West Cork towns mirroring Kinsale in this respect.

The remainder of the market is more in line with national figures, with price increases of approx. 5.7 per cent in the 12 months to the end of June. The majority of buyers are purchasing with a mortgage and are restricted to borrowing at 3.5 times salary, which has curtailed the market as intended by the Central Bank. While salaries may not have increased during the pandemic, with no weddings, holidays, reduced transport costs and a general reduction in discretionary spending, buyers have managed to save a larger deposit, which may be going into property.

What are the biggest mistakes you see people making when selling their home?

If you are thinking of selling in the future, get started now. Start talking to estate agents. If we see a competitor list a property, more often than not, we have not been invited in the door to make a proposal. We offer free market appraisals with no obligation to sell with us. We will provide an advised market value, advise on presenting your property, a marketing strategy to get you the best price and outline our fee structure. You might be pleasantly surprised! Secondly, call your solicitor or appoint a solicitor immediately and ask them to review the title documents.

What is your outlook of the West Cork property market for 2022?

We would see an increase in supply of property in 2022, however, this is the most difficult part of the market to predict. When everything settles down and the pandemic is under control, I think we are going to see a lot of people on the move. We have spent more time at home

than ever before during the pandemic. There are a lot of people out there who have discovered that their houses are too small, too big, too isolated, and so on and, where they were not able to extend or renovate, they will likely sell in 2022 which may help with supply.

We expect demand to remain strong with the Banking and Payments Federation Ireland

reporting record levels of mortgage approvals in May this year and with levels of cash on deposit in financial institutions at a record level nationally.

Pre-pandemic, property prices had been remarkably stable with low single digit increases or decreases. With the constraints on mortgage lending effectively controlling price inflation, namely central bank rules limiting

the majority of borrowers to 3.5 times salary along with loan-to-value restrictions, we expect that prices will begin to stabilise in 2022 and a return to low single digit growth.

Thinking of selling? Contact Sherry Fitzgerald O'Neill Clonakilty 023 883 3995 or Skibbereen 028 21404. E-mail: info@sfoneill.ie. www.sherryfitz.ie



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Special Feature GREEN HOMES

The power of PV

As we move towards clean green energy, Solar Photovoltaic (PV) is unquestionably part of the solution. Converting energy from the sun and turning it into electricity, a PV system will not only improve your energy rating but can offer huge potential savings in your electricity and heating bills.

Paddy Rose, Renewable Energy Manager at Advanced Heating and Energy Systems Ltd explains that, "Different rates may apply but if you take a cost of a unit of electricity as being .15 cent without the VAT, then if you spend €120 per two months that is about 800 units per two months. 800 units per two months over one year is

approx. 4800 units per year. So if you install a 4kw system, it will give you approx. 3700 units per year and 3700 units per year at .15 cent is €555 in potential savings!"

While in general Solar PV works well in the Irish climate, there are variations that need to be taken into account. "We always explain to customers

that a PV system is dependent on the climatic conditions, and clearly outline how production will vary based on this, so the customer will understand how their system will be of benefit to them," shares Paddy.

While the principle behind Solar Photovoltaic and Solar Thermal Panels is the same – both use solar radiation (energy from the sun) to create usable energy – Solar PV creates electricity whereas thermal systems are used directly for heating water or air.

"Solar PV uses the sun's raw energy to create 'free' electricity, which is used first, before grid electricity, to support any item in the building that is

drawing power. It can also be diverted to assist with hot water production," explains Paddy.

Air to Water heat pumps can be supported by PV (electricity) in cost reduction.

Solar PV systems can start from €3000 upwards. The electricity you use annually will determine the system size to install.

Advanced Heating and Energy Systems Ltd supplies and installs PV, from domestic to commercial, ranging from 4kw to 150kw systems.

Paddy Rose first installed Solar PV over 15 years ago, so has the experience, as well as a West Cork and Kenmare base, serving a nation wide clientele.



For more information or to get a free consultation contact Paddy Rose on 087 0521738.

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New standards for domestic solid fuels for next year

New standards for all domestic solid fuels will be introduced across the State within a year. From that point on, the most polluting of fuels will no longer be available on the Irish market.

Poor air quality causes premature deaths and each year some 1,300 people die in Ireland due to air pollution from solid fuel burning. This demonstrates the extent to which the choices we make when heating our homes can impact on our own health and the communities in which we live.

"When this Government was formed, we gave a commitment to tackle air pollution caused by domestic solid fuel burning, and we remain committed to doing so," said Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications Eamon Ryan TD marking International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies in September.

"We took a major step earlier this year, with a public consultation on the development of new solid fuels regulations for Ireland. We received more than 3,500 responses across all strands of the consultation, with a wide variety of suggested regulatory approaches for solid fuels.

"Having considered the submissions made by the public, health experts, advocacy groups, academia and industry, a framework for legislation has been developed and drafting of the regulations is underway."

From 2022 the following new standards for solid fuels will apply in Ireland:

- Coal, coal-based products, any manufactured solid fuel or



peat briquettes will be required to have a smoke emission rate of less than 10g/hour, reducing to 5g/hr by 2025.

- It is not proposed to make any changes to the smoke emission rate for biomass products (that contain coal), as this is already set at 5g/hr.

- The sulphur content permitted for all fuels will be reduced from 2 per cent to 1 per cent over time.

- Wood sold in single units under 2m³ will be required to have a moisture content of 25 per cent or less (moving to 20 per cent within four years) and wet wood sold over these volumes will be required to come with instructions for the purchaser on how to dry this wood.

- In order to accommodate those with rights to harvest sod peat, no ban on its burning will be introduced. However, a regulatory regime to reduce its harm in more urbanised areas is under examination.

These regulations will be finalised in the coming months and will be in place for the 2022 heating season. They are being announced now to allow those

serving the domestic solid fuel market to plan accordingly and to continue to invest in less polluting alternatives.

The Minister added: "In the meantime, I trust that people will take note of the messages in the forthcoming public awareness campaign, and take these simple steps to bring about better air quality and improved health for all. During this period, people are being empowered to make a conscious, personal choice to contribute to cleaner air and a healthier environment."

The campaign will centre around three core messages or the 'ABC' for Cleaner Air, which can help bring about significant improvements in air quality:

A – Ask yourself: 'Do I need to light a fire?' Use other cleaner heating sources instead if possible.

B – Burn cleaner, more efficient, low-smoke fuels and make sure you use the right fuel for your appliance.

C – Clean and maintain your chimneys and heating appliances at least once a year.



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Special Feature GREEN HOMES

Beautiful bathrooms from Buckleys

That Buckley's Tiles in Skibbereen is heading towards 30 years in business, having started out in a modest garage in the early 1990s, is testament to a hardworking family that puts customers and quality first. Lauren Buckley, who has a degree in business under her belt, has now joined her parents Norma and Jerry in running the business and hopes to grow it even more in years to come.



Father and daughter Jerry and Lauren Buckley.

Always known for its superb range of indoor tiles, Buckley's branched out in recent years to provide outdoor paving tiles, a market that grew massively in the last year due to homeowners upgrading their garden seating and eating areas. They also stock a huge range of bathroom ware and accessories, with something to suit every home.

"There is a very diverse market down here in West

Cork," Lauren explains. "From old farmhouses to modern new builds, so we make sure we cater for everyone, in both tiles and bathroom ware."

Whether for a new build or as a renovation project, homeowners are now putting a lot of thought and love into their bathrooms to create a relaxing space at home. To achieve a high-end look, take a look at Buckley's range of baths and ceramics, taps, shower units, cabinets, mir-

rors and more.

To really personalise your bathroom, how about designing your bath to match the rest of your decor? "We have a range of Dolocast freestanding baths and basins that can be custom painted in a selection of 1,500 colours and finished in either matt, gloss or satin," Lauren explains.

"Most of our bathroom ware is made in Ireland, and our adhesives and grouts are also made on the island. It's great that we can support Irish jobs in this way and also cut down on transport emissions."

Tiles are influenced by fashion as much as anything else in the home. In the last few years Buckleys has seen pattern tiles fly as people got sick of seeing grey and beige everywhere. "Now the size of the tile is getting bigger every year!" Lauren says. "For a little while everybody wanted small tiles but they are back up to a very large 60cmx 120cm tile, which is very striking."

Tiles do suit every home in terms of form and function, especially new builds that are encouraged to install underfloor heating – tiles are the best floor option to retain the heat.

A trained tiler himself, Jerry is the expert when it comes to knowing his product and providing sound advice to customers.

"We have such a diverse selection to choose from, terracotta to slate to porcelain. We are probably one of the few shops in the country selling natural Brazilian slate and natural terracotta. We source our tiles from European manufacturers, mainly in Spain and Italy but we also like to support anybody making local handmade tiles and mosaics."

"West Cork has such a diverse mix of international people with all different tastes and we cater for them all but can also give you some guidance. For example, if you have an old style country house modern polished porcelain wouldn't be right."

Jerry says it is never too early to come in and start looking. "A

lot of people leave it until the last minute and then it's a panic. Come in three or four times and start getting a feel for what you like. You don't have to make a decision, just start the process."

"We strongly encourage clients to take home samples to see how tiles look in their space,

with their lighting," he says. "That narrows down the selection and make the final decision easy and right."

Visit buckleystileandbath.ie or follow them on Facebook and Instagram for some design inspiration.



Buckley's also do a wide range of paving tiles to transform your outdoor space.



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One of the simplest, most cost-effective solutions to saving energy in the home to the best achievable standard is one that's often ignored or forgotten about: According to SEAI, approximately 20-30 per cent of the heat within the home can be lost through the roof so insulating your attic properly can massively reduce heat loss and save you money. But what also needs to be considered is the type of insulation used. Cellulose fibre insulation is a safe, eco-friendly and superior quality insulation that is actually made from recycled newspapers, something that Cork based company EcoCel has been doing for over 12 years.

According to John Egan, CEO of EcoCel, 95 per cent of all homes have inadequate insulation in their roof and walls. "The simplest, most effective way to save energy in a home is to insulate the attic to U-value of 0.11 W/m²K, which is achieved with 300mm EcoCel cellulose," says John "In our experience very few homes are insulated to this value, a situation that is not helped by setting the new standard for attic insulation at a U-value of 0.16 W/m²K. An attic insulated to a U-value of 0.11 W/m²K will pay back the cost of doing the work properly in two to three years." But The real value of insulation is the amount of energy that it saves

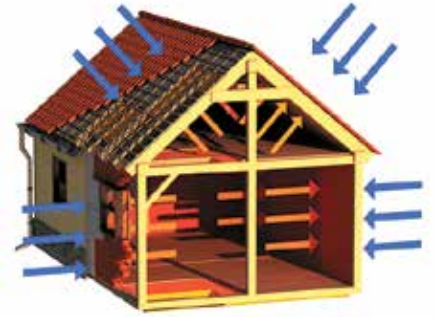
over its lifetime.

Cellulose is also a more environmentally-friendly alternative to imported mineral fibres, which have a higher carbon footprint.

The biggest carbon footprint in most building products is transport. EcoCel in fact has a neutral carbon footprint, as it consumes very little energy in the manufacturing process and has limited transport needs. All of its paper is collected locally. John explains some more of the benefits to insulating with cellulose fibre: Cellulose is safer in a fire than mineral wools. It doesn't burn – it's treated with safe fire retardants." Cellulose is also healthier.

Imported mineral wools can only absorb moisture – they can't release it. "So there's more chance of mould in the house, which is a health issue, whereas cellulose, a natural fibre, can take in and release moisture, thereby improving air quality in the house."

EcoCel cellulose is ideal in timber frame walls, sloping ceilings and flat ceilings. "225mm in a timber frame wall or sloping ceiling achieves a U-value of 0.14 W/m²K." It can also be used acoustically in party walls and floors, especially in floors with pipes, cables and



MV ducting; as it is injected under pressure, it fills every void, which is not possible with roll-out material.

Global Award winning Architect, Marc O'Riain is one of Ireland's premier interior architecture professionals with over €200m in realised projects. Marc has completed a PhD in low energy building retrofit. When asked about his reasons for choosing EcoCel as an insulation product Marc responded: "Health, air quality, thermal resistance and sustainability are the driving factors in the specification to ensure a building's longevity and its inhabitants. EcoCel came top of the class in all these areas for an insulation product."

All aspiring passive house builders' concerns about carbon footprint can be addressed by designing a building with EcoCel cellulose as the main insulation.

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CECAS launch for West Cork

The last weekend of September saw the public launch of an innovative and ambitious new Centre of Excellence for Climate Action and Sustainability in West Cork. CECAS is a first for the region, and brings together community, business, policy makers and educators under the stewardship of Green Skibbereen CLG a not for profit company who are driving the project.

The CECAS project is based in the heart of West Cork in the former Myross Wood House Retreat House close to Leap and Union Hall. The historic house dates back to the 1800s and sits in a scenic and coastal location in 35 acres of gardens and woodland.

The Centre has been up and running since the beginning of August and is already delivering and developing projects around woodland restoration, retrofit, renewable energy and sustainable practices, has a number of local community groups already using the many

rooms for meetings, education and events and is renting out small workspaces to local micro enterprises, creatives and small businesses. This combined with provision of basic and affordable holiday accommodation for visitors is starting to generate activity and importantly generate much-needed revenue.

Acting Chair of the Directors of Green Skibbereen, Trish Lavelle, who opened the launch, spoke of the huge potential for the building. "The building is slowly but surely coming back to life after some years of decline in its use. It's a lovely but very old, inefficient building but in that respect it is perfect for us to test and demonstrate the very best retrofit techniques and materials because over 20,000 people in West Cork also inhabit old and inefficient homes and if we are to address fuel poverty we need to help them make informed decisions about adapting to a low carbon future." She spoke of the importance of community engagement,

paying tribute to the many volunteers who are already coming forward to assist with various projects, gardening, woodland restoration and more. "West Cork has a wealth of talented people, resourceful people, practical people with so many great ideas. Without community, there is no CECAS and every single project we are working on will directly involve West Cork people, families, groups and businesses."

Unveiling the new CECAS Supporter Scheme, Trish explained that individuals, families and students can now sign up to the scheme via the CECAS website knowing that "for the price of a meal in a pub they can become directly involved in our vision of a zero carbon West Cork, confident that every cent is going into projects that will benefit our communities and help us all meet the climate change challenge"

Noel Casserly, Company Secretary for Green Skibbereen CLG, spoke of the expected



impact of CECAS citing an independent report produced by Exodea Consulting, which forecasts the creation of 68 direct and indirect fulltime equivalent jobs with an average payroll of over €800,000 and the generation of €23.6m in direct and indirect economic value. "CECAS aims to support the creation of a zero carbon economy in West Cork, with green skills, employment and businesses supported through the centre."

Angela Brady of BMA Architects is just one of the

increasing number of organisations working with CECAS and has designed the first phase of the development of an events hub in one wing of the house. She set out an exciting vision for the phased development of the building over the next five years and welcomed the launch of CECAS as "providing a vital community space for learning, sharing good practice, demonstrating and evaluating the best solutions to help us reach not just low carbon but zero carbon for West Cork".

Reflecting on the events of

the day Trish Lavelle was extremely optimistic for CECAS: "It was such a positive day, full of energy, generosity and a real willingness to support us. Over the course of the day we have made several new contacts with individuals, businesses and groups who wish to be involved in developing projects at CECAS in partnership with us. These are very exciting times for CECAS and for West Cork. It really shows that despite the very real climate emergency, we are far from powerless as a community."

Special Feature GREEN HOMES

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Freewheeling tiny homes offer the perfect solution

For the environment lover, a tiny house on wheels is an ideal way to fully experience nature. This small nomadic home can be easily moved to different landscapes in changing seasons – summer by the coast, winter by the woods maybe?

Timoleague based company, Sunflower Tiny Homes, is also catering for individuals who are currently locked out of our overheating housing market. Owner Damien Peureux originally only sold his tiny houses in his native France but has now introduced these beautiful bijou homes to Ireland. Damien speaks to **West Cork People** about the benefits of this new type of home.

Thanks to its small size, the tiny house is vastly more affordable than a traditional house. The price varies, depending on your choice of materials, equipment and accommodation capacity, but ranges from €30,000 to €70,000.

“This freestanding home allows you to use your budget intelligently,” Damien says. “Lower energy bills, no property tax ... investing in a tiny house is the ideal solution to save on your daily costs.”

Sunflower offers a wide choice of turnkey or customisa-

ble tiny house models and will work with you to design a home that meets your particular needs.

Tiny houses allow you to simplify your life without giving up your creature comforts. Thermal and sound insulation keep you warm and at peace and, despite their bitesized floor area, generally between 10 and 40m² for the largest model, these tiny house have all the comforts of a traditional home – kitchen, living room, bedroom and bathroom. “The space is cleverly designed to remain practical on a daily basis,” says Damien. “Based on minimal-



ism it's about optimising your material possessions.”

These homes also offer a daily life that is closer to nature. Large or bay windows and sometimes a terrace or an opening roof are great assets for those who dream of such a lifestyle. “Despite its small size, many tiny house dwellers feel like they live in bigger spaces than their old home – the outside world! The tiny house encourages people to spend more time outdoors to fully enjoy their surroundings, while having their cocoon nearby.”

Many people are choosing tiny houses for another reason, they are a simple, no planning required alternative to an extension when extra space is needed. “Whether it is because your family has grown too large for your existing home, you need some professional space to work or you want to take a proper home with you when you travel, our tiny houses are a dream solution,” Damien promises.

Call Sunflower Tiny Houses on 083 818 9301 to see if a tiny home is right for you.



Pulling the plug on charger clutter

Reducing electronic waste and making life easier for consumers are just two of the reasons to introduce a common charger in the EU. This is according to Ireland South MEP Deirdre Clune who has welcomed news that the European Commission is proposing the introduction of a common charger.

MEP Clune said: “Mobile phone chargers vary according to the manufacturer and model and there are so many different

types of charges on the market. This is not just inconvenient for consumers but it is also harmful for the environment. A common phone charger would help consumers save money while also having a positive impact on the environment.

“This matter has been on the radar at the European Parliament for some time now and they have strongly supported the harmonisation of mobile phone and device chargers. I believe it is certainly

an area where improvements can be made which would make life easier for consumers but also help the environment.”

Electrical and electronic equipment continues to be one of the fastest growing waste streams in the EU. An average EU citizen produces approximately 16kg of e-waste per year.

The Parliament has requested that the proposed rules apply not only to smartphones but also to tablets and other mobile devices.



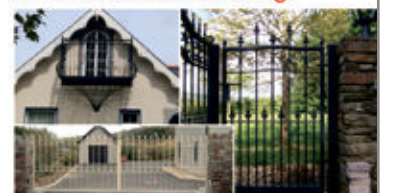
Parliament will now be working on this legislative proposal.

The Commission proposal to make USB-C connectors the standard charging port for all smartphones, tablets and other electronic devices sold across the bloc will now go for approval from the Member States and MEPs.

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Special Feature GREEN HOMES

Find green and every colour in between at Fusion in Skibbereen

Some eco-friendly choices are easy to spot, paper packaging over plastic for example, but there are less obvious ‘green’ products out there that are kind to the environment. Paint companies Farrow & Ball and Little Greene are actively pursuing a way of reducing our impact on the earth in a way that doesn’t compromise on quality. Both brands are available at Fusion Home Interiors in Skibbereen, a huge decor emporium that, much like the Tardis of Dr Who fame, is hidden behind a modest shop front.

“New customers are so surprised when they come down the stairs,” says Elaine Doolan, who co-owns Fusion with Ciarán Crowley. “I often hear a loud ‘wow’ as they realise the actual size of the shop.”

The shop’s loyal customer base has grown exponentially over the last 18 months, when Fusion delivery vans travelled the breadth of West Cork,

delivering the paints and wall-papers that kept DIYers sane in challenging times.

“Being stuck at home looking critically at the four walls motivated people to invest in high-end, quality decor... be it soft furnishings, paint, curtains or furniture,” says Elaine.

Now in-store customers are back in force and again being blown away by the sheer range of colours, patterns and

materials on display, and by the experienced advice that comes with them. “Smart home technology is the way forward for window treatments,” Elaine relates. “That includes both hardwired and battery-operated blinds and curtain rails.

Hundreds of fabric samples for bespoke made-to-measure curtains and blinds hang around the walls, with hundreds more available in sample books. It would be overwhelming were it not for the staff’s intimate knowledge of their stock.

“We love when a customer comes in with a vision, even better if they have some images that they have been inspired by. From traditional to contemporary fabrics we can put our hand to a print that ties in with that theme, or a colour scheme to bring that vision to life.”

Elaine is especially excited by customers with daring tastes. “I love colour and bold prints so when a customer shares that passion it’s brilliant. Because we fit the curtains or blinds, we get to see the final product in-situ and there’s nothing better.”

The big news from Fusion this autumn is that Farrow & Ball paints are now tinted in store, rather than ordered from the UK. “It’s a huge development for us,” Ciarán explains. “You can walk out the door with your paint in hand rather than waiting for an order to come in. We now have nine mixing units here so all our paint ranges are custom-made, available in every colour and for every application.”

“The lads are like pharmacists when it comes to the technicalities of paint products and what should be used where – be it for a residential or commercial project.

Ciarán is delighted to see a trend towards more environmentally friendly products, from Farrow & Ball and Little Greene especially.

“The entire Farrow & Ball range is water based, with rich,



Fusion Home Interiors owners Elaine Doolan and Ciarán Crowley



Fusion is now tinting all its Farrow & Ball paints instore.

responsibly sourced pigments. Little Greene’s oil based paints have been reformulated using sustainable vegetable oils, without compromising on quality or longevity.

“Both brands are not only classed as low VOC content but in reality are virtually zero.”

VOCs (Volatile Organic Compounds) are the culprits behind the strong smell of some traditional paints, a result of pollutants being released into the atmosphere as the paint dries. By contrast, low odour finishes don’t release any nasty fumes, giving you a product that’s safe to breathe, comfortable to apply

and live with, and kinder to the environment.

Both brands are also cruelty free because they are never tested on animals, and Farrow & Ball’s most commonly used finishes are also vegan-friendly, containing no animal-derived ingredients at all.

Finally both company’s wall-papers come from certificated sustainable forests, are printed with eco-friendly ingredients, and end up as a beautiful, durable, and 100 per cent recyclable product.

The new Farrow & Ball tinting facility is just another feather in Fusion’s cap. This

store has become a destination in West Cork and is well worth a special visit to Skibbereen. They deliver all products nationwide and provide a free measuring service for window dressings.

Fusion also offers a free interior design service with Lorraine Farrelly on Fridays from 12-3pm when you can get some more tips and ideas for transforming your own space.

Call in to find some inspiration for your next home renovation project.

www.fusionhome.ie

Special Feature GREEN HOMES

Revenue launches 2022 Local Property Tax (LPT) campaign

Revenue will contact over 1.4 million property owners directly in the coming weeks to explain the three things they need to do to meet their LPT obligations for 2022:

1. Determine the market value of their property as at November 1, 2021
2. Submit their LPT Return including their valuation by November 7, 2021
3. Pay or make arrangements to pay their LPT Charge for 2022.

The next valuation date for LPT is November 1, 2021. Residential property owners, whose properties were liable to LPT from 2013 to 2021, have paid LPT based on their self-assessed valuations at 1 May 2013. The new self-assessed valuation on November 1, 2021 will determine the LPT to be paid each year from 2022 to 2025.

These obligations apply for all residential properties, including vacant properties, properties

that were not liable to LPT from 2013 to 2021, and properties not yet registered with Revenue for LPT.

As LPT is a self-assessed tax, the first step that property owners should take is to determine the market value of their residential property. An interactive valuation tool and detailed guidance have been provided on Revenue's website for property owners to help them to meet their LPT obligations for 2022. The interactive valuation tool will assist property owners with their self-assessment by providing an estimated average valuation band for residential properties in each area in a map format. Property owners can find their own area on the map by simply entering the property's Eircode or location.

Revenue has reminded property owners that the interactive valuation tool is a guide only. They should consider the specifics of their property and assess whether its value falls within the average valuation band for

their area. Revenue has also included guidance regarding the different information sources that property owners can use to self-assess their property's value.

Ms Katie Clair, Principal Officer in Revenue's Local Property Tax Branch, has encouraged property owners to start the self-assessment of their property's value by using the interactive valuation tool: "I recommend that all residential property owners refer to Revenue's online guidance, particularly if they are determining their property's value for LPT for the first time. This includes those who purchased their property since 2013, as well as owners of properties that were not liable from 2013 to 2021 but are liable from 2022 onwards. Once property owners have assessed the market value of their property, they should submit the LPT Return and confirm a payment arrangement for 2022 by November 7, 2021. The easiest and quickest way to

do this is online via www.revenue.ie. It is mandatory to submit online returns for properties valued at greater than €1.75m or where property owners are liable for LPT on more than one property."

Ms. Clair added that "Some residential properties are not currently registered with Revenue, for example, because their owners built their property in the period since 2013. However, a property becomes liable for LPT for the next valuation period from 2022 to 2025, as long as it is a residential property on November 1, 2021. It is important that these newly-liable property owners register their property at www.revenue.ie and complete the same three step process. Additionally, owners of vacant properties are required to submit their LPT Return, including their valuation, by November 7, 2021."



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Special Feature GREEN HOMES

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The Better Energy Homes scheme gives grants to homeowners to improve energy efficiency in their homes. Landlords and owners of more than one property can also apply for a grant under the scheme. If you have previously availed of a grant under the scheme, you can reapply to get additional work done. The Better Energy Homes scheme is administered by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI). The following are some common queries which the **Citizens Information Service** receive in relation to the scheme:

What work is covered by the Better Energy Homes Scheme?

You can get a grant or the following energy-saving and renewable solutions:

- Attic insulation
- Wall insulation - including cavity wall, internal dry lining and external insulation
- Heating controls upgrade
- Solar thermal solutions
- Heat pump systems
- A Building Energy Rating (BER) after the energy-saving work is carried out (you must get this BER to qualify for the grant)

How does one qualify for the scheme?

You must have grant approval before you buy materials or start any grant-funded work. If you have already started work, you will not be eligible for a grant. Once approved, you have six months to get the works done and claim the grant.

To qualify for a grant you must:

- Be the owner of a dwelling built before 2006 for insulation and heating control systems
- Be the owner of a dwelling built before 2011 for heat pump and solar thermal grants
- Use a contractor from SEAI's registered list
- Use newly fitted materials and products
- Have work done that complies with the required standards
- Have a BER carried out after the works are done
- Use a BER assessor from SEAI's National Register

You may not get a grant if:

- The measures do not comply with the required standards
- The relevant measure (the work on your home) was already incentivised under another grant programme

How do I find out if my home would benefit from energy-saving work?

You can get a Building Energy Rating (BER) done in advance of any works. A BER assessor will energy rate your home and provide you with an advisory report, which will help identify areas that could be improved to increase the energy efficiency of your home.

Do I need to get planning permission for carrying out the work?

In general, you do not need planning permission for most works carried out under this scheme, though you may require it for external wall insulation. This depends on whether the insulation will affect the

external appearance of the building or whether the building is a protected structure. Contact your local authority to check if you need planning permission.

How do I choose a contractor to carry out the work?

The SEAI have a list of registered contractors. Before choosing a contractor from the registered list, the SEAI recommends that you:

- Ask friends, family, and neighbours who have done building work recently, for advice and recommendations on contractors
- Get a number of quotes and compare the offers
- Request and check the contractor's references
- Formalise the relationship with your chosen contractor by drawing up a contract detailing the required works, prices, timescales, payment terms and warranties

measure: €100

A BER assessment after works are done (maximum of 1 grant payable per home): €50

If the cost of the work (including VAT) is less than the maximum grant amount, you will get a grant for the actual cost of the work.

Bonuses: A bonus of €300 is payable when you have completed three qualifying measures and a further €100 is payable on completion of a fourth measure. The full grant history of your home is taken into account when calculating whether a bonus is due. A BER does not count as a measure when calculating entitlement to a bonus.

How do I apply for the scheme?

You can apply online or by post. If applying by post, you should contact the SEAI or your local Citizens Information Centre



When is the grant paid?

Grants are paid after the work is completed and you have paid your contractor.

How much of a grant will I receive?

The following list shows the maximum levels of grant and the bonuses payable for extra measures.

- Attic insulation: €400
- Cavity wall insulation: €400
- Wall insulation (internal dry lining):
 - Apartment (any) or mid-terrace house €1,600
 - Semi-detached or end of terrace house €2,200
 - Detached house €2,400
- Wall insulation (external)
 - Apartment (any) or mid-terrace house €2,750
 - Semi-detached or end of terrace house €4,500
 - Detached house €6,000
- Heat pump systems:
 - Air to water €3,500
 - Ground source to water €3,500
 - Exhaust air to water €3,500
 - Water to water €3,500
 - Air to air €600
- Heating controls upgrade: €700
- Solar water heating: €1,200
- Bonus payment after 3rd measure: €300
- Bonus payment after 4th

to get an application form.

Alternatively you can download the application form at www.seai.ie and send it back to SEAI. You need the MPRN number from your electricity bill and the name of your SEAI-registered contractor.

Online applications get an immediate response. Postal applications should get a response within five working days.

SEAI publishes a detailed guide to help with your application which you can download or contact your local Citizens Information Centre and they will send you one by post

What is the address for SEAI?

Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
P.O. Box 119
Caherciveen, Kerry
Tel: 01 808 2100
Email: info@betterenergyhomes.ie

If you need further information about any of the issues raised here or you have other questions, you can call a member of the local Citizens Information Service in West Cork on 0818 07 8390. They will be happy to assist you and if necessary arrange an appointment for you.

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Special Feature GREEN HOMES

Bank of Ireland rewards home owners and businesses for 'going green'

Bank of Ireland is rewarding home owners and businesses for 'going green' by making €1 billion of green loans available over the coming year. The Bank's Sustainable Finance Fund will encourage and reward energy-efficient homes, retrofitting of older properties, and SME and agri investment in energy efficiency. Anyone building or buying a property with a high level of energy efficiency can now apply for Bank of Ireland's Green Mortgage fixed interest rate, which has been extended initially to June 30, 2022.

Green Mortgage Fixed Interest Rate Extended Key points of the Green Mortgage Fixed Interest Rate:

- 0.2 per cent rate discount off the customer's chosen Fixed Rate option – for the initial fixed rate period on new borrowing only. At the end of the initial fixed rate period customers will be able to choose from our range of normal fixed interest rate options available to existing customers at that stage or will roll to a standard variable rate.
- Customer MUST provide a BER certificate for the property showing a rating of B3 or better prior to final drawdown.



- Available for (1) property purchases including Buy to Let, and for (2) Self-Builds and (3) Equity Release loans as well as (4) Buy-to-Renovate loans where the property will achieve a BER rating B3 or better on completion of works.
- The Green Mortgage Interest Rate is NOT available for switcher loans (a Switcher may apply separately for a Green Mortgage Interest rate on an Equity Release for improvements to achieve a

BER B rating and the Green Mortgage Interest Rate will apply to the Equity Release loan only).

Customer Eligibility

1. Applicants for the Green Mortgage Interest Rate must provide evidence supporting the energy rating for the property as follows:

- a. New builds: An B rated BER cert prior to drawdown
- b. Self-builds, Buy-Renovates and Equity Release funded works that are subject to planning permission: a BER certificate showing that the property is rated B (i.e. B3 or better) prior to final drawdown as part of the planning process
- c. Where Planning Permission is not required: Applicant must provide a specification from their builder or contractor of the works being carried out and confirmation that the property will achieve a BER rating B as a result of the works.
- d. Switcher mortgages which have a BER rating of B3 or better.

Terms and Conditions apply Bank of Ireland Mortgage Bank trading as Bank of Ireland Mortgages is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland.



CONTACT US TODAY ABOUT OUR GREEN MORTGAGE FIXED INTEREST RATE



Siobhan O'Sullivan

087 9921007

Siobhan.O'Sullivan@boi.com



Donal Casey

087 6213880

Donal_p.Casey@boi.com



Jerry Shorten

087 3484789

Jerry.Shorten@boi.com



Maire McCarthy

087 2354353

Maire.McCarthy@boi.com

Warning: If you do not keep up your repayments you may lose your home.

Warning: If you do not meet the repayments on your loan, your account will go into arrears. This may affect your credit rating, which may limit your ability to access credit in the future.

Bank of Ireland Mortgage Bank trading as Bank of Ireland Mortgages and The Mortgage Store is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland.

Clear out the cupboards with a clear conscience

West Cork households are being urged to bring their electrical and electronic waste to their local WEEE collection point to help the county meet recycling targets, which have increased since the first lockdown last year.

At recycling centres, all household items with a plug or a battery are accepted free of charge, including old washing machines, TVs, toasters and kettles, electronic tools and toys, cables, IT equipment, mobile phones, remote controls and even watches.

"Across Ireland we are buying more electrical goods than ever – with the annual tonnage on the market rising from 15kg a head in 2016 to 21kg a head last year," said WEEE Ireland CEO, Leo Donovan.

"Shopping statistics during

the pandemic showed a surge in spending on new electrical devices like mobile phones, computers, small kitchen appliances and white goods. With old items still lying around many households, we want to offer the opportunity to recycle these for free."

Last year, a surge in lockdown spring cleaning saw 6,036 tonnes of electrical waste collected in Cork by the country's largest recycling scheme, despite Covid-19 and travel restrictions.

A total of 11kg of e-waste was recycled per person in Cork last year – exceeding both the 2019 collection rate of 10.2kg, and the 2020 national average of 10.9kg per person.

However, the county's e-waste target for 2021 has increased to 13kg per person to reflect yearly increases in

electrical goods consumption, accelerated by Covid-19.

"84 per cent of all material that we collect is recovered for use again in manufacturing through both indigenous operators and specialist processors in Europe," said Mr Donovan.

"Most end-of-life products contain metals and minerals in higher concentrations than primary resources. These stock of resources are the urban mines of the future, so our recycling efforts can have a significant impact on the environment."

In 2020, the equivalent of 225,182 tonnes of CO2 emissions were avoided by recycling e-waste through the WEEE Ireland Scheme as opposed to landfilling. That is the equivalent of the annual carbon consumption of 4,504 hectares of trees.

WEEE Ireland accounts for

over two-thirds of all national waste electrical and electronics collection activity on behalf of 1,189 producer members.



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50 years experience

Special Feature GREEN HOMES

Glentree ensures visitors have somewhere to sit this winter

A new big ticket furniture purchase is always exciting and buyers count down the days till it arrives in their living space. In ‘normal times’ a high-end sofa, for example, may take a month or two from the time you ordered it and that’s to be expected for something that is being custom made to your specifications.

Although the world is starting to return to normality following Covid-19, the furniture industry is still facing challenges when it comes to supply chains. Paul and Evelyn Di Rollo of Glentree Furniture in Dunmanway sat down with West Cork People to explain how they are navigating those challenges and how a pre-pandemic decision to build a new 10,000 sq ft warehouse is now paying huge dividends when it comes to meeting customer demand.

Lockdowns, followed by huge surges in sales, kept all business owners on their toes in 2020, but for the furniture industry the supply challenges of 2021 have in some ways proved more vexing. Long lockdowns in the world’s leading hardwood growing countries, such as Vietnam, have led to longer than usual delivery lead times on all types of furniture, something that is frustrating for both shops and customers.

“As well as disruption to wood supply, furniture makers

have also faced shortages of fine fabrics from countries like Spain, which has had numerous local lockdowns,” Paul explains.

Autumn is when orders normally pour into Glentree for Christmas, traditionally a time when a new sofa is unveiled in Irish homes. Shoppers normally try out a shop-floor model before ordering it in their preferred material but “Unfortunately, that’s just not realistic this year,” says Paul. “We pride ourselves on our reputation with customers and I won’t disap-

point a customer with a false promise when delays are being experienced the world over.”

Instead Paul and Evelyn are counting their blessings that their decision to expand their showroom to 16,000 sq ft (not including an outdoor furniture area!) and build a new 10,000 sq ft warehouse allowed them to build up stock before the global shortages really took hold.

Glentree’s enormous showroom is divided into seating, dining, flooring, bedroom and outdoor living.

“We have a huge selection of furniture in all departments that is ready for immediate delivery,” Evelyn confirms. “It takes the stress out of it for the customer, knowing that what they choose is guaranteed to be in their sitting room next week.”

Paul also explains how the company behind one of their most popular lines, Stressless Scandinavian recliner chairs and sofas, has come up with a ‘quick ship’ option. “Whilst available in a range of colours and styles, Stressless cleverly assessed what are its most loved designs, and concentrated on keeping stocks high of those... the odds are that the chair you choose will be in that category!”

Every style of interiors from traditional to contemporary is represented in the showroom, with room groupings that allow you to really imagine how the furniture will look in your own property.

Some styles are perennial because they work in every type of setting. In seating that is the fabric Michigan corner sofa, versatile enough to fit the whole family, and the Fendi, a Danish designed modular suite available in fabric or leather and in many sizes that can be arranged to suit any space. It comes with a movable headrest and a very



Fendi Corner Suite



Michigan Corner Sofa with Swivel Chair



Milano Suite

discreet optional reclining function. New to Glentree last year the Fendi has proved so popular that it has become a staple for the store.

Particularly loved in bedroom furniture is a wood frame bed that comes in oak, cream oak or painted and would fit into a contemporary or cottage style bedroom. Trying out beds and mattresses is essential to choose the right fit for you and again

the bedroom department has been thoughtfully laid out with chic accessories bringing the displays to life.

Luckily for anybody suffering from a bad back there are currently no problems with supplies of mattresses – Glentree stocks a wide range of quality mattresses with high tech features such as cooling gel, latex and memory foam, including two Irish-made brands,

Respa and The Natural Sleep Company.

With such a wide choice in sofas, beds, dining and flooring in stock – coupled with knowledgeable and honest service, few leave Glentree without finding exactly what they came for.

Don’t trust your sofa to fate this Christmas, visit Glentree for a guaranteed delivery date.



GREEN HOMES

New legislation will clarify law on property rights for landowners in Cork

Fine Gael Senator Tim Lombard has welcomed the fact that the Government has agreed to enact a Bill which will clarify the law on how some property rights, such as rights of way, are validated and registered, providing certainty for landowners in County Cork.

Senator Lombard said, "New rules on registering easements, rights which allow the use of someone else's property for a specific purpose, such as a right of way, were due to come into effect at the end of November."

"However, from speaking with constituents, I know that this is an issue many landowners across Cork have been increasingly worried about due to the fact that questions remain regarding the details of the new rules."

"Fine Gael wants to provide certainty and assurance to landowners in by removing the upcoming deadline and allowing more time for consultation with key stakeholders to create a long-term and viable solution for all. My colleague in Fine Gael, Minister Heather Humphreys will ensure this is what happens."

"The new changes cannot take place while uncertainty and concerns remain. Questions still exist surrounding the period of time required to make a land claim based on long use, as well as whether applicants have to give up all other potential claims when applying directly to the Property Registration Authority (PRA)."

"I want to thank Minister Humphreys for acting quickly on this issue by seeking and

receiving Cabinet approval for this amending Bill. I know this week's announcement will come as a great relief for many people who have been worried about the impending deadline."

Minister Humphreys said, "The Bill I brought to Cabinet will remove the upcoming November 30 deadline, meaning that the changes which were due to take effect from December 1 will not occur."

"I believe it is important to provide reassurance to all of those affected by this significant issue. I will be engaging with stakeholders over the coming weeks and months to put a solution in place that ensures certainty and fairness for landowners," concluded Minister Humphreys.

Meet the Agent

Following the release of their new promotional video across their social media channels, highlighting their business and the attraction of West Cork, West Cork People catches up with the team at Charles McCarthy Estate Agents in Skibbereen for our Meet the Agent interview series.

Why choose Charles McCarthy Estate Agents?

We have been a part of the local community for generations, celebrating 50 years in business in 2018. We have extensive knowledge and experience with the West Cork property market and we strive to do our utmost for our clients. It's about assisting people on their journey whether buying or selling.

We are a one-stop shop for all your property needs. We handle all types of property – residential, agricultural and commercial, from new houses to period country homes, coastal holiday homes to townhouses, waterfront hideaways to agricultural holdings. We are also registered valuers and on a number of bank panels for mortgage valuations.

What would you say is your biggest selling point?

We pride ourselves on our marketing and global reach and put a lot of focus on that side of our business, growing our social media platforms and online presence and regularly looking for new methods and opportunities to build on that.

One such idea was our recent promotional video, shot and edited by the wonderful Wombat Media, including some

superb aerial footage of West Cork from Oakwood Aerial Photography. We wanted to use our platforms to introduce our team and give insight into what we do while also promoting the beautiful location of West Cork.

Our Instagram and Facebook pages have almost 6,000 followers between them and we consistently work on our content to ensure it remains engaging and promotes not only our business but the lifestyle and attractions of West Cork.

One of our most popular weekly posts is 'Feature Friday' where we mention a local business each week, ranging from shops and restaurants to entertainment venues and everything in between, highlighting all the best things about living in West Cork. We truly believe that when selling a property here in West Cork, you are not only selling a house, you are selling a lifestyle.

What are the biggest mistakes you see people making when selling their home?

A common thing we see is the failure to get the necessary paperwork in order before going to market, such as title deeds, planning/building regs, boundary checks to name a few. If you have decided to

sell your property, along with talking to an agent, you should also talk with your solicitor. Having these matters in order before listing the property on the market gives the best chance for a smooth sales transaction and efficiently drives the sales process forward.

The other key factor for successful marketing of a property is presentation. First impressions are key and with more people relying on online details to give them as much sense of the property as possible prior to visiting in person, presentation in photos is very important. Having the rooms free of clutter and excessive personal items is advisable. When potential buyers look at a property, they will want to envisage themselves living in that space. A well-presented tidy home makes this much easier.

If you want to find out more about Charles McCarthy Estate Agents or check out their latest video, you can find them on Instagram @charles.mccarthy, west.cork and facebook @ Charles McCarthy Estate Agents or visit their website www.charlesmccarthy.com for further contact information.




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GREEN HOMES

Meet the Agent

Pat Maguire
Pat Maguire Properties

When and why did you get into the industry?

I completed a night course in 1998 in Estate Agency in CIT and I started work as an auctioneer in Skibbereen in 1999.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

The variety in my work is fantastic. I get to travel all over West Cork, meet interesting people and get to see all types of wonderful properties.

Why should I choose you as my estate agent?

I think my experience as an estate agent in West Cork for over 20 years is our greatest attribute. Over that time we have listed over 1,000 properties, met many thousands of people and encountered every possible scenario. This experience is

invaluable in selling property today.

Have needs changed as a result of the pandemic...from your experience what are buyers now looking for in a property in West Cork?

Yes! More and more people are looking at moving to West Cork. This is because people can work from home due to high quality broadband. I also believe the quality of life in our towns and villages is unique and rewarding and very sought after.

What is the most unusual/special property that you have sold?

I recall selling an old tin shed at Kilcoe Harbour. It was an old miner's shed sat on a tiny plot adjacent the shore. It generated huge interest and has since been converted to a beautiful water-side studio home.

What is the biggest mistake you see people making when selling their home?

The most important thing to do when you decide to put your property on the market is to engage with your estate agent, solicitor and engineer. This advance preparation can save time and stress later. Also it is so important to present your property as pleasing as possible for viewings.

What is your outlook of the property market for 2022?

There continues to be a limited supply of houses available for sale. This will continue for several years unfortunately as new houses need to be built at a faster rate. Demand will probably slow down a little from the peak of 2021. This would mean that house prices will continue to rise into 2022 but at a slower rate.

Irish forestry industry can supply enough wood to build over 44,000 new homes per annum

A Coillte commissioned RED C poll reveals nine out of ten Irish adults don't know the Irish forest industry produces enough wood to build over 44,000 homes per annum.

"We think the 44,000 homes is a conservative estimate but is well in excess of the 33,000 annual homes the government's Housing for All Plan says is required each year from 2021 to 2030 to keep up with demand," said Mark Carlin, managing director, Coillte Forest.

Carlin added that Ireland is self-sufficient in providing a wide range of construction timber unlike the UK, which imports most of its wood and has done for many decades.

"Ireland is one of the best places in the world to grow trees due to its temperate climate and fertile soils. Softwoods or conifers typically grow twice as fast here as in Europe" he said.

Irish grown wood helps support a vibrant domestic forestry sector which provides 12,000 jobs across rural Ireland and contributes €2.3bn to the economy annually.

Coillte's forests supply wood, a renewable and environmentally friendly construction product. For every tree harvested, three new trees are planted in its place, to start the cycle



over again – making wood a truly sustainable and renewable product.

"Many people probably think of oak floors, teak doors or mahogany furniture when they think of wood being used in their homes," said Carlin. "What they probably don't realise is Irish conifer trees like pine, spruce and fir trees are the most commonly used wood for roofs, rafters and joists in the walls and floors," he said. "About 80 per cent of global demand for wood is for coniferous trees due to the wide range of products they produce

and their ease of use. The Irish market is no different. The vast majority of modern new homes use a significant amount of Irish wood," he said.

Carlin added that wood from Irish forests is not only used in the construction of your home, but also provides a wide range of products such as fencing for our farms, decking for gardens, MDF for furniture and pallets for transporting our goods."

Coillte is the largest forest owner in Ireland on behalf of the nation with over 440,000 hectares or over one million acres of forests and lands.

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Special Feature GREEN HOMES

Clonakilty couple overcome challenges brought by soaring costs

With four children (two under the age of two) and a house renovation that has faced the challenge of a pandemic, the past few years have been a bit of a rollercoaster for Clodagh Fitzpatrick and Luke Barrett. Fortunately the Clonakilty couple's local Credit Union was on hand to offer help when their renovation went over budget due to soaring material costs and they are now back on track with their dream home.



Clodagh and Luke have been renting a house in Clonakilty for the past eight years and first started thinking about owning their own home in 2016.

Located on a half acre site on the Clonakilty side of Ring village, the house is a split level bungalow with four bedrooms and an open plan dining/kitchen area.

"We wanted a house that would suit our family's needs now, for example with a playroom that in years to come can be converted easily into a bedroom or home office and so on," explains Clodagh. "I wanted a large utility room, as the house we are renting doesn't have one and muddy boots and wellies end up on the kitchen floor and we both wanted to be

able to see the view of the bay as much as possible, so we put lots of windows in the living area."

A self-employed carpenter who works in general maintenance, Luke is hands-on in the build and has also had fantastic support from family and friends working in the industry. With no shortage of quality tradesmen in Clonakilty and the surrounding areas, the couple said they had no difficulty sourcing people to do the work.

"While we did a lot of research ourselves, many of the materials and products we went for would have been suggested to us by other tradespeople and friends who have built before us," says Clodagh.

The house will be airtight with a heat recovery system and insulated to the highest standard. Luke and Clodagh decided to go with underfloor heating, which will run off an air source heat pump. "it should cost very little to heat," says Clodagh. They will also be boring their own well.

Everything was going nicely to plan until Covid hit! "It's been extremely time-consuming and more stressful than we initially thought and also has

been a massive learning curve," says Clodagh. "Everything stopped for a few months during the lockdowns and the rising cost of materials and labour also saw our budget dwindling sooner than expected."

Luke approached the Clonakilty Credit Union to enquire about a Home Improvement Loan, as the couple felt that with a growing family it would

be very difficult to get anything from the banks "Both myself and Luke have been dealing with the Credit Union for years," says Clodagh "and they could not have been more helpful on this occasion. Sinead talked us through our options and it really was a hassle/stress-free experience. We were able to email any documents/information they required and were approved our

joint Home Improvement Loan of €70,000 within a few days. It's a huge help in helping us complete our forever home."

The renovation is still ongoing and Clodagh doesn't anticipate it being completely finished before they actually do move in... but whatever about the interior finish, they can't wait to be finally looking out at that view of Clonakilty Bay every day.

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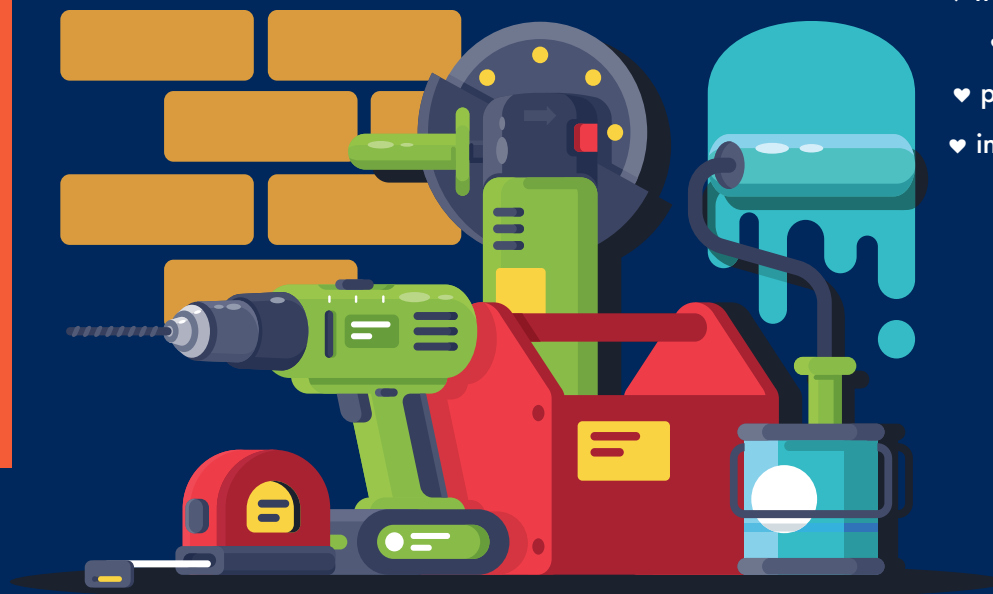
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Special Feature GREEN HOMES

Dressing up your windows

Dressing a bare window can be a daunting experience especially when faced with the wide range of window treatments out there. However, with the help of some professional expertise and a good range of styles to choose from, you can entirely change the look and feel of a room.

The past 18 months in and out of lockdowns, being forced to stay at home has motivated us all to look at our homes through new eyes. Proprietor of Perrott's Home Living Furniture Store in Clonakilty, Trevor Perrott says that he is seeing a real shift towards prioritising comfort and colour in the home. "I feel that one of the real positives that has come out of the past 18 months has been a recognition of how important our living space really is to our overall wellbeing and



health," he says. "People are looking to create luxurious and calming spaces; and colour and nature now seem to be prerequisites when it comes to designing a room in your home."

While one of the less than positive outcomes of this pandemic has been the rise in shipping costs and supply issues, which are now starting

to have a knock-on effect on the cost of bulkier items in the interiors business, fabric hasn't yet felt the bite. Trevor's advice to homeowners is to invest in curtains and blinds now while the price is good and supply isn't an issue.

Depending on the room you are dressing, curtains and blinds have different roles to play in



blackout, wooden, vertical or velux.

Once you have decided on the function of the blind, next comes the fun part – choosing the pattern and fabric. Perrott's has just refurbished the store interior and now boasts a curtain and blind department that will leave you spoilt for choice; but don't worry, Trevor is always on hand to offer individual attention and advice, so whatever your budget and style, you'll find the right solution for your home.

With the trend towards vibrant and cheerful prints with a penchant for patterns incorporating flora and fauna capturing the spirit of the outdoors, one of the newest ranges at Perrott's, 'Voyage Maison', certainly matches this criteria. The French brand boasts a beautiful selection of handcrafted fabrics, wallpapers, soft furnishings and accessories – with stunning prints.

While pattern is a great way of adding interest to your home and can really create a striking impression, do keep in mind that you will have to live with the design for quite a long time: Go with your gut; what you really like and what works with the overall design of your room, rather than following a trend. If the scene outside your window isn't that attractive, choose the scene you want to look at, and add beauty with a blind!

Well-known brands Prestigious Textiles, Tipperary Textiles, Ashley Wilde, ILIV, Studio G are all carried by Perrott's but watch this space because there are more really exciting names coming on board soon. New in store now and definitely one to drool over is Clarke and Clarke stylish bedlinen.

If you're considering getting blinds or curtains in time for Christmas, order now to avoid disappointment. All of the curtains and blinds and carpets at Perrott's are professionally measured and fitted for a perfect finish.

"Room by room, dressing your home is a wonderful journey," says Trevor. "And it's a journey we are delighted to accompany our customers on to help them turn a house into a home."

From carpets, curtains, blinds, bedding, lighting and accessories to sofas, beds, mattresses and dining and occasional furniture – Perrott's has a beautiful range of home interiors to style your house from.

Visit Perrott's Home Living (in the same building as J&T Tiles) in Clogheen Industrial Park, just off the Clonakilty Bypass. Phone 023 8850855. www.perrotts.ie.

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the home. While it's important for light to be blocked out in a bedroom for example – consider a luxurious heavy fabric in a curtain or a blackout blind – a room that is lived in during the day, such as the kitchen or sitting room, will benefit from light. In this case however privacy also needs to be taken into account before making a decision. Venetian blinds offer an elegant solution, particularly in an urban area where there is a lot of footfall directly outside the window, as the horizontal slats give privacy while allowing lots of natural light into the home. In a kitchen, keep it simple and fuss-free, taking into account that fabrics such as cotton and linen can rot, fade or shrink in moist environments. Choose a material that is waterproof, easy to clean and which won't be affected by condensation. The same applies when dressing a window in a bathroom. A pretty linen concertina blind over a kitchen sink or next to a shower won't stay pretty for very long!

While Perrott's has an excellent selection of readymade curtains in-store, ranging from €90 up in price, if you have a good budget to work with, opting for a bespoke curtain created by an experienced curtain maker will ensure that your curtains will be the optimal fit for your window and allows more flexibility when it comes to the choosing of material, pattern and style.

Perrott's is fortunate to have a curtain maker with over 40 years experience working with them, so a quality finish is assured. If the curtain is for a bedroom, a blackout lining will not only block out light and noise but in the likes of a cold, draughty cottage may also provide insulation. Curtains and blinds paired together can also work. While the blind provides privacy and light control, the curtains may soften the overall look and give a really luxurious finish. Again if budget is a concern, depending on the fabric, roller blinds can offer an inexpensive but effective way of dressing a window.

Perrott's has a huge range of blinds to choose from; roller,





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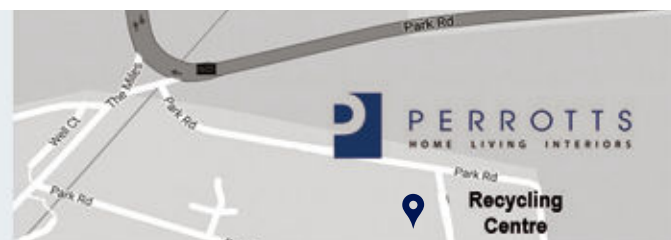


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Special Feature GREEN HOMES

At home with Emily Connell

Many of us are thinking more sustainably when it comes to the interior of our homes and what we gift others. But as well as quality and longevity, consumers are also looking for items with personality that give comfort and joy; things that they love, not just to look at, but also to touch and smell. There has never been a compromise between beauty and sustainability at Emily Connell's charming home wares shop, Chalk & Easel in Ballinspittle. It is a place to be inspired and feel creative, somewhere to acquire beautifully designed items for the home or clever gifts for others. Emily invites us into her home where she gives an insight into some of her favourite interiors finds and inspirations.

How would you describe your interiors taste?

Definitely eclectic. I buy what I love, it must make me happy to see, touch and use. I have always been drawn to natural materials and simple but effective design.

What is your favourite spot in your home and why...describe?

Sitting at our huge 200-year-old kitchen table. It's so solid and chunky. It would have once been beautifully French polished but we got it in a bit of a neglected state and chose to keep

it rustic so that we didn't have to worry about hot mugs and so on, which is great, as it also doubles as a stage for our four-year-old's impromptu performances.

Describe your favourite interiors items in your home and why you chose them?

My collection of what I call hyggemugs – handleless mugs and cups that feel so comforting with both hands wrapped around them while sipping hot coffee. I probably have one of every cup that I have ever sold in the shop.

Wool Blankets, they move around the house with me. None have a fixed abode and certainly none are solely for aesthetic reasons. Their purpose ranges from giving comforting hugs, providing a shoulder to cry on or feet warmer, and often tents for Elliott. They even come in a basket with me when I'm going to a friend's garden for a bbq or to the beach.

Low wattage lamps in every nook and cranny. Every single room in the house has at least four lamps and I rarely use the ceiling lamps. I believe every corner should have a light source.

Do you have a sentimental weakness or 'soft spot' for any particular item?

I've been called a basket case more than once! There's something about baskets that I'm drawn towards. But I won't admit to having too many yet...



there's always going to be more baskets.

Pet interiors/design hate?

I'm definitely not a fan of matching. I feel that the home is alive and growing and changing with needs; I think what we surround ourselves with should show who we are; I feel sometimes people have lost the ability to choose what they like and instead choose what might suit the look of a space, which is sad. I'd love for people to feel confident in choosing how to design a home for themselves based on what they're drawn to. That way the items become timeless and don't need to be replaced if trends change. I wonder if people are feeling differently about their interior choices in the past year, when it's just them using the space, have they become less formal, more cosy and so on?

have a function first. Form is also really important but should always take shape with the function in mind.

What are you inspired by when it comes to design?

I know it's trendy now but I have always been inspired by mid century and Scandinavian design. I have had the privilege of working for some amazing designers in Dublin, Arthur Duff and Greg Tisdall from Duff Tisdall and Mike Price from Inside; all of whom have imprinted upon me an appreciation for simplicity and timeless design. Proportions and line are the aesthetic qualities that govern me. Furniture should make us feel light and comfortable. Nothing should be difficult or uncomfortable to use. I think that if the attention to detail is put in at the design stage there's no need for frills and so on.

a Bare + Botanical electric diffuser with essential oils by La Bougie.

There is definitely going to be a beautiful rainbow check McNutts blanket making its way into the house this winter.

The best piece of design advice you've been given?

Imagination is observation...my now 94-year-old grandmother told me that when I said I wanted to study art. Clever lady!

Can you share a good piece of advice you have imparted to someone recently?

When it comes to buying items for the home I'm encouraging people not to be afraid of colour – we all need a little colour in our lives at the moment.

Is there anything missing from your home?

Actually, can I say nothing? I really can't think of anything... Right now people is probably the only thing missing!

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Have you splashed out on anything recently?

My biggest spend in the home this year was a record player for my husband. I'm also totally in denial about the fact that furniture I love from the shop sometimes just finds its way into my house...I never really know how it gets there!

Do you believe in the principle 'Form follows Function'?

Absolutely. I live by it, it's one of the most important factors when I'm buying for the shop also. Even last night at a pottery course I found it really difficult to come up with an idea for something to make if it didn't

Special Feature GREEN HOMES

The green green styles of home



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

Going with this month's theme of Green Homes, let's take a look at how the colour green can make us feel when used in interiors.

When you picture the colour green in your mind's eye, what do

you think of? I am transported into a forest and automatically start to feel calmer. In colour psychology, green is described as a peaceful yet energising colour. As the dominant colour in nature it makes us think of growth and abundance and may impact our thinking, our relationships and our physical health in a positive way.

Designers like myself often employ green in wall colours or accessories as a way to reduce stress but also improve focus – therefore it's a great choice for a home office or commercial office space but can be used in any part of the house.

Green is as varied as it is versatile, coming in a spectrum of light and dark shades with undertones ranging from neon yellow to soothing blue. If you would like to incorporate more green into your home here are some ideas:

Of course the obvious choice is to add green as a paint colour. If you fear green is too bold for a whole room, you can just use it on a feature wall; it pairs well with a wide variety of colours including neutrals like brown and grey. Make sure you pick the right shade for your space by considering which direction your room faces; greens with a blue undertone may be too cool for a north or east facing room so choose a warm earthy green with a yellow undertone. Farrow and Ball have some lovely greens – Sap Green, Green Smoke or Treron or see

Colourtrend's Sweet Caper for a lovely mossy green. When it comes to styling with furniture and accessories, introducing soft pastels and metallics can help to add a softness and beautiful contrast to green walls.

If you have wainscoting in your hallway add style with beautiful Colourtrend paints for panelling such as Standing Tall and Schoolroom Green. I suggest adding a neutral colour above so the panelling stand outs.

Make sure you pick the right shade for your space by considering which direction your room faces; greens with a blue undertone may be too cool for a north or east facing room so choose a warm earthy green with a yellow undertone.

Wallpaper is another fantastic way to create a focal point in a living room, kitchen or bedroom. Make a statement with a bold print or pattern; I love William Morris and Cole & Sons wallpapers, they always give a room the wow factor.

Green is also hugely fashionable as a paint choice for kitchen units – the most popular

shades at the moment are sage (warm) and forest (cool), which offer totally different looks. Another option is Colourtrend's Scullery Green for something crisp and fresh yet soft and easy to live with. Many kitchen designers are currently painting kitchen units and walls in the same colour for a bigger impact apparently!

If you have decided to go with a neutral kitchen you can still incorporate green with subway/metro tiles in your backsplash or perhaps bring it into a bathroom with Somer tiles for the floor or a Tara stacked glass tile for inside the shower.

To create a peaceful oasis in your bedroom why not cover a headboard in green velvet to add a sense of grandeur to this space. Speaking of velvet, a lot of people are afraid to go bold with their couch colour but a green or teal velvet couch, armchair, ottoman or pouffe will create an opulent look. Be it a couch or bed, simply adding a throw or cushions in multiple fabrics, shades and patterns is an easy way to achieve your green mission.

Finally, one can never have enough plants in a home; they not only freshen the air but also eliminate harmful toxins. Research was carried out by NASA revealing that houseplants can remove up to 87 per cent of air toxins in 24 hours... green and clean!

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Green inspiration from Tom Sheehys, Clonakilty and Bandon



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The garden is beginning to look a little woolly now that it's the end of September; the apples and pears are falling from the trees and the courgettes have slowed so much that they have become a valuable commodity again. Even the beans are beginning to be defeated with the drop in temperature, but to be honest we have eaten so many beans that it's time for a change. The pumpkins are dragging their feet a bit which, considering we had quite a lot of days over 18 degrees this summer, is strange, but no doubt they will have caught up by the end of next month. There has been enough rain for them to continue to grow.

We have a great crop of aubergines in the tunnel, which partner well with the ripe tomatoes. Both are technically fruits and members of the nightshade family and, as they generally grow in harmony with each other, they turn up together in a lot of recipes.

I have been making Caponata, a Sicilian dish, which is like a sweet and sour version of ratatouille. It's one of those recipes with lots of variations and secret family twists. Some recipes include raisins or sultanas and some peppers and courgettes. It's a very flexible recipe so use what you have and what you enjoy. I've added a pear from our ancient gnarly pear tree, which produces very hard fruit. It's not traditional but I think it's an interesting addition.

Caponata can be eaten warm with meat and fish, as a side vegetable, stirred through pasta or on bruschetta (toast rubbed with garlic and olive oil). It's one of these dishes that gets better, as it sits, so if you have time to make it ahead and can leave it for some hours, so much the better.

For this recipe you need to find yourself a beautiful bright



A FLAVOUR OF WEST CORK RECIPE

Karen Austin

aubergine that's nice and taut, avoid any that are soft, as they will have been picked some time ago.

Caponata

Ingredients:

- 1 aubergine
- 1 onion
- olive oil
- 3 stems celery
- 1 hard pear
- 3-4 large ripe tomatoes or 1 can tomatoes
- 2 tbs capers
- 3tbs golden sultanas
- 2-3 tbs pitted green olives
- 20g pine nuts
- 3tbs good red wine vinegar or balsamic
- 1-2 tsp sugar
- Handful fresh basil
- Salt and pepper

Method:

Dice the aubergine into 2cm cubes, toss with a little salt and put aside for 15 minutes.

Soak the capers in a small bowl of water to remove excess salt then drain.

Peel and chop the onion, heat a medium pot, add enough olive oil to cover the bottom and stir in the onion. Cook on a medium heat. Chop the celery small and add to the onions. Season with a



little salt then leave it to gently sizzle away without browning. Peel and chop the pear and stir in. Cook the vegetables for ten minutes, until they begin to melt down.

If you are using fresh tomatoes, cut them in half then grate them on the coarse side of the grater over a bowl. If you using a can, then roughly chop the tomatoes. Stir the tomatoes into the pot, increase the heat, and when it's bubbling away, turn to simmer. Season with a little salt and pepper.

Take a handful of the aubergines and squeeze them to remove excess water. Do this to all the aubergines. Put a frying pan onto the heat, add enough olive oil to just cover the bottom of the pan and add the aubergine. Toss well then cook over a high heat for a few minutes, until the aubergine takes a little colour. You might

need to do this in two batches. Add the fried aubergine into the pot then stir in the sultanas, olives, capers, vinegar and sugar. Leave to gently simmer for 15-20 minutes stirring occasionally.

Heat a small pan and gently toast the pine nuts then stir into the Caponata.

Chop the basil, add, then check the seasoning – it probably won't need any more salt as the olives and capers look after that department.

Take off the heat and leave to rest before eating.

Enjoy the last of the summer's harvest...we'll be eating cabbages soon!

Karen

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Call for over 70s to receive nutrition screening at flu vaccination

The introduction of nutritional screening as part of winter flu vaccination appointments for over 70s – has been recommended by nutrition experts.

In its 2022 Pre-Budget Submission the Irish Society for Clinical Nutrition and Metabolism (IrSPEN), supported by the Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute (INDI), has called for a pilot scheme integrating a five minute nutrition screening for over 70s as part of the winter jab appointment.

The submission also recom-

mends that nutrition screening, performed by care staff once per quarter, be extended to the 58,000 people in receipt of home care support.

IrSPEN Director Niamh Rice said the potential to identify patients before weight loss or changes to nutritional status is high, given that the prevalence of malnutrition is estimated to be at least 15 per cent in over 70s, and likely to be even higher in those presenting for flu vaccination.

"Screening, while waiting for vaccination or in the

15-minute wait post vaccination offers a low cost but highly cost-effective means of ensuring that patients at nutritional risk can be identified at a convenient point with the primary healthcare team, with minimal additional staffing cost other than training and initial piloting."

"Also, the 58,000 older people receiving home care support are likely to be particularly vulnerable to malnutrition with an estimated prevalence of up to 30 per cent. Integrating a five-minute nutritional

screening every three months into their care, has the potential to avert costly hospital admissions, decrease healthcare usage and improve quality of life and independence.

"The cost of treating a malnourished patient is three times that of a nourished patient, and so it makes economic sense to identify any risk of malnutrition and treat it early. There is potential for lower healthcare utilisation, reduced burden on our GP services as well as improving the well-being and independence of many people."

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West Cork schools encouraged to get involved with health homework programme



Laya healthcare has released the findings of a national research study examining the overall health and wellbeing of children aged 9-12 in Ireland. The study explores the status of the physical, nutritional, and mental health of children and ‘tweenagers’ and aims to highlight the areas where parents and families are most in need of support and information. The results

were revealed as Laya Healthcare launched Laya Super Troopers TV, the newest element in the established Super Troopers health homework programme, which sees five West Cork schools taking part so far this year. The 28-part series aims to provide families and children with fun activities and advice on how to promote a healthier lifestyle for all the family.

The series, which features stars such as Johnny Sexton, Anna Geary and Karl Henry alongside well-known personalities, sportspersons and health and wellness experts, focuses on nutrition, physical activity, and mental wellbeing. Hosted by child presenters MJ Kearin (12), Daniel Shields (14) and Juliet McKenna (12), the Laya Super Troopers TV episodes are available to

everyone and feature an array of fun activities, advice, and lots of challenges for children, parents and teachers to do themselves.

Endorsed by Healthy Ireland, the Laya Super Troopers programme has benefitted more than one million children since its launch six years ago and 600 schools will take part in the programme this academic year. The West Cork schools taking part are Abbeystrewry NS, Skibberreen; St. Matthias NS, Ballydehob Chaitigheirn NS, Beara; Kilcrohane NS, Bantry; and SN An Aird, Clonakilty. As Ireland’s first health homework initiative Laya Super Troopers encourages children and families to integrate achievable yet impactful activities into their daily lives.

The Research Findings

The results of the nationally representative study reveal the reality of the mental health and wellbeing of the children of the

nation. Of the parents surveyed, 68 per cent claim that their child experiences anxiety and can go through periods of low mood, with four per cent describing their child as very anxious and in need of reinforcement. This situation for families has been further compounded by COVID-19 as 40 per cent of parents report that pandemic has had a negative impact on their child’s mental health and 57 per cent of parents claim that their child gets upset more easily now than they did before its onset.

The importance of physical exercise and the positive impact it has on their child’s mental health is widely recognised by parents, with 87 per cent saying that their child is noticeably happier after taking part in physical activity. Despite this, the study findings reveal that more than half (58pc) of children aged between 9-12 are not getting the

recommended one hour of daily physical activity. This represents a steep decline in activity levels amongst children of the same age group from 2018 when 51 per cent of children were getting more than an hour of activity per day.

The parents surveyed recognised that nutrition and diet remains an area with an unmet need for parents in terms of support and information, as 47 per cent of parents claim that their children have access to too many unhealthy food options, and one third of parents saying that they would like to teach their children to cook but do not have the tools or information to know where to begin.

Families all across the country can get involved by going to layasupertroopers.ie to access the free Laya Super Troopers TV series or to register their schools.

HIQA and the Mental Health Commission want to hear from the public to help improve quality of care and support for children

The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) and the Mental Health Commission (MHC) are inviting children, young people, families, advocates, staff with experience of health and social care services, as well as the wider public, to help inform the development of new Draft Overarching National Standards for the Care and Support of Children using Health and Social Care Services.

Feedback received through this public consultation will help to ensure that the standards are meaningful to children and improve their experiences of health and social care services.

The overarching standards are underpinned by four principles (a children’s rights-based approach, safety and wellbeing, responsiveness and accountability) and can be used by all health and social care services including disability services, mental health services, acute services, GP and primary care services, and children’s social services to achieve child-centred care and support.

There are two main organisations responsible for organising health and social care services for children; the HSE and Tusla, in addition to private and voluntary service providers. These overarching standards will sup-

port organisations and services to work together in a co-ordinated and integrated way to improve the experience and outcomes of children and their families. The standards set out what outcomes a child should expect and what a service needs to do to achieve these outcomes.

Rachel Flynn, HIQA’s Director of Health Information and Standards said: “HIQA and the MHC recognise the complexities of health and social care services and the challenges faced by services and staff in driving and sustaining improvements in these settings. By providing a common framework for all health and

social care services working with children, these standards aim to promote clarity, consistency and continuity within and between services so that children experience integrated care and support and do not fall between services.”

It is envisioned that the draft overarching standards will also act as a framework for the development of more specific standards or guidance that describe in more detail how services can care for and support children in a particular context, if required in the future.

Rachel Flynn continued: “We recognise that while national

standards are an important component that will improve consistency and continuity of care and support for children, in order for the standards to be effective, national policy and structures to support inter-agency working will also be required.”

Gary Kiernan, Director of Regulation at the MHC said: “The MHC and HIQA welcome feedback on the draft standards. We hope that the standards will give a shared voice to the expectations of all those who use or work in services which support children. They will be an important driver for change and provide a common language to

describe what high-quality, safe and reliable services look like.”

Feedback on the standards can be provided by completing an online questionnaire or downloading the feedback form on www.hiqa.ie and emailing it to standards@hiqa.ie.

At the end of this consultation, comments will be collated and used to help inform the development of the Draft Overarching National Standards for the Care and Support of Children using Health and Social Care Services.

The deadline for receipt of submissions is 5pm on Thursday, October 28, 2021.

people Food, Health & Lifestyle

The 'E Word': What is ethnicity?

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 column, I continue to provide a 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?

One of the common reasons for DNA testing is to research ethnicity. It is a 'just for fun' element and some testers are not interested in other details. For those of Irish descent at home or abroad, 'proving Irishness' can be the sole objective. However, results are not straightforward and not necessarily what you might expect. In the last article, I mentioned that Y-DNA results indicate different arrival times in Ireland for the Donovan (original Neolithic hunter-gather settlers, who came and went as the Ice Age allowed) and Sullivan families (of Nordic origins). Autosomal (or 'atDNA') looks much closer to home, probably within the last 400 years or so.

Despite testing companies using the term 'ethnicity', which is often a driver for kit sales, most genetic genealogists, both professional and the citizen scientist, use the more appropriate term 'DNA origins'.

The E-word is full of social and political meaning. Historically and still, this term can easily be weaponised to the detriment of certain groups. It is best not used in the context of DNA testing. In anthropological terms, ethnicity describes specific people who come from a particular geographical area and share a common culture. They may not always be genetically distinct; tribal, or ethnic groups in the strictest sense of the word. This is not something easily applied to general 'ethnicity' results or indeed to the Irish people. Trying to understand ethnicity results is one of the most common questions I get.

Having tested and before you read your own ethnicity results, here are a few things to bear in mind:

Results are frequently revised and only reflect the modelling used by that company, i.e. if you share your raw DNA file between other testing companies or test with them, you will get different results. It is not an absolute. The other applicable e-word is 'estimated'. This area of science is still under development. Ideas and



THE DNA OF WEST CORK PEOPLE

Mark Grace

Mark Grace is a genetic genealogist and family historian at Ballynoe House, Ardfield, Co. Cork

results change.

Results depend on the size of the testing company's database and where their customer base comes from. Theoretically, the larger the database, the more consistent the result. Ancestry is regarded as potentially more accurate in this regard and seems to be so for Irish testers. If testers come from the same part of the world they will contain little representation of DNA origins from further afield which may be applicable to you.

As mentioned in the last article, due to the randomness of DNA inheritance, DNA from some of your more recent ancestors may not have been passed on to you and will not be reflected in your results.

It is important that these type of results are not taken seriously and certainly you should not get worried or upset if your result is unexpected or unexplained.

With so many people testing, there are enough statistics to show the chances of inheriting ancestral DNA. From third cousins onwards (sharing great great grandparents, or 2xGGPs in shorthand), you may not share any atDNA at all. Except for the direct paternal (Y-DNA) and direct maternal (mtDNA) lines as described in the last article, DNA from some of your 2xGGPs and 3xGGPs and so on will not have reached you. So, those family stories of a Chinese great great grandmother or African great great grandfather may not be reflected in your results. They might be seen in your parents or grandparents (who are closer to your DNA origins) or even a sibling, which is why having the widest possible participant dataset in your family, particularly involving older generations, helps.

For the Irish, there is also the consideration of what geneti-

cally defines 'Irishness'. The Irish have developed a clear cultural identity which is partly defined in the modern era by romantic historical notions Celtic culture, but genetically all Europeans are 'mongrels' from intermarriage, invasion, migration, and settlement. As all our DNA shows, modern humanity is undoubtedly of African origins and the ancestors who first settled in Europe had darker skin. So where do you draw the line with definitions on ethnicity? You can find a genetic point in time for any definition you choose. Recent studies have shown many Irish have close genetic connections to Scandinavians or the Basque people. It's complicated.

For many years my own 'ethnicity' contained the appropriate amount of Irish ancestry based on my family tree. A year ago, an update at Ancestry changed my Irish ancestry into 'Scottish' with zero Irish ancestry. Currently, FamilyTreeDNA has my Irish ethnicity at 22 per cent. MyHeritage has seven per cent 'Irish, Scottish and Welsh'. I have found specific pieces of my DNA connected to deep Irish roots, so I know this ought to be reflected in my results.

My wife's Irish 'ethnicity' will be recognised by many in West Cork. Her family tree, supported by local church records, goes back to the early part of the C19th, covering the last 200 years. She is defined by Ancestry as 100 per cent 'Munster'. More precisely 100 per cent 'West Cork and Southern Kerry'. Within the area of West Cork, Ancestry defines six specific regions including 'South Central Cork', 'South West Coast of Cork', and 'West Beara Peninsula'. How they do so is not clear. These do match her maternal and paternal roots.

My research finds clusters of matches relating to these specific areas. There are no signs of suspected earlier English, Scottish or Welsh West Cork settlers from some of her ancestral family names. MyHeritage has my wife defined as 92 per cent Irish and eight per cent Scandinavian. Could the latter have something to do with her many Sullivan families in Beara?

When you test for your own DNA origins, do not expect a clear answer.

For any questions that can be answered as part of future columns (genealogy@creativegraces.net). Follow the West Cork DNA projects based on my wife's DNA and that of her genetic cousins, on Facebook 'My Irish Genealogy and DNA'.

OUT & ABOUT IN WEST CORK

Send your photos (with captions) to info@westcorkpeople.ie



Sixth class girls in St Joseph's GNS Clonakilty cycled to school to celebrate National Bike Week.



At the launch of Positive Ageing Week 2021, Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr Gillian Coughlan was pictured with (L-R) Evie Finlay, HSE Singing for the Brain Committee, Mandy Bodenstein Bandon Age Friendly Town Group, Robert Wilmot Bandon Age Friendly Group, Noreen Walsh Bandon Day Care Centre/Age Friendly Town Group and Niall Healy Director of Services, Cork County Council and Chair of Cork County Age Friendly Alliance. Photo: John Beasley



Congratulations to four West Cork girls who won gold at the recent 800m Irish Coastal Rowing Championships. The Under 16 ladies from the Rosscarbery Rowing Club are Emma O'Regan, Caoimhe Calnan, Maeve Crowley, all from Ross, with Grace Hurley from Dunmanway.



HEALTH

Hannah Dare
Organico Bantry

It's finally feeling like the end of summer, time to get the socks out and start thinking about winter-proofing your family. This month we are focusing on immune support for kids, and we have put together five tips on keeping your kids well this winter.

Just like adults, children need a foundation of good nutrition to support normal immune function. Feeding your child a daily diet bursting with fresh (organic when possible) fruit and veg provides them with a high dose of essential vitamins and minerals and health-protective antioxidants.

But let's be real – no child's diet is 100 per cent perfect 100 per cent of the time (no need to put that pressure on yourself). So a daily immune support supplement acts like a safety net for the shortcomings of modern diet and lifestyle. In Organico we get great feedback from Kindervital from Salus Haus (particularly the Fruity Flavour), as well as Nature's Plus Animal Parade Gold Liquid. Both of these are food based multi-nutrients, which means they are easily absorbed (just like good food).

A healthy gut is essential for nutrient absorption and a strong immune system. In kids, a leaky gut or imbalanced microbiome can be the root cause of fatigue and foginess, inflammation, susceptibility to illness, skin problems, and allergies.

Fermented foods, with all their gut-loving probiotics, are wonderful for kids. Try full fat

yoghurt (sweetened at home with fresh fruit, fruit-sweetened jam, or raw honey), organic miso soup (so easy your kids could make their own), organic tofu and tempeh, sauerkraut and kimchi (you never know – many kids love it), and Hannah's kid-approved tamari seeds (check out our Blog on organico.ie for the recipe). These are all great options for getting probiotics into your child's daily diet.

Another amazing way to support your child's gut health is a kid-friendly probiotic. It's such a relief to know that no matter what they eat, they're getting a good foundation of a variety of gut-loving bacteria. We love Udo's Choice Probiotics, there's a child's one and an infant one, and both offer a wide range of healthy bacteria which is ideal for your child. We also get great feedback from people who take BioKult Infantis.

Although not always the easiest advice to follow, it's important to get sugar under control at a young age. Sugar causes inflammation throughout the body, contributes to immune dysfunction, and makes it so hard for a child to concentrate, especially when there's homework to be done.

If your child is craving a sweet treat after school, opt for something fibre-filled like fresh fruit or Rachel's recipes for naturally sweetened sprouted banana bread or vegan flapjacks

(check out our blog for the recipes).

Another way to promote your child's concentration and calm is to give them an omega-3 supplement to support brain development.

Research has shown that omega-3 fatty acids can improve learning ability, memory, attention, impulse control, and planning ability. I give my kids Omega 3 every day – they are old enough now to swallow a capsule but before I found the Nordic Naturals DHA Gummies went down well, as did Somega's amazing tasting Omega 3 (Somega are a company based in Bandon, they make excellent quality products).

It's so tempting, especially as the temps drop, to settle in front of a screen in a cosy, warm room anytime a bit of relaxation is called for (not just tempting to kids btw, to us too).

But a bit of time outdoors every day does the body (as well as the mind and spirit) a world of good. Many researchers espouse outdoor playtime as a way to help kids become smarter, happier, more creative, less anxious, and healthier.

Another benefit time outdoors offers is vitamin D absorption. Vitamin D impacts every cell in the body, and it's critically important for the proper function of the immune system.

Even with time outdoors as a daily habit, the HSE recommends, 'All babies in

Ireland aged from birth up to 12 months, both breastfed or formula fed, should be given a daily supplement of 5 micrograms (5µg) of Vitamin D.'

It's recommended that kids aged one-10-years-old take a daily vitamin D supplement of 10µg, not to exceed 50µg. From the age of 11, kids can take the same daily dose as adults (20-25µg). The Better You Vitamin D sprays are ideal, there is one for infants and one for kids and they taste great.

You don't need us to tell you that an under-slept kid is a cranky kid, but crankiness isn't the only side effect. Because it weakens the immune system, lack of shut-eye can cause a little one to become more susceptible to illness.

Sleep is so important because it's during the hours of rest that the body repairs and a little body undergoes developmental work.

Another great thing to try for your kids' sleep is a magnesium supplement. Just like in adults, magnesium works in kids to ease anxiety, promote rest, and support the normal sleep/wake cycle. Magnesium can either be taken as a supplement, or, if they have had enough of supplements, you can use the Better You Junior Magnesium Body Lotion. It smells great and the magnesium is absorbed straight through the skin.

If you have any questions about kids' health or immune support, get in touch with us (info@organico.ie). A lot of us have kids of our own and we can give you firsthand feedback on how well kids' products go over in real life.

We also have a Free Webinar coming up on October 7 with Marilyn Glenville, it's on Sleep (the full title is Feeling Tired All the Time) and you are most welcome to attend. To get the link to sign up, just make sure you are on our Newsletter list and look out for the registration link which we will send out in early October. Hope to see you there!



The Silver Bullet, Clon's chapter of Cycling Without Age, has plans to expand its services. Founded five years ago, the Bullet's trishaw, which has become a familiar feature in the town, is piloted by volunteers and gives free recreational lifts to the elderly and less abled.

Passengers are taken around town and out on the Inchydoney Wetlands Trail to enjoy good

conversation and the chatter of migratory waterfowl. Bubbles and laughter frequently appear, as pilots and passengers exchange stories and memories.

With the help of recently released government funding, the Silver Bullet Project now plans to upgrade its first trishaw and purchase several new vehicles including a second trishaw, two adult trikes, a hand pedal bike, and a parent/child tandem

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Clonakilty's Silver Bullet expands its accessible cycling services

bike. These vehicles will be made available by appointment, without charge. Volunteer pilots will continue to 'fly' the trishaws but will add instruction and assistance with the other accessibility bikes.

Persons wishing to purchase their own accessibility flyer will be offered consultation and assistance in achieving their dream.

The Silver Bullet Project

hopes to site a home base somewhere near the Clonakilty end of the Wetlands Trail to be staffed by volunteers from its mother organisation, the Clonakilty

Bicycle Circus. The plan is to offer quick bike safety checks at this location and administer the fleet of special bikes.

It is hoped the service will be up and running by next Spring.

people Food, Health & Lifestyle

Embracing impermanence



'To live in this world you must be able to do three things: to love what is mortal; to hold it against your bones knowing your own life depends on it; and, when the time comes to let it go, to let it go.'
From 'In Blackwater Woods' by Mary Oliver

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.

Today, as I write this, I notice that it is the Autumn solstice, a day when daylight and darkness are equal. The leaves are beginning to fall off the trees, gently reminding us that nothing lasts forever, it is nature's time to gently let go. Learning the skills to stay with our present-moment-experience can afford us a heightened awareness of the wonder, but also an awareness of the fragile quality of life itself. This observation of the changing natural world can be a real support to

us when learning to face into, possibly even embrace, impermanence. Even though part of the natural world; as humans, we often find it hard to let go of things in our lives, whether little things or bigger, more meaningful things. In a simple way, we might even notice whether we found it hard recently to let go of Summer and face into Autumn. We might be grieving the loss of the lovely long days, or the light. Facing into grief and loss is without doubt one of our most difficult, yet inevitable challenges.

The notion of impermanence is very much on my mind these days and I have been exploring the concept with intention. When you practice mindfulness meditation and learn to bring a moment-by-moment awareness to thoughts, sensations and emotions, you learn to accept that, just like the natural seasons, things are always moving and changing in our lives, beginning and ending, being born and dying. This awareness, however, can be double-edged and can bring real sadness at times, when we realise that all good things come to an end.

Yet, on the other hand, when we realise that someone or something will not last forever, we are also given a precious gift, of how to use our time wisely and a chance to appreciate and be grateful for what we have, while we still have it.

Acknowledging that the natural cycle of life is outside of our control and includes loss and letting go, we can choose to focus on the things that are within our control, like making peace, making memories, and making space for what is truly important to us. "To see the preciousness of all things, we must bring our full attention to life," says author and world-renowned meditation teacher Jack Kornfield in his book 'A path with heart'. Jack writes that happiness in life is less about owning or possessing things than about our capacity to love. Keeping our hearts and minds open and soft when facing grief and loss is not easy but bringing our full attention to life means being present for both pleasant and unpleasant life experiences and allowing ourselves to tenderly turn towards our feelings, even the difficult ones, like grief

and loss.

Acceptance plays a huge part here and mindfulness helps with this, giving us the skills to stay in the present moment, even if it's not filled with joy or if it's bittersweet. Being present with people and with ourselves when dealing with grief and loss, offers an invitation to reconcile and forgive our own perceived failings or flaws, to connect and make peace with ourselves and others. Undoubtedly, other people are feeling similar emotional pain or may have felt the pain of loss before, so we can connect with our common humanity, the fact that we are not alone in how we are feeling. People respond or react in different ways to impermanence and to grief, loss and change. There is no right or wrong, but maybe we can bring a little softness or compassion to anything we're struggling with just now, or any loss we may be feeling. Is there something in yourself or someone else that you might need to forgive or let go of in this moment? Knowing that we only have this present moment, the here and now, can be a great motivator for being the best

human being you can possibly be, just in this moment.

If you would like an opportunity to connect with yourself and others in a meaningful way, I am delighted to be guiding drop-in mindfulness sessions at Myross Wood, Leap on Tuesday mornings from 10 -11am. Please get in touch if you are interested in attending.

My online meditation sessions via Zoom are on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 8pm, 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.

If you need any support to begin or to deepen your meditation practice, please feel free to get in touch. For more information on upcoming workshops and courses please like my Facebook page (Mindhaven) or feel free to get in touch by phone: 087 2700572 or by email: susanoreganmindfulness@gmail.com

The Person with 'the cure'



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 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

This month I am going to talk about the many healers of vernacular medicine who still practise in our communities. Most people call this folk medicine, but this term does not give it the recognition,

or respect, it deserves because these cures sustained our communities for many centuries and still do so today.

The therapies within vernacular medicine may be roughly divided into three distinct areas, physical manipulation, plant medicine, and charms, prayers, and rituals. A person may have a cure for ringworm or 'heart fever'. Another person may have a 'bottle' that helps a certain condition, and yet another may 'raise the breast-bone' to relieve chest pain.

Lanes and Heffernan's are well known bonesetters and the Lane name 'as gaeilge' is Ó Leighin, which comes from the Irish, 'Leigheas', meaning healer. The Elizabethan Faints of 1641 list 17 people with the name Ó Leighin and the occupation of 16 of them is listed as chirourgeon. The word 'chiro' comes from a Greek word meaning hand, so a chirourgeon is a person who heals through his hands. The occupation of the 17th Ó Leighin was listed as Sergeant, which is probably a misunderstanding of the word surgeon.

Lanes, then, would have come from a learned tradition. Their ancestors would have been one of the hereditary medical families serving Irish Chieftains in Munster. Other hereditary medical families serving the Munster chieftains were Ó Callanáin (Callanan), Ó

híceadha (Hickey), Ó Nialláin (Nealon) and Ó Troighthigh (Troy). Unfortunately, these families lost their lands and positions with the demise of the old Gaelic order in the 17th century. What is quite amazing is how much of the knowledge remained with the families, or disseminated into wider community, so that some of the cures continued to be available to those in need.

I am not familiar with anyone in West Cork who 'raises the breastbone' but it is a technique practised successfully in other parts of the country for different chest ailments, the most common description being 'under the weather.'

The healer who uses plants to treat an ailment has a superb knowledge of their properties, and their skill in applying this knowledge, be it for skin cancer, shingles, or arthritis, is built on years of apprenticeship and experience. The only danger today is that the sons and daughters of these healers will not continue the tradition due to fear of litigation.

The healer who can use a charm to stop bleeding or heal a sprain is the healing method we find most strange, and it is not easy for any of us to accept that this not only happens but is also effective. This method of healing comes under the banner of psychoneuroendocrinology today, but I am not sure it can

be so easily categorised.

If you want to hear more about Irish vernacular medicine, and meet Sean Boylan, one of our best-known traditional

healers, come to the launch of my book, 'Ireland's Hidden Medicine' in Fields, Skibbereen at 6.30pm on Friday, October 15.

New book explores Irish indigenous medicine

Rosarie Kingston's new book 'Ireland's Hidden Medicine' explores the rich healing traditions of Ireland which resonate through the country's landscape, music, festivals and language.

Indigenous medicine, no matter where it exists in the world, is characterised by the oral transmission of knowledge and the necessity for each person to be in harmony with themselves, their society and environment, as well as the spirit world.

Ireland is no different, and its traditional therapeutic approach is designed to address body, mind, spirit and emotions within the local social and environmental context. However, these ancient healing traditions are increasingly neglected due to the dominance of biomedicine as the country's primary system of healthcare.

Ireland's Hidden Medicine explores how the core

elements of any medical system are always the same: diagnosis, prognosis, treatment, and prevention of ill health. These central elements do not change, but the medical systems which give them expression may evolve, mutate, and even die, because their fortunes are tied up with the changing cultural, technological, and economic paradigms of their societies.

This book provides a fascinating look at the history and fortunes of Irish folk medicine – from the legendary god of healing, Déin Chécht, to the coming of Christianity and the religious and social backdrop of the nation's development. The book also provides a seasonal guide to utilising Ireland's indigenous medicine, which provides a wealth of benefits and a connection to a sacred and therapeutic landscape.



Rosarie Kingston is a practicing medical herbalist in West Cork, Ireland. She lectures in the department of Folklore and Ethnology at University College, Cork. Her PhD examined Irish vernacular medicine in the twenty-first century and she considers this blending of science and tradition paramount to the progression of modern healthcare.

'Ireland's Hidden Medicine' by Rosarie Kingston. Paperback RRP: €20 at aeonbooks.co.uk Discount code IH20 for 20 per cent off applied at checkout; valid until 31.10.21

Connecting West Cork to Wellbeing

Almost nine years ago the first 'wellness bus' rolled through the towns and villages of West Cork, as part of an initiative to help people recover outside of the traditional mental health services. The bus promoted social inclusion and gave advice on services, available across the community, that promote physical, mental and social wellbeing.

The 'wellness bus' initiative evolved into The Wellbeing Network (TWN), which has kept its original spirit, continuing to offer the West Cork community a preventative approach to mental health, and providing resources on their own doorstep, such as access to non-clinical and medical supports, as well as information about self-care.

The aim has always been to empower each individual by encouraging them to take charge of their own wellbeing journey, by addressing 'The Five Ways of Wellbeing'. These are: 'Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning, Connect and Give'. The impact of greater wellbeing is reflected in a stronger sense of community and in the ability to care for ourselves and each other. An important part of the proactive approach of the Wellbeing Network has been to also provide a website that ensures people have information about what is available in their community and what may work to help them through difficult periods.

During the difficult periods of self-isolation that Covid-19 brought to our community, the Wellbeing Network's efforts focused on offering people ways to make connections and on helping them to develop their coping skills. The Wellbeing Network has adapted to the changing circumstances, meeting people in their particular situations and offering supportive services in respect to the uncertainty and mental challenges of the pandemic.

Conversations about mental health have inevitably focused on the problems experienced by individuals and families who have found it difficult to access effective support at a time when they have needed it the most. To this end the Wellbeing Network has put together a series of online workshops designed to help people to keep well through creativity, healthy eating and mindfulness. At the same time the Wellbeing Network website has continuously provided links to services and resources available to help people boost their wellbeing.

For a number of years the Wellbeing Network has collaborated with 49 North Street to host a West Cork Feel Good Festival, scheduled each year to coincide with World Mental Health Day on October 10. The aim of the festival is to promote and celebrate community wellbeing whilst linking with and promoting the many ongoing health and wellbeing resources found across West Cork. The Festival is all about community, connection, engagement, slowing down, having fun and feeling good.

The collaboration with 49 North Street has been an important one. Located in Skibbereen, 49 North Street offers people a space where they can come and confidentially share practical advice on living through difficult times. It has become an important asset in the West Cork community, a place where people can go to explore ways of improving their mental health and wellbeing.

This year the Feel Good festival is offering a number of events where wellness falls in with creativity. The organisers (49 North Street, Skibbereen, The Wellbeing Network, West Cork and Mental Health Engagement, Cork Kerry HSE, working in partnership with community groups and organisations) hope to inspire



The Happiness Ensemble



Luka Bloom

everyone to engage and connect.

West Cork Feel Good Festival 2021 has been made possible with the support of an Arts Council Capacity Building award to MusicAlive, an arts and health organisation that coproduces arts events at 49 North Street. MusicAlive has teamed up with Levis Corner House in Ballydehob for various discussions and live gigs with an exceptional line up: Luka Bloom, Donal Dineen and Lisa O'Neill.

Skibbereen Family Resource Centre and 49 North Street will be also hosting free events during these days of Feeling Good. Creative writing, mindfulness, singing, dancing, cooking, music, meditation, and more.

Some highlights include: Luka Bloom, performing at Levis's Corner House in Ballydehob on Sunday October 10; 'Benign & Beautiful (Vol. 2)' book launch, to also be presented in Levis's on the afternoon of October 10 by poet/musician Pól O Colmáin; The Claddagh Rogues, performing at Levis's at 3pm on Saturday, October 9 (the afternoon also includes film screenings and discussions around homelessness, mental health, and the prison system, as frontman James O' Flynn reflects on his extraordinary life).

The Claddagh Rogues will also perform on October 8,

3-5pm, at 49 North Street, during the launch of 'Beyond the Village', a project led by visual artists, Sarah Ruttle and Rebecca Keyser, and the 'Out of the Blue'/Recovery Stories project, in association with Open Dialogue.

On October 13, 1-3pm, 49 North Street will host 'Éiri 's Ital: A Positive music and food sharing event with Music Alive

and The Happiness Ensemble'. The Happiness Ensemble is the brainchild of Peter Fitzpatrick who, in 2014, "seeking an alternative way to recover from depression and anxiety, rediscovered his love of music and voice." Nick Murphy, a member of the The Happiness Ensemble enthuses: "It's all coming back, starting with the festival, I feel better already, the craic

is always mighty, wonderful place and wonderful people, something for everyone, where everyone matters."

Events are either online or in strict adherence with public health guidelines. Pre-booking is essential.

See www.wellbeingnetwork.com for the full programme.



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Braving loss through poetry

World traveller, coach and poet, Marie Murphy, has just published a book of her poetry, dealing with the topics of loss

and healing, which she has titled 'Braveheart' in memory of her late father Frank.

Marie is an adventurous soul who has been a travel writer since 2010; living, working and exploring in Australia, Thailand, the United States, Canada and her soul home, Costa Rica, where she gets most of her inspiration to write. Marie says her journey has not just been about exploring these beautiful places but goes much deeper: "After experiencing great loss in my life, travel has healed me immensely in many ways and brought back joy and meaning

to my life. Costa Rica means 'Rich Coast' and the healing energy of this magical country is warm and nutritious."

Marie writes poetry on love, healing and strength, writing about grief and pain expressively and authentically.

She recently returned to West Cork from Costa Rica for her father's funeral. "Dad was a man full of kindness for all, he always had time for a chat with people and loved visiting the elderly," says Marie. "I would like to carry on his legacy by staying connected to people and living in kindness and compas-

sion."

Marie chose 24 heartfelt poems for 'Braveheart', which she hopes will bring joy and strength to those going through life's struggles and help to alleviate suffering from loss. "People are never alone in times of losing a loved one, we must remember that their love lives on inside us."

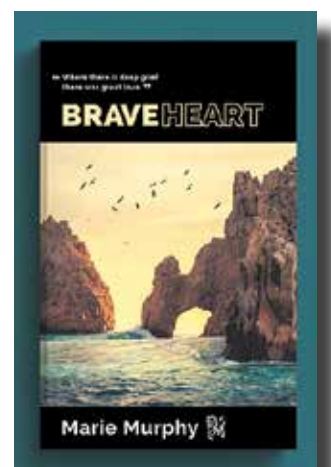
If you would like a copy of the book 'Braveheart' you can contact the author Marie Murphy directly by email: mariemurphycoaching@gmail.com

It can also be purchased in any of the following bookstores

for €14.99: Green Dot Irish Design Makers – Clonakilty; Coughlan's Bookshop – Clonakilty; O'Farrells Newsagents – Bandon; Healthy Days – Riverview Bandon; The Hummingbird Gallery – Dunmanway; O' Riordans Pharmacy – Enniskeneane

Heart

*Our hearts are so tender
Open up and surrender
Let the fire inside ignite
And arise to the light
Carrying on to remain strong
In this life where we belong.*



people Food, Health & Lifestyle

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.



Fern Higgins Atkinson, chairperson of BRÓD and Youth Development Officer in the Ability Programme, West Cork Development Partnership, chats with Maitiú Mac Cárthaigh. Maitiú speaks about his experiences as a young gay man, growing up in rural West Cork, and how they have influenced, shaped, and informed his journey into art.

“Approximately 4,000 school teachers are hiding their sexuality due to discrimination fears” (INTO, 2021)

When I started to think about this article, back to school was in full swing. It had crept up on me this year; the summer had whizzed by and suddenly, my youngest two children were asking for pieces of new uniform and other such things that are required for the back to school bonanza. My other four were moving along, out of school and expanding their horizons. All of the normal sequences of life were clicking into place, as was the case every September, yet another year on. This merry dance, the juggle of lidless lunch boxes and huge school bags, checking hand-me-down school jumpers for holes and, of course, buying exam papers (yet again and again and again). Waiting for the school bus; “Was it early? Is it late? Who knows! I’m driving you in or I’ll be late for work...” Familiar statements

that happen every September while we try to navigate our way out of the freedom of summer and into a formal and structured existence once again. Tired teens plugging themselves back into the system for yet another year. Parents and carers attempting to send their children back to school in proper uniform. Buying shoes only to be told; “No boots, no white bits, black laces” and so on. The usual hubbub that is worthy of a slapstick comedy if only it were funny.

In 2015, a bill was passed in the Dáil; ‘The Equality (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2013’. The bill amended the provisions of Section 37(1) of the Employment Equality Act. In a nutshell, Section 37 had allowed for discrimination against workers based on their sexual orientation and family status. Back in 2000, schools in Ireland that were run by religious institutions, were exempt from certain areas of equality law due to the considerations of their religious ethos and consequent teachings. These exemptions were passed by the European Equality Directive at the time and allowed schools, underpinned by a religious ethos, to discriminate against employees. The passing of the bill in 2015 was welcomed by advocacy groups and teachers unions. At the time, the director of education policy in GLEN (The Gay and Lesbian Equality Network), Sandra Irwin-Gowran, said; “It provides a critical springboard for the cultural change needed in our schools – change that ensures all people, whether they’re working or learning, can do so in an environment that is welcoming and affirming of who they are” (O’Brien, 2015). This statement resonates with me in the return to school tsunami. The progress that has been made over a number of years regarding inclusion, equity, equality and breaking down stigma is great. The LGBTI+ community is visible in the media, through awareness campaigns, on film, in our society and our families. But are they visible in our schools? Despite the passing of the bill in 2015, the INTO (Irish National Teachers Organisation) still suggest that there are many teachers that are not comfortable “revealing their true identities in schools” (McKeown, 2021). The INTO president, Joe McKeown, suggests that “when the patron of a school feels that the actions of LGBTI+ teachers are intrinsically disordered, it is difficult for LGBTI+ teachers to



feel protected or valued”. This is a stark reality that many of us do not have to consider in our working lives.

That the very core of our human selves could be diminished in such a way is hard to take on board. This leads me to ask this question. If our LGBTI+ teachers are feeling unsupported and fearful, what is the knock-on effect of this to our children?

Our children spend vast amounts of their childhood and teenage years in the formal school environment. This is a formative time, in their social and emotional development, as well as the academic side of things. The aim of school may be formal learning with a hope towards college and work, but in reality, school life is mostly about the social learning that is accrued.

School life for teenagers is rolled-up skirts, skinny pants, hoodies, earrings, nose rings, ring rings, belly tops in PE, make up, normal hair, coloured hair, shaved heads and beards, spots, sweat, puberty. Kids being pantsed, first years being pocketed or bushed, older kids with cars, older kids with no cars, kids with no money, kids who have lost a parent, normal kids and weird kids, musical kids and sporty kids, first kisses and raging hormones. Thoughts of sex, having sex, not having sex. Discos, backs of buses, rites of passage, friends, enemies and everything in between and around the sides. My point is, being young, being a teenager, is exciting and terrifying. New experiences and risk taking are par for the course. Feelings of belonging, feelings of isolation, both wanting attention yet hating it too. The extremes of covering and uncovering the developing body. The revealing and exploring of sexuality. The exploration of identity.

Amazing work is being carried out across the country, in our schools, colleges and advocacy services to raise awareness

and support both LGBTI+ adults and young people. Over the last couple of years there has been increasing pressure to ensure that our young people are supported appropriately in their places of education. The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) is currently undertaking a major review of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) in both primary and post-primary schools, and, within this, an inclusive programme on LGBTI+ relationships is to be developed. An overhaul of the RSE/ SPHE programmes is welcomed, particularly by young people themselves. An example of this expression of need includes a study conducted by the Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI) and the University of Limerick in 2020. The study was based upon 18 months of research over a cross-section of young people, education stakeholders and unions. One of the discoveries was that transgender and gender diverse youth feel marginalised within their post-primary schools and do not have the

equality of educational opportunity as others. Other findings were that the “key transition challenges encountered by transgender and gender diverse youth included: misnaming and misgendering; restrictive uniforms, bathroom accessibility, staff prejudice, peer bullying, barriers to sports, and, a lack of support” (McBride, 2020). Only this year, in April, a new sex education programme for Catholic primary schools was developed by the Irish Bishops Conference (IBC). This included statements surrounding the fact that the Church’s teachings on marriage between men and women cannot be omitted and that “puberty is a gift from God. We are perfectly designed by God to procreate with him” (IBC, 2021). Considering the Vatican’s stance on same sex unions (that they cannot be blessed), is it appropriate that a relationships and sexuality programme for primary schools be developed and implemented when designed by Catholic Bishops?

There has never been a better time to start these conversa-

tions. We are all entitled to our private beliefs, prayer, spirituality and moral standpoints. By writing this column, I am not attempting to impose my spiritual persuasions upon anyone. I am merely raising questions of inclusivity, respect, openness and feelings of safety. Our places of education are pillars of our society. They are hot houses of innovation, ideas, participation and growth. We must strive to support all who abide within the walls of these institutions; this includes teachers and students. Check out advocacy and education groups such as Shoutout, BeLonG To, LGBT Ireland and TENI. The CIT (now MTU) LGBT+ society launched its first Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA) training day in 2020 and have consequently published guidelines on how to set up a gay/straight or gender and sexuality alliance in your secondary school. The INTO has formed an LGBT+ teachers group to support and advance the cause of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender primary school teachers. BeLonG To’s annual Stand Up Awareness Week takes place from November 15-19 and is an opportunity for second level schools, youth services and Youthreach to take a stand against discrimination and bullying (loads of resources for educators available on the BeLonG To website).

Huge work is being done to further advocate for our young people and their educators. Let’s keep the conversation going, create safe spaces and open our minds to a truly inclusive educational experience.

OUT & ABOUT IN WEST CORK



Congratulations to MICC students who received their Leaving Certificate results last month. Students and staff were delighted with the outstanding results, which reflected the tremendous work ethic of the group. Pictured from left: Ms Fiona NiC Charthaigh Deputy Principal, Ciara Hurley, Anne O’Driscoll, Marina Connolly, Mairead Crowley, Mr Niall Murphy Principal and Ciara Ahern.

Getting your health winter-ready



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.

Consider for a moment, what kind of a spender are you? Are you the kind of person who looks ahead, plans for your financial future, spends carefully and mindfully and invests regularly in your savings?

Or are you more laissez-faire? Do you spend today and worry tomorrow? Do you readily take loans so you can have what you want now, and then chase your tail keeping up with the interest and repayments?

Whatever your modus operandi is financially, perhaps pause for a moment and reflect on whether you treat your health in the same way. We have a kind of 'Health Bank Account'. Of course, this is in part

determined by any legacies left to you by your parents and more specifically (in terms of Chinese Medicine philosophy) your grandparents. Did they bestow a wealth of awesome genes and rude constitutional health into your account?

In Chinese Medicine this is referred to as your Jing – your Essence, that special vitalised metaphorical oil in your barrel that you will draw on throughout your life. This is tantamount to being your savings account. The kidneys are the storehouse for your Jing, so taking care of one's kidneys is of particular interest in Chinese Medicine, ensuring that you don't burnout, work or play too hard, have gazillions for children, burn the candle at both ends or run into health deficit.

Meanwhile, we also have a health current account with much the same income and expenditure dynamic. Eating nutritious food, sleeping well and at appropriate hours, finding our sweet spot in life between output with our engagement in the world and input with more tranquil, nourishing and restorative interludes, feeling connected to loved ones with a sense of belonging and a lifestyle that evokes plenty of joy, laughter and fulfillment are all ways we can cultivate our health income.

Conversely, we can spend like crazy and run up significant health debt. Endlessly worrying like a dog gnawing on a bone, being habitually stressed, over-riding our need for quality restorative sleep, eating non-functional, biologically alien foods that tax our body and resources heavily, sacrificing ourselves on the altar of our jobs, necking medications

instead of attending to the root cause of dis-ease...let's face it, we are not short of ways to run up a pretty daunting health debt these days. Indeed, it seems there can be a bizarre kudos in running yourself into the ground in some circles, as if your worth is measured in terms of how darn hard you've worked and how much you've neglected your own basic needs.

By contrast, in Chinese Medicine we revere those who master the art of living in a profoundly balanced way. Understanding our output as Yang, our input as Yin, our expenditure as Yang, our savings as Yin, we aim to keep the Yin and Yang of life and health in exquisite balance, dancing in tune with the undulating seasons of the year and all the natural cycles and dynamics that we are inextricably part of and whether we like it or not, are affected by.

The onset of illness is not the best time to start attending to your health. You can't simultaneously pay off your debts and save money. And if you have had a lifestyle of drawing on your reserves and your savings, then you will have little to buffer you during the hard times of illness or those inevitably intense patches in life (work deadlines, relationship troubles, moving house, family dynamics, pandemics) when you most need some savings in your health bank.

In Chinese Medicine we aim to be several jumps ahead, tending to the health of our patients in a way that fosters accruing some savings in advance of needing them. Of course, for the most part, I see patients in my clinic who are running low on their reserves, perhaps even exhausted them,

and their body is sending them a plethora of memos on a daily basis to attend to their overdraft urgently, aka your red reminders in the post!

Occasionally someone comes in looking for pre-emptive treatment and for me as a practitioner, this is always a particular joy. I encourage my patients to look ahead, to consciously and proactively invest in their Health Savings and manage their Health Current Account wisely. If you know that you are prone to winter ails, flus, coughs, and seasonal lurgies, then in Chinese Medicine we advise addressing this at least one if not two seasons earlier – so do a course of treatment in summer or early autumn. If you know that you are wanting to start to a family, come in for treatment to optimise your menstrual cycles and promote egg quality six to 12 months earlier at least. If you can see your menopause coming down the track, come five to 10 years earlier – you will seriously thank yourself. If you know that you have a demanding time coming up (you're competing in a tournament, running a marathon, moving to a new job with a steep learning curve, writing your thesis or sitting exams, facing an unavoidable operation, going through a separation or house move) come for some sessions to build up your inner resources before you need to spend them. Ultimately, it's about understanding that we can influence the trajectory of our health far more than we perhaps realise. So be the captain of your own ship and steer yourself to calm and harmonious waters. Your Future Self will thank you.

Freya Sherlock
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Concern launches emergency appeal to avert impending humanitarian catastrophe in Afghanistan



Concern Worldwide has launched an emergency appeal for public donations to fund its work in Afghanistan and help avert an impending humanitarian catastrophe.

"Even before the recent unprecedented change in context across the country, 18.4 million people were depending on humanitarian assistance," Concern CEO Dominic MacSorley said. "More than one-third of the population is facing crisis or emergency levels of food insecurity. Nearly half of all children under-five and a quarter of pregnant and breastfeeding women will need life-saving nutritional support over the next

12 months."

In addition, after four decades of war, more than three million people are internally displaced. Afghanistan is also experiencing widespread drought, with more than 40 per cent of crops lost as a result this year.

"Now, with winter approaching, humanitarian organisations like Concern are facing a race against time to prevent the current humanitarian crisis tipping Afghanistan into catastrophe," Mr MacSorley warned.

"Severe winter weather and mountainous terrain means parts of the country will be inaccessible when the heavy snowfall and extreme cold arrive, leaving millions of

vulnerable Afghans with little to survive on, unless we can get food supplies into the region in the coming weeks."

Concern has worked in Afghanistan for the last 23 years and has an experienced team on the ground. "We are committed to staying and delivering humanitarian assistance to those most in need," Mr MacSorley said. "We need funding to enable us to do this."

Concern's team in Afghanistan is preparing to distribute food and shelter kits to communities in the north and north east of the country. Funds raised by the public appeal will be used to address the immediate needs of families in desperate need

of food and shelter through the provision of essential food assistance, as well as items such as clothing, blankets, heating and fuel. These items are vital to ensure families are prepared to cope with the harsh winter, which is fast approaching.

Meanwhile, Concern has welcomed the response to the United Nations appeal this week, with governments pledging \$1.2 billion in funding for humanitarian assistance within Afghanistan and in neighbouring countries which are hosting Afghan refugees.

To donate to Concern's Afghanistan emergency appeal visit concern.net.

people Food, Health & Lifestyle



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.

The Covid virus has negatively affected each one of us to a greater or lesser extent. Some of us are still nervous to mingle in public. One lady I spoke to mused that she'd never thought of herself as old

The Covid pet

until she was told to cocoon last year and that she was a 'risk' to society at large. (I might add that this lady is very fit and spry, and certainly doesn't look or act her age!) Another woman I know has been so badly affected that she now has panic attacks. I'm sure there are endless versions of the same story.

But what of our dogs now that the Covid restrictions are beginning to loosen and a form of normality is returning? Many people are going back to work; time spent at home is halved and real-time stress has raised its ugly head again. The puppies and rescues we acquired to help us through lockdown have grown or raised problems that we perhaps no longer have the time, inclination or ability to address.

The rescue centres are beginning to fill again where once they were virtually empty during Covid times. Indeed, in the UK, they are at overflowing levels

already. Dogs Trust Ireland are reporting that more and more people are surrendering their pets now that 'normal service has been resumed'.

But, that doesn't have to be the case for every dog and busy family. During lockdown, many trainers took to Facebook and other social media to generate business. While some are really genuine, it's wise to beware of those who just want your money! For example, there are people advertising certain essential oils as a remedy for some problem or another. It's really important to realise that essential oils are amazing for emotional, psychological or even physiological problems but, and it's a really big but, you need to have an in-depth knowledge of them. Some are toxic; some have a contraindication for pregnancy; some affect the skin unless well-diluted. And, first and foremost, the animal needs to choose what he needs. Forcing an oil on

an animal is invasive and breaks the trust with the person.

One valuable fact I've learnt in my long experience of dog training and using holistic remedies is that 'one size does not fit all'. Yes, the basic training commands are the same but, like us humans, dogs have odd quirks and idiosyncrasies, as well as exhibiting certain breed characteristics. Not only that, each household has different needs and expectations. As trainers, if we view each dog always in the same manner and imagine that what worked for one will automatically work for the next, we set ourselves up for failure.

It's the reason I love my job so much, because each case is different and provides me with some sort of challenge to try to sort out or help an owner and his/her canine companion. And that brings me neatly to the purpose of this article.

In moments of extreme stress, we tend to do something drastic

to try to improve our situation. But, hindsight often shows us that, if we waited a little longer or asked for proper help, we might have better managed our situation. So before you think of surrendering your pet, because you feel you can no longer cope with it in what has become an overwhelming situation, why not reach out and have a conversation with someone qualified who might be able to help you.

The aim in my job is that I may be able to fashion a routine for you, make some suggestions, use Touch, Essential oils or Flower remedies to find a specific solution for you and your dog that successfully allows you to stay together and, as much as possible, to live happily ever after. And former clients will attest that I help them through phone calls and emails, if necessary, after making a visit to them.

Of course, it may be necessary to advise someone that it's safer or kinder to find another home

for a pet. Just as not every marriage or partnership lasts simply because certain circumstances prevent that happening, the same is occasionally true for canine/human partnerships. However, I cannot believe that anyone would throw away a lifetime commitment between two people on a whim because real life didn't match up to a false dream. Not without doing something or seeking help to try to save it. So, why can't the same positive attitude apply to a canine-human relationship? There is someone out there who can help.



RAWR's Halloween safety tips for pet owners

After a very restricted Halloween last year, many people, especially children, will be looking forward to the prospect of a more lively celebration this month. Regardless of the type of celebration you are planning, it is important to remember your pets safety and happiness. Animals are individuals, so while you might enjoy the festivities, RAWR advises you to consider it from your pet's perspective.

A dog's natural instinct is to protect their home or to alert you that a stranger has arrived, and cats typically prefer a quiet environment with their family. The hustle and bustle, as well as the noise associated with Halloween, can be very stressful for your pets.

Before the celebrations start, put your pet in a quiet room where they will be safe from all the activity. If your pet is likely to try to run out the front door but is comfortable in a crate, consider putting them in the crate with a treat-filled toy and some soft music playing in the background. Even if you are just having family over for a Halloween party, keep your pets away from the festivities in their safe room. Masks and costumes



change how people look and smell to a pet, so even familiar people may become frightening.

Introduce your pets to their safe room before you decorate

indoors. Changes to your home can make your pets, especially cats, nervous or frightened; or they may decide those fake spiders pose an existential threat and need to be killed! Be aware of which decorations pose threats; some hazards are obvious, such as lit candles (fire hazards and toxic to birds if scented). Other potentially dangerous decorations include rubber eyeballs (choking risk), glow sticks and fake blood (possible poisons), fake cobwebs (can choke or entangle pets and wildlife), potpourri (toxic to birds) and strung lights. Watch out for those sweet wrappers and plastic packaging too.

If you do choose a costume for your pet, consider your pet's personality and what type of cos-

tume they may tolerate and for how long...it's best to keep pet costumes minimal. Keep an eye on your costumed pet to make sure the costume is comfortable and allows your pet to move freely. Also be sure to remove any chewable parts or objects that could come off and choke your pet.

If your pet appears uncomfortable, take off the costume. Signs of discomfort include folded down ears, eyes rolling back or looking sideways, a tucked tail or hunching over.

Keep sweets safely stashed away. Many foods, such as chocolate, sweets and xylitol (a sweetener used in many foods) are hazardous to pets. Watch your children! Children may make the harmful mistake of

sharing their treats. Make sure they know the difference between a treat for them and a treat for their four-legged friends. If you suspect your pet has eaten something that's bad for them, call your vet immediately.

Finally, bring your pets indoors before night falls. Cats are always safest inside with you, but on Halloween it's especially important to secure all pets, including rabbits, inside so they don't run away out of fear. In case they escape, make sure that all your pets are wearing tags with current IDs and that their microchip is registered with your most up-to-date information. Proper ID will help you reunite with your lost pet.

Fota announces birth of five endangered Cheetah cubs

Fota Wildlife Park last week announced the birth of five new Northern cheetah cubs (Acinonyx j. soemmeringii) to mother Grainne and father Archie. The Northern cheetah subspecies is considered Endangered by the International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as there are less than 800 left in the wild. A total of 238 cheetahs have been born at Fota Wildlife Park since 1984.

The five cubs, comprising of three females and two males were born on August 10 and spend several hours a day playing with Mum Grainne in their leafy habitat on Cheetah Hill at the County Cork visitor attrac-

tion. The cub's mother Grainne is four-years-old and was born in Fota Wildlife Park; she previously gave birth to a litter of three cubs on Saint Patrick's Day last year, whereas twelve-year-old Archie is a first-time dad.

Head ranger, Julien Fonteneau said about the births, "We are delighted to announce the birth of five Northern cheetah cubs. As a conservation charity and a zoological intuition, the continued participation and success in European Endangered Species breeding programmes (EEP) is very important. With each year, wild populations of cheetah are coming under greater threat of extinction from habitat destruc-

tion and human persecution.

"These births are a great way to educate the public about the collaborative work that zoos do under the auspices of EAZA breeding programmes (European Association of Zoos and Aquaria) to conserve the genetic diversity of endangered and vulnerable species, like the cheetah. For example, the father of the cubs, Archie, was transferred to Fota Wildlife Park from a zoological facility in Dubai to take part in the EEP here at Fota. The Cheetah is synonymous with Fota Wildlife Park, the image of the species is used in our logo and our director, Sean McKeown, coordinates the stud-

book for the breeding of the captive Northern cheetah population in European zoos.

"Personally this is my first time to witness the birth of such a big litter. Five cubs are certainly very rare. I'm thrilled to say that they all are thriving. The cubs are very active and a delight to see every day, up at the top of their habitat playing and annoying their mother Grainne, who seems to be taking it all in her stride. We're asking the public to vote to name the cubs via an online form on our blog at www.fotawildlife.ie/ news and to be in with a chance to win one of five Conservation annual passes."



Fota Wildlife Park is open daily from 9.30am – booking online only at www.fotawildlife.ie.

The implications of cleanliness



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.

I was surprised to hear that we now do not recommend sterilising babies bottles. The hours of fun I had with boiling water and being ever so clean with our second baby: All a waste of time and just goes to show how advice changes.

Another interesting spin off of our current Covid-19 precautions is the potential to test the Hygiene Hypothesis.

Allergies have become a lot more common over recent years and cause great concern. The hypothesis says that keeping ourselves too clean does not test our immunity, which when redundant, turns bandit and

attacks ourselves.

Children growing up on farms and those from bigger families seem to have fewer allergies; examples being, eczema, asthma, hay fever and drug and food allergies.

We now have had a whole eighteen months of scrupulous attention to hygiene issues and one might expect the 'knock-on' effect to be even more allergies if the hygiene hypothesis is correct. This research is going on and no conclusions have been reached but I will keep you posted.

I ran this hypothesis by a Consultant Haematologist friend of mine. There are some interesting hygiene issues in his field. Childhood leukaemia is more common in affluent families. Does this have something to do with an over-sterile germ-free home? Possibly. Children who attend a nursery from a young age are also less likely to develop leukaemia. A child with no siblings is another risk factor for leukaemia.

If we look at the animal kingdom, domesticated cats are much more likely to get leukaemia than the feral moggies.

So once again, giving our immunity something to do, within limitations, has massive implications!

This is all very interesting and confusing I know. Once again it is all about taking the middle road and using common sense.

Let's look at antibiotics. It drives me mad when a patient says they are allergic to most

antibiotics but cannot remember which ones or who diagnosed their allergy. No bracelet worn either! This is a huge problem if you have sepsis and the antibiotic has to be given more or less immediately to save your life. Penicillin derivatives are still widely used and life saving in sepsis.

I met a patient recently who said he was allergic to every local anaesthetic, which is amazingly rare, and a huge problem if it was just his personal hunch without any real proof, particularly as he had a wound needing to be sutured.

We know how to treat allergic reactions. The serious one is anaphylaxis, when the throat closes, the tongue swells, a rash appears and circulation collapses. It is truly life-threatening. You'll have read about the nut allergy – when someone



with that allergy unknowingly ingests a nut product and dies. It usually hits the headlines.

I can honestly say that in my long career in A&E and as a GP, I have only seen true anaphylaxis once or twice. I see patients every day who have 'allergies'.

On the subject of antibiotics there is a general reluctance to give antibiotics for colds and flu. In our bowel we have two kg of good bacteria. The microbiota. This adds up to ten thousand billion bacteria and we know very little about them. They work with our immunity to keep us well. Bump them all off with powerful antibiotics and big trouble can ensue. It may take months for normal service to resume. Rather like spraying your garden with non-selective weed killer and wondering why your roses have died!

How can you help your immunity over the coming winter months? A good mixed diet, plenty of sleep and exercise and avoiding toxins like alcohol and smoking. Stress is hugely damaging to our immunity and being aware of your stressors and dealing with them is important. I like a good walk, a day fishing, looking forward to new challenges and being proud of what I have done, and accepting I am not perfect by any means.

The hygiene hypothesis makes medicine very interesting and we are learning all the while. Take home message? Life is all about balance, not too much or too little. If you have an allergy talk to your GP

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about it. For a serious one get an EpiPen and learn how to use it. For tricky cases there is an excellent allergy clinic at CUH to investigate and confirm the more serious reactions.

It goes without saying that I believe firmly in vaccination. Touch wood, it has kept me safe during some tricky times in A&E.

I respect that people may

decline vaccination but I had a patient of 78 who had significant health issues and refused not only the Covid vaccination but would not even let us do a Covid swab test! This was tantamount to refusing medical treatment and it presented us with a huge dilemma, which took hours to resolve and put staff and other patients at risk. Bizarre!



Some of Cork's youngest 'heroes', Alex, Oisín, Cormac, Alannah and Calvin (pictured above), are all patients at the Mercy University Hospital and this October they need your support for their latest mission, 'Mercy Heroes.'

The mission, should you choose to accept it, is to become a 'Mercy Hero'. Taking place

Join forces with Cork's bravest Heroes in aid of the Mercy Kids and Teens Appeal

on Friday, October 22, Mercy Heroes aims to raise funds for the Mercy Kids and Teens Appeal to support the youngest patients at the Mercy Hospital.

Funds raised for the Mercy Kids and Teens Appeal will support services like POONS (Paediatric Oncology Outreach Nursing Service). This service, the only one of its kind in Ireland, allows children with cancer to receive vital treatment in the comfort of their own home, helping to cut back on hospital visits and provide support to families during such a difficult time. POONS has provided immeasurable support for some of Cork's youngest patients and their families over the last number of years with 45 families using the service in 2020 alone.

One such family is that of three-year-old Calvin Mulryan, who is currently receiving treatment for Leukemia at the Mercy Hospital. Speaking about their experience, Calvin's mom, Emma Galway, said "We are so grateful for services like POONS. Even though Calvin loves seeing all the staff on the ward when he goes to the Mercy, it is a huge help to be able to receive some of his treatment at home. Getting to cut back on the number of hospital visits and instead have the POONS nurses come to our home has helped to bring a little bit of normality back into our lives."

The Covid-19 pandemic has made this service even more vital for these patients. Speaking about its importance, Olga Buckley, Paediatric Oncology/

Haematology CNS at The Mercy said "Being able to deliver a home-based option to sick children has helped enhance their quality of life and allowed for some normalisation of family life during cancer treatment. With the emergence of Covid-19 in Ireland, it has become absolutely necessary. Our young cancer patients are considered within the critically vulnerable group as their treatment, including chemotherapy, causes immunosuppression. POONS helps to cut back on the amount of time these patients need to spend in the hospital and gives them the opportunity to receive their treatment at home."

In 2020, the Mercy POONS nurses travelled 34,826 kilometres to provide an incredible 726 home visits to families.

It costs the Mercy Hospital Foundation €30,000 each year to continue to keep this service mobile. On Mercy Heroes Day on October 22, you can help them to do just that by making a donation online at www.mercyhospitalfoundation.ie or by joining forces with your friends, family or colleagues to host a virtual or in-person coffee morning. Schools around Cork are also being encouraged to join in the fun by holding a Dress Up/Dress Down Day to support these young heroes.

Paschal McCarthy, CEO of the Mercy University Hospital Foundation emphasised how support for campaigns like Mercy Heroes can make such a difference in people's lives, "For the past eight years, The Mercy University Hospital Foundation

has proudly provided funding for POONS. We can see, each year, the impact this service has on families. Covid-19 has placed an even greater demand on the service as these patients are amongst the most vulnerable in our community. This year, anyone can become a 'Mercy Hero'. Any donation, big or small, will help make a huge difference."

If you would like to become a 'Mercy Hero' this October, sign up at www.mercyhospitalfoundation.ie, where you can also hear from some of Cork's youngest heroes about the difference your support will make. And to set up your own 'Mercy Heroes' fundraising page, visit www.justgiving.com/campaign/MercyHeroes21.

people Food, Health & Lifestyle

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.

The beauty industry is booming! Yes, despite the economic magnitude of the COVID-19 pandemic the beauty industry has proven relatively resilient, especially in terms of online sales. In fact, a research report by McKinsey found that online revenue for beauty-industry players rose 20 to 30 per cent during the outbreak. Today there is a staggering number of online beauty brands to choose from, and for me, finding the ones that deliver exceptional results along with customer service can be few and far between – but thankfully there is one such online brand that delivers time and time again

and it just so happens to be Irish. Say hello to AYU, the multi-award-winning Irish based, and Irish-owned online cosmetics company set up by renowned makeup artist Suzie O'Neill.

Dedicated to empowering women with the tools and knowledge to bring out their best selves, AYU's ethos of wanting to show women how to enhance their natural beauty and to always be their best selves is just one of the many reasons why I love this brand. I recently caught up with Suzie and got to find out more about the brand, how she started out, who inspires her, along with her AYU desert island products and plans to visit Cork!

How did your career begin in the world of beauty?

I have loved makeup and skincare for as long as I can remember, I have always been more creative than academic, so I knew I would always want to work in a creative area. It was my mum who suggested I study beauty when I wasn't sure which path to go, and it was the best thing I ever did.

What prompted you to launch AYU and what does AYU mean?

I was at a stage in my life when I had just had my first child and I was working in a job that I loved but it was very full on. I wanted to be able to be the master of my own diary and create a good work/life balance for myself,

so I took the leap into starting AYU. It was a scary time, but I knew there was more for me than where I was. AYU means beautiful in Balinese, and I just love that it has a meaning close to my heart.

Is there anyone in particular who has inspired you throughout your career?

I am a big fan of Bobbi Brown. I just love her work ethic and how she started a business from nothing and built a massively successful empire by doing what she wanted and going against the norm of the time.

How would you describe your personal makeup style?

I am low key. I love simple well-cut clothes, fresh make up and relaxed hair. It makes me feel my best when I am comfortable!

What is your favourite celebrity makeup look and why?

Is there a celebrity whose face you'd love to make up with AYU?

I love fresh skin and defined eyes. A few who spring to mind would be Reese Witherspoon, Olivia Palermo, Kirstin Cavallari – I would just love to get to work on any of their faces.

Are there any common makeup mishaps that women make?

The biggest mistake I see is wearing the wrong shade of foundation. People often wear it a little darker than it should be to warm the face, but it doesn't work like that. Your base should melt away into your neckline and then we bring in colour and shape with concealer, bronzer,



and blush. Your base is purely to give you an even base.

Are there any makeup trends that you absolutely love or would love to see left behind?

I adore fresh, clean skin so this is one that I hope stays on trend forever!

Many women can find it difficult to determine their undertone when it comes to choosing foundation, are there any tips that may help them?

A very simple and quick way to gauge this would be to ask yourself, do I tan – if you do, then you suit golden warm tones; if you are paler, you will suit more cool tones. I don't really think pink undertone foundations suit anyone or look super natural but I love a neutral or yellow base to balance the skin.

What would be your three desert Island AYU products?

Definitely our Instant Undereye Concealer, Radiant Skin Cream and Total Lash Mascara.

There have been some fabulous new additions to the AYU family. Where do you get your inspiration for new product development?

I am always thinking about what women want, what will make their life easier and make them feel great, so this is where I start from. I want everything to be simple and effortless, so we really concentrate on creating the best core collection possible.

What are you currently working on with AYU?

Oh, so much. I wish I could tell you, but I would be in big trouble. We do have lots of new additions coming over the next year though and we are venturing into new area also!

Having seen with great respect and admiration your business grow from strength to strength, have you any tips for any aspiring businesswomen wishing to perhaps start their**own business?**

Thanks so much. Honestly, the best bit of advice I can give is just to start. Start today and work consistently with everything until you get to where you want to be. It is easy, and the hours can be very long, but it is so worth it when you love something. Also, if I can add another, keep your blinkers on, people will have opinions on what you are doing but always remember that what other people think is none of your business!

Any future plans for a Girls Day Out in Cork/West Cork?

We'd love to see you. I cannot wait to get back out on the road when we can. Cork is actually going to be our first stop and we are hoping to have a pop up as well early next year!

AYU is available online from www.ayu.ie and all products are dermatologically tested, paraben free, gluten free and vegan friendly. I am never without the Instant Under Eye Concealer, a game-changer if ever there was one, €18.50. If you're unsure of shades, check out their complimentary virtual shade matching service and also the newest additions to the AYU family, including the AYU Emerald Eye Shadow Palette, Complete Brow Kit, Volume Lashes Mascara and Classic Cream Eye Shadow Collection.

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Human Growth and Digital
Transformation Programme a success

A one day Human Growth and Digital Transformation Programme took place last month in the beautiful surrounds of Manch Estate in Ballineen. The course aims to help participants to take charge of their physical and mental wellbeing, re-energise, cope with change, and as a result, reach optimum productivity in the workplace.

One of the course participants had this to say: "The setting in Manch was just a perfect tranquil area, away from the public eye, surrounded by nature. It was a little place of paradise. The day itself was a very powerful experience. We felt deeply connected to nature with the forest bathing, it was revitalising from the hustle and bustle the last number of years of Covid. It just allowed time to breathe. I felt so grounded after it. The nutrition aspect was so informative it opened my eyes to gut health and motivated me to look up recipes that can enhance my lifestyle and take that step to self-improvement. The food served was so fresh and tasty without feeling any guilt. The biophilic design was a concept I never heard of, it opened my mind to ideas in enhancing the environment I live in. The whole day collectively was constructive, I appreciate the wisdom that three speakers shared with us. They were so sincere and Grainne was just a breath of fresh air with her energy and humour in conducting the whole day." Mary-Ann

If you would like to connect or be part of the next One Day in Nature Programme please contact Michelle or Grainne for more details or visit bwellhive.ie

people Food, Health & Lifestyle

The importance of self care



Amanda Roe

Trauma therapist
& Mind coach

Are you selfish? No I'm not! The question I ask you is 'why not?' Selfish is a word that can conjure up memories of others taking, controlling, being self-centred and not caring about your needs or the feelings of others. It can give you a repulsive feeling and be the internal voice that firmly states 'NO that's not me!'

However without putting your own needs first it is impossible to recharge your batteries and have the energy for others in your life.

That might be at work when you are feeling run off your feet and unable to say 'how can I do that?' when another unreasonable request is dropped on your desk.

It might be in the home when you are managing the household and the day is taken up with meal preparation, cleaning, and the guilt of what you haven't done yet.

It could be outside the home when you are volunteering, caring for parents, neighbours, or friends.

As humans focusing towards our own goals or towards the needs of others, there are two opposing motivational drivers and it is natural to find one easier than the other.

Someone who is already self motivated will not have a problem with the word selfish, as they value the importance of their own personal goals. But if your motivation in life is to help others and to do things with or for others, then putting your own needs first can be difficult to do, and it will make no sense at all that others do not feel the same way.

Not prioritising your own self care can lead to gradual depletions; perhaps difficulty sleeping, low mood, emotional upset, weight issues, period problems, aches and pains, chronic fatigue and eventual burnout.

So when you are feeling tired, overwhelmed or rushed off

your feet what is your self care routine? Is there someone in your life who will remind you to slow down? Is there someone who will put dinner on the table and send you off to bed? If you are concerned about your mood or emotions, who do you talk to?

Doing more for others than yourself can lead to chronic levels of stress and affect your mind, body and emotions. Learning to manage stress and prioritise self-care are key to feeling good and staying well.

When others are unwell it can be very clear what they need, but when you are feeling rundown, the temptation is often to down play your symptoms and keep going.

So ask yourself 'what happens if you are unable to cope?' How does that affect you, your family, your work or others you care for?

If it is important for you to be well and stay well then make a list of things that make you happy and recharge your batteries.

It might be a hot bath and going to bed early, exercising, eating well, meeting up with friends and family, playing a musical instrument, having a haircut, a manicure or taking a nap in the middle of the afternoon. Put this list somewhere visible or even on a colourful post-it note so you can remind yourself to care for yourself each and every day.

Amanda Roe is an acupuncturist, clinical hypnotherapist and life coach providing natural solutions for your mental, emotional and physical health. For more information call/text 087 633 1898 or email amanda@marketstclinic.com



Eoin Roe

Chiropractic

The benefits of probiotics depend on what you expect them to do. Most people think that probiotics will help them improve their beneficial bacteria in their gut and get rid of the bad bacteria. But there is no research showing that probiotics permanently change the gut microbiome (resident bacteria in the gut); they are more likely to have a transient effect meaning that, whilst you take them they are beneficial, but as soon as you stop they are no longer effective.

If you are using probiotics to help with gastrointestinal issues or just for general health, it is important to remember everyone has very different microbiomes, which will react differently to different strains of probiotic. There is no such thing as a perfect strain of probiotic bacteria no matter how much manufacturers advertise that they have. You will need to try a few and see what works best for you.

The balance of bacteria in your gut depends on your diet, environmental factors, other lifestyle factors and even genetic factors. In order for good health, you need to have a diverse range of good bacteria. Dysbiosis is a term used when there are more bad bacteria and less good bacteria.

So what make bacteria good or bad? All bacteria produce by-products called post-biotics, or lipopolysaccharides (LPS). LPS from good bacteria dampen inflammation and help immune function, while LPS from unhealthy bacteria produce an inflammatory response. Therefore bacteria that promote an inflammatory response are considered bad bacteria, and bacteria that have an immune-modulating effect are called good bacteria.

The beneficial effect when you take a probiotic is that it may have some anti-inflammatory effects and beneficially support your immune system but it is not going to completely change your microbiome. As soon as you stop taking it, the benefits will go.

The only way to completely change your microbiome is

Do probiotics really improve your gut bacteria?



through improving metabolic factors, diet and other lifestyle choices.

Why would you want to improve your microbiome? Your gut microbiome has a huge impact on your health, mood and behaviour it can even effect your blood sugar stability, auto-immunity and some diseases.

Some Common Symptoms of Dysbiosis (too much bad bacteria) are Constipation; Lower abdominal pain; Alternating Diarrhoea and Constipation; Bloating.

So for those suffering with the gut symptoms outlined or worried about other health issues, taking a probiotic may well help but a better longer lasting approach is to change your diet.

Achieving this can be different from person to person but the basics that will help everyone are as follows: Reduce or remove sugary foods, foods high in trans fats and processed foods; Increase the amount of vegetables in your diet, aim for five to six portions or more of

different veg everyday; Increase fibre intake – eating more vegetables is part of this but you can also add more fibre into your diet by soaking chia seeds or psyllium husk in a glass of water and drinking this daily.

One of the reasons this approach is more beneficial than taking probiotics on their own is that eating a diverse range of vegetables, will increase the diversity of your microbiome and increasing fibre will help your gut bacteria survive as this is the fuel they need.

As The Human Microbiome Research Project has found, the more diverse your gut bacteria is, the healthier you will be.

Eoin Roe is a Certified Functional Medicine Practitioner and a Chiropractor based in Skibbereen. If you would like help with gut issues, autoimmunity, blood sugar issues or joint and muscle problems please contact him through our new website www.roehealth.ie. You can book a chiropractic appointment directly through the website or use the contact us form.

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IMAGE

Louise O'Dwyer
Image Consultant

Because I do what I do, my conversation topics with people can sometimes vary from the bizarre to the ridiculous. As human beings go, we are so complicated, sometimes so simple and other times...there simply are just no words to describe what can happen to us in any one day or even from minute to minute. We want to do our best, look our best, and get to the end of every day knowing that we put our best foot or shoe forward. So many pursue a life of happiness, when, in fact, there will only ever be moments of happiness in between the stress and strains that life undoubtedly will fling at us. These moments are to be cherished; they are the times that keep us going when days are grey.

"I have everything I could possibly want," a client said recently, "absolutely everything." Somehow, from experience I suppose, I knew that there was a big BUT coming. "BUT," she said, "how do you solve the problem of these big boobs?" There it was. She said it and then laughed for a long time. "I'm so sick of lugging the weight of them around the place and constantly trying to cover them up; I've burst so many buttons that I've lost count at this stage." This woman is close to six foot tall, and yes, her bust is bigger than average, but her per-

sonality has a flamboyancy that outshines everything else. "For years I have tried to compress my chest or hide my breasts in oversized shirts or loose-fitting sweaters, keeping everything baggy and shapeless," she said. She needed clothes that accentuated her body...all of it, rather than clothes that hung from her boobs like a tent.

Dressing bigger boobs is hard but dressing them fashionably can be near impossible if you don't know what you are doing. The fashion industry is continually designing clothes for flat silhouettes, which makes it difficult for those with an ample bosom to wear their boobs to full capacity. One thing is for sure, vintage clothes were tailored for women and their womanly curves and we have lost that; everything is now streamlined and it can often look like we are 'jammed into' a hell of a lot of outfits. There's nothing sexier than a woman who is comfortable in her own body, a woman who embraces every part that she has been given. Others may disagree, especially those who are knee deep in their own body dysmorphia! The bottom line in this conversation is don't try to dress like Angelina Jolie if you have a giant ass, or like Jennifer Aniston if you are endowed with breasts as big as granny's famous plum puddings!

I have the utmost respect for this lady because a) she could easily afford a breast reduction but chooses not to have one; and b) she specifically asked me to write about this so that those, like her, suffering in silence, are given some options as to how to embrace their body.

How about we get the absolute 'no-no's' out of the way first. Turtlenecks or polo-necks are out. Dresses or tops with spaghetti or neck-holder straps offer little or no support so best to completely avoid them. Backless dresses or tops will never be a part of your wardrobe



– no matter what flash new 'promise you the sun, moon and stars' bra comes on the market. While strapless bras do exist for women with bigger breasts, it's generally not a good idea to wear anything strapless because there will always be tugging and manoeuvring and re-organising! Tops and dresses with flounces and ruffles can make the bust look even more full.

Start by spending an absolute fortune on your bras because you are fighting a losing battle if you don't wear a decent bra with ample support. They can be better than Spanx at making you look slimmer and can even improve your posture. Get properly fitted and ask for the most expensive bra in that size, then

work backwards in price so you can see and feel the difference that spending more or less on a bra actually makes. Do this before you buy another stitch of clothing for therein lies your holy grail.

Learn how to accommodate your ample bosom in ways that flatter. High necklines can make your whole torso look shorter and larger and draw too much attention to your breasts so opt for an open or sharp V neckline to break up the space and create longer more flattering lines.

Wrap styles – whether it is a coat, dress or a top – allow individual adjustments, have an open neckline, flatter your waistline and follow the natural curve of your breasts, without



that tent-like look.

Tops with ties or twists towards the bottom create a waist under your boobs, which is welcomed, very flattering, and gets rid of that shapeless look and feel.

Wear jewellery above your bust to draw attention toward your face. Wearing too long a chain can add unnecessary volume to your chest.

Look for 'slightly' looser fitting dresses in your 'wow' colours that can be tied with a belt. They give you enough room while still giving a beautiful shape.

Darts and narrow belts always accentuate the waist.

Voluminous skirts or trousers balance the silhouette.

A heart neckline with its curved lines is ideal for special occasions when you want to show off your cleavage in a tasteful way.

Find a great dressmaker who will put snap buttons into your shirts so there is zero gaping.

All of these tips will work for some of you and some of these tips will work for all of you, so enjoy, and you can thank my frank client for nudging me to devote an entire article to big boobies. Find a way to love and accept them, no matter how big or small they are.

Only two things are certain in life: Death and if you fall asleep in a tank top, you will wake up with a boob hanging out!

Breast cancer survivors urge women not to ignore the warning signs

Breast cancer survivors from around the country are urging women to join the Care for Your Pair movement, learn the warning signs for breast cancer and speak to two loved ones about breast health.

To mark Breast Cancer Awareness Month this October, the Irish Cancer Society's new early detection campaign aims to get Ireland talking about breast health and the signs and symptoms of breast cancer.

Grace Slattery from Co. Galway was studying for her final exams to become an advanced

paramedic when she noticed some stiffening in her breast. She regrets ignoring the symptoms for a number of months, which led to her undergoing a double mastectomy and extensive treatment.

"I do think if I had got myself checked at the start when I initially found the changes in my breast that I would have probably been able to avoid all of that hassle. I've been incredibly lucky since then, but everyone thinks it won't happen to them and I was definitely one of those. Checking your breasts is so important, and to know your body and know

what's usual for you".

Mum of one, Catriona Kavanagh (38) was also diagnosed with breast cancer in May 2019, just one week after she discovered a lump under her right breast. She firmly believes that acting quickly, and visiting her GP immediately, contributed hugely to her positive outcome. She urges all women to be aware of their own bodies and to seek immediate medical advice if they notice anything out of the ordinary.

"Early detection is the best treatment out there. You know your own body – so if you notice

anything unusual at all, go get it checked out. Care for your pair, chat to your friends and family too and encourage them to know the signs and symptoms and to act quickly if they notice anything unusual at all" she says.

More than 3,600 women and around 40 men are diagnosed with breast cancer each year in Ireland. It is more common in women over 50, but it is important to breast aware at every age.

Aileen McHale, Cancer Information Services Manager at the Irish Cancer Society said, "It is crucial that all women are

breast aware at every stage of life. We are delighted to launch this year's breast cancer awareness campaign, 'Care for your Pair' encouraging the women of Ireland to check themselves and talk to two friends about breast health, because early detection of breast cancer increases treatment options and ultimately saves lives. If you notice anything unusual, such as changes in breast/arm/pit shape or texture, unexplained fatigue or unexplained weight loss please visit your GP without delay".

Centra, who have kindly supported the Society's breast cancer

awareness campaign for the past 12 years, will be highlighting the 'Care for your Pair' message and encouraging customers to make a €1 till donation in store from October 1-3 in selected Centra stores nationwide.

All funds raised through 'Care for your Pair' will go directly to support breast cancer patients by providing crucial cancer services, such as the Irish Cancer Society Support Line, Driver service, Night Nursing service and free counselling.

Visit cancer.ie/careforyourpair

people Arts & Entertainment

Cork playwright Micheál Lovett launches debut novel to critical acclaim

Dixi Books of London, are delighted to be publishing the debut novel by Irish playwright, Micheál Lovett, entitled 'Realm of the Hare'.

Set in Kerry, Cork and Oxford, this magical story melds together Irish mythology, sorcery and the ever-growing challenge of climate change in a legendary tale of good versus evil, nature versus man, and Ullanite versus the Regnum.

Realm of the Hare tells the story of Boudicca Moriarty.



A young girl from Oxford, whose mother

has mysteriously disappeared and she returns to the care of her grandparents in Co Kerry. Here she finds a mysterious locket containing a tiny book,

leading her to join forces with a wild hare called 'Finn'.

Their journey to the ancient world of the Ullauns, in nearby Killarney National Park, and join a band of child warriors called The Ullaunites, who are the

last defenders of Nature from the Regnum, a dark army led by Mustela, who craves Nature and the power of its secrets.

To survive, Boudicca must leave behind her childhood and become an Ullaunite warrior and protect Nature, before all is lost to the Regnum.

Former Writer in Residence at the Everyman Palace, Micheál Lovett is a critically acclaimed playwright born in Mogeely and reared in North Cork.

His debut play 'The Dead-

man's Beard', toured Nationally in 2001, 2002 and 2013, 'This Ebony Bird' Cork Opera House Smock Alley 2005, 2011, 'Jumping the Sharks' starring Don Wycherley, Smock Alley, Cork and Limerick. 'Tricky' London 2004, 'Macbeth at the Gates' New Orleans, US 2007. 'My Heart Upset the Moon' RTE Radio 1. He has written for numerous TV shows in Australia with Endemol Shine and Channel 7.

He is also one of the founding

members of Blood in the Alley Productions with Geoff Gould.

Eddie Lenihan, Irish Folklorist and Author described Realm of the Hare as "An outstanding tale for young and old alike. Here is a book based very much on familiar territory- Killarney, London – yet exploring heights and depths of other worlds- some of them uncomfortably close to us though invisible to our eyes."

Available in all local book-shops.

Works of poet Mick Flynn are preserved in Ballinascarthy

A recent book launch in Ballinascarthy has ensured the preservation of written works by Mick Flynn of Tullymurrihy (1898-1970), who was simply known as 'The Poet'.

Mick's songs, poems and play titles have been compiled and published by local woman Kate Crowley.

Local historian Patrick Canniffe, a grand-nephew of Mick, launched the book at an outdoor ceremony at Mick's homestead, surrounded by his friends, relations and neighbours. Children in the O'Flynn family – Peter, Philip, Edel and Colm – stole the show with a recitation of 'The Scarecrow'.

Prior to the launch a graveside oration took place at Mick's final resting place in Kilbrogan cemetery, where two of his many songs, 'Mike Murphy's Poitín' and 'St Mologa', were sung by Jerry Calnan and Patrick Hennessy.

Mick Flynn was born in 1898 and went to school in Clogagh, his only formal schooling, before he worked the family farm. He was a gifted scribe, always abreast of politics, and drew his inspiration from everyday



Pictured at Mick's homestead are Patrick Canniffe who launched the book and Kate Crowley who compiled it.

happenings, both locally and nationally. Mick always carried a pencil and paper and could be seen anywhere, anytime, jotting down verses of poems and songs. His plays were shown in community halls in Gaggin, Ballinascarthy, Crookstown, Barryroe and Clonakilty.

It is startling how much Mick

knew about the world, the solar system and politics, considering he never drove a car or even rode a bicycle! Although he lived in an era with no phones or television, he did have a radio and read the newspapers religiously.

Although everyday life was simple for Mick, he had a vision

far beyond what his eye could see and his witty written works portray all this and more.

'A Cruinniú of Songs, Poems & Plays Penned by Mick Flynn The Poet' is a collection of Mick's songs, including Susie in the Red Caravan, The Reactor, Sweet Enniskeane and Day Old Chicks. Books are available by contacting (086) 4540981.

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MOVIES THIS MONTH



The O'Flynn family from Tullymurrihy reciting 'The Scarecrow' – children Colm, Edel, Philip and Peter with Dad Edward and Grandad John.

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WE'RE COMING BACK FOR YOU!

people Arts & Entertainment

Les Clague Exhibition



Clonakilty Community Arts Centre is delighted to announce a new exhibition of paintings by Clonakilty artist Les Clague.

The exhibition opens on Saturday October 2 at 7.30pm and runs to Saturday October 30.

Gallery Opening times are Tuesday to Sunday 11am to 5pm. Asna Square, Clonakilty.



Ruairí Ó Donnabháin, a choreographer and dancer in residence on Cape Clear, was this year's Oíche Chultúir Ambassador for An Ghaeltacht.

Ruairí is reimagining himself, and the world around him, through dance. He has hosted European award-winning festivals and events and he also choreographs new dances, as well as collaborating as a dancer on numerous projects internationally and in Ireland. He works internationally and, in 2019, created a language-based arts residency on Cape Clear.

Siobhán Ní Dhuinnín is a dance artist based in Cork. Her primary focus is on place-based and site-specific work, manifesting in film and live performance. She seeks to question how the human body engages with the earth in a way that gives agency to both.

Siobhán is dancer in residence at Ionad Cultúrtha Baile Bhuirne.

Oíche Chultúir / Culture Night saw Ruairí invite Siobhán to Cape Clear to join him in creating a new dance piece on the island. The project aimed to nurture and strengthen the relationship between artists in different Gaeltacht areas.

In the news Crossword

Across

- 2. Unlike Irish soldiers of old, these wild birds are heading towards our shores for winter. (5)
- 5. Hillary has taken this role from Queen. (10)
- 10. This antipodean city suffered a shock in September. (9)
- 11. Born in the East, she became an icon for The West before retiring. (6,6)
- 12. He will soon serenade girlish Nancy in Cork rather than Galway. (2,7)
- 14. Cork nailed its colours to the mast in bid to host this watery competition. (8,3)
- 15. Zeus sheds a tear because this stage has somewhat lost its sporty sounding moniker. (7)
- 16. Warbler Mariah's new tippie. (5,5)



Sudoku

The goal of Sudoku is to fill a 9×9 grid with numbers so that each row, column and 3×3 section contain all of the digits between 1 and 9

		1					7	
6						1		5
				6				
3		2						8
	6				5	4	2	
8	4							6
	7			4				
		9	8		2			
				7	1	3		

#206673 Difficulty: moderate

		3						
			7	2	4			1
		4	8			7		
		9	5					
	4					3		
6			2	9	8		7	
	9		6			5		
5		2					6	
					9			2

#55962 Difficulty: hard

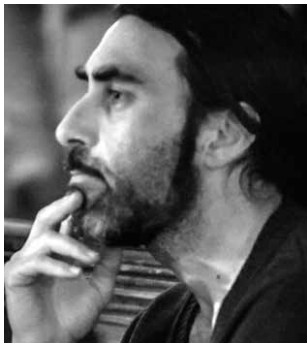
Down

- 1. Teenage Emma arrived last minute to win this. (3,2,4)
- 3. A certain Nokia from The Kingdom has been irritating all in this seat of power. (4,7)
- 4. The source of fireworks in La Palma. (7)
- 5. Mixed up Corki the Parrot is grounded for now. (4,7)
- 6. Reminded us that, though short in stature, he is figurehead of the whole land. (7,1,7)
- 7. Wally was last spotted in this cold land of warm baths. (7)
- 8. Last chance to pick these for your Crème de Mûre. (12)
- 9. Lioness of golf who roared to victory stateside. (5,7)
- 13. Birthplace of Typhoid Mary who featured recently on RTE. (6)

Answers on page 55!

people Arts & Entertainment

Johnny Bugler: Driftwood, etching and the surfaces of memory



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.

With Rembrandt in Print showing at the Crawford Art Gallery in Cork and a plethora of print-making exhibitions around the country, the art of printmaking in Ireland is enjoying a well-deserved spotlight. ‘Diamond Point’, celebrating 60 years of Graphic Studio Dublin showed through September in the Blue House Gallery, Schull, as did a 30 year anniversary show for Cork Printmakers in Working Artist Studios, Ballydehob.

Rather than writing up a general survey of the printmaking scene, however, I am in this article focusing on a single artist, who for many years worked as a technician and tutor at Cork Printmakers, before retraining as a teacher and continuing to focus on his own practice. This artist is Johnny Bugler, whose masterful prints, sensitive photography and inventive and arresting assemblage have been quietly accruing into a subtle and fascinating oeuvre.

The ambient trace and the hidden history of things are the leitmotifs of the work of this multi-disciplinary artist, a West Cork native living and working in Cork city. Bugler is a Master Printmaker, however his work (sometimes reminiscent of Joseph Cornell) extends beyond print into assemblage, photography, film and installation.

Bugler’s installation work in the Elizabeth Fort (Cork city), part of the Elsewhere exhibition of 2017, was an excellent example of his ability to combine elements as diverse as photography, found objects, motion, film, lighting and sound recording into a heightened poetic experience. His site specific works included ‘Bombers and Birdsong’, ‘Man’, ‘Woman’,

‘Drawing a Line in the Sky’ and ‘Mollusc Mine’.

‘Bombers and Birdsong’ was an installation of 300 suspended sea urchin shells, lit by a deep blue light, and floating to a “BBC sound recording of a nightingale, recorded whilst 197 Wellington and Lancaster bombers began flying overhead on their way to Mannheim”. According to Bugler, “the shells became bomb shells - fragile and beautiful but with a more sinister backstory.” On slow, suspended rotation in another nook of the former air-raid shelter was another shell-inspired work: ‘Mollusc Mine’, made from a fishing float and tusk shells, added to the poetic welding of fragile nature and the memory traces of war.

Bugler’s use of shells betrays his West Cork roots; the sea urchin shells, popularly known as Virgin Mary shells are iconic in the region. Bugler relates how he used to collect them on his daily swim: “It became a bit of a challenge to see how many I could find and bring back to the surface intact. I soon amassed a large collection and I found a use for them when I was offered the World War II era bomb shelter of Elizabeth Fort.”

Two other works in the Elizabeth Fort installation were assemblage pieces with photography and act as a bridge here to his more dominant works in print and assemblage. ‘Man’ made from discarded wood, metal and leather, with two old photographs of servicemen inserted, hinted at the work to come in Bugler’s 2019 solo exhibition ‘Blue Notes’.

Asked about his work in assemblage Bugler relates: “When I pick up a piece of driftwood on the beach I like to imagine the life that it has had. How far has it travelled? Who painted on those layers and layers of paint? What beloved boat did it form part of? I like that the salty water and the turbulence of the



Water Boys, photo-etching, carborundum, screen-print, 99 x 45 cm, edition of 4

sea and the sand have given it a patina and texture that would be impossible to replicate by a human hand. Objects that are marked with signs of having had another life or another use are the ones that offer most interest to me. They often might have a sense of what the Japanese call Wabi Sabi; a kind of minimalist beauty in texture and imperfection.”

‘Seascape I’, II & III from the Blue Notes exhibition (2019) reveal the master printmaker in dialogue with the driftwood collector. In Seascape I a photopolymer etching of the sea is placed discreetly in the bottom left of the panel with pieces of driftwood and book cloth breaking up the square and the surface, creating a distinctly postmodern image. In Seascape III, the largest and most memorable work in the show, a large screen-print of the sea is broken up by a rusted fridge door, both sitting upon a long horizontal piece of paint-flaked wood.

Asked about his work combining print with assemblage Bugler writes, “Printmaking can be very laborious sometimes and so it is very gratifying to combine printed images with found objects that have a sense



Seascape III, mixed media; screen-print on panel, driftwood, fridge door, 210 x 90 cm

of character and are ‘ready to go’. There is always so much care and attention to detail when printmaking as well as a long wait for the final product, and so it is liberating to work with something more immediate.”

Whilst Bugler is at his most inventive in combining materials his purely graphic works reveal his keen craftsmanship and sensitivity as a printmaker and analogue photographer. ‘Water Boys’, which combines carborundum, photopolymer etching and screen-print shows both his technical dexterity and sense of poetic possibility and

playfulness. The photographic images, drawn from travels in Northern Mozambique and Indonesia are filtered through the chance language of various print-making processes, thence emerging a shade closer to painting than photograph; the monochromatic ink and the placement of the images both flatten and dissemble the figures from their origins, lending the print a sense of dream-like recollection, as opposed to factual documentation.

Etching, carborundum and collograph are the processes which speak to the heart of

Bugler as a Printmaker. For him etching into steel “is quick and immediate and it can produce surprising and unexpected results”. Citing the printed work of Richard Diebenkorn and Paula Rego as early influences, Bugler has evolved as an artist of great technical acumen whose image making is at once deeply poetic and playful. He is an artist to look out for in Ireland’s rich and growing printmaking scene. For more of Bugler’s work visit www.johnnybugler.net.

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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.
email: astro@katearbon.com
www.katearbon.com

October Sun Signs

If you've been feeling a sense of tension or frustration in recent weeks things are about to change. October brings us a momentous release from inactivity or expectancy with four planets leaving their retrograde phase to progress forwards once more.

Mars plays a key role this month, as it expresses its strength and vigour through the social and balancing sign of Libra. Mars often acts as a trigger and will activate us into asserting our will or reaching for our desires. The Sun in Libra helps us to share with others and seek some harmonious solutions to any discord. The Sun Mars combination in Libra can bring a demand for social cohesion or collaboration. It's a time when those that stand apart from the socially acceptable trend could be seen as unwelcome resistance rather than as an individual taking a different path. Finding a balance that avoids exclusion is the higher expression of this energy, and it is required from us now.

As the Sun and Mars move

closer together in the sky from October 6 to 9, their heat and passion are amplified. This creates a lot of power and strength to push forwards giving the first weeks of the month a kind of turbocharge to bring in the next phase or new project.

There is a New Moon on October 6, which is the natural time for initiating a new direction or focus, and in Libra that focus is on our relationships. All personal connections are under the microscope now, as Pluto turns to travel forwards again. Pluto is about hidden forces that have power over our lives. It's our unconscious habits or buried fears. It represents what lies beneath the surface to be discovered, investigated, and released. Pluto can also represent toxins and pollutants that need to be purged from our system. There is a process with Pluto. Once discovered, hidden elements can be transformed in a beneficial, positive way so we can make new 'healthier' choices. Pluto has been in retrograde since late April and now the process that

started back then can be taken to the next level.

Mercury, the planet of information and communication, is currently retrograde and it joins with the Sun and Mars on October 9. During this conjunction, these planets are so close to the Sun they can't be seen, which means plans can be hatched behind the scenes. We may not fully know what has been cooked up by this pair until they become visible again towards the later weeks of the year. The timing of this significant Mars Mercury Sun conjunction ties in with the Saturn Uranus Square, which has dominated the freedom/restriction themes of 2021.

On October 11 Saturn turns direct after being retrograde since late May. This is another release of energy that brings the great planet of structure, consolidation, and boundaries back into action in a more obvious way. It also strengthens the third and final phase of the tense Saturn Uranus square, as it begins to move towards being exact again in late December. We

may find a new phase of the great reset and new normal are all lined up and ready to roll as we approach mid-month. This is a time of big social shifts and changes and there is no going back to what we were comfortable with before 2020. Our focus is turned to developing the kind of society we want for the future and how we want to connect to our communities. Issues with essential resources, basic commodities, and supply systems are going to be hot topics later in the month.

The final two planets to turn direct this month are Jupiter, which has been retrograde since mid-June, and Mercury, retrograde since late September. They both make this shift on October 18, which is quite a double act for effect. The big planet of expansion and justice is combined with the messenger planet, both in air signs. We can expect some news, information, and insights to come to light and further developments on matters that went quiet earlier this summer.

The area of life that will be most affected on a personal level will be

where both Libra and Aquarius are represented in your birth chart.

This is a time for clear communications with the ones you care for and those who take a prominent role in your life. The aim is towards better co-operation and greater understanding. This energy brings high hopes for reconciliation or resolution but differing personal goals or values need to be negotiated first.

The Full Moon on October 20 combines with Mars and a tense aspect to Pluto. This will highlight themes that emerged earlier in the month and now require positive action. The coming months will reveal more truths. It will be the next step in a process of eliminating what really causes fear and distrust between people. It's time to come together and form bonds with others who are sincere and have integrity.

October has a New Moon at 14 degrees Libra on October 6 at 12.05pm and a Full Moon at 28 degrees Aries on October 20 at 3.56pm.



Aries: The focus falls on your relationships from early October and you have difficulty distinguishing between your own feelings and the people closest to you. Tune in to yourself, and allow your partner or close friends to have their moods without imagining they always have something to do with your own actions. Connecting with others in a special moment can be enjoyed when close allies or partners become your focus but you could be thinking that you have all got a little too involved or caught up with each other recently and soon you'll need to stand back.



Taurus: You may waste too much energy on menial tasks, thus getting distracted from the broader visions in your life during these few weeks. You are likely to make yourself indispensable through being of service to the physical needs of others, and generally happy to take on a lot of tasks – both in your career and around the house. If you are not careful, however, other people will take advantage of you. Now though you should be really getting things together for yourself whilst you can keep the focus on the details. Once done, you'll be able to stand back and take pride in your accomplishments.



Gemini: Spontaneity is the keyword for you this month and it's time to loosen up and have some fun. Taking the lead and making some bold statements is also an option. Going just a little bit over the top will be acceptable now as this is a general time of celebration for all. Passion and intensity can run rampant as your enthusiasm overflows so get creative with your energy. You have a strong emotional need for some romantic encounters but you do know how to nurture and maintain the romance in an existing relationship too. So go the extra mile and enjoy!



Cancer: During October you might find you need to spend more time at home and you can find great pleasure in looking after loved ones, cooking, making home improvements etc. You feel very sensitive to the moods of others, especially if you share your personal space. Although you'll be strongly motivated to create a caring and secure environment, a crowd can be claustrophobic. You can get on each other's nerves. This is a time to acknowledge the comfortable and familiar environment that supports you. Draw on it as a source of strength but avoid being over-dominant or demanding.



Leo: Any trying or difficult emotional experiences you have early this month result from having strong differences of opinion with someone you have to deal with every day. When you argue your case you are easily swayed by irrational arguments and emotions. Could it be that everybody is trying to get their message through but no one is listening? Try not to get distracted whilst you tie up important loose ends and meet deadlines. You need to keep some time for a new project or mental challenge in later weeks. You could be making plans for travelling or starting a new class or training programme.



Virgo: Mid-October will find you focusing on your personal resources and economic fluctuations. You can be a very kind and giving person but you also need to feel secure. Being a little more concerned with your financial status now is probably a good thing although some people may view you as unusually materialistic and possessive. This is a time to cash in on some of your hard-earned investments and name your price for your efforts. Be confident in your skills and abilities and turn them to good use now as others will notice and reward you later.



Libra: By mid-month you are likely to have put doubts behind you and become a glowing example of both vitality and attractiveness. Let your personality truly shine and you can expect to have a powerful impact on your surroundings through your moods and feelings. You may be seen as unusually emotional or sentimental, but you know how to provide a truly nurturing environment for others. You're motivated to show how much concern and care you have for them now. Bring any critical personal projects to a conclusion whilst you have the energy required to satisfy your own high standards.



Scorpio: You need to withdraw from the world from time to time and commune with nature or your inner feelings. During October you are extremely sensitive to your environment and could spend a lot of time enveloped in a very private emotional world. Ideally, create a place of your own which is sacred to you where you can be alone. In this private retreat, you can become aware of your many dreams and longings. Try to work more consciously with the inner world of your imagination through creative work or meditative practice for a few days.



Sagittarius: You have the desire for strong bonds with your friends and you are especially sensitive to how they treat you this month. You are both caring and concerned for their personal development, but easily hurt if they let you down in any way. Ensure that you spend time only with people that elevate and support you. Disconnect from the daily grind and tap into your lighter side for a while. Count your blessings and remember that enjoyment of the good life is more about your own sense of wellbeing, not money, friendship or possessions.



Capricorn: You have a strong sense of duty and you can feel that your role is primarily to live up to family or social expectations in early October. You may have been striving to achieve some predefined goals and you want the recognition now. Over the coming weeks, you can reach out for what you want for yourself. Stand in the spotlight whilst acting the part of your unique self in all your glory. Ensure you take time out to wave your own flag and get noticed for your contribution before a new surge of personal creativity rolls in.



Aquarius: Think big and stretch your imagination this month. In the past, you will have unconsciously been affected by the convictions and values of those close to you. The powerful need for a strong belief to hold on to that is solid and true for you demand your attention now. During these few weeks as your interest in philosophical and spiritual areas is heightened use the time to expand your inner window on the world and break new ground. The feeling of suddenly having understood something can have you wondering now what to do with it all, but that will take care of itself down the line.



Pisces: As October progresses your experiences will confirm that you must not depend on other people or your possessions to provide emotional security for you. This could be a very transformative few weeks when you might unearth resources within yourself that you were previously unaware of. Allow yourself to stand aside for a moment and recognise where any deals and contracts have tied up your energy. You no longer need to rely on certain items or belongings as you become more emotionally stable. Clear out any useless things you've been hoarding, the sense of space and freedom will do you good. If you've been feeling a sense of tension or frustration in recent weeks things are about to change. October brings us a momentous release from inactivity or expectancy with four planets leaving their retrograde phase to progress forwards once more.

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COMPETITION

Win tickets to 'Krapp's Last Tape' at The Everyman

One of Samuel Beckett's most iconic plays, 'Krapp's Last Tape', is coming to The Everyman on Tuesday October 19 and Wednesday October 20, at 8pm both nights.

First produced in 1958, 'Krapp's Last Tape' is one of the earliest one man plays produced for the stage and is considered by many critics to be Beckett's most perfect piece of writing for the theatre.

69-year-old Krapp is celebrating his birthday while listening to tapes of himself at 39. Poor old Krapp has only the "sour curd and the iron stool" to look forward to in his old age.



Fun, compelling, comic and starring Denis Conway as Krapp, this new production embraces the elements of clown while remaining faithful to the powerful text.

More info www.everyman-cork.com | 021 4501673

To be in with a chance of winning two tickets for Tuesday 19 October, 8pm send your name and phone number with 'Everyman' in the subject line to info@westcorkpeople.ie before October 7.

On 'The Same Page'



The Same Page Anthology is the newest literary publication out of Cork, joining the ranks of many fine journals and anthologies produced in the county each year. Among the excellent writers featured in The Same Page Anthology, Vol. 1 are West Cork's own Michael Ray and Colm Scully, among others. Michael's poem 'On struggling with Marx' impresses with its original content, unique voice, and endless re-readability. Michael Ray is not only an accomplished poet, but also a glass and multimedia artist

known for many local and national projects.

Colm Scully's poem 'Riddle' delights and intrigues with its unusual form and thoughtful theme. Colm is a widely published poet and has recently won several awards for his poetry films. He has also put together an excellent two-part poetry film workshop for DeBarra's Spoken Word. The first session aired on zoom in September. The next session, on October 6, will give further in-depth information about the process of creating poetry clips as well as show the results. Expect lots of visual delights, lively discussions, Q&A, and an open mic that is open to all. To receive the zoom link on the day, send an email to debarrasspokenword@gmail.com or go to the event on their Facebook page 'psoken.wrod'.

The Same Page was founded by the students of Creative Writing at UCC amidst the unusual challenges presented to the people of Ireland during the 2020 lockdown. Like many new Irish projects, groups, and initiatives, these students worked to

turn lockdown challenges into new opportunities, persevering through innovative thinking. The Same Page project manager, Lauren O'Donovan, explained, "Typically, Creative Writing students at UCC complete work experience in literary fields throughout the program. This might be assisting at a festival, interning at a publishing house, or another industry relevant role. But because of social distancing and lockdown, this type of work experience was completely unavailable to us in 2020. We talked together as a group and thought, why not make our own work experience opportunity?"

The 2020-21 class of UCC Creative Writing students decided to launch a publishing press, The Same Page. Throughout the year they learned the ropes of the publishing industry from leaders in the field such as Danny Denton (Editor of The Stinging Fly), and Eimear Ryan (Editor of Banshee), under the guidance of Eibhear Walshe (Head of Creative Writing at UCC). They issued a call for submissions which requested

poetry and prose, and received over 350 pieces of work from around the world. Working as a democratic team, the class of 11 students selected work by 43 Irish writers and international writers with Irish connections. After ten months of hard-work, the book was typeset, proofread, and sent to the local printer City Print Ltd, Cork. Original artwork by Róisín Leggett Bohan, an abstract painting titled Spill, was generously donated for the cover of the book. Printing costs were funded by the UCC Boole Library and the UCC School of English, and all proceeds from the sale of The Same Page Anthology will be donated to The Sexual Violence Centre, Cork.

The book will soon be on shelves in Vibes and Scribes, Waterstones, and Carrigaline Bookshop in Cork. It will also be available in Charlie Byrne's Bookshop, and Bell Book and Candle in Galway. A launch party including live readings is also planned for later this year when event restrictions are relaxed.

Third edition of 'Irish Ceramics' lauded

The third edition of Irish Ceramics is a hardback book printed, designed, and produced in Ireland. Consisting of 304 pages, it is the largest compilation ever recorded of Irish Ceramic Artists working today. It is a pictorial record of great significance and an essential and important showcase for those artists included in the book. The book includes over 180 artists selected by their peers.



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Masters of Tradition Festival 2021

Masters of Tradition will take place online this year but its mission remains the same – to journey to the heart of Irish music and provide a platform where subtle elements of the music can be heard.

Concerts have been pre-recorded in Bantry House, Future Forests in Kealkil, and Abbestwry Church in Skibbereen. They will be streamed each Wednesday evening until November 17, and will also be available on-demand after the initial streaming.

As ever, the Festival is headlined by its Artistic Director Martin Hayes and he will be joined by Bruce Molsky, Steve Cooney, John Walsh and Phil Robson; singers Christine Tobin and John Hoban; multi instrumentalists Francesco Turrissi and Brian Donnellan; pianist and composer Cormac McCarthy; poet Doireann Ní Ghríofa; accordionist Derek Hickey; uilleann piper David Power; uilleann piper Mick O'Brien, flautist Emer Mayock and fiddler Aoife Ní Bhriain; violinist Marja Gaynor and more.

For details go to westcorkmusic.ie.

Crossword answers

Across: 2. Geese; 5. Chancellor; 10. Melbourne; 11. Angela Merkel; 12. Ed Sheeran; 14. Americas Cup; 15. Olympia; 16. Black Irish
Down: 1. The US Open; 3. Dail Eireann. 4. Volcano; 5. Cork Airport; 6. Michael D Higgins; 7. Iceland. 12. Blackberries; 9. Leona Maguire; 13. Tyrone

Rembrandt's finest prints go on display at Crawford Art Gallery

A new exhibition at Cork's Crawford Art Gallery invites visitors to encounter the astonishing work of Rembrandt van Rijn. 'Rembrandt in Print' presents 50 of the Dutch Master's finest works from the Ashmolean Museum's world-class collection of over 200 etchings and drypoints.

Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669) is widely hailed as one of the greatest painters of the Dutch Golden Age and one of the most experimental printmakers of the seventeenth century. This touring exhibition presents Rembrandt as an unrivalled storyteller through a selection of outstanding prints ranging from 1630 until the late 1650s.

Through these works the public will be exposed to the artist's inventive techniques and extraordinary skills. The prints, which are almost 400 years old, are perfectly preserved and, though small in scale, reveal the exquisite, rich detail of his work. Rembrandt is best known for his self-portraits and scenes of everyday life.

The exhibition, which has been on hold for 16 months, is free to the public and open daily

at Crawford Art Gallery, the only Irish venue where Rembrandt's prints can be seen. It is fitting that the Dutch Master be exhibited in the historic gallery at Emmet Place, once the city's Custom House when Cork was a thriving merchant port, due in part to Dutch trade.

An extensive educational programme from the Learn and Explore team at the Gallery will accompany this exhibition introducing a new generation of younger visitors to the work of a legendary Dutch Master.

In collaboration with Cork Printmakers, a Print Studio will also be set up in Crawford Art Gallery to explore the tools, processes, and practice of contemporary printmaking. Presented in parallel with Rembrandt in Print, it will recreate a printmaker's studio in the heart of the gallery and will be accompanied by workshops and online resources.

On the prints selected for the Irish debut, Ashmolean Curator, An Van Camp says: "This collection of 50 works is the best-of-the best of the Ashmolean's outstanding Rembrandt prints collection. He created extraordinary prints by using existing

techniques in his own artistic and innovative way. His prints range from squiggly, drawing-like sketches to more pictorial, heavily-hatched compositions. While apparently quite diverse at first sight, all Rembrandt's printed works are characterised by his talent for storytelling and his keen observational skills. His subjects are steeped in drama, adding atmosphere to views of the Dutch countryside or imbuing biblical scenes with lively characters."

While most other contemporary printmakers made prints of historical, religious, or mythological subjects, Rembrandt also delighted in presenting everyday scenes. The exhibition includes a range of these images such as intimate family studies, a selection of confronting life-drawn nudes, and carefully detailed characters observed on the streets including beggars, peasants, Ringball players, and the repugnant Rat Catcher



(1632). A variety of subjects matters from portraiture to landscape, from the biblical to the everyday are explored in the exhibition, revealing Rembrandt's extraordinary talent but also his playful exploration of printmaking techniques.

Crawford Art Gallery's partnership with KLM Royal Dutch Airlines to bring Rembrandt in Print to Ireland is a fitting tribute to past and future links between Ireland and the Netherlands.

This exhibition has been organised by the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. It runs from September 17 2021 – January 9, 2022

Exhibition and associated programmes made possible with the support of KLM Royal Dutch Airlines and Cork City Council.

people Arts & Entertainment

COMPETITION

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Win a family pass to West Cork Model Railway

To be in with a chance of winning a family pass to West Cork Model Railway, take a photo of your completed colouring and email it with your name, age and guardian's phone number with 'Model Railway Competition' in the subject line to info@westcorkpeople.ie before October 7.

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Glengarriff ghouls

Something ghastly is taking place in Glengarriff this Halloween Weekend, October 30-31. On Saturday and Sunday the village's streets will host all sorts of ghosts and ghouls, with many fun and free events planned and high-spirits guaranteed.

Let the kids be transformed into their favourite spooky characters by having their faces painted. Look forward to spooky games, gruesome snacks for everyone, face painting, a halloween quiz with prizes, treats for those who come in costume, scary stories and halloween movies.

Do the dress up scary fairy walk, and much more!

See www.visitglengarriff.ie and @visitglengarriff on Facebook and Instagram for more.

Spookiness coming to Aaaaah-field and Rooar-thbarry

Boo-fest will take place this mid term October 22-31 in Ardfield Rathbarry parish. Get in the spirit of things with locals and celebrate Halloween in spooktacular style to make it one to remember.

There is a fantastic program of events planned to keep you entertained throughout the week, all while raising funds for the village playground, Ardfield Rathbarry Playground Group and the Little People of Ireland charity. Visit the Ardfield Summer festival Facebook page or instagram for updates.



people Arts & Entertainment

Call for poetry and writing for specially commissioned publications

Cork County Council will create two bespoke publications featuring poetry, thoughts and public recollections around the events of 1921 and how they relate to Cork County and the Ireland that we live in today.

This year marks 100 years of a number of key events in the War of Independence. More than 20 ambushes together with over 30 assassinations and executions took place across Cork County during 1921. 1921 was also the year that witnessed the Truce and the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty.

As part of a series of commemorative projects, Cork County Council has launched a poetry competition for secondary schools within the county. The Council is also seeking written essays from anyone with an interest in this period of history for a publication titled 'Thoughts of Independence'.

Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Gillian Coughlan

highlighted how, "The Truce and the signing of the Treaty one hundred years ago were momentous occasions in Irish history. It is timely to ask ourselves, is the present reflective of a future that had been dreamed of? When reflecting on the past we get a better sense of ourselves in the world today, and what tomorrow could look like. 1921 was a significant year in the County of Cork with ambushes in Dripsey, Cúl na Cathrach, The Battle of Crossbarry, and the greatest loss of Republican life at any War of Independence engagement, the Clonmult Ambush. There were house raids, barracks attacks, disappearances, rescues and close to 100 shootings. I hope that students and people of all ages will submit their poems or essays and show that 100 years later, we still remember."

Council's Commemorations Committee, poems will be chosen to feature in a bespoke commemorative poetry

publication. Every student who submits a poem will receive a copy of the publication with additional prizes for specially selected entries and the overall secondary school winner.

For the 'Thoughts of Independence' publication, the Commemorations Committee is seeking contemporary writings and insights into the events of 100 years ago and what they mean for us today. Historians, heritage societies, academics, students and anyone with an interest in this aspect of Cork's history is invited to submit an essay. A number of essays will feature in a bespoke publication which will form Book 1 of 2 with the second book undertaken in 2022/23 and focusing on the Civil War. Every person who submits an essay will receive a copy of the publication.

The closing date for receipt of all poems and essays is Friday, October 29 and entries can be emailed to commemorations@corkcoco.ie.

The Frank and Walters announced for outdoor gig in Bandon

One of Cork's most acclaimed pop groups, The Frank and Walters, will play a special outdoor show for over 200 people in Bandon on Sunday October 10. Presented by Cork County Council in conjunction with The Good Room, The Frank and Walters will take to the stage on St Patrick's Quay in the West Cork town as part of the Council's Cork Co Co Pops Series, an expansive programme of events aimed at supporting performers and bringing live events to local communities.

Best known for their hit 'After All', which rose through the charts when it was first released in 1992, The Frank and Walters welcomed a whole new audience when 'After All' made its way back into the charts more than 25 years later having featured in the RTE/

BBC TV series The Young Offenders in 2018. The Frank and Walters will be supported by harmony loving Folk/Pop duo from Bandon, 'The Shruggs', comprising of long-time friends and Musicians James Downing and Kees Hendrickx.

Mayor of the County of Cork, and fellow Bandon resident, Cllr Gillian Coughlan warmly welcomed the special performance saying, "It's wonderful to have The Frank and Walters playing in Bandon as one of the closing events of the Cork Co Co Pops Series. They are a band that will appeal to audiences young and old and I'm sure this will be a show not to be missed, especially as it will also feature our own, incredibly talented, The Shruggs, who I know will be a superb opening act."

Chief Executive of Cork County Council, Tim Lucey, added, "Cork Co Co Pops is part of a suite of measures provided by Cork County Council to support performers and bring live events directly into local communities. It certainly achieved that throughout the Summer where live outdoor performances were on offer across the county's parks, cafes, markets and beaches and has proven to be an enormous success."

Tickets for the event are €20 plus booking fee and are available from www.uTicket.ie The Gates at Harte's Car Park on Patrick's Quay will open at 7pm on Sunday 10 October. This event is funded by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media under the Local Live Performance Programming Scheme.

people Sport & Fitness

West Cork man organises Air Ambulance charity cycle two months after serious accident

The first Air Ambulance Charity Cycle will take place in West Cork on Saturday, October 2. Caheragh native, Darren Lynch is organising the 60km event to thank the Irish Community Air Ambulance following his own experience this summer. Darren was involved in a serious cycling accident in July and was treated at the scene and then airlifted to hospital to treat his injuries by the crew of the charity Air Ambulance.

The Irish Community Air Ambulance is Ireland's first and only charity-funded HEMS Air Ambulance. It works in partnership with the National Ambulance Service and responds to serious incidents and medical emergencies from its base in Rathcoole in North Cork.

Darren Lynch was one of over 400 cyclists taking part in the Mizen Looper Charity Cycle from Drimoleague to Mizen Head on July 24, 2021. The 31-year-old was an hour into the event, just outside Schull, when the accident occurred, suffering injuries to his head and face.

Darren describes his memories of the day, "I remember everything except the crash. I was transferred to the local sports pitch in Schull. The

helicopter landed just as the ambulance was entering the field, it was so well coordinated. The level of care I got even inside the Air Ambulance, the peace of mind, I still can't find the words to explain how much it means to me. From the moment the Air Ambulance arrived, I felt like I was in safe hands and that it was the start of my road to recovery. Schull is 100km from Cork City, which is at least an hour and a half by road. I was in Cork in 18 minutes, we landed in Bishopstown and I was brought straight to A&E, where I had X-rays, CT and MRI scans. Thankfully, my scans were clear. If they hadn't been and I had not been brought to hospital so quickly, we could have been dealing with a very different outcome."

The Air Ambulance Charity Cycle will take place on Saturday, October 2. The 60km event is suitable for cyclists of all abilities, it starts and finishes in Skibbereen taking in some key areas in West Cork. Registration begins at 9.30am with a rolling start due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Darren came up with the idea of a fundraiser for the Irish Community Air Ambulance with his friends when

he was recovering at home, "It's important for me to turn a negative situation into a positive one. I'm almost fully recovered now thanks to all the emergency services, medical professionals and fellow cyclists who helped me that day. We know that the Irish Community Air Ambulance is only called to serious emergencies and that each mission costs around €3,500, which has to be fundraised or donated. The charity cycle is an opportunity for me to thank them for the care they gave me in July and hopefully help fund some of its life saving missions in the future. You don't realise the importance of this service until it impacts you or someone close to you. I want to use this experience to show that I am a survivor, that I came out the other end and that it could have been far worse. I want people to see no matter how hard it seems at the time; the comeback will always be greater than the setback."

CEO of the Irish Community Air Ambulance is Micheál Sheridan, "Our HEMS Air Ambulance is tasked to the most serious of incidents, often in rural and isolated locations like West Cork. It means a great deal to us when we see former

patients of ours doing so well and for Darren to be organising a charity event so soon after his accident really is inspiring. Community events both big and small are vital for us because we're not government funded. I know that the Air Ambulance Charity Cycle on October 2nd will help us to fund future missions and bring hope to people in emergency situations."

The entry fee for the Air Ambulance Charity Cycle is €50. Donations can also be made online. For more information about the service or to make a donation directly to the Irish Community Air Ambulance visit communityairambulance.ie.



Glengarriff Parkrun restarts

Glengarriff Parkrun, a free, fun, and friendly weekly 5k community event, has recommenced after a long break. Walk, jog, run, volunteer or spectate – it's up to you!

Join in every Saturday morning 9.30am-11am to connect with locals in the scenic Glengarriff Woods Nature Reserve. Gather for the Parkrun in the main parking area, which is a

short distance from the Nature Reserve Entrance.

The entrance to the woods is approximately 1km from Glengarriff village, on the Kenmare Road (N71).

Organisers ask that you don't forget your barcode, as no barcode means no result. You can do your 5k along without registering if you want to check parkrun out, but it's more fun to be on the results list. If you are

volunteering for timekeeping or scanning, the parkrun Virtual Volunteer app will ask for your barcode so bring it along please.

Please do not volunteer or run if you are feeling unwell or show any symptoms of Covid, or are a close contact.

If you want to register for parkrun and get a barcode, go to parkrun.ie/register

people Sport & Fitness

The impossible question: West Cork GAA's greatest club?

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.

There is little doubt that the West Cork club scene carries a rich and varied history. There are countless

stories of little guys punching above their weight and numerous intoxicating tales of eras in which famous beauties consistently stole the show. For the uninitiated, I am of course talking about West Cork's vibrant Gaelic football scene rather than its nightlife. Since the inception of the Cork Senior Football Championship, West Cork clubs have appeared in a staggering 84 senior football finals, emerging victorious on 39 occasions. In total, West Cork teams have secured a whopping haul of 151 county titles in both hurling and football across all grades to date. This is remarkable when one considers that just 17 per cent of Cork's 259 clubs are based in the West Cork area. When discussing the current and past status of Gaelic games in West Cork, the conversation inevitably shifts to one question. Who is the greatest West Cork GAA club of them all? When setting about this task earlier in the month, I thought that the answer could simply be determined by a quick search of the Cork football roll of honour. I was wrong. The GAA's aforementioned rich and varied history in West Cork means that a very expansive variety of factors need to be taken into consideration in attempting to answer this question!

It goes without saying that the main candidates are Bantry Blues, O'Donovan Rossa,

Castlehaven, and Clonakilty. West Cork's traditional big four certainly feature prominently in the aforementioned SFC roll of honour. However, one would have to ask if it is fair to omit the hurling strongholds of Newcestown, Bandon, and Kilbrittain who have consistently competed at intermediate level and above in both hurling and football and bred players such as Owen Sexton, Tim Crowley, and Kevin Kehily? The same question could be asked of Valley Rovers who have maintained a stellar consistency in both codes in addition to being the home of two former GAA Presidents in War of Independence veteran Sean McCarthy and legendary Cork hurler Con Murphy. They also produced noted players such as Alan Quirke, Kevin Canty, Elaine Burke, and Brendan O'Sullivan. Equally, one would have to consider the merits of clubs such as Ilen Rovers, Carbery Rangers, Doheny's, Naomh Abán, Ballingeary, and Adrigole who have defied sparse catchment areas to compete at intermediate/senior level on a regular basis. They have also aided Cork's inter-county prospects by developing players such as John Hayes, Kevin O'Sullivan, Kevin McMahon, John O'Rourke, Fachtna Collins, Anthony Lynch, Micheal Ó Croinín, Mick Scannell, John O'Driscoll, as well as the father-son pairing of Kevin

and Brendan Jer O'Sullivan. Consequently, there will be many observers who feel that West Cork's highly successful divisional sides ought to merit inclusion in this discussion. Beara have won senior honours on six occasions, along with the 1968 Munster Club title (Won when divisions were allowed to compete in the All-Ireland series). Carbery have tasted senior success on four occasions, while in 1994 they became the first and to date only West Cork side to win a senior hurling title.

Bantry Blues

The fortunes of Bantry Blues GAA club have ebbed and flowed to a remarkable extent over the last century. Although now consistently competing at intermediate/senior level, they were a Junior A club as recently as 1971. However, their haul of two senior and six intermediate county titles is admirable to say the least. The fact that they can count 2010 All Ireland Winning Captain Graham Canty, Declan Barron, Donal Hunt and Philip Clifford (who captained Cork to an All-Ireland Final loss to Meath in 1999) amongst their club members speaks volumes for their stature. All four have thirteen Munster Championship medals, three All Ireland Championship medals and six All Star awards between them.

O'Donovan Rossa

The fact that a club of O'Donovan Rossa's undoubted stature have only won one senior championship is a testament to how difficult it is to win Cork football's ultimate prize. However, their win in 1992 was followed up with an incredible All Ireland Club win in 1993. In doing so, they became the only West Cork club to achieve All Ireland Club glory at senior level. At intercounty level, O'Donovan Rossa Clubmen such as John Evans, Kevin O'Dwyer, Mick McCarthy, Conor McCarthy, Tony Davis, and Don Davis have won All Star Awards, All Ireland Titles and Munster Titles while representing the club.

Castlehaven

Castlehaven are undoubtedly one of Cork's most successful football clubs of the modern era. They have amassed five senior football championships between 1989 and 2013. They have also won Munster club championship honours in 1989, 1994 and 1997. In addition to this, Castlehaven players Niall Cahalane, Larry Tompkins, Michael Maguire, and John Cleary were integral figures in Cork's golden era and all four players collected All Ireland medals in 1989 and 1990. Tompkins and Cahalane also amassed five All Star awards between them. Haven clubmen Mark Collins, Brian

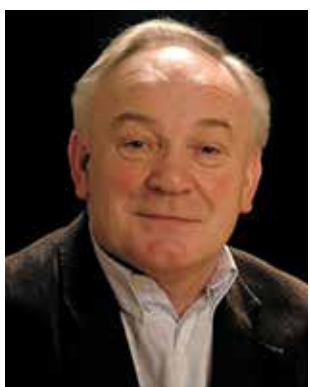
Hurley, Michael Hurley, Damien Cahalane and Conor Cahalane have all represented Cork and Castlehaven with distinction in recent seasons.

Clonakilty

Clonakilty have picked up senior football championship silverware on nice occasions in their storied history. They have also finished runners-up on 12 occasions, including a remarkably unfortunate run from 1932 to 1936, which saw them lose five successive finals. In an incredibly 'St. Michael's-like' development, they would lose again in 1938 before finally picking up their first silverware of the decade in 1939. Cork Team of the Millennium players Fachtna O'Donovan and Tadhgo Crowley won several county titles in Clonakilty colours, as did their 1945 All Ireland winning teammates Humphrey O'Neill, Ned Casey, and Moll O'Driscoll. In recent seasons Tom Clancy, Liam O'Donovan, Mark White, and Sean White have been flying the Clonakilty flag at inter-county level.

It seems that in my quest to provide a definitive answer to one of the more controversial questions in West Cork sport, I have raised more questions than answers: The question of 'Who is the greatest West Cork GAA Club?' remains very much open to individual interpretation.

people Motoring

CAR
REVIEWS

Sean Creedon

Mazda 6 Anniversary Edition

1920 as a Hiroshima cork producer, Mazda has become one of the world's most innovative car manufacturers.

The company was founded in Japan in 1920 and the name Mazda was first introduced in 1931 when Mazda, then called the Toyo Kogyo Company, launched the 'Mazda-go' a tricycle truck. The Mazda R3670 Coupe, launched in 1960, was Mazda's first actual passenger car.

My test car came in Snowflake White which was very impressive. The weather was dry last week, but it might be difficult to keep a colour like that clean when the mucky days will, no doubt, return.

The car is beautiful to look and so comfortable to travel in. Naturally it will be an attractive option for large families and I think the Mazda 6 should also be an attractive for business people, who want a bit of comfort on long journeys and might also like to impress their colleagues.

The limited-run Mazda 6

Saloon 100th Anniversary Edition comes with a 2.5-litre Skyactiv-G petrol engine, which is mated to Mazda's six-speed automatic transmission as standard.

Inside the cabin is very bright, thanks to a nice touch of cream the dash and doors. But the dominant interior colour is the burgundy on the seats. The floor mats are also red/burgundy.

It's set very low, but no trouble getting in and out. For me it certainly was a big change from the big chunky SUVs that I have been driving in recent months. The drive is very relaxing and all the controls on the dash are at your fingertips and you also have slave controls on the steering wheel.

Like other Mazda cars the first thing you notice when you start the engine is the heads-up display directly in your line of vision over the steering wheel. For me that's always a warning that there are speed cameras out there and that 120km/h is a limit, not a target.



The boot is massive and although I am not a golfer, but I can see how people who play golf or need to carry a lot of sport equipment would love the large boot in the Mazda 6. Skoda's Octavia and Super are famous for their huge boot, but this one is just at big. Sadly no spare wheel.

Prices for the Mazda 6 start at €34,170, with the special 100th anniversary edition starting at €47,695. Road tax is steep at €420. You will never forget that Mazda is 100 years old as the key fob is embedded with the 100-year logo.

It's good to see that there is still a market for a car like Maz-

da's executive saloon, despite the big push towards SUV's in recent years. My family really appreciated the luxury it provided. Great on long journeys, but a bit thirsty in urban driving.

After driving several SUVs and electric cars in recent weeks, it was good to get behind the wheel of an old-fashioned saloon car last week. But not just any saloon, it was the 100th Anniversary Edition of the Mazda 6.

Mazda celebrated their centenary last year, but we were all in Lockdown back then and there were few celebrations in this part of the world. From its origins in



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.

With any interest, whether it be sports, books or baking, you're bound to meet new people, whose stories and actions will inspire you. Taking up running has been no different. While I'm still a fighter at heart, and still cherish all the fighters, trainers and friends I've met through Thai boxing, I have also found room for new inspiration from within the running community. In fact, I've been encountering so many people with interesting, inspiring stories to tell, that I've decided to dedicate a series of articles on it, and I hope you will find their stories worth reading and maybe even inspire you to get up, lace up and get outdoors.

Before you start reading, keep in mind that we all have to start somewhere and we all have different lives, bodies, goals and dreams. These profiles are not featured to emulate per se, but merely to inspire; to show what 'normal' (non-professional athletes) people can achieve with dedication and persistence, whilst still living a 'full' life. This doesn't diminish running 3-5km a couple of times a week, or taking a yoga and a zumba class every now and then. Every time you get up and get active is a win for your health, your body and ultimately your life.

When I asked 39-year-old Clonakilty based runner, David White about how he balances training and life, he smiled. It was clear that was aware of the difficulties of dedicating so much time to training, whilst still maintaining a family life, job and friends.

"They're very supportive, especially since my September project is for charity," White said, as I met him behind the Clonakilty Firestation, one Saturday afternoon, after he had

The art of the impossible (Part 1)

just run two half marathons, pushing a buddy in a buggy through both halves.

He was just getting ready to go home and relax, before training again the next day. Both days were part of his September Charity challenge, which were packed with events that most of us would be happy to just complete one of during a year. The weekend before we met, he had completed The Kerry Way Ultra Marathon, a 200km race in Co.Kerry, and the following weekend he was to cycle from Malin head to Mizen (640km).

"I don't plan any long races in the future though," he tells me. "My work schedule in the nursing home involves 12 hours shifts and it fits really badly with training for long races like the Kerry Way Ultra (Marathon). So no more Ultras for now." He smiles again, and I get the feeling that this could change, should his work schedule change.

I ask him, how much he trains in a 'normal' week, without any races coming up. "Normally I try to train every day. Some days I run, other days it's on the bike or the cross trainer." Asked how much he does train during a week, David says he's not sure, "I'll try to get in two longs run per week (50-80km), however it's not always possible. Some days it's a 20km run, but it's ok. It's a nice distance". At this point I think of my three toes making a fuss, having run a 27km race a weekend earlier, and I can't help but smile, hearing him say that 20km is a nice easy run.

"I started running 19 years ago – well actually, I started walking. My first race was a 10km and after I finished, I wanted to do it again, but faster and better. Running has become a part of my life since then and it's just a part of my everyday life now". Asked what running gives him, David says that besides the experience of running outside, close to nature and feeling grounded, running has taught him to zone out, yet still be focused on the task at hand, something he says comes in handy every now and then.

"I also think it's amazing how you can push your body. Unless your body breaks, it's all mental. You can really do anything," he says and points to his running adventure the previous weekend.

"The Kerry Way Ultra (200km) was my best running experience to date, and last year it was the worst. Last year I had stomach problems from my nutrition choices and my feet were destroyed by blisters. I was

Clonakilty based runner, David White



close to giving up by the 170km mark. Blisters were bursting and it felt like my feet had just given up. My girlfriend met me at the last checkpoint (170km) and that gave me the strength to finish the race. I completed it in 36 hours with my feet in bits. This year, my nutrition was on point. We'd come up with a recipe for homemade flapjacks and sandwiches, which could sustain me through the race, and my stomach tolerated it".

A smile lights up David's face, as he continues and tells me about this year's triumph: "My feet were great this year too. I used to be a forefoot runner, but due to all the hills on the route my toes took a beating. By changing to a mid-foot/flat-foot landing, I avoided the extra strain on my toes and this year they were fine. I also shaved off four hours and finished in 32 hours this year, but I think that's it for the 200km races". He says the last bit with a smile and determination. It's been done with success this year, so now it's on to other things.

"My next goals are for the two last weekends of September. First there's the bike ride from Malin up the top of Ireland to Mizen, down south, and then the following weekend, I'm going to attempt to do an 'Everston' on Carrauntoohil". White explains that an 'Everston' is to go up and down a mountain as many times as it takes to do the height of Mount Everest. In the case of Carrauntoohil that's about 8.5 times.

I can't help being curious about David's nutrition choices. With all the extreme challenges he is going through this month, and only five weekdays to recover in between, his intake must be on point. "I'm eating pretty healthy," he says, "and for the long endurance event, I make sure to get a lot of carbs, sugars and fats. I know this sounds scary to a lot of people,

"I started running 19 years ago – well actually, I started walking. My first race was a 10km and after I finished, I wanted to do it again, but faster and better. Running has become a part of my life since then and it's just a part of my everyday life now"

but you really need this," he says and I think he's referring to the on-going shaming of certain food groups. "To run that long, the body needs carbs, sugar and fats, and not something that will be in your stomach for hours, before it releases the energy. You won't be able to do an ultra on protein." I nod and think about how too few people in the fitness world actually talk about these things: about how we need different foods, for different purposes.

We get onto the question which is on most minds when it comes to running: how do you stay free of injuries? "Listen to your body", White tells me, "With age it takes longer



to recover. So if you can feel something is off, don't push it, unless you're willing to be sidelined for a while. It's better to pack it up and go out again the next day, than to smash through and risk an injury".

David White's best advice to new runners is: "Get a good pair of runners from the get go. Don't buy bad runners and don't try to go too fast, that will come in time. I'm not a coach, or in a running club. I don't like to be in the spotlight, but I'm happy to help when people ask me for advice or to go for a run with them".

Whilst preparing this article, I heard back from David: the 640km cycle from Malin Head to Mizen went well. While the paper is getting ready for print he is most likely hiking up and down Carrauntoohil, attempting

to do an Everton. My bet is that he'll succeed, just like he has done all month.

If you wish to run with David White, you're welcome to reach out to him, or maybe catch him at the local races, Clonakilty Waterfront Marathon and Skibbereen's Adventure Race. If you'd like contribute to David White's adventure challenge charity, which supports two causes: Autism and Cystic Fibrosis, you can find it here: <https://gofund.me/94bd103a>

Questions and comments are welcome as usual at: taniaaskitchenfitness@gmail.com or via [@trainwithadane](https://www.instagram.com/trainwithadane)

Next month: Mum of two, Jette Schmidt and her ultra marathon journey!

Gear up for the 2021 Fort2Fort Charity Cycle Sportive

The annual Fort2Fort Charity Cycle Sportive is back for 2021 and is celebrating its milestone tenth year. This year's cycle will once again raise vital funds for the Mercy Hospital Foundation, four Cork City and County Lions Clubs and Camden Fort Meagher Restoration. Taking place on Saturday, October 23, registration has now opened online at www.mercyhospitalfoundation.ie.

Continuing to build on nine years of fantastic success, this

year's Fort2Fort Cycle has something for everyone with four different routes to choose from. The four routes of 40km, 65km, 85km and 120km will all start and finish outside Camden Fort Meagher, Crosshaven, each with incredible views of Cork Harbour along the way. For those taking on the challenge of the 65km, 85km and 120km routes, a food stop will be available at Bramley Lodge before the return cycle back to Camden Fort Meagher.

Registration for the cycle is

now available online at www.mercyhospitalfoundation.ie until 12pm on Friday, October 22 at a cost of €55 per person. To celebrate the tenth year of the Fort2Fort Cycle, a special commemorative eco-friendly jersey is also available to buy this year for a discounted €15. In-person registration will also be available on October 22 between 4-8pm in the Radisson Blu Hotel, Little Island and from 7:30 am in Crosshaven GAA Club on the morning of the cycle.

people Gardening



GARDENING

John Hosford

The Weekend Garden Centre

Autumns tints are now beginning to appear on the leaves of trees, especially those of the Japanese Maples. Liquidamber is starting to put on its autumn finery and Chrysanthemums and Dahlias should continue to provide an impressive display until the arrival of the first autumn frosts.

Gardeners can encourage a succession of flowering by regular deadheading, cutting off faded blooms cleanly with a sharp secateurs.

Watch out for slug damage and soil borne pests and treat with an organic solution.

Jobs for the Month

Rake up fallen leaves and make leafmould compost.

Continue clearing up the garden before winter, disposing of any diseased material off site.

Get planting of evergreen

Gardening in October

shrubs completed before the end of October.

Give coniferous trees a last trim early this month.

Plant climbers, perennials, lily, daffodil and crocus bulbs.

Divide overgrown perennials.

Use an organic, humus-rich compost when planting, making sure it doesn't contain weed seeds or roots, especially perennial weeds such as nettles, bindweed, Japanese knot weed, mare's tail, docks or scutch grass.

Protect alpine/rock plants from winter wet, adding grit and providing adequate drainage. Alpines are best in full sun with good drainage.

Lift and store Begonias, Dahlias, Gladioli and all tender summer bulbs, labelling securely with plant name, height and colour before storing and placing in a frost-free, dry, protected area for storage.

Lift and divide Rhubarb.

Aim to get planting of spring bedding plants completed before the end of the month (before the time changes), taking advantage of the accumulated heat in the soil from the summer and the moisture of the autumn. Wallflowers and Sweet William, with their delightful colours and fragrance are eagerly-awaited flowers in the spring and early summer garden. Plant some of the taller

tulips (Darwin and Triumph varieties) in conjunction with your Wallflowers.

Colour for late Autumn

Cyclamen hederifolium will be providing great drifts of colour at this time of year.

Dainty pink flowers appear defiantly above the falling leaves. Kaffir lilies (Schisostylis) come in reds and pinks primarily and will flower well into December.

Pink Nerines (planted as bulbs in the spring) will now be in flower. They grow best in sunny, well-drained positions and are valuable providers of colour. Other colours, not as widely available, include reds, whites and orange.

Pampas Grass is an old favourite with its majestic plumes borne at this time of year. Grow as a single specimen or as an associate plant in expansive mixed borders or herbaceous borders. Make sure you give them adequate space, usually at least two metres from their nearest companion, to display to best effect.

Acers provide brilliant autumn colour tints, from burning yellows through rich reds to bronze purples. There are many different varieties available, from compact low varieties to taller varieties. Choose an area that is sheltered from cold

easterly winds and most succeed best in acid, lime-free soil. Rhus (Stags Horn Sumach) provide great autumn colour but do watch out for suckering.

Liquidamber styraciflua, growing up to 25m in height, is a magnificent tree for autumn colour. While not a tree for a small area because of its ultimate size, where space permits, it will provide unending pleasure with its dramatic colour each autumn. Little pruning is required except for the removal of crossing and broken or diseased branches. Add an organic fertilizer and compost at planting time, providing rabbit guards if rabbits have a history of previous damage or rabbit populations are at alarming levels. Look out for the some of the choice named varieties such as 'Worplesden' or 'Silhouette'.

Greenhouse

Continue ventilating on warm days but close in mid-afternoon to conserve heat. It is important to keep air circulating to keep diseases such as botrytis (grey mould) and mildew at bay, as they flourish in warm, moist, still conditions. Buy bubble polythene in preparation for insulation of the greenhouse or conservatory.

With shorter days now, combined with cooler temperatures, watering has to be done with

more care. Watering should be done early in the day so that the place has a chance to dry out before nightfall. Try to avoid getting water on the leaves, as this can take time to dry out. Most plant growth will have slowed down so only water plants when they really need it.

Keep a regular eye out for dead and yellowing leaves and fading flowers, checking out any pests that may be lurking around. It is surprising how many pests you can find overwintering in the warm, more favourable, indoor conditions.

Sow Sweet Peas

Sow sweet peas for next spring – five or six seeds to a 12cm pot. Young plants can be potted up individually in spring.

Crops under glass

Clear out old tomato, aubergine and pepper plants and all their debris, as they finish cropping. Any green tomatoes can be brought indoors to ripen on the windowsill, clearing the space so you can give the greenhouse a thorough clean before winter.

Sow a few winter lettuce in a cold greenhouse. Sow the seeds in clean pots or trays maintaining a temperature of 16 degrees C. When ready to plant out plant into the greenhouse border, grow bags or in a window box. Water cautiously

in the winter.

Grow radish, mustard and cress for winter salads.

Fruit Garden

Pick strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, plums, apples and pears, storing any fruit of sound condition. Do not mix early with late varieties and keep apples and pears separate while in storage. Keep the temperature low in the storeroom at night through ventilation. Avoid anything in the store that will contaminate or taint the fruit.

Prune gooseberries, red and white currants at leaf fall. Finish pruning of blackberries and hybrid berries.

Order new fruit trees and bushes in readiness for planting in November onwards. Choose a sheltered site that is not in a frost pocket and get a soil test done before planting. Avoid waterlogged sites and correct drainage if there is a problem. Fence off against rabbit, hare and deer damage.

October Lawn Care

Apply an organic Autumn lawn feed during the month. Seed sowing should be completed by now but it is an ideal time for turf laying. Rake up fallen leaves on a regular basis. The edges of the lawn should be trimmed for the winter.

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people Gardening

Cover bare soil with green manures



THE NATURAL GARDENER

Noah Chase

Noah studied horticulture at the Eden Project in Cornwall, England. He now co-manages a family run nursery, Deelish Garden Centre in Skibbereen, specialising in rare, unusual and edible plants. His passion is sustainable gardening, useful plants and care of the environment.

You may hear 'green manures' and think green poo! Green manures are actually plants which are grown to benefit the soil and are an organic way to: 1) improve the soil fertility, including adding valuable nitrogen; 2) improve the soil structure, giving better drainage or water retention; 3) suppress weeds; 4) avoid soil erosion; and 5) attract beneficial insects and other predators.

If you find yourself with a bare patch of ground after harvesting or clearing in your garden and are unsure what to plant, then this group of plants may be perfect for you! These plants are quick growing, so the process is simple. You sow, they grow – and then you dig them in. In just a few weeks green manures can benefit the soil. Here at Deelish Garden Centre, we love to encourage the use of this fantastic group of plants.

In the vegetable garden

• Use green manures as a 'catch crop'. Wherever you have a bare

patch of ground, after you have lifted crops such as potatoes, sow a green manure. Phacelia and mustard are quick to germinate, and can be dug in within six weeks of sowing.

• Grazing Rye or Winter Vetch can be sown in the autumn and will keep the soil covered over winter, and thus suppressing the weeds. When the weather warms up, you can dig it in and it will provide nutrients ready for your hungry summer veg such as courgettes or spinach.

• A low growing green manure, such as Trefoil, will keep the ground covered between rows of a tall crop, such as sweet corn. This green manure reduces weeds and retains water.

• Grow green manure for its flowers! Crimson Clover and Phacelia are gorgeous when in flower. Bees and other pollinators love their nectar rich flowers. From spring through to summer, sow small patches here and there to fill in gaps both in the veg and the flower beds.

In the fruit garden

• Vetch grown over winter under greedy fruit bushes will fix nitrogen on their root nodules, ready for release during the growing season. Hoe off in spring, leaving the foliage to decompose on the soil surface.

• You could also grow a long-term green manure, such as White Clover, around the base of fruit trees. You'll keep weeds at bay and provide a good wildlife habitat for pest-eating predators as well as nectar for our precious bees.

There are many benefits of using green manure crops:

Soil fertility – with their deep root systems, green manures gather nutrients from the depths that ordinary vegetables rarely reach. Plants from the legume family, such as clover and vetch, also absorb nitrogen from the air and fix it in nodules on their roots. Once the green manure plant is mature, by digging it back into the soil all the nutrients are returned as the plant decomposes. This process also feeds the

millions of small microcosms in the soil, stimulating them into creating a healthy rich growing medium.

Improved soil structure –

Whether your soil is heavy and clay-like, or light and sandy, green manures can help rectify any problems. The extensive, and sometimes deeply penetrating, root system of green manures will open up heavy soils, allowing better drainage. In light soils, these roots remain closely bound to the soil particles and act as a sponge. They hold onto moisture and nutrients, and prevent them from being washed out by a heavy rain.

Weed suppression – Nature

takes advantage of bare soil. Weeds will quickly populate any area not in cultivation. A cover of quick growing green manures such as Mustard will smother young weed seedlings, and save you hoeing to keep the soil weed-free. Clover provides an excellent long term cover crop. When sown, you will find a first flush of weeds competing with the Clover. Cut them all back and the Clover will thrive on a second growth, outgrowing the weeds, and building up valuable nitrogen in the soil, ready for when you dig it in.

Prevent Soil erosion – Bare soil and the nutrients contained in it can quickly start to wash away in our wet winters. By growing a winter green manure such as Grazing Rye, you will keep your soil structure and all the valuable nutrients contained in it. Artificial weed membranes can also be used to stop soil erosion but will not benefit soil microbes which will continue to multiply if using a green manure.

Pest control – Sow a small patch of Crimson Clover (one of my favourites) or Phacelia, as their vibrant flowers attract bees and hoverflies, which are invaluable at eating aphids. Research has also shown that some flying pests can be confused if the outlines of their food plant are disguised. For example, under-planting brassica plants with Trefoil or Vetch disguises the outline of the crop and seems to confuse and deter

cabbage root fly. Slug predators such as frogs and beetles enjoy the cool, damp ground under a green manure cover crop.

When do I dig them in?

• You need to dig in the manures three or four weeks before you want to use the ground again, or when the plants are approaching maturity – whichever comes sooner. The young green growth will quickly decompose and feed the soil. You don't want them to get too woody, and you don't want them to set seed. Mustard, for example, goes over very rapidly once it starts to flower, so it is best dug in when, or before, the first flower buds show.

• Grazing rye, a grass, forms flower buds in the heart of the plant. Once you can feel a flower bud, it is time to dig the plants in. It is important to do this at least three weeks before you want to sow your new veg crop, as the Rye will temporarily release substances in the soil which inhibit seed germination. This is good for keeping out weed seedlings, but you need to wait a month to sow seeds. Planting out young plants, however, is fine.

How do I dig them in?

• To dig them in, simply turn the plants back into the soil, using a sharp spade. Chop up tough clumps as you go. Aim to bury the plants no more than 15cm deep on heavy soils, 18cm on light ground. Mustard and Buckwheat can simply be hoed off or strimmed for larger areas when young, leaving the foliage in place, or added to the compost heap.

• If you don't want to dig them in, you can let tender plants get caught by the first winter frosts and leave the frosted foliage in place to protect the soil. Or you can cover the plants with light-excluding mulch, such as a landscape fabric like Hypex, black plastic, or large sheets of cardboard held down by straw, logs, bricks and so on.

We stock a large range of green manure seeds here at Deelish Garden Centre so feel free to stop in and we will be happy to

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advise you on the best options for your gardening situation. In the meantime happy gardening and remember gardening doesn't have to cost the earth.

Gaisce calls on the Cork public to plant a bulb to protect our bees

To celebrate 35 years of Gaisce – The President's Award, the organisation is encouraging people in Cork regardless of age, location or size of back garden to take up their own Gaisce challenge this autumn and plant a pollinator-friendly bulb to protect one of the most important players in the climate change battle – bees.

If planted in autumn, the bulbs will bloom in Spring. The #BulbsForBees campaign is supported by President Michael D. Higgins and the 'All-Ireland

Pollinator Plan' who have worked with Gaisce to undertake the largest ever pollination project in Ireland. The pollinator friendly bulbs will bloom in Spring creating a variety of flowers including crocus tommasinianus barr's purple, allium moly and muscari armeniacum.

Over the next two weeks, over 50,000 pollinator-friendly bulbs will make their way to every post-primary school in the country; to Gaisce Award Partners including disability services, prisons and volunteer



centres with the help of An Post; and over 300,000 bulbs through

the Irish Local Development Network for distribution to the wider community and youth sector with support from the Department of Children, Equality, Integration, Disability and Youth these bulbs will be provided for free.

In Cork, community and youth groups can contact Cork City Partnership Clg, West Cork Development Partnership, SEC-AD Partnership CLG, Avondhu Blackwater Partnership CLG or IRD Duhallow about collecting their Gaisce bulbs, while their stock lasts. Members of the

public are encouraged to visit their local garden centre to pick up a pollinator friendly bulb to participate in the challenge by October 21st.

You can find out how to participate in the project and how to receive a special commemorative certificate of participation from the Gaisce – The President's Award website.

For more information please visit: www.gaisce.ie/bulbsforbees/

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