



westcorkpeople

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Courmacsherry ladies Siobhan O'Regan, Angela Crowley, Mags O'Flynn and Elaine Keaty take an early morning swim on Broadstand on May 6 in support of Darkness into Light. Pic: Sharon Crosbie

Schull's youth in danger of losing their creative space

Spearheaded by Sally Smart of Smart Productions, The Loft in Schull has for the past five years been facilitating drama, animation, film and acting for young people in the area. Now due to the building it is renting being sold, this creative space is desperately searching for a new home.

The Loft, with its purpose-built stage and theatre, has become an integral part of the community in Schull and with the production of a film and animation already underway and many other projects booked in for the summer and autumn, Sally is appealing to anyone who can help.

"I am devastated for the massive work and love I have poured in and the fact that all the children

and teens who come through here on a weekly basis will have nowhere to go," she shares.

Sally had been working out of schools and halls and colleges for many years before finally finding a suitable premises to consolidate everything in five years ago. It allowed her to host and run weekends for the Fastnet Film Festival, host thirty Austrian students in October and work with children of all ages and abilities and learning difficulties. Some of the work produced at The Loft has won awards at International film festivals.

"This is a massive loss for the community of Schull and surrounding areas, as I cater for all the children who are not into sport or GAA," she says. "They are losing a fantastic big space in

which to be creative."

The reason Sally started The Loft was because she had to drive her own daughter, Ayoola Smart, to Cork twice a week in order for her to get acting training. Many of the students who Sally began teaching ten years ago are now in acting colleges in London and her daughter, Ayoola, is already making her mark in the acting world, which includes a role in the film Juliet, Naked with Ethan Hawke and featuring in the popular BBC drama 'Death in Paradise'.

If you are in a position to help The Loft find a new home in Schull, please contact Sally on email at redfeatherdesign1@gmail.com.



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'Birdman of Allihies' lends nature a helping hand

While he mightn't have two bob to rub together at times, the affectionately named 'Birdman of Allihies', Alex Scade, 74, tells **Mary O'Brien** that he considers himself a wealthy man. Over the years Alex's self-built aviary and wildlife sanctuary in the hills of Beara has sheltered many birds and animals otherwise without any hope of survival.

Recently the pensioner cared for four long-reared owl chicks, one with a broken wing, another with a broken leg, who were found after falling out of their nest in Glengarriff. After four months, the chicks had regained their strength and learned to fly and feed themselves so, together with the person who found them, Alex released them back into their natural habitat in Glengarriff.

"They were too young to be able to fly so they would have been easily killed by a predator if left there," says Alex.

Currently residing at the sanctuary in Beara is 'Ra' a fearless snowy owl named

after the Egyptian god of the sun and sky. Passed on to Alex when he got too old by a raptor breeder for the falconry trade, 'Ra' stands guard with a steely yellow gaze, his enormous wings opening and spanning the aviary as he takes flight to land on Alex's shoulders when the birdman enters the enclosure.

Also in situ are a buzzard, barn owls, two emus, a crow, seagull, gannet, rook, ducks, geese, Willie the goat who has a penchant for head-butting visitors and three friendly Jack Russell terriers. The buzzard and seagull both have one wing. 'I can give them a life here,' says Alex.

While thousands of birds

have passed through the birdman's care, Alex's most beloved visitor was 'Olive' a South American water rail bird, who stayed for three years, laying four eggs, before vanishing one day. "I think she thought of me as a mate," laughs Alex, who recalls climbing up the tree to hand her material when she was making her nest. "I found her at a market. She was caged and looked very sick."

He also rescued the emus from a market in Kerry ten years ago. "They were bred for meat," he says. The emus, who run around daily in the neighbouring farmer's field, are now a part of this eclectic family so they won't be moving on.



Alex Scade talks a stroll with his emus and 'Willie' the goat.

Two of the worst cases Alex has helped return to health were a deer and a fox.

"The deer had been hit by a car and was in a very bad state when someone brought it to me," he shares. "It had a very bad head injury." After consulting with a local vet, Alex gave it painkillers and tried to encourage the deer to eat by placing some chewed dates inside its

mouth. "After four weeks it got up and started walking around. That was when I realised it was blind so I put a bell around its neck." Eventually the deer regained its eyesight and walked out of the sanctuary.

The fox had been attacked by dogs and was sitting in the middle of a road when it was found. "I think he was just waiting to be hit by a car and put out

of his misery," says Alex. "He was in an awful state." Alex took him to the vet and he was put on a course of antibiotics and steroids. 'I managed to get him cleaned up over a few weeks and in the end he managed to move the crate enough to squeeze himself out, lifted the latch on the window, and off he went.'

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Alex in the aviary with a one-winged buzzard.



‘Ra’ stands guard with a steely yellow gaze, his enormous wings opening and spanning the aviary as he takes flight to land on Alex’s shoulders when the birdman enters the enclosure.

Glasgow, Alex grew up next to the railway tracks, where open carriages on freight trains filled with fish on its way to becoming fertiliser and seagulls circling overhead were a common sight. Fascinated by the noise, that was his first dalliance with wildlife. He also ran away from home regularly, taking shelter in local woods for three or four days at a time. “I was called a menace to society by a judge when I was 12,” he shares. “But that was what I grew up in, the slums. I didn’t know any other way of life!”

Determined to see something of the world, after learning and working in his trade as a painter and decorator, at the age of 25, Alex set off on his bike. “I was fed up with life,” he says. Getting as far as Istanbul before running out of money, the intrepid traveller hitchhiked with his bike back to London, where he worked for a few months before leaving for the States. From there he cycled across central and south America before island-hopping to Australia, eventually riding on horseback up through the Cape York peninsula. “I was free as a bird and I loved it,” he says.

After returning home to Scotland and finding that life and his friends there had moved

on, Alex decided to take a trip to Ireland. Within a few weeks of arriving in Dublin, in 2001 he landed in the Beara peninsula and finally felt at home. “It was during the boom years so there was plenty of work, the people were friendly and I loved the empty space and wildness of the landscape,” he says.

...From there he cycled across central and south America before island-hopping to Australia, eventually riding on horseback up through the Cape York peninsula. “I was free as a bird and I loved it,” he says.

A few years later, in 2005, with a loan from the Credit Union, Alex bought two acres of scrubland off a local farmer and, with the help of his friend and neighbour Kevin Tim O’Sullivan, he dug ponds and planted trees and wildlife friendly vegetation. For the first 15 years he had no electricity. “It changed my life,” he shares.

“I liked the pub and music scene but I swapped out the beer for trees!”

Today Alex doesn’t drink or smoke or own a car so every cent he has goes back into the sanctuary and birds’ food bills. Polish natives and animal lovers Olek and Dagmara joined him three years ago, now helping out at weekends, after they happened across the animal haven on a trip to Beara. “They helped me build the aviary and have a stake in the place so I can rest easy if anything happens to me that they’ll take care of the birds and animals,” shares Alex.

Donations can be sent to Alex Scade, The Animal Sanctuary, Allihies.



A rescued gannet

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Anticipation builds as Ireland's first Buddhist temple in Beara nears completion

According to the renowned Tibetan lama Mingyur Rinpoche ... "building a place where we can find peace and happiness in our minds can only be beneficial, in the widest possible sense." For the past seven years, since the sod was turned in 2016, this is what the community at Dzogchen Beara, the Tibetan Buddhist retreat centre on the Beara peninsula has been painstakingly working towards. Having reached the final furlong, the goal now is to raise the necessary €700,000 needed to complete Ireland's first Buddhist temple in time to start welcoming visitors next Spring.

Over 4.7 million euro has already been invested into this monumental building, whose stunning golden copper alloy roofs are designed in the authentic style of a Tibetan Buddhist temple and adorned with copper ornaments all carefully hand-gilded by the team at Dzogchen Beara. At the very peak sits the main sacred ornament and inside that there is an ingot of copper from the 19th century donated by the local Allihies Copper Mine Museum, signifying the retreat centre's connection to the local community.

Inside the building rest the recently received Buddha, Guru Rinpoche and Tara statues from Thailand and Nepal waiting to be mounted on the shrine after being filled with blessed substances and relics.

"In hindsight if we had raised all the money before starting, while we may have completed the project more quickly, we might have made some mistakes," shares temple project manager Leon Rossiter.

"The fundraising has set the pace for each stage, helping

to contribute to the quality and longevity of the building, which we hope will welcome hundreds of thousands of people over hundreds of years."

Although the major construction work has been completed, temple project manager Leon Rossiter and Brian Murphy of Beara Building Services are still busy on site. The final touches are being made to the courtyard, which has been paved with Indian sandstone; capping has started on the the 50-metre wall at the back of the temple and the Liscannor stone has been chiselled and installed on to the main pillars at the sweeping entrance to the temple. Maella Wootton was responsible for researching, testing and gilding the copper roof decorations in gold leaf. Her sister Isha, who helped her gild, will return to Dzogchen in July to paint all the pillar decoration.

"The Beara community takes huge pride in the building because of the involvement of so many local contractors," shares centre director Malcolm MacClancy. "It's been really fulfilling



seeing small villages in Asia being sustained by the work on the temple decorations and then seeing Brian and the team here receive them in the next phase...from one small community to another."

"We have had a great team from the start," says Brian, who travelled to France to view a similar structure there before commencing work on the temple in Beara.

"It's been a lovely project to work on and a great place to work...fine and relaxing," he smiles.

Over 2000 trees and plants have been introduced here over the past four years framing the cliff-edge infinity garden, which leads you down to the breathtaking expansive ocean views.

"While seven years might feel like a long time, we're very aware that in Tibet this temple would have taken a lifetime to build," says Leon.



Temple project manager Leon Rossiter, centre director Malcolm MacClancy and communications manager Derek Corr pictured with one of the recently received statues.

"The shell of the building is completed so now the goal is to make it a working space."

Inside, the second fix has to be started and the solid oak floor laid. There is a vast amount of ornate decorating work still to be done. The complete teachings of the Buddha will be encased in huge wooden bookcases and the statues must be mounted on the shrine.

Tibetan Masters have said that the power of the location of the Dzogchen Beara temple at the south-western tip of Europe makes it especially important for the future of Buddhism, and that blessings of healing and protection will

flow from here through the elements, to touch the whole world.

As well as a place of spiritual practice and teaching, once completed, the temple will also offer a programme of public retreats and seminars open to everybody.

"It has been a path of aspiration and, now we're on the final stretch, our hope is that people will want to help us reach the end," says Malcolm. "This temple will be such an amazing thing for West Cork."

In 1973, Englishman Peter Cornish and his wife Harriet bought this clifftop farmland with the intention of creating a spiritual home for people

of all traditions. In 1992 they gifted the land and buildings to a charitable trust. Harriet's death at the age of 44 to cancer inspired the building of the Spiritual Care Centre at Dzogchen Beara.

All donors' names – no matter how small or large the donation – will be included on a scroll to be enshrined in the temple when it is complete. You can donate in your name, the name of a loved one, or of somebody who has passed away. The intentions of all donors are prayed for daily by the Dzogchen Beara community. To donate to the building of the temple go to www.dzogchenbearatemple.com



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Cork County Council signs contract for Bantry Relief Road Phase One design



Padraig Barrett, Cork County Council, Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr Danny Collins, Clodagh Henahan, Cork County Council and Beren De Hora, Director Fehily Timoney and Company at the contract signing for Bantry Relief Road Phase 1.

Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Danny Collins has welcomed the contract signing for Bantry Relief Road Phase 1. The 1km first phase will run from the existing junction on the N71 Glengarriff Road and the Slip Road to the north of the town, looping southwards close to the alignment of the former railway line re-joining existing roads at Sheskin.

Bantry Town experiences traffic congestion as the N71 passes through the town centre with no alternative routes

through the town. The N71 to the east of the Town Centre Square experiences major congestion along Marino Street to the Glengarriff Road, especially with Heavy Goods Vehicles. The proposed relief road, when complete, will help alleviate much of this through traffic.

Fehily Timoney and Company have been appointed to carry out the detailed design following a tender competition.

Outlining the importance of this first step towards a relief road for Bantry, Mayor Collins said, "This project is long-awaited

and, when complete, will provide significant relief for the town of Bantry in terms of access to the town from the northern direction including the Beara Peninsula. The scheme will allow for safer access for pupils to Colaiste Pobail, Gaelscoil Bheanntair, and St. Finbarr's Boys schools as well as improving safety and ease of access for emergency vehicles, staff, patients and families to Bantry Hospital and Primary Care Centre."

Credit Unions top RepTrak reputation ranking

Credit Unions have again been ranked as Number one among the Top 100 most highly regarded organisations in Ireland, according to the Ireland RepTrak 2023 annual study that was published on 10 May. Credit Unions have consistently featured in the top two of the annual study for the past five years.

The Ireland RepTrak 2023 annual study is based on a survey of more than 5,500 members of the public which gathered data on the levels of trust, respect, admiration and esteem they have for organisations in Ireland.

Credit Unions took the top spot as the most reputable organisation in Ireland with an excellent Reputation Pulse score of 82.8. With more than 3.6 million members, credit unions were credited as being a cornerstone of local communities. The public acknowledged the trust

that members place in their local credit union and their friendly people-focused approach.

Only three organisations achieved an 'Excellent' ranking – Credit Unions, An Post (score of 80.8) and Bord Bia (score of 80.6). Interestingly, a widespread, cross-sectoral decline was reported, as 49 of the 100 organisations studied this year experienced significant declines in reputation, while only four organisations improved their score.

The CEOs of the three West Cork Credit Unions welcomed the announcement.

Finbarr O'Shea from Bantry CU said: "The results of the 2023 RepTrak study are a significant achievement for the credit union sector, and once again a recognition of the role that we play in communities across Ireland. We are delighted with the results, which positions us as a leader among some of the most promi-

nent organisations and household names in Ireland."

Anthony Forde from Clonakilty and Dunmanway CU added: "We are delighted to see the hard work, dedication and commitment of the credit union movement across the country being recognised in the RepTrak survey. The survey emphasises attributes such as trust and respect, which are core to the ethos of credit unions."

Tony Hughes from Access CU commented: "We're focused on continuing to enhance the supports and services which we provide to our members and our local communities. While we will continue to adapt to meet the changing needs of our members, there will be one constant – we will always put the needs of our members at the heart of everything that we do".



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Curtain up on Summer



A WEST CORK LIFE

Tina Pisco

This is it lads! The moment we've all been waiting for. The prize that dangles in the distance through the dark days like a beckoning light at the end of the winter tunnel. Summer 2023 here we come! Is there ever a time more filled with hope? More anticipatory? I spend the first few months of every year longing for the summer. And then – just like that – here we are, basking in the dream, with the smorgasbord that is a West Cork summer laid out in front of us like a buffet breakfast in a four-star hotel.

I make no excuses for sounding somewhat smug. I'd even go so far as to say I'm gloating. How could I not. The past few weeks of sunshine have been spectacular; regenerative to both plants and animals. The landscape has had just the right mix of rain and sun to explode into a lush wonderland. It's so beautiful that every drive into town, walk on the beach, mosey around the garden, or glance out the window is only gorgeous. There is a quality to the light, dappled through pale new, green leaves, that really feeds my soul. The hedgerows and woodland are crammed with flowers, the hawthorn dots every road with

its popcorn blooms, and it feels like everything is rejoicing.

The soundtrack to this celebration is provided by the birds – though frankly it is more screaming than singing. It starts dreadfully early at around 4am. This is not an elegant dawn chorus. It sounds more like a huge row in the check-in area of a low fares' airline. The swallows start early with a sunrise meeting just outside my bedroom window. They argue loudly until the sun is up and then they fly off and tend to their nests. Talking about nests, I mentioned last month that we had swallows in the garage and jackdaws in the bathroom roof. I had not noticed that there are various other parts of the house that have been rezoned from facias and soffits to residential. It seems that we're experiencing a bit of a property boom on the property. We will have to deal with this in the Autumn.

We have always had a wonderful variety of native birds, but this year is exceptional. In 2017, Hurricane Ophelia ripped through our hectare, practically destroying the small woods out the back. The trees that were toppled were mainly pine. When we replanted, we got a mad pick and mix of deciduous trees: oak, whitebeam, chestnut, maple, beech, birch and larch. All in all, we planted over sixty trees and have lost very few of them. Six years later the back field has been transformed from a barren sad slab of mud into a lush mini woodland. This new development out the back has not gone unnoticed. Birds took one look and decided that it would make a great place to raise a family. It's safe to say that there are dozens of nests out there. Starlings, swallows, crows, jackdaws, and magpies. Wrens and wagtails. Blue tits and great tits. Ringed doves and pigeons. (Even the

buzzards have been scoping the place out, but the settled birds are having none of it, and join forces to chase any raptors away from their airspace.) They all want to live here.

You'd think that having a large maternity ward would fill the air with melodious sounds. In fact, it makes for an almighty row. Occasionally, you get a stretch of that lovely summer birdsong, but most of the time the various bird families seem to be slinging insults at each other while the chicks call for more food in a canon of shrieks that echo around the house. It can be so loud that I have to turn up the radio. Every so often a chick falls out of a nest. This causes an increase in the volume of noise as the parents go berserk, screaming, and roaring as they swoop overhead. Then their neighbours chime in, presumably yelling at them to shut up as they've only just managed to put their own babies down for a nap. Our dog, a lovely gentle hunter, has made it her business to rescue these fallen chicks, which of course enrages the parents even more. Luckily, she has a very soft mouth and does not harm them. Last week she picked up four chicks in one day! I am happy to report that they all were scooped up and taken back to their homes by their parents, once we managed to get the dog back in the house.

I know that this glorious weather is not likely to last, but I'm happy to live in denial. This is the best of times, with the prospect of three months of beach, BBQs, beer gardens and fresh veg from the tunnel to look forward to. The sun is out the sharks are basking, there's a humpback swimming around the coast, and the yellow flags are just coming into bloom. Sure, where would you be going?

Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the June issue of West Cork People,

It's so nice to have blue skies and warmth as we head into June even if it's a bit unsettling that we're already facing drought conditions and restrictions so early in the summer!

It's been an interesting month: From having a snowy owl land on my shoulders in Allihies to being head butted by a goat to nibbling on spruce tips and nettle muffins in Glengarriff and lots more in-between, I had a real journey of discovery in nature on my interviews these past few weeks!

On the theme of nature, interestingly Melissa Murphy's column for the June issue reflects on how not only are we living with the natural world, but we actually are it!

Anticipation is building as Ireland's first Buddhist temple on our own Beara peninsula almost reaches completion. I was honoured to get a tour recently and meet some of the team behind this monumental project. However with another €700,000 still to be raised in funds, the journey isn't quite over yet. All donors' names, no matter what size of the donation, will be included on a scroll and enshrined in the temple.

Still on a mindful path, I also meet with Sean Vail, who shares how, since he was diagnosed with terminal cancer of the colon in 2016, he lives by the inspirational words of Vietnamese monk, Thich Nhat Hanh "I promise myself that I will enjoy every minute of the day that is given me to live."

Last month I mentioned how a longstanding business in Clonakilty is being left homeless due to its premises being sold. The same is happening down in Schull unfortunately, with young people in the area in danger of losing their creative space 'The Loft' if a new home isn't found soon (more information on the front page). How will the face of West Cork change I wonder if this continues to happen?

We have an interesting feature on 'Coping with Chronic Inflammation' in our Health and Lifestyle section. Eoin Roe helps explain autoimmune conditions, covering some of the triggers and factors that need to be considered in managing a condition; Hannah Dare looks at diet and supplements that can help in fighting inflammation; Tania Presutti discusses how exercise can have an anti-inflammatory effect, describing some of the types of exercise that can help when trying to manage an autoimmune condition and improve your health; and Valerie Wistreich of The Well Institute shares her own journey with a chronic disease and how managing stress and calming the nervous system has helped on her path to recovery.

Kieran Doyle delves into the Sudan conflict and the role colonialism had to play; as we mark the centenary of the end of the Irish Civil War, Pauline Murphy looks at the homemade firepower on the anti-Treaty side; and NPWS conservation ranger Claire Deasy shares some amazing facts about Clonakilty's newest resident, the peregrine falcon.

West Cork's calendar is jam-packed already for the summer with everything from the West Cork Garden Trail to festivals, exhibitions and gigs. In June watch out for the Innishannon Steam and Vintage Rally this bank holiday weekend or later in the month the Clonakilty Show, Clonakilty Carnival, Fastnet Maritime and Folk Festival in Ballydehob and Bantry Kupala Festival.

For this and lots more see inside.

I hope you enjoy the read...in the sunshine,

Mary



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West Cork People

Letter to the editor: St Vincent dePaul (SVP) Clonakilty says thank you

Supporting our community is at the heart of West Cork. The people of Clonakilty and district have certainly shown their generosity again this year and SVP wants to say a very big thank you. St Vincent dePaul (SVP) Clonakilty includes Lisavard, Barryroe, Ardfield, Rosscarbery, Bealad, Timoleague, and Darragh. Generous donations are received on their annual collection days in December and by direct donations throughout the year from groups and individuals. These valued donations are used to support local families and individuals in need of help. This help varies from contributing to the cost of fuel, food and education, as well as providing advice and information on other services. Without the very generous financial donations from the public, none of this valuable assistance would be possible.

In 2022, SVP Clonakilty and district received €102,573 in donations, which supported nearly 30 third-level students with the rising costs of living and studying, and many families and individuals with the rising costs of fuel, food, and other essential expenses.

The local SVP conference is part of Ireland's largest, voluntary, charitable organisation, provides support to those experiencing poverty. The main area of work is direct contact with people who need help and assistance. When someone contacts SVP with a request for help, they can expect to receive a visit from two friendly SVP volunteers who are there to listen and see what help is required.

For more information on what SVP does and how to seek help, donate or volunteer, visit the website www.svp.ie or email stanne.clonakilty@svp.ie

To all those who donate and volunteer, a very big THANK YOU.

BaseWorx and Hyde Whiskey to represent Cork County at National Enterprise Awards

Two Cork based businesses have been awarded Local Enterprise Awards from Cork County Council's respective Local Enterprise Offices (LEO) in Cork North and West and South Cork. Companies 'BaseWorx' and 'Hyde Whiskey' received the accolade for building successful businesses despite the challenging times of the past two years. They will now compete against 28 other businesses at the National Enterprise Awards at the Round Room in Dublin on June 1 for a share of the €35,000 winner's prize fund.

Representing LEO Cork North and West, BaseWorx, was founded by Graham Clarke, Keith Killilea, and Kevin McSharry. BaseWorx is a cloud-based management platform for flexible workspaces. It helps managers to efficiently manage their space for a wide range of workspaces including Enterprise Centres, Coworking Hubs and Shared office settings. The global flex space market is expected to reach a value of \$103 billion by 2027, a growth that is driven by an increase in demand for flexible office spaces from various industries, along with the rise of remote work and the need for more contemporary, co-working-style environments. As BaseWorx grows and adds new products it will be well placed to be a leader in this market both here in Ireland and internationally.

Conor Hyde of Hyde Whiskey created his now burgeoning business from revisiting his own family's rich history of whiskey distilling of over twelve generations since 1640. It has been

awarded some of the world's top whiskey accolades for its art of wood management and cask maturation which gives Hyde Whiskey its unmistakable taste and character, making it one of Ireland's best small batch, hand-crafted whiskeys. Now in its ninth year of business Hyde Whiskey today exports over 23 different HYDE whiskeys into more than 65 different export markets worldwide.

Speaking at a special luncheon to celebrate the award winners, Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Danny Collins said, "I would like to congratulate Hyde Whiskey and BaseWorx on their awards and wish them all the very best as they progress in the competition. While many independent businesses are encountering challenges, it is heartening to see many still break through and achieve success. Hard work and dedication has brought these businesses here today. I am proud of the supports that our Local Enterprise Offices offer to local SME's and I encourage other local businesses to avail



Kirsty Sweetnam, LEO Cork South, Conor Hyde, Hyde Whiskey, Sean O'Sullivan, Head of Enterprise, LEO Cork South, Graham Clarke, BaseWorx, Deirdre O'Mahony, Acting Head of Enterprise, LEO Cork North and West, Keith Killilea, BaseWorx, Lisa Finn, LEO Cork West

Pic Darragh Kane

of the large suite of supports available to them from the LEO's. I wish Hyde Whiskey and BaseWorx all the very best in the national awards and beyond. I am certain that we will hear much more from both of them in the coming years as they grow".

Speaking of the award, Conor Hyde, Hyde Whiskey said, "The whiskey business is not an easy one to compete in but with Hyde Whiskey we feel that we have created something very special that has brought

customers all over the world to connect with our brand and appreciate the time and expertise that goes in to creating an award winning independent whiskey. Since the beginning, the LEO in South Cork has been an enormous support, through grant support and mentorship they have helped me to grow the business and reach new export markets which has been a lifeline in such challenging times for small, independent businesses."

Speaking of their award, Gra-

ham Clarke, CEO, BaseWorx said, "We were all too aware of the enormous shift of how people are working and the advent of the co-working industry. We are even seeing a demand for our product in traditional office settings as a lot of organisations come to terms with the shift to hybrid working. Our solution ultimately reduces the administrative burden of running a workspace. As it is such a fast-growing sector, having the support of the LEO Cork North and West has been invaluable

to us and we look forward to representing our region at the national finals next month."

Last year Cork County Council's LEO offices in South Cork and Cork North and West approved grants totalling over €1.75million to assist local businesses.

Further details about the supports available to local start-ups and small businesses are available through www.localenterprise.ie.

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The Sudan conflict: A failed African state or a product of post-colonialism?

Christopher O'Sullivan TD FIANNA Fáil THE REPUBLICAN PARTY



I am delighted to announce that my new **BANDON CONSTITUENCY OFFICE** at Market Buildings, New Road is now open at least 3 days a week and I will host constituency clinics on the first Monday of each month from 10am to 12 noon.

My constituency office in Clonakilty remains open 5 days a week.

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 Market Buildings, New Road, Bandon, Co. Cork, P72K738.
 Email: christopher.osullivan@oireachtas.ie
 Tel: 023 88 11011



HISTORY & POLITICS

Kieran Doyle

A few weeks ago, Sudan descended into a bloody conflict, prompting thousands to flee, including a raft of European diplomats. When the diplomats leave a country it's always a sure sign of the beginning of something serious. Without diplomacy to advocate for peace and talks, well it's inevitable that violence fills this vacuum.

In a nutshell, the latest upheaval in this unfortunate country, (already suffering drought and famine), is a result of the

failure to transfer peacefully from Omar al Bashir's dictatorship which fell in 2019. Four years on, civil bodies and agencies who have pushed for democracy, are now sandwiched between two warring factions, Gen Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, the country's de facto ruler, and the former warlord Gen Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, both claiming they are the man to lead Sudan into a new dawn. Where have we heard that before?

Africa, more than any of the other continents, has suffered from dictators, despots, military juntas and civil wars. Would it surprise any of you to say this was what European leaders wanted when they could no longer control Africa after the collapse of imperialism in the mid twentieth century? Once the crushing debts of world war two caught up on England, France, Germany, Belgium and the rest, maintaining armies, civil servants and subsidising their colonial fiefdoms; it was only matter of time before the European leaders would have to withdraw. At the time, there was an attempt to paint their withdrawals as some sort of benevolent gesture, one that was embracing the spirit of freedom and democracy that they had fought for in both the Great War and then World War Two. Leaving destabilised countries, with artificial national boundaries, and amalgamating disparate tribes was part of the geopolitical control. The colonial masters, while giving independence, left many of the new fledgling states dependent on their former masters for support, even to this day. For example, France still meddles in the francophone African nations. Though France did not have direct involvement in the Rwandan genocides of 1994, their colonial legacy meant that the structures they set in motion that empowered the Hutus minority, would lead to them slaughtering 800,000 ethnic Tutsis. Colonial powers always have used the classic divide and conquer, even when they supposedly leave.

Media outlets found that many 'local' embassy staff in the current crisis in Sudan, were shamefully abandoned once the conflict came to their doors. These people who were good enough to be the embassy co-workers, cleaners, security and gardeners were superfluous to the Europeans when the crunch came. Echoes of this happened in Rwanda too. The French army, who 'came to the rescue' in 1994, left hundreds of Tutsis embassy staff to their

bloody fate, yet evacuated some Hutus politicians whose bloody fingers were stain with genocidal involvement.

Now we have Sudan making the headlines. It previously consisted of a territory ruled by Great Britain, called Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. Wielding African nations into 'Nation states', based on western traditional lines, has led to the troubles we see today elsewhere across the continent. These made-up 'nations' did not possess class or ideological reasons, nor religious or ethnic. There often was no traditional or historical reasons to build unity. Egypt and Sudan today are so different, it's ridiculous to ever imagine how their were morphed into those boundaries. On gaining independence in 1956, it spent thirty years of that in a state of civil war. One of the issues was that under the artificial creation of national boundaries, the powers that be mixed Sudan with Arab Muslim's ethnicity and with those of the north, who were Christian and of different ethnic makeup. Of course we strive as humans to live in peace no matter what our differences, but this is easier said than done. The artificial Sudan did not settle [as planned no doubt – it also contains massive oil fields that British Petroleum have a stake in, and outsiders like Great Britain can interfere for their vested interest.]

When the British did leave, of 800 posts that were due to be filled by local civil servants only six were awarded to southern. There soon came more uneven distribution of interests across a strata of society. The southern Corp army were commanded by 'northern' officers causing a mutiny, which led to the first civil war. This ripple effect has run right through Sudan's history, so much so that finally, in 2011, South Sudan was created, and legitimised in international law in 2011. But the legacy of misrule, corruption and history continues to plague the region, as witnessed by the latest outbreak of war in April.


Why was the Sudanese territories coveted by the British in the first place? Sudan was an essential stepping stone for Britain's interest in securing territory on the African continent that would link Cairo to Cape town all along British annexed land. They succeeded in conquering or controlling a north south passage that ran from Egypt, through Sudan, Kenya, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe all the way to South Africa. So one nation's imperial dream becomes a

nightmare for the people of those lands.


Colonialism has affected India too. British colonialism was a brutal occupation and not a civilising effect as some colonial historians want us to think. The Indians fought in huge numbers in World War One, approximately 1.3 million of them, in return hoping for some sort of autonomy. Those who didn't fight sent money, animals, foodstuffs, and textiles. They sold precious heirlooms, all in the belief that they were on the 'right' side of a moral war. If only ones morals could protect them. When the war ended, instead of the promises of responsible self-government and some control over their own destiny, the British actually reimposed wartime censorship, increased taxes, broke their political promises and indeed banned any gatherings, peaceful or other. The Amritsar massacre 1919, probably epitomises more than any other event, the self-interests and rabid imperialism of Britain. Orders to ban mass gatherings coincided with the Punjabi spring festival. Families gathered for food and celebration inside a walled garden without a hint of politics to this celebration of a traditional festival. The British Administration ordered General Dyer out to deal with the Indians. He arrived without warning, ordering his soldiers to shoot all the people present. He later boasted that "1,650 rounds fired and not one bullet wasted". It was estimated by the British that 350 were killed, but it was probably double that. The wounded had to lie 24 hours before being attended to. The House of Commons condemned him but the House of Lords commended him. He was awarded a bejewelled sword and a pension worth a quarter of a million in today's money. The great English poet Rudyard Kipling hailed him as "The man who saved India".

I taught in London for a few years: They don't cover colonial history and tend not to interrogate their darlings like Kipling too closely. Winston Churchill often comes top of the list in their greatest ever Prime Minister.

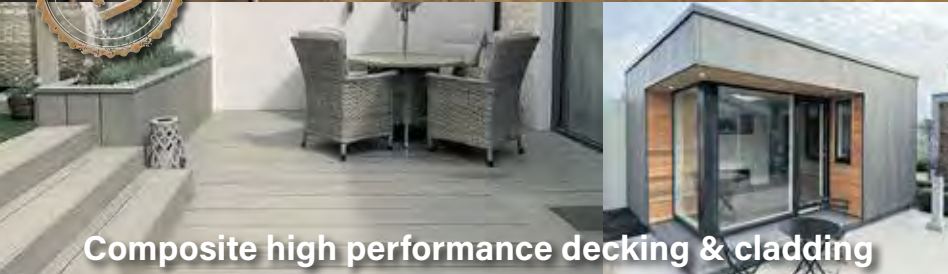
Speaking of India and Indians, in the context of massive famine conditions there, he coldly responded, "I hate Indians, they are a beastly people with a beastly religion. It's all their fault for like breeding like rabbits"... and when it was reported that 4.3 million had consequently died he wrote "Why hasn't Gandhi died yet?"



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Council launches guide map on archaeology of West Cork



Pictured at Bantry Tourist Office is back row l-r: Rose Carroll, CCC, Bernard O'Leary (Bantry Historical Society), Michael Lynch, CCC, Margate McAllistair (Bantry Historical Society), Sharon Corcoran CCC, Front row l-r Eileen O'Shea, Bantry Development & Tourism, Mary Sleeman, CCC, Mayor of the County of Cork Cllr. Danny Collins, Jim Larner, Bantry Historical Society.

The Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Danny Collins has officially launched a new guide map highlighting the rich and unique archaeological heritage of the West Cork countryside.

The '101 Archaeological Sites to Visit in West Cork' guide map features well-known monuments such as Drombeg Stone Circle, Timoleague

Friary, and Charles Fort, as well as lesser-known sites like Ardgroom Stone Circle, Kinneagh Round Tower, and Cahervagliar Ringfort. It also includes monuments from more recent times, including Martello towers, signal towers, water-powered mills and mining remains.

The map provides a brief description of each site, along with its grid coordinates, mak-

ing it easy for visitors to find and experience the rich heritage of West Cork. The new guide complements the Council's Historic Towns Map series now available for 11 towns in Cork County, including Bantry, Skibbereen, Clonakilty, Schull, Dunmanway, Castletownbere, Kinsale and Bandon.

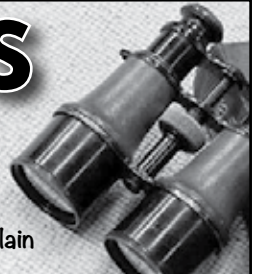
Speaking at the launch, Mayor Collins said, "West

Cork is home to a wealth of archaeological sites that tell the story of our unique cultural heritage, from Stone Age burial tombs to medieval castles and abbeys. This guide map will be an excellent resource for both locals and visitors to the area, providing a comprehensive list of accessible sites that showcase the diverse history of the area."

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The '101 Archaeological Sites to Visit in West Cork' guide map and the Historic Towns Series are available for

download on the Council's website at www.corkcoco.ie. Copies are also available at local Tourist Offices.



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Government needs to switch focus from tax cuts to healthcare and education issues of children with disabilities

Families Unite for Services and Support (FUSS) is a national advocacy group which highlights disparities in services for children and young people.

They recently released a survey based on responses received from parents/carers/guardians and clinicians/therapists. They described disability services as 'disjointed, diluted and clinical-

ly unsafe for staff and users'.

It may be a stark finding, but it is unsurprising for any family of a child with a disability.

Parents of children and adults with disabilities are among the groups I meet most frequently. They are often at their wits' end, beyond angry and frustrated. All they want is the basic services their child is entitled to.

Under the Convention on the

Rights of Persons with Disabilities, each child has the right to receive appropriate healthcare, education and supports to help them live independent lives in the community.

Therapeutic interventions are crucial for children. They can be life-transforming. That is why this is such a significant and emotive issue. Parents and families know the difference

timely therapies can make.

One of the clearest signs of dysfunction in the children's disability services are the waiting lists. Nationally, there are over 4,600 children on waiting lists for assessments of need, and more than 10,000 waiting longer than 12 months for initial contact with a Children's Disability Network Team (CDNT).

Families also face geographic lotteries, with considerable variations in service qualities and waiting lists. Figures from December show that the Cork-Kerry HSE region has a list of 1,488 children waiting over 12 months for initial contact, while the figure in this category for Mayo, Galway, Roscommon was 80.

None of this is the fault of individual teams. The clinicians, therapists and others on these teams are doing everything they can. But in most cases, CDNTs are not fully staffed and already have excessive workloads. Staff are deeply frustrated and demoralised. They have spoken about being burnt out, with many transferring to other services or to private practice.

I have consistently raised the



SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

Holly Cairns TD

issue of staffing with Disability Minister Anne Rabbitte and HSE management. Addressing this issue would make a massive difference to overall disability services.

One of the glaring problems is that some public services are provided through what are known as Section 39 organisations, where staff have different pay and working conditions to their counterparts in the HSE. This makes it difficult to recruit and retain staff.

In addition, student health-care staff are treated poorly by the Government, with nurses

getting very little pay for compulsory placements and student therapists, psychologists and others getting nothing in some cases. The Government needs to understand that the key to encouraging young people to work in Irish healthcare is valuing them from day one.

It is essentially that the Government gets to grips with this issue. Children with disabilities have a right to proper healthcare and education. Staffing is key to providing these services and reducing waiting lists.

Despite the grim realities for the families of children with disabilities, the Taoiseach and other Fine Gael ministers are already flying kites about tax cuts for the budget. It is disgraceful that they are even suggesting this when disability services are threadbare.

I know what choice most people would make between getting a few extra euros a week or ensuring that a child with a disability is not left waiting over a year for their first appointment.

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57,500 Cork burial records now online

Over 57,500 burial records from 112 graveyards around Cork county are now available to access online free of charge on www.skibbheritage.com.

The team at Skibbereen Heritage Centre have been digitising Cork County Council burial registers for some time, creating a database of records that cover most of the graveyards around west Cork and this now extends into the east Cork and Macroom



areas too.

The records are searchable either by individual name or graveyard and the original pages of the registers can also be viewed for each burial.

This latest upload includes the very poignant records for the Lusitania victims buried in mass graves in Cobh in May 1915, many of them unidentified.

As well as the burial records, the Skibbereen Heritage Centre website features video tours of some west Cork graveyards,

which give a brief history of each graveyard alongside some of the stories of those buried there as well as a 'virtual tour' of the monuments.

The Cork Graveyards database and videos are available to view free of charge on Skibbereen Heritage Centre's website www.skibbheritage.com alongside an interactive map of all the graveyards covered and a tutorial video on how best to use the database.

Works progressing to eliminate untreated wastewater in Castlehaven Harbour

Uisce Éireann, working in partnership with Cork County Council, is progressing with the construction of new wastewater infrastructure for Castletownshend. This important project will eliminate the discharge of untreated wastewater into Castlehaven Harbour, resulting in improved water quality that will enhance local amenities and support social and economic development.

Speaking about the project to

date, Anthony Kavanagh, Programme Manager with Uisce Éireann, said: "We are progressing well towards delivering this important project on behalf of the local community in the beautiful coastal village of Castletownshend."

"The new Castle pumping station is installed and ready for commissioning along with the installation of pipeline from the station to the new wastewater treatment plant. The works at the wastewater treatment plant are also

well underway along with other elements of the project."

"This significant investment will boost Castletownshend by enhancing the local environment and improving water quality for swimming, rowing, and sailing. Eliminating the discharge of untreated wastewater into Castlehaven Harbour will enhance the scenic views and coastal walks around Castletownshend."

The project will be completed by 2024.

Ludgate and Cork ETB collaborate to support career comebacks for women

Most women who take career breaks intend to return to the workforce when the time is right. However, when they are in a position to return to employment, they face real and perceived challenges that stop them from doing so. For too many women, taking time out from the workforce equates to signing out of their career. Ludgate and Cork ETB have collaborated to change this pattern.



Grainne O'Keeffe, Ludgate CEO, and Teresa O'Sullivan, Adult Education Officer at Cork ETB, launching the programme

Ludgate, with the support of Cork ETB, is proud to announce the return of its successful Women's Returnee Programme for 2023 – Launchpad. Designed specifically for women looking to re-enter the workforce after a career break, this comprehensive programme empowers and supports women in taking the next steps on their career journeys, be it employment, further study or starting their own business.

"Cork ETB are delighted to fund this new initiative supporting women to get back to work or education, helping them to take the next step on their career path. This partnership will build on our respective experience to ensure a motivational, engaging, supportive and meaningful experience for all participants," says Teresa O'Sullivan, Adult Education Officer at CETB.

Launchpad 2023 addresses the unique challenges faced by women who have taken time off from their careers for family or personal reasons. It recognises the immense talent, experience and skills that these women possess, but also the challenges they face having been away from the workforce for some time such as digital skills gaps, self-confidence and access to the remote and local employment network.

"We understand that returning to work after a hiatus can be daunting for many women," said Rose Minihane, Ludgate Education Innovation Manager. "Women can feel isolated and overwhelmed by the prospect of finding the right role. This programme tells them they are not alone in this position. Launchpad is designed to provide them with the confidence, skills, and knowledge they need to re-enter the workforce and thrive in their chosen fields."

Launchpad is the second year Ludgate is running a Women Returnee programme. In 2022, fourteen women took part in the inaugural programme – ReIgnite. Ludgate was delighted with the success of the programme, which received positive feedback from the participants and the wider business community. Since completing the course, many of the women have returned to work, identified further training opportunities, or started their own business.

"We firmly believe that career breaks should not hinder a woman's progress or potential," said Grainne O'Keeffe, Ludgate CEO. "Launchpad training programme is a testament to Ludgate's and Cork ETB's commitment to ensuring this talented group of women have access to the

skills, support, and network to relaunch their careers. Importantly, we also let the business community know of this untapped pool of talent and experience."

The training programme incorporates a variety of workshops that cover essential topics such as: Digital Skills - Microsoft Office Suite & Google (Drive, Docs and Sheets) CV building and Interview skills; Marketing techniques; Motivation and Goal-setting; Career planning and Communication; Personal branding and Social media; Networking and navigating the rural / remote jobs landscapes; Further training and start your own business taster.

To ensure participants get the best opportunities to re-enter their chosen career paths, the women are paired with a mentor who is a senior professional in their chosen field. This feature of the programme was highly beneficial to the 2022 women returnees and, for many, the mentoring support has continued after the programme ended.




"Having access to an established professional in their sector, someone who can give them insights into how to access employment in their field, help them identify and fill their skills gaps, and give these women access to the



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business network was a significant advantage to the women," said Grainne O'Keeffe. "The participants benefited hugely from their respective mentoring partnerships."

Launchpad will be facilitated by a team of experienced workshop leads who specialise in career development and return-to-work programmes. Participants will also benefit from one-to-one coaching sessions, group discussions, interactive exercises that encourage skill-building and

support networks among fellow participants.

One of the unique aspects of the 2022 programme was the friendships that formed among the women, who have now become each other's advocates and support network. "Some of the women began enjoying a coffee together after the workshops," said Rose Minihane. "We are still meeting for coffee every so often, even though ReIgnite ended months ago. It is wonderful to catch up and see how everyone is doing.

And hear of all the progress and plans – it's exciting!"

The programme will run over 12 weeks from the end of September to mid-December, with a break to coincide with school half-term. Each workshop will be on Thursday morning from 10am-1pm.

Launchpad is now open for registration. Interested individuals can register through Ludgate's Eventbrite. Link to Eventbrite www.eventbrite.ie/e/633861375437

O'Sullivan calls on CRU to prioritise consumer interests amid SSE Airtricity's record profits

Cork South West Deputy Christopher O'Sullivan has urged the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) to take immediate action to address the interests of consumers in light of SSE Airtricity's staggering profits of £2.18 billion over the past 12 months.

Deputy O'Sullivan stressed the importance of advancing the implementation of a more affordable night rate starting at 8pm as well as expediting windfall tax legislation to ensure that consumers receive compensation they deserve.

Expressing his concern over the recent financial results announced by SSE Airtricity, Deputy O'Sullivan said there is a need for swift action from the CRU to bring relief to struggling households.

"With energy costs on the rise, it is crucial to adjust the night rate timing to better align with consumers' needs," Deputy O'Sullivan said.

"With SSE Airtricity reporting profits of £2.18 billion for the last 12 months, it's more important than ever that the CRU bring forward the cheaper

"...it's more important than ever that the CRU bring forward the cheaper night rate time to start at 8pm,"



night rate time to start at 8pm," he said.

"This adjustment will allow consumers to better manage their energy consumption, particularly during the evening hours when usage tends to be higher. It's a simple measure that can make a significant difference in people's lives."

Deputy O'Sullivan stressed the necessity of expediting windfall tax legislation, which aims to ensure that companies benefiting from substantial profits contribute their fair share to society.

In March the government approved the General Scheme of the Energy (Windfall Gains in the Energy Sector) Bill 2023,

which will implement a temporary solidarity contribution and a cap on market revenues.

The legislation, once enacted, would provide much-needed payback to consumers who have borne the brunt of rising energy costs, Deputy O'Sullivan said.

"The EU's windfall tax legislation must be expedited to ensure that those reaping enormous profits are held accountable and contribute their fair share to the welfare of our communities, Deputy O'Sullivan said.

"Doing so can alleviate the burden on hardworking people and families who have been struggling to cope with escalating energy prices."

Amnesty calls for release of native American activist jailed for over 40 years



Native American activist, Leonard Peltier, has been imprisoned in the USA for over 46 years, including years in solitary confinement, after an unfair trial for the killing of two FBI agents on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, South Dakota.

Peltier, a member of the Turtle Mountain Chippewa tribe and of Lakota and Dakota descent, was a leader of the American Indian Movement, an indigenous civil rights movement founded in Minneapolis that, apparently had been infiltrated and repressed by the FBI. He has said that his political activism was driven by the racism and brutal poverty he experienced every day growing up on the Turtle Mountain Chippewa and Fort Totten Sioux reservations in North Dakota, and living through the federal government's forced assimilation policies at boarding school.

Leonard has always maintained his innocence and Amnesty observers at his trial, and others, have long had



concerns about the fairness of the legal proceedings leading to his conviction. Over the years more and more people, looking at the evidence; have called for clemency, including Mary Robinson, late Archbishop Tutu, former FBI agents, US Senators Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren. Even the the US attorney, James Reynolds, whose team led the prosecution and appeal of his case has said "Leonard Peltier's conviction and continued incarceration is a testament to a time and a system of justice that no longer has a place in our society. Earlier this year a former FBI agent close to the case accused the FBI of harbouring a vendetta against Peltier and called for his release.

Several Presidents have promised to look at Leonard's case but nothing has come of it.

In 2022 UN experts called for him to be released immediately after concluding that his prolonged imprisonment amounted to arbitrary detention.

No one should be locked up for over 40 years when there are serious concerns about the fairness of the trial. President Biden should right this historical wrong and grant Leonard Peltier clemency.

The last word goes to Leonard who is now 78 and suffering serious health problems.

He said "Of course I know from my own experience that the justice system sucks in America, and for us natives has not changed much in that area. It's 2023 but it's still a very racist system."

If you would like to call for Leonard's release go to amnesty.ie.



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The battle of the armoured cars

On May 24, 1923, IRA Chief-of-Staff Frank Aiken issued an order to all fighters to cease fire. As we mark the centenary of the end of the Irish Civil War, **Pauline Murphy** looks at how those fighting on the anti-Treaty side of the bitter conflict did not have quite the same firepower as the pro-Treaty Free State army.

At the outbreak of civil war a number of armoured cars were handed over to the Free State Army by the British Government. Painted green and christened with Irish names such as 'Danny Boy' and 'Sliabh na mBan', these Rolls Royce armoured cars could carry a crew of three, achieve speeds of up to 45mph and fire up to 500 rounds per minute. Still, for all their speed and fire power, these vehicles did often break down due to an over-heated engine!



© Kilmallick Gaol

The anti-Treaty IRA responded to the threat of these Free State armoured cars by making their own. 'The River Lee' armoured car was one such homemade vehicle and its origin story is as shaky as the machine itself!

One tale relates that the car was built in Cork city from a coal truck, which had armoured plates and two Lewis machine

guns attached to it. Apparently it was constructed at the IRA's engineering shop on Leirim Street, under the direction of Cork Brigade engineer Jim Grey.

Another story comes from First Cork Brigade O/C Mick Murphy, who suggested in his Bureau of Military Witness Statement that the 'River Lee' was made from the chassis of

a car that was seized in 1920 from two Auxiliaries who had dropped it for a service at the Johnson and Perrott garage on Emmet Place in Cork city.

Whatever its origins, 'The River Lee' armoured car became famous in Republican lore, even though the men tasked with driving her often complained that the machine was fiendishly sluggish due to being weighed down with heavy steel plates!

We know 'The River Lee' was used at the Battle of Kilmallock in County Limerick in 1922 where it came up against 'The Manager', a far superior Free State Rolls Royce armoured car (pictured above). 'The River Lee' put up a good fight but, one IRA Volunteer quipped, "it cruised around like a labourer's cottage!"

Towards the end of the fight at Kilmallock, 'The Manager' gave chase and came face-to-face with 'The River Lee', whose days would have been numbered were it not for the Vickers machine gun in 'The Manager' jamming, allowing the IRA car to escape.

Kilmallock was not to be these cars' last tango and they

The River Lee Armoured Car

(air: *The Darling Girl From Clare*)

Well a battle was raging in Kilmallock,
'tween the Anti's and the Pro's,
Once boldly marching out together, alas now bitter foes.
But hark what's that roillin' over, and tearing up the tar?
here to give 'em hell, ringin' freedom's bells,
its the River Lee armoured car.

Chorus:

*Whats that I hear? bringing hope and fear,
spitting oil boys, puffing smoke boys,
a fine machine ever to be seen,
dressed in armour, she's a charmer,
when there's a fight, she turns day into night,
to uphold the plough and stars,
she is the rebel pride, making staters fly,
the River Lee armoured car.*

Well a battle it was raging in Douglas,
when the staters came by sea,
they landed with a plan and hopes, they'd all be home for tea,
but watching her prey on the high hill, like a cunning jaguar,
waiting for to pounce and make the staters bounce,
the River Lee Armoured car.

Chorus

Well a battle it was raging in Macroom, beneath the autumn sun,
a cavalcade of rebels in the town, took on the free state guns,
as the sun it was sinking in the west, there was to be no rest,
she raised a fine bazaar, that would rattle any czar,
the River Lee armoured car.

Chorus

Well every battle has an end, every woeful war must cease,
she headed for the hills in full throttle, and never more was seen,
At times I hear her engine growl, and smell the burnt up tar,
I look in great hope but alas she's now a ghost,
the River Lee armoured car.

met again a week later when 'The River Lee' trundled her way back to her native county to partake in the Battle for Cork.

On August 9, 1922, Free State troops landed at Passage West port and made their way into Cork via Rochestown and Douglas; the troops met strong resistance as 'The River Lee', along with IRA fighters positioned in the woods of Rochestown, briefly impeded their advance.

Free State troops quickly deployed 'The Manager' and the IRA fighters were overpowered and retreated, with their car, westwards out of the city and towards Macroom. The battle

had been brief but bloody, with casualties on both sides.

In September 1922, 'The River Lee' took part in its final fight when it battled against Free State forces in Macroom town. Just as they had done in Cork city, the State forces pushed the anti-Treaty fighters out of Macroom and westwards towards the county bounds.

Not much is known about the ultimate fate of this famous homemade armoured car; 'The River Lee' was last seen chugging her way to Ballyvourney, where she vanished into the hills.


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Calling all community organisations and sports groups in need of a lick of paint

In connection with the Relove Paint project, Cork County Council have a paint grant for community organisations and sports groups to avail of; five pots of 5.6 litre interior or exterior paint. All you have to do is apply to cyclesense@gmail.com for an application form with the name and contact details of your organisation. The closing date for the give away is June 16.



Cycle Sense is a social Enterprise producing Relove paint for the whole of West Cork and the Bandon/Kinsale area. The paint is an initiative of Cork County and City Councils. It is an up-cycled brand, which is remixed, re-sieved and repotted from supplies collected from local amenity sites creating a quality end product from paint that would otherwise go completely unnecessarily to landfill.



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people Environment : Making a difference

Clonakilty welcomes the planet's fastest animal – the peregrine falcon

Following her recent talk and viewing session to the public, Branch Committee member and local area National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Conservation Ranger, **Claire Deasy**, gives an account of Clonakilty's newest resident bird of prey, the awe-inspiring peregrine falcon (scientific name: *falco peregrinus*; Irish name: fabhcúin gorm).

This spring, residents in the neighbourhood of the Catholic Church in the town of Clonakilty woke up to one of the most heartening sounds of the wild, the call on high of a peregrine falcon; its unmistakable screech stopping people in their tracks. Peering into the sky it soon became apparent that the call was coming from the impressive towering steeple of the Church, which dominates the skyline in the centre of town. First one, then two peregrines were spotted and confirmed as a male and female pair by Claire Deasy. Pristine images of the striking birds were captured by the keen-eyed photography of Fr Tom Hayes, Clonakilty Parish Priest. Fr Hayes is one of the peregrine's closest neighbours, living as he does in the parochial house with direct views of the peregrine's perching sites. The presence of the pair established the Church as an 'occupied territory'. Further survey and observations of the pair will continue into the summer to determine if they breed successfully. Breeding sites are confirmed to be successful if fledged young, or young which are close to fledging, are recorded.

The presence of a breeding pair of peregrines at this Church is not new. Historical records of an occupied territory here are held by the NPWS who carry

out National Peregrine Falcon Surveys. Locals also recall other years where they have heard the call and spotted peregrines in the steeple of the Church. The pair present this year appear particularly vocal and this has given all of us an opportunity to stop and appreciate the magnificence of this amazing bird.

The peregrine is a powerfully-built crow-sized bird of prey, found all over the world except for Antarctica and New Zealand. It has a blue/grey back and barred white underparts. An identifying feature of the peregrine is its black head and 'moustache' or 'side burns', which are thought to protect against the sun's glare, a bit like sunglasses. We know this, as studies have been conducted to show that in countries where the sun's radiation levels are higher, the 'moustache' or 'side burns' are larger. Peregrines hunt mainly other bird species including pigeons, starlings, waders and water birds. It relies on its high speed dive, known as 'a stoop', to kill its prey in mid-air with its long talons. The peregrine traditionally breeds on coastal or inland cliffs, although quarries and tall urban buildings have become increasingly popular breeding sites in recent times. It winters on coastal habitats, such as Clonakilty Bay, where there is a ready supply of waders and water birds that

spend the winter here.

The peregrine is not only the fastest bird but the fastest animal on the planet; no other creature comes close. Reaching speeds of up to 389kmh or 242mph in a stoop, we can compare this to the speed of a Formula 1 Car which is 354kmh or 220 mph. At this speed, a peregrine will be withstanding 25 times the force of gravity. By comparison we would only feel three times the force of gravity on a rollercoaster bend! How does the body of the peregrine withstand such speed and pressure and still manage to make a kill? Evolution has equipped this amazing bird with a toolkit of adaptations to enable it to hunt its prey at high speeds. It has razor sharp vision,

An identifying feature of the peregrine is its black head and 'moustache' or 'side burns', which are thought to protect against the sun's glare, a bit like sunglasses.

eight times better than human vision. Its internal anatomy and skeleton is also built for speed, with a large keel bone allowing for larger flight muscles. It has an extra pair of vertebra on its tailbone that allows for a larger area to attach the strong muscles, which enhances its tail movement and manoeuvrability. Its heart is large and the beat is very strong, beating up to 900 times per minute. This heartbeat speed also allows the Peregrine to flap its wings up to

four times per second. Finally, it has a structure in its nostrils called a tubercle. This acts as a baffle causing the air rushing into its nostrils to curve in a spiral manner, slowing down the air, which prevents the air pressure entering through the nostrils from rushing straight in and causing lung damage. This design principle inspired by the peregrine is now used in the air intakes for turbo-jet engines.

A cautionary tale. The Peregrine is a protected bird species under Irish and EU law and Ireland has an estimated 425 breeding pairs. However, this was not always the case. In the 1950s to 1970s, peregrines experienced a global catastrophic population crash bought on by exposure to Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT), an insecticide. Ireland's breeding pairs dropped to just 14 pairs during this period and, on the east coast of America, they were wiped out. Through biomagnification, the levels of DDT increase in concentration as it moves up the food chain and the peregrine is at the top of the chain. The effect on peregrines was to weaken the eggshells such that the eggs were crushed by the parents, often before hatching. DDT was banned in 1972 after governments recognised the harm it was doing and its use remains restricted in most regions. This was not too late for the peregrine and here in Ireland, numbers have slowly risen to 425 pairs in the most recent survey, with a five per cent rise in population since the last survey (NPWS, 2017). This reiterates how connected the web of life is and how human inputs into the environment can



Peregrine with food. Pic: Claire Deasy

have knock on affects elsewhere along the food chain. We may be at risk of repeating history as chemicals such as 'forever chemicals', flame retardants and neonicotinoids, are released and used in the environment with insufficient knowledge of how they take their toll on humans and nature.

Other threats to the peregrine are ever present, particularly from human persecution and disturbance at nest sites. Deliberate poisoning of these beautiful birds is unfortunately an annual occurrence. Traces of rat poison are also found in peregrines, which may lead to indirect toxic effects. While the peregrine population in Ireland is showing healthy signs of recovery since its crash in numbers, NPWS continue to monitor peregrines closely due to the aforementioned threats from humans. NPWS urge the public to report any unusual activity around peregrine nest sites or dead peregrines to NPWS. It is hoped that society is changing and that persecution and disturbance of birds of prey is becoming more and more socially unacceptable as the public realise how fragile nature is and how important it is for humans to conserve it.

For now we can enjoy the wonderful experience here in Clonakilty of staring into the eyes of one of the world's most remarkable and skilful wild animals, the peregrine falcon; catch a glimpse while you still can!



Upcoming outings being held by the Branch are:

Sunday, June 11 - 'George the Sky' walk from Castle Donovan.

Sunday, June 30 - Visit Long Island.

Visit www.birdwatchirelandwestcork.ie for more information about these events. To receive news and reminders about events join the mailing list by sending an email to mailinglist@birdwatchirelandwestcork.ie. For more information about the Branch, contact Fiona O'Neill at secretary@birdwatchirelandwestcork.ie. F: @BirdWatchIrelandWestCork Twitter @BWIWestCork

Photographer wings it to Clon to capture stunning image of falcons

Acting on a tip off from his grandfather, Ryan De La Cour flew down from his home in Ballyvolane on April 22 to capture this stunning image of peregrine falcons, a male and female, atop Clonakilty's Catholic Church.

Ryan is a keen wildlife photographer who only recently returned to an earlier love for bird watching. "My grandad, Michael O'Regan, lives in As-

sumption Place and he told me that a peregrine falcon had been spotted locally," he explains. "Grandad could also hear them everyday.

"I had never seen falcons myself in Clon but I had spotted them by Knockadoon Head in East Cork; usually these birds of prey live near and on coastal areas like cliffs. But I had never seen them in a pair and the two in Clon were a male and female

breeding pair."

The eagle-eyed photographer spent three hours waiting in the church yard before capturing this amazing moment. "I am so proud of my photo," he confirms. "It was a bucket list item of mine that is now ticked off!"

You can see more of Ryan's work on Instagram at @rdlcphotos



people Environment : Making a difference



GROUNDED

MEP Grace O'Sullivan

As the sun finally burst onto the scene in late May, an unlikely group paid a visit to Ireland's shores on an important mission.

Members of the European Parliament, hailing from different parts of Europe and from opposing political groups joined together for a delegation to Ireland's coastal and

Bringing Europe to Ireland's coast

fishing communities. Following months of preparation after I had originally proposed the idea some time ago in the European Parliament's Fisheries Committee, it was great to see a good plan come together.

Six years have flown by since the fateful night of the Brexit referendum tore the UK out of the European community and the results of that decision are plain to see in the UK today. But what is less known throughout the EU is the continued impact of Brexit on Ireland. Nowhere is this less evident than in Ireland's fishing towns, where communities and businesses have seen a crushing 15 per cent cut in fishing quotas due to Brexit. With that in mind

I invited MEPs from across the continent to come see for themselves the impact that Brexit is still having on our coastal communities.

While the larger fleet of mackerel trawlers based around Donegal have taken a big hit from Brexit due to their historic activity in Scottish waters, the smaller operations along Ireland's south coast from Castletownbere to Kilmore Quay in Wexford have seen a different kind of challenge – one that threatens the very existence of these towns and their livelihoods.

On top of loss of quota, there are very few young men and women who see fishing as a viable career choice from a young

age. Our fishing communities are getting older, as younger generations from coastal towns increasingly seek their fortune away from the quayside. While Bord Iascaigh Mhara offers useful trainings for the fishing industry, there is still a need for apprenticeships to get more young people into the career from a young age.

This presents massive problems for coastal communities and the rest of Irish society as an island nation. As well as the produce that Irish fisheries bring to consumers, we are facing into a decade of unprecedented action needed to defend our seas and oceans from climate change and biodiversity loss. We need fishing communities

at the centre of this action. In the same way that we should be rewarding farmers for changing their business models from one that is purely based on quantity and production towards protecting and restoring nature alongside food production, fishers should be compensated to be at the forefront of marine protection.

The State has embarked on what could be the most significant legislation for marine protection in the history of the State, establishing Marine Protected Areas covering 30 per cent of our waters and setting up a whole new State agency for maritime planning. Fishers should be supported to guide these initiatives. Take for

example Torre Guaceto in Italy as a model, where local fishers have requested the local Marine Protected Area be expanded because it has increased fish stocks so much and kept out industrial fishing outfits.

Meanwhile the potential of offshore wind development means we need mariners more than ever. In Donegal, Killybegs fishers have embarked on a joint venture with wind farm developers to directly benefit from this new feature of our maritime landscape.

These are the kinds of opportunities we need to include fishers in as State and EU policy. Otherwise we risk losing an important piece of Irish heritage for good.

Protecting our marine wildlife

As the waters warm around the coast of West Cork and we welcome the annual migration of whales, and lots of activity from dolphins and porpoises, Marine Biologist and Oceanographer and IWDG member **Catherine Russell** reminds us that these creatures should not be disturbed or stressed in their natural habitat.

Rich with life, there are over 25 cetacean species in Irish waters, a mixture of year-round residents and some visitors. Pods of dolphins are present year round and larger species such as humpbacks, minke and fin whales are annual visitors; arriving during May, their presence is announced by groups of birds, dolphins and their distinct blow. Each species can be identified by the angle and type of blow.

The exceptional properties of the South and SW Coast provide ideal conditions unique in Europe for marine life to live, feed and breed. Many species are endangered or vulnerable worldwide. In 1991 the Irish Government declared all Irish waters (The EEZ) to be a whale and dolphin sanctuary in recognition of the importance of this habitat. The Irish Whale and Dolphin Group (IWDG) has been leading the way with conservation efforts in Ireland. 'Mission Blue' has identified areas of West Ireland declaring hope spots by a global marine conservation movement, stretching from Kenmare Bay to Kerry. These aim to increase public awareness, support and access for worldwide Marine Protected Areas. The Hope spots have been scientifically identified as critical to ocean health and include places such as the Galapagos, the Great Barrier reef, Antarctica.

National and international legislation protects cetaceans. The EU Wildlife Act (1976) and amendments state it is an offence to hunt, injure or wilfully interfere, disturb, or destroy the resting

or breeding place of protected species (unless under license or permit).

West Cork is very fortunate to have the chance to see these creatures in their natural habitat and have a duty to make sure they are not disturbed or stressed. Whale watching is an activity that should be carried out from a distance. Engine noise and the threat of propeller damage can cause unnecessary stress and the IWDG has created a code of conduct to safeguard these majestic creatures. Simple rules to remember are do not approach head on or behind, the best angle is slightly behind and to the side staying parallel. Do not go closer than 100m avoid sudden changes in direction. Do not stay longer than 30 minutes and avoid loud noises. Do not scatter or separate groups and never get between a mother and calf. If the whale, dolphin or porpoise approaches the boat keep your engine in neutral, idle for a minute and then switch the engine off. The exception of course is dolphins who are very playful and love to bow ride!

Follow West Cork Kayakers Facebook page for more information on interacting with the environment in their new sustainability code.

Catherine Russell is a JNCC accredited Marine Mammal Observer and member of the West Cork Kayakers based in Trillick who have recently launched a sustainability code with information about interactions with marine life.

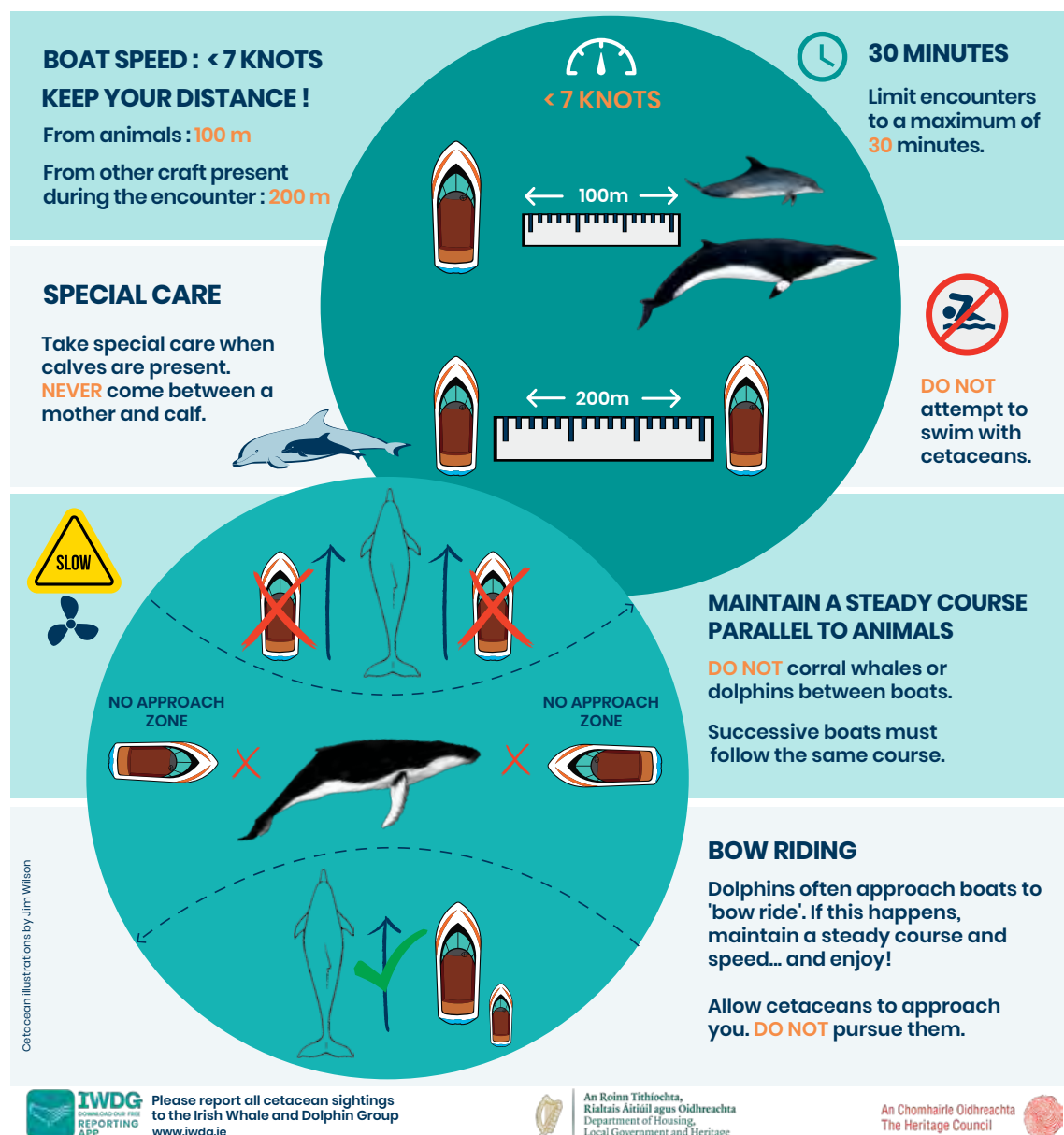
For more information go to www.iwdg.ie

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL WATERCRAFT ENCOUNTERING WHALES AND DOLPHINS

IWDG
Irish Whale and Dolphin Group

MARINE NOTICE NO. 15 OF 2005

- Government regulations **prohibit** the deliberate disturbance of all cetaceans (whales, dolphins, porpoises) in Irish waters.
- Cetacean behaviour may be unpredictable and cause potential damage to small craft, especially when large whales are feeding and/or when calves are present.
- The basic **Code of Conduct** outlined below should be followed when encountering cetaceans:



people Environment : Making a difference

Inchydoney Island Lodge and Spa celebrates 25 years by partnering with West Cork ecosystem restoration project

Inchydoney Island Lodge and Spa, which celebrates their 25th anniversary this year, has always championed West Cork and the surrounding landscapes in which the hotel sits. The hotel owners see themselves as custodians of their beautiful resort and recognise the need to sustain and protect it for future generations. Coupled with this, the hotel has been a long-time supporter of Irish artists and craftspeople and guests will see the work of many West Cork artists on display at the hotel.

So, it is fitting that, with the help of the Tree Council of Ireland, the hotel has committed to supporting another West Cork organisation to whom both sustainability and the arts are central to their purpose. Crithir,

located in Drinagh, is a West Cork based creative hub, with a focus on wellbeing and residency programmes immersed in nature. They are based on a small farm holding and aspire to help guests learn and grow, focusing on creativity, wellbeing, farm to fork food, nature and community. As part of a three year commitment by Inchydoney Island Lodge and Spa, Crithir will plant approximately 3,000 native Irish trees on their land, in a bid to support local biodiversity.

Des O'Dowd, owner of Inchydoney Island Lodge and Spa said, "We wanted to celebrate West Cork on behalf of our team and our guests to mark 25 years of being immersed in this beautiful community. When we met Tim, we felt immedi-

ately that there are synergies between us. We have always been delighted to support the unique creative community that surrounds us, and we're very interested in what Crithir is trying to achieve.

"Our commitment to this project feels like the right thing to do for us and we're happy, on behalf of our guests, to plant these native Irish trees and watch this woodland develop over the coming years with Tim and his team as they work to support local wildlife habitats and restore local ecosystems."

Speaking about the partnership, Tim Daly, founder of Crithir said, "Connection to nature is core to our values at Crithir and we have been working to create additional wildlife habitats in support of local



Ann and Des O'Dowd of Inchydoney Island Lodge & Spa with Tim Daly, founder of Crithir creative hub in Drinagh

biodiversity. Our collaboration with Inchydoney will see the planting of thousands of mixed hardwood and softwood trees, with a major focus on native Irish woodlands to help restore ecosystems in the area."

Brendan Fitzsimons, CEO of the Tree Council of Ireland, said "We were delighted to be involved in this innovative environmental and artistic project.

Tree planting is at the core of our mission".

Inchydoney Island Lodge and Spa is committed to investing in environmentally conscious choices. The hotel is home to one of Ireland's largest solar arrays which has been generating energy since 2006 and uses Calor BioLPG, a 100 per cent renewable energy source. Electric vehicle charging points

are available for guests and the hotel regularly organise beach clean ups with their team and local residents. The hotel takes its position as caretaker and guardian of its immediate environment very seriously and its role in enhancing and protecting the natural beauty of the headland of Inchydoney Island.

The Organico Sea Swim

ON: Thursday 8th June 6.30pm

AT: The Abbey Beach Bantry

FREE EVENT: we will match all donations in aid of Bantry Bay Protect Our Native Kelp Forest

SIGN UP INSTORE
or at organico.ie/seaswim



Clochán Uisce: Historical cycle of the Feagle

On Sunday June 11, in partnership with the Clonakilty Bicycle Festival and Duchás Clonakilty Heritage, members of the public are invited to a Historical River Cycle to learn the history and health of the Feagle. Meet at Emmet Square, with your bicycle, at 3pm; from there the group will head out towards Ahamilla, stopping along the way to learn about some historical events and infrastructure along the river. As a group, kick sampling and insect identification activities will also be carried out at two points along the river, which is fun for all ages. This is sure to be a lovely event that will leave you with a much deeper understanding of this humble and ancient waterway. All welcome.

Looking back to last month, on May 14, Clochan Uisce hosted a walk along the Argideen river, meeting at Inchy bridge where the group engaged in some citizen science.

Water measurements were taken as part of the data collection for drinkablerivers.org and kick sampling and plant identification was done. A lot of interesting invertebrates were found in nets such as stonefly nymphs, caddis fly nymphs, and surprisingly baby eels, also known as elvers. Mayflies were to be seen in large numbers and the trout were taking full advantage of this yearly bonanza.

Kick sampling and water measurements are a great way to connect with the life source of the river and empowers



groups and communities to help understand and protect this fragile ecosystem.

There will be many more citizen science days along the Feagle and Argideen to look

forward to.

Clochán Uisce meets each month and all are welcome. You can find the group on Instagram or join the mailing list by emailing clochanuisce@gmail.com.

Calls to reintroduce the sturgeon – Ireland's lost 'dinosaur fish'

The Irish Wildlife Trust (IWT) and the Blue Marine Foundation in the UK have jointly published a report, 'Restoring the Sturgeon to Irish Waters' urging the Government to examine the feasibility of reintroducing this long-lost and enigmatic fish.

Sturgeon, sometimes called 'dinosaur fish' as they have been swimming in rivers and seas since the Jurassic Period, can grow to over two metres and

were once frequent in the waters around our coast.

Before Irish independence they were designated a 'royal fish' and any sturgeon caught was automatically the property of the Crown.

A legal review commissioned for this study found that under the Habitats Directive Ireland is obliged to examine the feasibility of reintroducing sturgeon while existing data show that suitable habitat exists for them,



particularly in the Rivers Shannon and Suir.

These migratory fish spawn in freshwater but spend most of their lives at sea. Sturgeon can therefore be an 'umbrella species', i.e. measures to restore their habitat will benefit a range of other species in the aquatic and marine environments.

IWT campaign officer, Pádraic Fogarty says, "We need to see a more concerted effort to reintroduce species to Ireland that

have been driven to extinction. We believe the sturgeon should be a priority as many of the measures to restore its habitat, such as improving the status of rivers and the creation of marine protected areas, are already government commitments. It's also a magnificent animal that deserves to be brought back to Ireland in its own right."

people Environment : Making a difference

CHERIS group aims to support West Cork homeowners with their home energy upgrades



RETROFIT

Xavier Dubuisson

Xavier Dubuisson is an engineer with 25 years experience in the field of sustainable energy in Ireland and internationally. The founder and CEO at RetroKit, a start-up dedicated to upscaling home energy upgrades with innovative digital solutions and one of the partners in the CHERIS project, Xavier has many years of experience helping homeowners make the right decisions when upgrading or building low energy homes.



Ludgate Hub, The Wheel and RetroKit have been selected to deliver an innovative new programme aimed at filling the sustainable learning gap.

The CHERIS project aims to support homeowners in making their homes more energy-efficient (ensuring access to grants and funding where possible), reducing household energy costs, all while targeting Ireland's climate goals. CHERIS will focus on householders in West Cork, addressing their needs at the initial stages of their home energy upgrade journey.

The pilot initiative will also build capacity and know-how within the community in West Cork to develop low carbon communities and further engage in climate action. It will focus on the following key areas in the drive towards energy efficient households:

- Raise awareness and knowledge within the community of home energy upgrade solutions, the costs and benefits of these options, and the support

measures and opportunities available.

- Build capacity within the community to support homeowners on their upgrade journey, by providing a tailored advisory service.

- Support the development of community scale energy renovation projects by providing an integrated home energy survey advisory service and signposting for grants available.

For more information on the project you can go to the website: www.ludgate.ie, where you can also register your interest to attend one of our free clinics to learn more about the first steps you can take to reduce and decarbonise your energy use.

So what is a home energy retrofit or upgrade? Put simply it's a renovation project that aims to improve the energy efficiency of your home, reduce its carbon footprint, improve comfort and reduce bills.

Measures to consider include insulating the building fabric (walls, roof, floor, windows and doors), upgrading its heating and ventilation systems, and installing renewable energy systems like solar panels.

Retrofit can be completed in two ways: A step-by-step approach, completing the retrofit in stages over a number of years, but with an overall plan or a whole house deep retrofit to get to a B2 energy rating or better all in one go.

There are many benefits to retrofitting your home including:

- **Reduced energy bills** – it will save you money!

- **Improved comfort** – warmer, less draughts, mould and damp

- **Energy and Carbon Savings** – Reducing your carbon footprint

- **Greater Building Durability** – Upgrading your home will last longer

- **Increased property value** – more of an issue for home buyers

- **Future proofing** against rising energy costs and carbon taxes

There are some simple cost-effective step by step measures you can consider individually:

- **Attic insulation** – Up to 25pc of your home's heat can be lost through an attic without insulation. Upgrading your attic insulation to 300-400mm deep is a simple and cost effective measure.



• Cavity wall insulation

- Poorly insulated walls can account for up to 35pc of your heat loss. If you have a cavity wall upgrading this can be a simple and non-disruptive measure to help save you money and stay warmer.

- **Draught proofing** – A lot of heat can be lost through air leaks in the building. Simple things like draught proofing a loft hatch or blocking an open chimney can really improve comfort as well as save energy.

- **Heating controls** – Improving your heating controls by adding heating zones, thermostatic radiator valves or smart controls is a simple measure that could reduce your heating bills by up to 20pc!

- **Low energy lighting** – A simple swap to LED bulbs can help reduce your electricity bill and it is an easy DIY job too!

More advanced deep retrofit measures can include: External wall insulation, triple glazed windows, heat pumps and solar panels.

However, before starting your retrofit, particularly if you are planning a whole house upgrade, it is important to have a plan in place.

An existing building energy rating, (BER) will tell you where your property sits on the rating scale from G - A1 and also comes with an advisory report containing some high level advice.

For more specific advice, a home energy assessment will include an existing BER along

with a detailed assessment of your current building's performance, recommended upgrades and options, estimated costs, impact and advice on what grants are available. There is a list of technical assessors, who provide this service, on the SEAI website or you could work directly with a registered one stop shop.

Grants available:

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) offers a number of grants to support single measure and whole house retrofit. More information is available on their website: www.seai.ie.

The different grants available are:

Individual Energy Upgrades Grants offers individual measure grants from €700 –

€8,000 per measure, which typically covering 30-40pc of the cost, (up to 80pc for cavity and attic insulation). These can cover things like attic insulation, wall insulation, heating controls upgrades, solar panels and heat pumps and you can pick and choose as many as you like.

One Stop Shop service offers grants for a whole house retrofit, to achieve a B2 energy rating or better all in one go. The one stop shop manages the whole process from start to finish and the grants cover between 30-50pc of the work. The grants are deducted from the homeowners bill directly. Additional grants for items such as windows, doors and ventilation are only available through this scheme.

The Fully Funded Energy Upgrade (formerly Warmer Homes) scheme offers free energy efficiency upgrades to homeowners who receive certain welfare payments such as job seekers, fuel allowance etc.

The SEAI community grant scheme offers similar grant amounts to the One Stop Shop service to help communities and homeowners. Individual homeowners must apply through an experienced project coordinator as part of a broader application. The main criteria is that a whole house retrofit is completed, resulting in a post work B2 energy rating or better.

A properly insulated attic could be all that is needed

According to SEAI, insulating your attic is often the most cost-effective upgrade made to a house. Approximately 20-30 per cent of heat within the home can be lost through the roof so insulating your attic properly can massively reduce heat loss and save you money, especially if you avail of one of the grants that SEAI are offering grants; ranging from €800 for insulating the attic of an apartment to €1500 for a detached house.

According to John Egan of Ecocel, a Cork-based company that manufactures, installs, and supplies cellulose fibre insulation – a safe, eco-friendly and superior quality insulation made from recycled newspapers – to other installers; the take-up of these attic grants is miniscule in scale to what is

needed because attics are not being looked at as a stand-alone solution.

“When the attic is properly insulated, the house should only then be assessed to see what other works are needed or, as we have seen very often, no other work might be necessary.”

“When the attic is properly insulated, the house should only then be assessed to see what other works are needed or, as we have seen very often, no other work might be necessary.”

Aside from the fact that there are not enough attic insulation installers in Ireland, John believes that the SEAI benchmark for retrofitting attics should be set higher.

“It should be a U-value of 0.11 and an improvement in air tightness of 10-15 per cent,” says John. “Also the material should last the lifespan of the building without a vapour check (only achievable with natural fibres).”

Ecocel, at 300mm open blow in an attic, achieves all three of the above.

If there is enough interest, John is considering offering training in attic insulation installation to community groups in an effort to increase grant uptake and benefit local communities. Any groups interested can contact John at 021 4324567.

people Food, Health & Lifestyle

An oniony tart



A FLAVOUR OF WEST CORK RECIPE

Karen Austin

The sunshine is here and we've been gardening like mad people. A little bit of heat and everything takes off. All the seedlings that were set earlier in the spring are jostling for attention and need transplanting out. This is a very satisfying occupation, it's like creating an instant garden. Rows of beans, beetroots and salads, patches of courgettes, sweetcorn and pumpkins all in situ, everything is looking very happy. I have my fingers crossed that no wild winds will

arrive to burn them this year. All going well we will have a feast when they all ripen.

Meanwhile there's a bit of a wait whilst it all comes to fruition so this month's recipe uses onions and a can of tomatoes!

Pissaladière is a recipe from the south of France, originally made with dough but often made as a tart. It works well either way as it's all about the topping and it makes the perfect summer food. Fresh, tasty and portable.

The curious name comes from the ancient ingredient pissalat. Pissalat is a puree of salted baby sardines and anchovies, a relative of garum, which is a fish sauce that's been around since the Romans. This stinky ingredient is no longer on the ingredient list but the name has stayed. Anchovies do however feature but for a vegetarian version we usually use chevre, a fresh goats cheese.

The ingredients are very simple; onions, black olives, tomatoes and then to finish the tart, anchovies or goats cheese. The base can be either pizza dough, short crust pastry or

puff pastry. Puff pastry is the easiest as that can be bought but we have always used short crust pastry which makes a deeper tart that holds more filling. Dough is delicious too. The choice is yours.

Once the topping is made you can spread or fill whichever option you choose.

You will need more onions than you can imagine to make this recipe as whilst cooking they will melt down and caramelise, so don't take fright whilst slicing them and crying. You need an enormous mound. You will end up with about 25pc volume when the onions are cooked.

The filling takes time to cook, it's not something to be rushed if you want to achieve the deep sweetness that this tart is all about. However it does not need a lot of attention, just the odd stir to prevent it from sticking to the pan so you can multi task whilst preparing it, just don't disappear off and do something else.

Pissaladière is delicious for lunch or dinner, all that's needed is some salad on the side.



Pissaladière

Ingredients:

- 7-8 large onions
- 75mls olive oil
- 1 x 400g an tomatoes
- 100g stoned black olives
- 100g goats cheese or one can anchovies
- Salt and black pepper
- 1 pre-baked tart shell

Method:

Peel the onions, cut in half then thinly slice. Heat a large frying pan and add the olive oil and the onions. Give them a good stir and season with a little salt. When you can hear the onions sizzling, turn the heat down. Cook for about one hour giving the occasional stir to prevent sticking until they are totally soft and golden. At this stage the onions should be sweet.

Chop the tomatoes and stir into the onions together with the olives and cook on medium heat for a further 20 minutes, until the liquid from the tomatoes has reduced and the mixture is thick. Season with salt and pepper.

Tip the mix into a pre baked tart shell, or onto a piece of rolled out puff pastry or dough. Spread the mix evenly.

If you are using goats cheese cut it into thin slices and place around the perimeter of the tart. If you are using anchovies drain the oil then arrange on the tart like hands on a clock.

Bake for about 20 minutes or until the cheese looks toasty.

For the tart shell

Ingredients:

- 250g flour
- 125g butter - chilled and diced
- Salt
- 80 -100mls iced cold water

Method:

Put the flour and butter into a food processor then pulse buzz until the flour resembles crumbs – this won't take long. Slowly add the water until the dough begins to come together – but not altogether, just beginning to come together. It will be very bitty, that's okay, as when you tip the mix out you will be able to bring it together with your hands. Do this quickly and do

not knead the pastry, as soon as it becomes one piece stop handling it and put it into the fridge to chill.

Roll the pastry out on a lightly floured surface to fit the tart shell. Trim the edges leaving a little extra at the top as pastry shrinks a little whilst cooking. Any extra pastry can be put in the fridge for later use. It will keep for a couple of days without spoiling.

Chill the tart shell once more, this will help the tart to cook without collapsing.

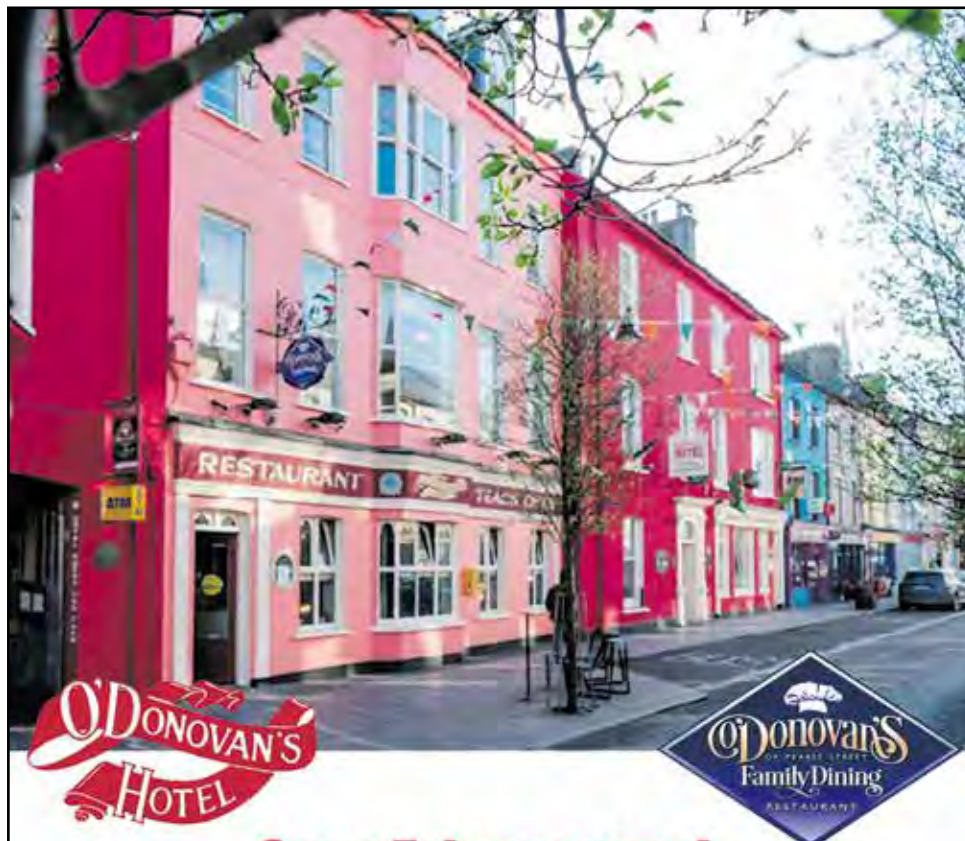
Preheat the oven 180c

Bake the tart until lightly golden. Keep an eye on it, especially at the beginning, to make sure the sides don't collapse. If this happens take the shell out of the oven and gently press the sides back into position.

Here's a happy birthday to all the Junes out there!

Karen

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West Cork based Kate Ryan has been named Blas na hÉireann's Producers' Champion for 2023. See full story on next page.

people Food, Health & Lifestyle

Join the 300 graduates who have completed UCC's Diploma in Speciality and Artisan Food Enterprises



Are you a food producer or interested in working in this booming industry? The Diploma in Speciality and Artisan Food Enterprises (formerly known as the Diploma in Speciality Food Production) was developed to provide a broad understanding of the growing differentiation of the food market in which a significant segment of consumers is motivated by characteristics of taste, traceability, quality, sustainability and proximity. The Diploma provides an insight into the challenges of creating a small food enterprise and the skills required to make a successful business.

It provides essential scientific background in the field of food science and technology, includ-

ing elements of food microbiology, food safety, food chemistry, process technologies, nutrition and sensory food science. Traditional methods of food manufacture are also covered during the course. The programme also includes an introduction to small business management, financing and marketing.

"The Diploma in Speciality and Artisan Food Enterprises is the new name for the long running and very successful Diploma in Speciality Food Production," explains Dr Angela Sheehan, Programme Manager. "UCC is very proud of the almost 300 graduates who have completed the Diploma since inception, many of whom have gone on to develop successful small food businesses. The new

name reflects the evolution of the course content to meet change. We consider it a timely change and one that fits with the current lines of thought that innovation is fundamental to achieving sustainability in all its forms."

The Diploma programme content fits within the scope of the Agri Food Strategy - Food Vision 2030 which also notes that insight, innovation, and product differentiation and developing opportunities at home and abroad are further important elements in adding value.

The closing date for applications is September 22. Contact a.sheehan@ucc.ie or see www.ucc.ie/en/fitu

Kate Ryan announced Blas na hÉireann Producers Champion

Kate Ryan, award-winning food writer and founder of Flavour.ie, has been named Blas na hÉireann's Producers' Champion for 2023 for her dedication to championing the best of everything Irish and independent.

The Producers' Champion is selected annually by Blas na hÉireann producers, based on a survey that goes out to the entire Blas network.

Originally from Bristol, Kate moved to Cork in 2005 and quickly recognised the food scene in Ireland was becoming transformative. With a growing number of food and drink producers and an increasing abundance of exceptional restaurants to celebrate, her idea of Flavour.ie became a reality. The platform, which is dedicated to promoting Irish food and drink, also features her blog, The Flavour Files, where Kate writes about great local produce, seasonality, wild and foraged food, and craft drinks of all kinds, with recipes that illustrate how

artisan foods are as at home in our kitchens as they are on a restaurant menu.

As well as writing for her own website, Kate writes regularly as a food features writer for The Echo and Irish Examiner, and many of her articles feature in a number of other publications.

In 2017, Kate was commissioned by A Taste of West Cork Food Festival to write the Artisan Food Guide, which showcases food and drink producers across West Cork. She has been a member of the Irish Food Writers Guild since 2019, becoming Secretary in 2021, now Treasurer and a Committee member. In July of this year, Kate will present a paper at the prestigious Oxford Food Symposium based on research completed for her final project of the PGDip in Irish Food Culture (UCC). She has also been a judge for Blas na hÉireann for many years.

"I'm incredibly honoured to have been awarded Producers' Champion by Blas na hÉireann,"

said Kate Ryan. "I write about Irish producers to showcase and highlight what they do because I care so passionately about them. We are blessed on this island to have such a vast amount of fantastic produce and it is so important to celebrate that. I started Flavour.ie as an ode to exceptional Irish producers, so this award is down to them."

"Kate's contribution to the Irish food scene is deeply appreciated, as is her continued support for producers," said Artie Clifford, founder of Blas na hÉireann. "We have known Kate for many years, as a judge for the awards and as a supporter and friend of Blas, so we understand how passionate she is, and how genuine her dedication is to what she has made her cause. She is incredibly well-regarded in the industry so I know that the extended Blas family will see this award of Producers' Champion 2023 for Kate as something that is extremely well-deserved."

Are you passionate about developing a food business?



UCC Part-time Course:

Diploma in Speciality and Artisan Food Enterprises*

*Formerly the Diploma in Speciality Food Production

Start Date:

10th October 2023

Who Should Attend:

Those starting or developing a speciality or artisan food business.

How will the Diploma be Delivered:

It will be delivered using a blend of mostly online and some face-to-face methods (in UCC, Cork campus)

Cost:

The fee for the Diploma is €2800, and is part funded (64%) by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine for eligible participants

Past participants have described the course as **INVALUABLE** and would **STRONGLY RECOMMEND** it to those starting or developing artisan and speciality food businesses.



Closing date for applications: 22nd September 2023

The course runs part-time from October 2023 to May 2024

An application form and more information can be obtained from Dr Angela Sheehan, Programme Manager, a.sheehan@ucc.ie or by visiting www.ucc.ie/en/fitu

people Food, Health & Lifestyle

Mind over matter

“I promise myself that I will enjoy every minute of the day that is given me to live,” wrote the ‘Father of Mindfulness’ Vietnamese monk, Thich Nhat Hang. These are words that Sean Vail strives to live his life by since he was diagnosed with terminal cancer of the colon in 2016. Living in Skibbereen, the retired physio, whose many and varied careers have ranged from floristry to farming – he was also almost ordained a Franciscan Friar – has embraced mindfulness since his cancer diagnosis and is currently studying for a Masters in Cognitive psychology and mindfulness with the aim of being able to provide free counselling for members of the LGBT+ community in West Cork.

“We all have a choice whether we will die happy or sad,” says Sean, who says that today he looks for the lesson in everything in order to move forward.

Given three months to live when he fell sick while on a business trip to the UK in 2016, Sean was offered an experimental surgery that involved removing most of his colon and 26 lymph nodes. “I ended up with a collapsed left lung, pulmonary embolism in my right lung and blood clot in the superior mesenteric vein,” shares Sean. “I was told that if I made it to the following morning I’d be lucky.”

“When you’re given that kind of a diagnosis, something changes inside you and your perception and outlook on life completely changes,” he says. “With death imminent, I found that I had a fierce tenacity and will to live.”

Sean is a strong proponent of accessing the mind-body connection and the power of visualisation for healing. Visualisation is based on the neuroscience that when we visualise an action, the

same brain regions are stimulated as when we physically perform an action.

Desperate and unwilling to let go of life, Sean and his sister spent the next ten days doing the only thing they could do, practicing visualisation; swimming through the veins and arteries in Sean’s body and using pick axes to tear the blood clot apart and repair his lungs!

“I like to think it helped because contrary to all the doctors’ expectations my body grew veins around the blood clot and restored blood flow to my intestines,” shares Sean, who went on to have chemotherapy treatment.

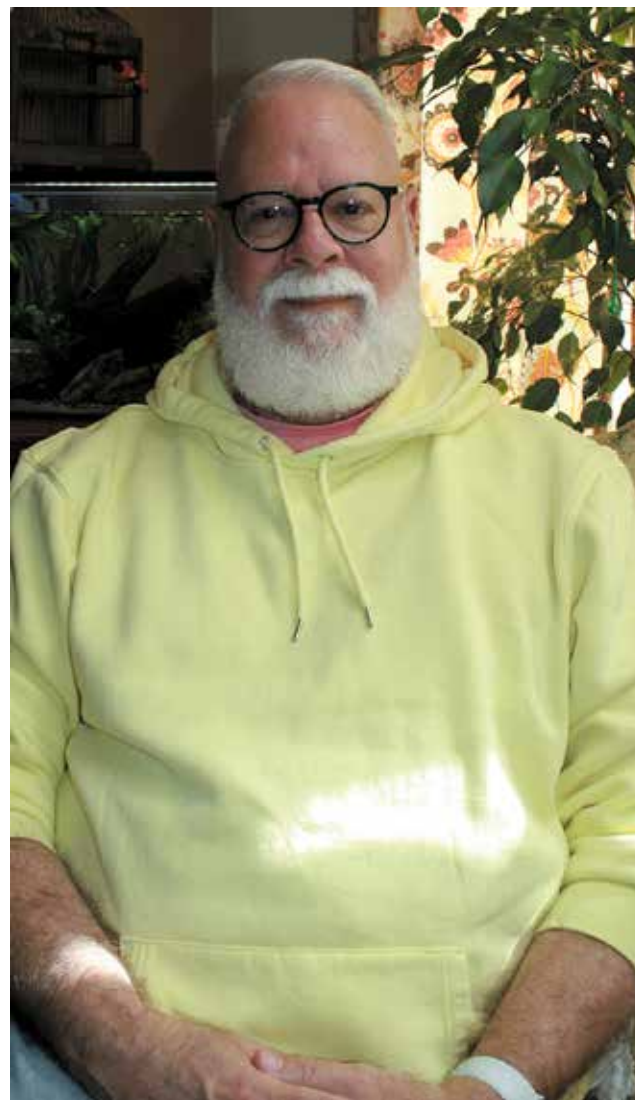
While it has been a difficult path to recovery, currently there is no cancer detectable in Sean’s body. Mindfulness, he says, has been his saviour on this journey. “I don’t think I’d be alive today without it,” he shares. Reading ‘Full Catastrophe Living’ by stress-relief and meditation expert Jon Kabat-Zinn in particular was life-changing. Kabat-Zinn created the revolutionary eight-week programme called mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR).

“I used to be very stressed all of the time but I have gone from having zero patience to having the patience of Job,” says Sean, who now uses mindfulness in the classroom when he is teaching English to children.

“I didn’t have the luxury of coming out, I was thrown out... of the navy, my family, my home.”

An active member and advocate of the LGBT+ community in Ireland, Sean first arrived in the country in 1991 at a time when homosexuality was still a criminal act. Once he has his Master’s Degree, his hope is to offer free counselling to members of the LGBT+ community in West Cork. “It’s not easy being gay,” says Sean. “You’re always looking over your shoulder. I was bullied and beaten every single day of my school years.”

Born into a military family in



Michigan, Sean joined the Navy at the age of 17 and was one of the first service members to be honourably discharged when he revealed his sexual orientation to his superior following the death of his partner.

After being discharged, he returned home. “My parents’ attitude was that this is what God does to people like me and they threw me out of the house,” says

Sean. “I didn’t have the luxury of coming out, I was thrown out... of the navy, my family, my home.” Sean settled into the thriving gay community of Fort Worth, Texas, where he spent most of the eighties being a part of a new civil rights movement.

Today he is working on a project to bridge the gap between younger and older LGBT+ people in rural West Cork.

Proficient in many skills, from carpentry to crochet, Sean says he doesn’t feel like he’s the average gay man, which has played a part in his own struggle to identify. “I’ve built my own home twice and I’m a farmer and carpenter,” he says. “While I’m not shy about sharing my lifestyle and sexuality, when you’re bullied on a daily basis like I was as a child, it can cause developmental delays and issues. Many younger LGBT+ people become social hermits or use unhealthy coping mechanisms like drugs and alcohol. One of the reasons I went into psychology is because I really wanted to understand how this happens,” says Sean.

Sean starts each day with five things that he’s grateful for.

“I’m grateful for so many things,” he shares, as he points out one of the beautiful biotope aquariums that he has created in his home; a little piece of nature indoors that has been proven to reduce heart rate by as much as three per cent in just 10 minutes and have a positive effect on a person’s wellbeing.

“I’m content,” he says when asked if he’s happy. “I do feel lonely sometimes – the thought creeps in that ‘nobody wants me’ but I remind myself that loneliness is a state of mind so I look at it and ask myself where it’s coming from. Mindfulness teaches you how to create a distance between your authentic self and a situation, a thought or an emotion and to intellectually respond rather than react to it. Our brain is malleable and it is possible for anyone to change through repetitive meditation practice.”

Dancing at the crossroads for Pride in West Cork

BROD will be hosting a Pride event at Emmet square in Clonakilty on Saturday, June 24 again this year. It is all of four years ago since the last gathering, in 2019, and what a day it was shares **Mark Holland.**

We had food and fun, music and dancing, sunshine and rain, but most importantly we had a huge crowd that turned out to show their support for all of the LGBT+ people who make up a part of our West Cork community. Thank you, it was such a privilege to be part of a good-humoured and colourful day out that meant so much to so many people who never knew how well we are accepted here, at

home, amongst our own families and friends.

Associated with colourful flags and political marches, which were more like riots, the modern Pride movement has its origins in the 1960s USA, which was a time and place of unprecedented social upheaval and progress. It has spread and evolved since then to assume many forms. It became front and centre of the famous Rio Carnivals in the 1980s and ‘90s, but still today in parts of the world, including the ‘West’, it can be a risky business to celebrate being LGBT where you are exposed to small-minded hecklers who somehow feel they have a right to offend other people for being who they are. It is important for us here to keep in mind how lucky we are to live in a benevolent society, an open democracy, founded on Freedom of Expression, that was hard fought for by



those who went before us for our benefit. And it can be disappointing to see these rights and privileges being eroded in other democratic countries when their benefits are taken for granted.

Dancing at the crossroads used to be young peoples’ opportunity to meet and enjoy themselves on mild summer evenings in the countryside in Ireland until this practice was banned by the Public Dancehalls Act 1935. Down with that kind of thing! The Act was brought in under pressure from the clergy who

said that we would all go to hell in a handcart unless dancing was restricted to licenced premises, where the lights could be left on and everyone had to stand for the national anthem at the end. It seems that mandatory chicken suppers were introduced at a later date (a bit like during the early days of Covid). It was all about control and supervision.

We are so lucky to live here in the 21st century, but with such privilege comes responsibility, it is our actions today that shape the future, it is not a given. We

delude ourselves that progress is a straight line rather than cyclical with ups and downs, expanding and contracting. We need to do what we can to make sure that we are in the best place we can be when that cycle begins to turn again, as a community. We all depend on our environment, the social one and the physical one. Where the physical environment is impacted negatively human rights begin to suffer, the two are linked inextricably. We have an unusual fondness for our environment here in West Cork.

We identify with it as a part of us, and we extend that care for others with a welcome and protection for those who may not be as lucky as us, at home.

It will be good to be back to celebrate the inclusion of diversity in all its colourful forms, with music, performances and a bit of craic. With treats to eat and faces to paint, even the choo-choo train gets dressed up for the day. So come join us at the square from 12 to 5 o’clock, Saturday, June 24, for Pride in West Cork.

Feast on entertainment and food at Clonakilty's annual culinary food festival

Nothing beats eating al-fresco! This June, the annual, family-friendly food festival will see Clonakilty's streets transformed into a foodie haven on Saturday 17 June. The Irish Yogurts Clonakilty Street Carnival is an opportunity to sample delicious local food, mix with fellow foodies and experience a true taste of West Cork.

An unmissable foodie experience that has something for everyone. Devour your way through flavourful dishes from 3pm that include seafood linguine, grilled beef fillet sandwich, Clonakilty Blackpudding burger, Pizza al Taglio, noodles and curries, and many more. Catered for by Clonakilty's top

local restaurants and local food producers, including, Kirby's @ The Whale's Tail, Inchydoney Island Lodge & Spa, Clonakilty Park Hotel, Scannells, The Emmet Hotel, Oak Fire Pizza, Clonakilty Food Company, O'Donovan's Hotel, Alley Garden Bistro, Abacus Catering, Casey's and John O'Brien's Bar and Restaurant.

Kids can enjoy their very own carnival festival experience by dining and playing in the Family Fun Zone. A tasty kids' menu, musical entertainment, and kids' activities will all be on hand to keep them amused throughout the day at Astna Street from 11am. Free activities include a drumming workshop, kids' disco, bouncy castles, penalty shootout, giant Jenga and Connect 4 games, mini golf, face-painting, circus workshop, stilt walkers and an autism family friendly area.

Entertainment throughout the day includes live music from The Kates, Ceomhlta Clonakilty, Clonakilty Brass Band and Shanley's House

Band. Carnival goers will also have the chance to add some jazz to their step as the Clonakilty Swing Dancers (Damhsa Lathar Chorcaí) will get audiences on their toes and the West Cork Drumming Group will add some extra beat to the festivities.

County Cork has always enjoyed a reputation of being a unique and dynamic food destination in Ireland, and the Irish Yogurts Clonakilty Street Carnival is no exception. A real feast for the senses, this unique food and family fun festival will showcase the very best cuisine and flavours the town has to offer.

Food tickets can be purchased at www.clonakilty.ie €18 for adults, €7.50 for children, booking fee applies. Adult tickets include 2 meal dishes, ice cream, wine or softdrink. Tickets can also be purchased from Fuchsia Footwear and Kerr's Bookshop in Clonakilty. All other activities throughout the day are FREE and streets pedestrianised.



Local dancers Mae Kiely and Paul Hogan danced for joy on Pearse St, Clonakilty at the announcement of this year's Street Carnival. Pic: Dermot Sullivan.



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Health Focus: COPING WITH CHRONIC INFLAMMATION



Amanda Roe

Trauma therapist
& Mind coach

Fertility series: Thyroid dysfunction and how it affects female fertility

undiagnosed Hashimoto's Thyroiditis.

Hashimoto's is an autoimmune condition where your body's immune system mistakes parts of your thyroid gland as foreign and starts to produce antibodies that attack it. You may suspect a thyroid problem because of your symptoms, however this often goes undetected as thyroid hormones can be within a normal range on a standard blood test from your

GP even when your immune system is damaging part of it.

Your thyroid is a small butterfly-shaped gland in your neck just in front of the windpipe that produces hormones responsible for metabolism, growth and development of the human body.

Thyroid hormones known as T4 and T3 control your basal metabolic rate, or in other words how much energy is produced from the food, beverages and oxygen you consume. Low

metabolic rate causes problems like constipation, hair loss, low energy, weight gain – high levels cause the opposite ie. an increase in heart rate, inability to relax, weight loss even though you are eating all around you.

Women with Hashimoto's can have symptoms from both the too high group and the too low group at the same time – for example they may be suffering with weight gain, hair loss and constipation and then have periods of time when they get heart palpitations or a sensation that is often described as inward trembling and increased anxiety. Women can feel frustrated and confused when they have symptoms yet a blood test comes back as normal and thyroid issues are dismissed.

Your ovaries require a good balance of thyroid hormone in order to function properly and dysfunction is related to low ovarian reserve and low AMH levels.

Thyroid dysfunction is also connected with miscarriage risk as the foetus does not have a thyroid and depends on the mother to produce adequate thyroid hormones to sustain a healthy pregnancy.



Each person is unique and thyroid problems can be genetic however research has indicated that about 80 per cent of thyroid disease consists of thyroid-specific autoimmune disease Hashimoto's disease and Grave's disease and yet it is still not routinely checked.

When women are feeling unwell for some time, they often turn to the internet for answers. A google search may identify potential thyroid problems and recommend supplementation of iodine, however I must warn you more current research shows that supplementation with iodine can actually be more harmful and trigger further autoimmunity. The advice to avoid cruciferous vegetables is also based on outdated information.

All autoimmune conditions including Hashimoto's thyroiditis have nutritional and environmental triggers. Gluten and gluten cross-reactive foods are problematic for most people with Hashimotos and often goes along with an IBS (Irritable Bowel Syndrome), Coeliac or NCGS (non coeliac gluten sensitivity) diagnosis. There-

fore a personalised approach that looks at dietary changes is advantageous and can even help to manage the condition.

So if you are exhausted and have any of the symptoms above or are trying for a baby then working with somebody who understands the complexities involved and will support you to work with your doctor and improve your health for fertility in a holistic manner is important.

Acupuncture and Chinese medicine can support thyroid function, regulate your menstrual cycles and are a well-regarded complementary therapy to support pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum recovery.

Amanda Roe is a Clinical Hypnotherapist and Acupuncturist. She uses a range of holistic therapies including guidance around food to improve fertility, emotional and mental health and support natural recovery from trauma, eating disorders and other mind/body illness. For more information or to book a consultation visit www.roehealth.ie or call/text Amanda on: 087 633 1898.

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Maintaining health with an autoimmune disease diagnosis

All of us have an immune system that is made up of organs and cells. The job of these organs and cells is to protect our bodies from infections, viruses, parasites

and cancer cells. Unfortunately, sometimes this system decides to go haywire and instead of protecting us, it actually attacks our body instead.

The autoimmune conditions

with which we are most familiar are rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, but there is also psoriatic arthritis, Sjorgen's, celiac disease, and lupus. Autoimmune conditions can affect any system in the body and autoimmune conditions of the endocrine system include Graves disease, Hashimoto's thyroiditis, and Addison's disease. Guillain-Barre syndrome and multiple sclerosis are examples of autoimmune conditions that affect the nervous system.

To add to the misery of having an autoimmune condition there is no short list of symptoms. Depending on the condition, one may experience pain, tiredness (fatigue), rashes, nausea, headaches, dizziness and more. This is because specific symptoms depend on the exact disease. Unfortunately, autoimmune diseases are more common in women than men



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

and the medical world is still at a loss as to what precisely causes a person's immune systems

to run amok. Some risk factors include a family member with an autoimmune condition, being female, obesity, and infections.

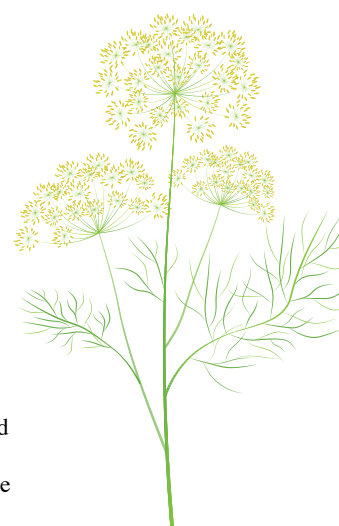
Having got a diagnosis of an autoimmune disease, the first reaction is usually one of shock, as well as the realisation that life will never be the same. This is because there is no cure, and the symptoms have to be managed. To add to the distress, there is no magic bullet how one can do this, as each person's situation is unique, and it is through trial and error that one achieves a certain balance in managing one's condition.

From my perspective, the symptoms that cause the greatest distress are pain, fatigue, and the constant anxiety that accompanies the diagnosis. Treating autoimmune conditions is a multi-pronged affair and involves exercise, dietary advice, acupuncture, herbs, acupressure, Qi gong, Tai chi, yoga, and exercise as well as conventional medication and advice.

The herbs I prescribe, depend on the personal story of each patient, and are designed to ease the symptoms but also to build

energy, and reserves in a person. The gut is the most important part of the body to improve, as an unhealthy gut microbiome will affect the entire system. Herbs that benefit the gut are chamomile and fennel, while curcumin and ginger are anti-inflammatory. A healthy gut will also help with anxiety and this in turn will lead to better sleep.

All in all, a diagnosis of an autoimmune disease is a life changing event, and it is vital that a multi-pronged approach is taken from the very beginning.



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Health Focus: COPING WITH CHRONIC INFLAMMATION



Eoin Roe
Chiropractic

Understanding autoimmunity

tions; depending on the tissue target i.e. thyroid gland, nervous tissue, GI tract they fall into two main categories known as central autoimmunity and organ specific autoimmunity. Whilst the mechanism of action is the same in central conditions the target protein is present in multiple tissues of the body and therefore these conditions are more serious.

Early diagnosis of autoimmune conditions is very difficult; there is a natural propensity for these conditions to naturally flare up and calm down again. Symptoms can often be vague, varied, contradictory, seemingly unconnected or attributable to other factors. There is no autoimmune speciality within the medical profession so patients are often referred through multiple different specialities. It can take years to get a diagnosis, as this approach does not take into account the bigger picture. The lack of autoimmune speciality also affects the amount of research funding looking specifically at these conditions.

As a functional medicine practitioner, I take a particular interest in the physiological mechanisms that underpin human function. In the case of autoimmune conditions, these mechanisms are numerous.

The following is a brief outline of some of the most important factors:

Triggers

The immune system has two main components the Innate and adaptive.

The innate immune system seeks out and destroy pathogens as we come into contact with them. Much of this contact with pathogens happens in the mucus membranes of our bodies, the lungs, gut, eyes, nasal-pharyngeal and female reproductive tracts. The innate immune system is very active in these areas, seeking out pathogens such as bacteria and viruses but also anything else that is considered to be foreign.

The adaptive immune system involves the development of specialised cells that learn to recognise certain proteins that

the body has come into contact with before. It does this by the product of antibodies produced by B-cells and specific cytotoxic T-Cells meaning that future exposure to the pathogen is dealt with more efficiently.

Immune responses can be triggered by exposure to common pathogens like H. Pylori,

gingivitis or Streptococcal, environmental toxins, chemicals and even certain food proteins.

This happens through various mechanisms such as molecular mimicry, cross reactivity and bystander activation.

As I mentioned earlier, tolerance is an important concept and this applies to factors

mentioned above: Reactions to dietary proteins is known as a loss of oral tolerance, reactions to different chemicals is known as a loss of chemical tolerance; so if you find that you are reacting to lots of foods that you used to be able to eat or start feeling sick when you walk

Continued on next page...

Autoimmune conditions are on the rise worldwide but particularly in developed countries for reasons that are not fully understood. They are complex and there are many triggers that can contribute to their manifestation and progression.

At its most basic autoimmune conditions are caused by the immune system mistaking self-tissue as foreign and attacking it. In the literature this is known as a loss of tolerance and this is an important theme to understand when looking at autoimmune conditions, something which I will come back to later on.

Whilst there are many different autoimmune condi-

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Understanding autoimmunity... cont'd from previous page

through the perfume department of a large store or when using certain cleaning products or paints, the chances are that these substances are triggering your immune system and your body is losing tolerance.

For all people suffering with autoimmune conditions, improving tolerance by removing or limiting triggers is essential.

Barrier Functions

The mucus membranes all act as barriers to stop access of unwanted proteins but they also have to allow certain things in. If we use the gut as an example; the gut is full of bacteria which are essential to good health. Bacteria can produce by-products which are not good for you, if they are allowed to cross the barrier and into your blood stream. At the same time your gut has to allow certain amino acids (building blocks of proteins) and nutrients from the food that you eat into your system.

You may have heard the term 'leaky gut' – this is describing

the breakdown in the ability of your gut to act as a barrier and is a significant trigger for the development of autoimmune conditions.

Many people who have IBS will also have 'leaky gut' so if you have unmanaged gastrointestinal problems from an immune reactivity point of view this is not a good situation to be in.

Unstable Blood Sugar

This may seem unbelievably basic but is a very significant trigger for the activation of the immune system. Unstable blood sugar happens when you are either eating a diet that is too high in carbohydrates and sugars (including too much fruit) or alternatively when you are not eating enough, skipping meals and depending on coffee and other stimulants to keep going.

The immune system does not directly react to glucose (it reacts to proteins) but it is impossible for the human body to function properly if it doesn't have a stable supply of blood

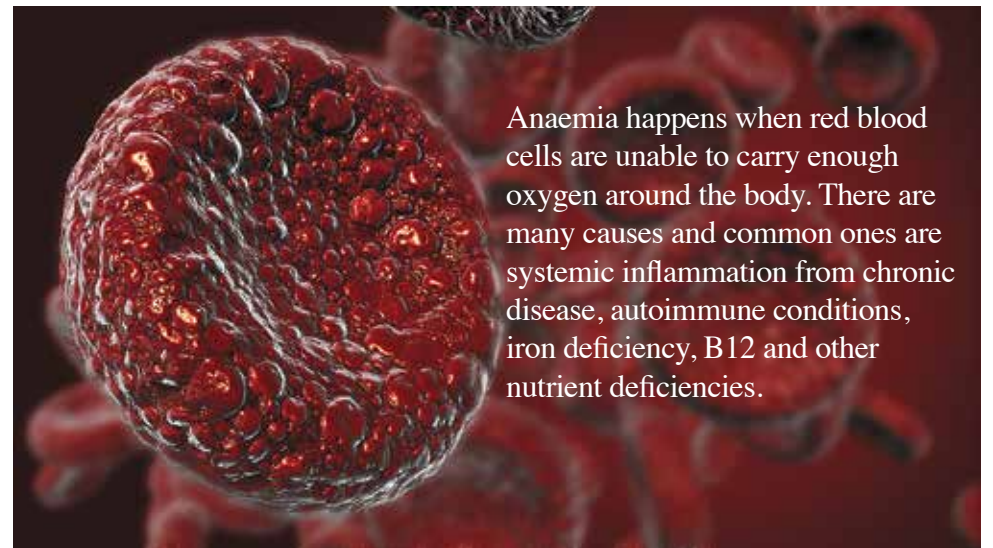
glucose and that comes from the foods we eat. Unstable blood sugar can affect our energy, how well our brain functions and very importantly how well we sleep.

Sleep is a very important factor in immune system function especially for the development of T-cells including T-reg cells which help to regulate immune function.

Anaemia

Just as the body cannot function without a steady supply of glucose it cannot function well without oxygen. Anaemia happens when red blood cells are unable to carry enough oxygen around the body. There are many causes and common ones are systemic inflammation from chronic disease, autoimmune conditions, iron deficiency, B12 and other nutrient deficiencies.

Again like blood sugar, anaemia does not directly trigger the immune system but lack of oxygen affects all functions of the body, including the immune system.



Anaemia happens when red blood cells are unable to carry enough oxygen around the body. There are many causes and common ones are systemic inflammation from chronic disease, autoimmune conditions, iron deficiency, B12 and other nutrient deficiencies.

Diet

The immune system reacts to sequences of amino acids (amino acids are the building blocks of proteins). This does not mean that eating a diet that includes protein-rich foods like meat and fish causes immune reactivity. There are hundreds of proteins in the diet but the immune system may only react to a few of them. Gluten is probably the most problematic protein in food and is found in wheat and other grains. Many other foods

also have proteins in them, common ones that have been linked to immune reactivity are dairy, nightshades and lectins.

Immune reactivity to food is made worse if the person is suffering from 'leaky gut', as inappropriate sized proteins are able to get into circulation where they can cause systemic immune reactivity.

As you can see, many factors need to be considered and I hope I have been able to give you some idea of the complexity of dealing with autoimmune

conditions. Unfortunately it is not possible to cure autoimmunity but it is possible to help people to feel better and manage their autoimmunity using a personalised and targeted diet, nutrition and lifestyle approach.

Eoin Roe is a certified functional medicine practitioner and chiropractor based at www.roehealth.ie Skibbereen. Please feel to make contact through the website or call 028 62081.

New studies point towards inflammation being a greater cardiovascular threat than cholesterol



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For decades, doctors have been focused on lowering patients' cholesterol

levels to prevent cardiovascular disease. Now, American scientists point to inflammation as a much greater risk factor.

Cholesterol-lowering statins belong to the most widely prescribed drugs worldwide and it stands to reason because, for decades, doctors have viewed elevated cholesterol as the number one risk factor when it comes to cardiovascular disease. A new meta-analysis published recently in the Lancet challenges that view, however, by pointing to inflammation as a substantially greater cardiovascular threat.

Large analysis of three studies
Scientists from Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts, Mount Sinai Heart, New York, and the Cleveland Clinic Heart and Vascular Institute in Ohio, did a collaborative analysis of 31,245 high-risk cardiovascular patients in statin therapy. The study participants were recruited from three multinational trials.

Inflammation had a greater impact

The researchers looked at the impact of high-sensitivity C-reactive protein (CRP), a frequently referred-to marker of inflammation, and LDL cholesterol, to determine how these two factors affected the risk of major adverse cardiovascular events (MACE), cardiovascular death, and all-cause mortality.

They found that inflammation (as assessed by measuring CRP levels) was significantly associated with MACE, cardiovascular mortality, and all-cause mortality. By contrast, cholesterol was neutral for MACE, and only had a minor impact on cardiovascular mortality and all-cause mortality.

This is a bit of game-changer, considering that cholesterol has always been viewed as the main culprit. On the other hand, a number of studies that have been published in recent years support the observations made in the Lancet review. For example, Swedish researchers headed by Professor Urban Alehagen, a cardiologist at the University Hospital in Linköping, have published a number of studies that show an inverse relation between inflammation and cardiovascular mortality.

54 per cent lower mortality risk

In the groundbreaking KiSel-10 study that was published in the

International Journal of Cardiology in 2013, Alehagen and his team of scientists demonstrated that daily supplementation with 200 micrograms of selenium and 200 milligrams of coenzyme Q10 lowered the cardiovascular mortality rate by 54 per cent among healthy, Swedish seniors. Multiple follow-up studies that were made afterwards by analysing the blood samples that were taken as part of the KiSel-10 study found that levels of CRP and other inflammatory markers were significantly decreased in the group that got the active supplements compared with the placebo group.

Selenium and coenzyme Q10

It is a well-known fact that the risk of chronic low-grade inflammation increases with age. What is interesting here is that the addition of selenium and coenzyme Q10, two essential nutrients that are depleted in old age, appear to offer protection. Selenium is known for its role in supporting different selenoproteins, several of which are powerful antioxidants with an anti-inflammatory effect. Moreover, selenium and coenzyme Q10 support each other in an intricate biochemical interplay.

Cholesterol is essential

Considering that cholesterol is essential for numerous body functions such as cell mem-

brane integrity, the synthesis of various hormones, vitamin D synthesis, and many other things, the whole concept of blocking the cholesterol synthesis with statins may not be the best strategy, after all. What is more, coenzyme Q10 and cholesterol share the same biochemical pathway (known as the mevalonate pathway), and statins are known to affect the body's endogenous coenzyme Q10 synthesis for the same reason.

Must be protected against oxidation

Cholesterol is essentially not a problem unless it is exposed to free radical attacks that oxidise it and cause an inflammatory reaction in the vessel wall. This happens when macrophages consume the oxidised LDL particles and produce what is known as 'foam cells'. These are embedded in the endothelial layer of the blood vessels where they set the stage for accumulating inflammation. Coenzyme Q10 and selenium are both effective antioxidants that protect LDL cholesterol and other blood lipids against lipid peroxidation, and this may be the key to avoiding the inflammatory reaction that appears to be underlying cause of atherosclerosis.



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Health Focus: COPING WITH CHRONIC INFLAMMATION

Harnessing the power of diet and supplements



HEALTH

Hannah Dare
Organico Bantry

Inflammation, the body's natural defence mechanism against injury and infection, can turn into a silent foe when it becomes chronic. Prolonged inflammation has been linked to a range of health conditions, including heart disease, arthritis, and even certain types of cancer. However, the good news is that we can combat this harmful process by making simple yet effective dietary and lifestyle choices. In this article, I will explore the world of inflammation and discover how incorpo-

rating certain foods, herbs, and supplements into our routine can help reduce inflammation and pave the way to a healthier and less painful life.

Before we delve into the specifics of combating inflammation, it is crucial to understand its underlying processes. Inflammation occurs when the immune system responds to injury or infection, releasing chemicals that promote blood flow to the affected area. While acute inflammation is a vital part of the healing process, chronic inflammation arises when the body's response persists, damaging healthy tissues over time. Chronic inflammation can be aggravated by an overly processed diet, stress, and environmental toxins. But the good news is that this means by changing these habits and introducing some beneficial new ones we can help to calm it down.

My father, Alan Dare, loved the saying 'You are what you eat' – and this really holds true when it comes to managing inflammation. Consuming an anti-inflammatory diet can play a pivotal role in calming the body's immune response.

Emphasising the following elements can make a significant impact:

Omega-3 Fatty Acids: Incorporate oily fish like salmon, mackerel, and sardines into your meals or consider high-quality fish oil supplements. Omega-3 fatty acids have shown remarkable anti-inflammatory properties.

Colourful Fruits and Vegetables: Opt for a rainbow of fruits and vegetables, especially those rich in antioxidants, such as berries, leafy greens, and cruciferous vegetables like broccoli and cauliflower. These vibrant foods combat inflammation by neutralising harmful free radicals. Recently, dark red Aronia berry juice has been incredibly popular in Organico as we have a local grower and Aronia berries are an excellent source of inflammation-fighting antioxidants.

Whole Grains and Legumes: Replace refined carbohydrates (like white bread and pasta and white rice) with whole grains like quinoa, brown rice, and oats, which are loaded with fibre and essential nutrients. Legumes like lentils and chickpeas

also provide a healthy dose of anti-inflammatory properties.

Nature has also bestowed us with a treasure trove of herbs and spices, many of which possess remarkable anti-inflammatory properties. Integrating the following herbs into your culinary adventures can help combat inflammation:

Turmeric: This golden spice contains curcumin, a potent anti-inflammatory compound. Add turmeric to curries, smoothies, or try golden milk for its beneficial effects.

Ginger: Known for its soothing properties, ginger also possesses powerful anti-inflammatory and antioxidant compounds. Enjoy it fresh in stir-fries, teas, or as a zesty addition to smoothies.

Garlic: Besides enhancing flavour, garlic contains sulphur compounds that inhibit inflammation. Incorporate it into your meals by sautéing or roasting, or adding fresh to yoghurt dips and salad dressings.

While a well-balanced diet forms the foundation of an anti-inflammatory lifestyle, certain supplements can act as valuable allies in our fight against inflam-

mation. Here are a few notable options:

High Strength Curcumin Supplements: Curcumin is an extract of Turmeric which you can take in capsule form for times when you can't manage to eat turmeric everyday. Look for products with enhanced bioavailability to ensure optimal absorption. We get excellent feedback from Flexofytol, a dietary supplement based on bio-optimised extract of turmeric that helps to maintain joint flexibility and limit the ageing of cartilage.

Omega-3 Supplements: If you struggle to incorporate sufficient omega-3-rich foods into your diet, high-quality fish oil supplements can provide the necessary dose of inflammation-fighting fatty acids. In Organico we often suggest a liquid Omega 3 (or Cod Liver Oil) supplement as these are a great way of getting the correct dose. It's very important to make sure you take a pure and high quality Omega 3. Brands to look out for include Eskimo 3, Nordic Naturals and Wiley's Finest.

Probiotics: Maintaining a healthy gut is essential, as gut

health influences the body's inflammatory response. Probiotic supplements promote a balanced gut microbiome, reducing inflammation in the process. Good brands to look for include Optibac, Biokult and Udo's.

If you'd like more information on calming down inflammation through diet and lifestyle, call in to us in Organico and we will help you make some positive changes. It's never too late to start. Take care and enjoy June everyone!

And a quick last note – if you are around Bantry on Thursday, June 8 do come and join us for our Organico Sea Swim at 6.30 at the Abbey Slip. We are celebrating World Oceans Day and there will be brownies! Also we are raising funds for the Save Our Native Kelp Forest Campaign and we are matching all donations for the week. See you there!

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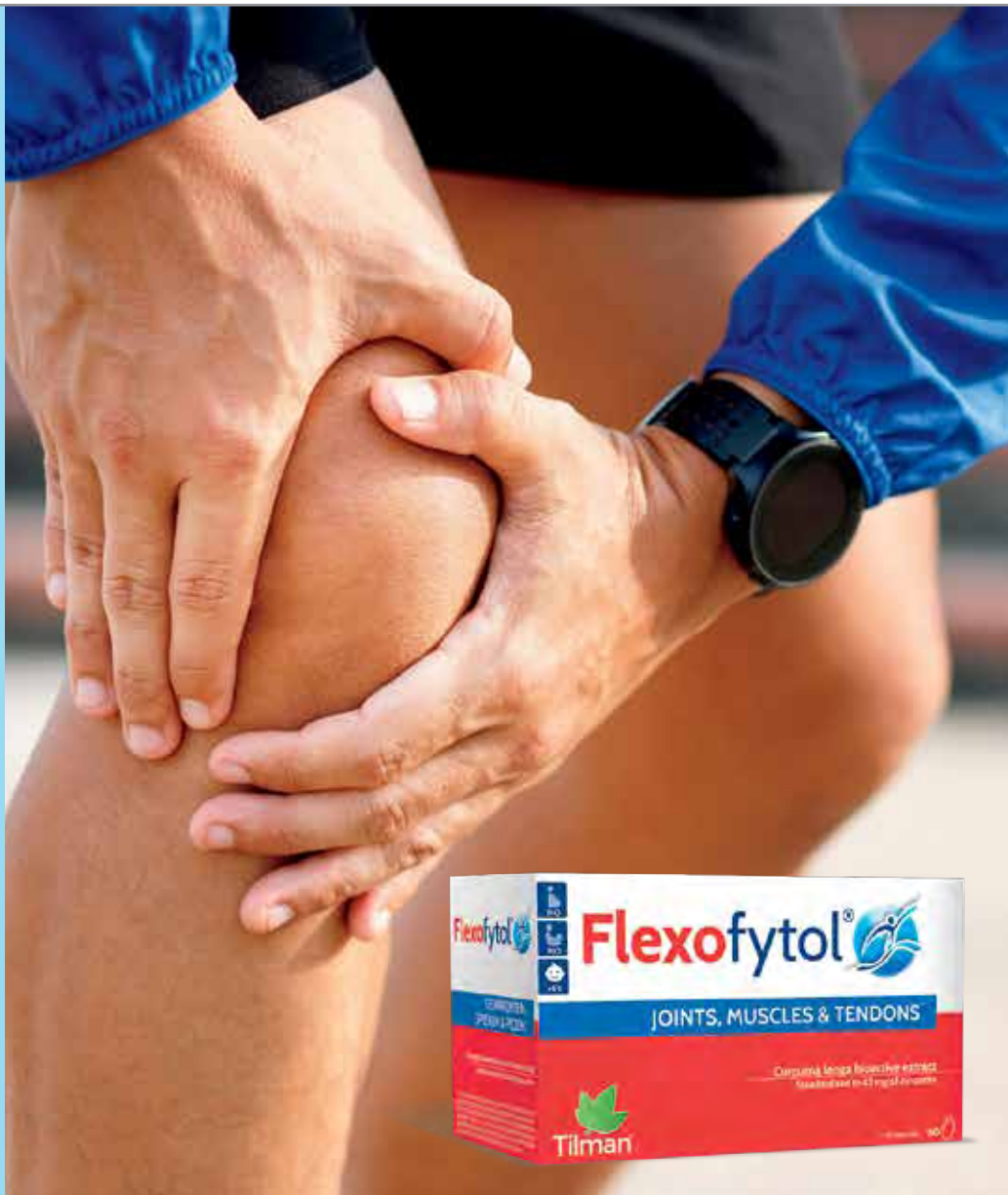
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Health Focus: COPING WITH CHRONIC INFLAMMATION

Choose to let go of stress for the sake of your health

It's well-known that stress can take a heavy toll on our health and with an ever-increasing number of studies showing that people who experience more stress will suffer more medical problems, including a suppressed immune system, we know that it's vital that stress is managed. For anyone already suffering from a chronic disease or autoimmune condition, stress can lead to more severe symptoms. Through a combination of neurophysiology education, practical skills training and therapeutic support, The Well Institute is dedicated to helping people to take control of their stress and anxiety and meet life's challenges more calmly.

After falling unwell on a walking holiday in Italy, in 2019, The Well Institute founder Valerie Wistreich from Kinsale suddenly found herself in a position where she needed to use every skill set she had to support herself. Valerie received the devastating diagnosis of metastatic colon cancer.

A trained nurse and integrative psychotherapist her experience working for the humanitarian organisation Médecins Sans Frontières and in her own psychotherapy practice meant she had extensive experience working with people who had experienced traumatic events in their life and knowledge of the impact this can have on their physical as well as emotional wellbeing – although she had a suspicion that the news from her doctors wasn't going to be good, Valerie still found herself going into complete shock before drawing on her training and experience to aid her own path to recovery.

"I went into 'fight or flight' mode," shares the 60-year-old.

"The following month was incredibly nerve-racking, as my cancer progression was unusual, and there was a possibility that I had more than one type of cancer. It seemed like the news kept getting worse and worse for a while."

Putting her business on pause, Valerie was aware from experience that the first thing she needed to do was support her digestive system.

"When we experience acute stress and anxiety, our digestive system is the first to be impacted, as blood flow is diverted to more vital organs," she shares.

"I knew that inadequate blood flow in that region would not be helpful for healing, so I focused on keeping my stress and anxiety

under control. It was vital to keep my digestive system as well-perfused as possible."

Valerie's primary goal from that day forward was to regulate and calm her stress and anxiety levels.

Fear was her enemy, and she knew that feeling like she couldn't cope would only make her feel more helpless and hopeless.

"I concentrated on coping and taking charge of 'keeping calm'," she says. "Doing so gave me a sense of purpose and empowerment in a situation where I had to rely entirely on medical professionals and surgeons."

Fortunate to have had the opportunity to be treated by two exceptional medical professionals, Mr. Brian Barry, a compassionate and empathetic surgeon, and Dr. Brian Bird, a dedicated and supportive oncologist, Valerie's perspective shifted to focusing on living as well as possible with cancer and figuring out how she could help herself.

The words of the poet Mary Oliver "Keep some room in your heart for the unimaginable" particularly resonated with Valerie, sustaining her throughout her cancer treatment, particularly when Covid disrupted the last three months of her chemotherapy, adding an extra layer of stress and anxiety to an already difficult situation.

Living mindfully, trying to be present in the 'now' of the



experience rather than in the fear for the future was so important in Valerie's path to recovery. Small experiences became life enhancing.

"I was able to be present for all the little joys each day, a walk on the beach, a chat with a loved one, a shared joke, a laugh or just watching the birds feeding from the feeders in the garden or bathing in the bird bath," she shares. "I genuinely experienced more joy in my life during that time than ever before."

Facing her own mortality, while very frightening, also brought a lot of relief and is where her own therapeutic skills and understanding helped.

"Each day I walked Garretstown beach with my lovely dog Aby and I cried my way from one end to the other. I allowed myself to 'feel'. But all the while I used my breathing to

remain calm and slowly I faced the fear of dying. What I realised was that I actually wasn't afraid but sad! The relief in letting go of the fear was transformational. I felt calm and I felt sad and that was ok."

Valerie leaned into her own skill set to calm stress and fear when she began to experience it, using breath techniques, body scanning and relaxing tension and a helpful visualisation.

"What was important was being aware of when I was beginning to feel fear and then responding immediately and calming my system," she says.

The sense of safety provided by her medical team and the love and affection of her family and close friends plus her own ability to respond when she noticed that she was getting stressed or fearful meant that Valerie was able to calm her nervous system appropriately.

A good diet, exercise and sleep were all vitally important factors in her healing. Maintaining body mass and exercise are now recognised as very positive outcome indicators in cancer treatment.

Despite the odds, Valerie's outcome today is happily a positive one. She is now three years post treatment and feeling very well.

"I feel grateful for today's wellbeing and I take the time every morning to acknowledge the

joy in being well enough to get up and be able to engage with the day ahead," she says.

She is also back working full-time at The Well Institute and enjoying every moment of it.

"I am certain that we can support our natural healing by calming our nervous system. When teaching now I focus on helping people to identify what helps them and not to ignore the red flags of stress and anxiety but to respond to them.

"When you consider the impact of stress on the whole body it isn't surprising that there are inflammatory and autoimmune consequences. It is believed that the neuroendocrine hormones triggered by stress can cause immune dysregulation, ultimately leading to autoimmune disease by altering or amplifying cytokine production. Fortunately, there is growing evidence from clinical studies that suggests stress management can have a positive impact on the onset and severity of inflammatory diseases."

Today by helping others, Valerie finds she is also helping herself to maintain a positive outlook and a sense of fulfilment.

The Well Institute offers a range of programmes both on-line and onsite. Group and one to one engagement is also offered. www.thewellinstitute.com

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Health Focus: COPING WITH CHRONIC INFLAMMATION

Enjoy 'Wild Wellness' in sauna bathing

While the Finns may be the masters of saunas, in Ireland, right up to the 19th century we had our own version, the 'teach allais', which directly translates to 'sweat house'. Many years later and the sweat house, renowned for its health benefits, is enjoying a revival in the form of the Finnish style sauna in Ireland, particularly on the shores of County Cork.

Located at Garretstown Beach near the Old Head of Kinsale, the Wild Wellness Collective offers its customers the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of a West Cork custom built traditional Finnish sauna in one of Cork's most scenic locations. The sauna is run by local lady Bronwyn Connolly and her business partner Olan Crowley, whose other business Bean and Berry right next door serves up delicious healthy smoothie bowls.

Wild Wellness Collective started by accident during the pandemic after Bronwyn, who suffers from arthritis, purchased the sauna for her own use. "I get great pain relief from sauna use," she explains. One Sunday in August, she brought the sauna to the beach and it all started from there. "People loved the idea of it and for the next few months I spent my weekends offering the sauna for rent at Garretstown," she explains.

As the business grew, Bronwyn's neighbour at the beach, Olan, came on board to help her develop it. Two years on and with Cork people realising the incredible benefits of regular sauna use, Munster's largest custom built sauna is thriving.

"It's worth noting that most studies are based on using the sauna at least two to five times per week over a number of years so it's not a quick fix for anything," shares Bronwyn "however it's definitely something that should be included in your regular health and fitness routine."

While many studies claim that sauna use increases metabolism and blood circulation, and improves cardiovascular function, according to the feedback Bronwyn has received, users of the Wild Wellness sauna mostly come for relaxation, detoxification, pain reduction and recovery. "Many of our customers feel that their sleep and stress management are the most noticeable benefits. It also does wonders for your skin," she says.

Contrast therapy involves alternating between hot and cold environments. "So for the



sauna and sea combo you can start with a hot sauna, then cold dip, back to hot sauna and so on," explains Bronwyn.

A hot sauna followed by a cold plunge in the sea stimulates blood flow, which has many benefits including skin health and a reducing inflammation.

"According to science it's a great way to activate brown fat, speed up recovery and reduce inflammation and so on."

Studies have also shown that sauna use helps in reducing cortisol levels, which helps balance mood and stress levels. It has also been associated with a lower risk of dementia.

According to Irish school records in the National Folklore Collection "The inhabitants of every town-land in the parish had their own sweat-house. Every Saturday the sweat-house was heated. One Saturday morning a large turf-fire was lighted in the sweat-house. The sweat-house was heated to a very high temperature. In the evening a person used to go to the sweat-house, close the door and remain there till he was literally "bathed in sweat". The people of olden-times believed that by perspiring in such a manner rheumatism was prevented."

Wild Wellness Collective specialise in large groups bookings, such as team building,

clubs gatherings and healthy hens and stags. They also offer packages, including yoga classes, surf sessions and healthy lunches.

Bronwyn and Olan hope to expand their offering in the summer; Bronwyn will be starting sauna yoga classes soon after recently completing training in Finland.

Wild Wellness Sauna is open Fri - Sun from Oct-May and during the summer from Thurs-Mon.

For more information or to book go to wildwellness.ie



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Fire cider's anti-inflammatory properties

Fire Tonic, also known as Fire Cider, is a popular herbal remedy believed to possess anti-inflammatory properties. It combines a unique blend of ingredients that work synergistically to promote well-being and potentially reduce inflammation in the body.

One key ingredient in Fire Tonic is apple cider vinegar, which contains acetic acid known for its potential to reduce inflammation. Additionally, it supports digestion and nutrient absorption, aiding the body's inflammatory response.

Garlic, another important component, is rich in sulfur

compounds that inhibit inflammatory enzymes and reduce inflammation markers. It also offers antioxidant benefits to counteract oxidative stress-induced inflammation.

Ginger, turmeric, and cayenne pepper, commonly found in Fire Tonic, further contribute to its potential anti-inflammatory properties. Ginger contains gingerol, an anti-inflammatory compound. Turmeric contains curcumin, a powerful anti-inflammatory compound, but its absorption is limited. That's where black pepper comes in.

Black pepper contains piperine, which enhances curcumin

absorption. When combined with turmeric, black pepper significantly increases curcumin's bioavailability, potentially enhancing its anti-inflammatory effects.

By incorporating Fire Tonic into your routine, you may experience the potential benefits of its anti-inflammatory properties. However, it's important to note that individual responses may vary, and Fire Tonic should not replace medical advice or treatment for specific conditions.

Consult a healthcare professional before starting any new regimen, especially if you have

underlying health conditions or are taking medications. They can provide personalised guidance based on your circumstances.

In conclusion, Fire Tonic's combination of ingredients, including apple cider vinegar, garlic, ginger, turmeric, and black pepper, suggests potential anti-inflammatory properties. It may support the body's inflammatory response and enhance curcumin absorption, promoting overall well-being and a healthier lifestyle.

Health Focus: COPING WITH CHRONIC INFLAMMATION



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Physical activity and autoimmune diseases



DIY FITNESS

Tania Presutti

Danish freelance journalist and fitness professional Tania Presutti, delivers a series of efficient DIY fitness exercises you can do at home.

Within the next couple of years it is estimated that about half of the population in Europe will suffer from some sort of allergy. Autoimmune diseases are on the rise, especially in our part of the world and nobody can really explain exactly why. While we know that some diseases are genetically predisposed, most have no obvious origins. Scientists have discovered over 100 different autoimmune diseases; more common ones including Crohn's, lupus, psoriasis, type 1-diabetes and arthritis. Many can become manageable with lifestyle changes in areas such as food and exercise.

While food in most cases is the number one marker in making a difference to health,

exercise comes a close second, and depending on the disease, can even come first in helping to regulate the body's natural immune system.

Whenever you are physically active – going for a walk, a run, riding your bike, going for a swim or attending a dance class – your muscles release substances which affect the immune system, so you get an anti-inflammatory effect. Studies have proven that patients who suffer from rheumatoid arthritis feel less pain when they exercise regularly than patients who don't exercise. So exercise not only makes our heart, lungs and muscles stronger, it also helps in boosting the immune system.

In autoimmune diseases suspected to be caused by the person being overweight, in particular too much visceral fat (the fat around the organs), like scleroses, rheumatoid arthritis and type 1-diabetes, weight loss can aid in prevention or worsening of these conditions.

Finally exercise can also work for some people as a stress reliever. A Swedish study has shown stress to be a significant marker for autoimmune diseases such as psoriasis, lupus, type-1 diabetes, scleroses and inflammation in the intestines.

For these reasons alone exercise is worth prioritising in your life, especially if you are susceptible to inflammation and/or autoimmune disease.

So what kind of exercise does science recommend? The short answer is any and all.

Whether you are going for a 20 minute brisk walk every day,

lacing up your running shoes, dancing or lifting heavy things, your body will respond by producing endorphins to lift your mood, your heart and lungs will be strengthened and your muscles will produce anti-inflammatory substances.

If you are suffering from arthritis in your knees or hips, running might be too much, as this type of exercise is the one which takes a heavy toll on the joints. Likewise if you are suffering from arthritis in the shoulder region, you shouldn't lift heavy weights above your heart.

So what can you do? Pilates or Yoga are great exercises to strengthen the muscles, ligaments and bones in the affected areas. Also moderate weight lifting can be helpful.

How much and how often? Thirty minutes daily activity is a golden guideline. This can entail everything from going for a walk, vacuuming, gardening or biking to work. The 30 minutes can even be broken down into three 10 minute parts to make good on your health. So in short, the 30 minutes daily activity doesn't require you to change into gym clothes or go to a certain place to be active. You can make a conscious effort to implement daily activities at home, walk the dog for at least 20 minutes, go for a 10-20 minute bike ride. Just by cleaning or gardening a couple of days a week you will have your every day activity goal fulfilled.

It is recommended that you get your heart rate up for 20 minutes twice a week. This means you would have trouble

or causing a challenge. A homeopathic consultation takes approx one hour 15 minutes and during this time we delve deep into when this illness started, what was going on in your life at the time, what are your triggers emotionally and how the pain and discomfort feels. It is vital to look at food and diet as this can be a huge factor; after all your food is your fuel and we must remember we are not all the same, what suits one person may well aggravate another. Homeopathic remedies are prescribed on an individual basis – taking into consideration how it is for you. There is no one size fits all!

Not every client will know what triggers an imbalance in the body. For example; what

triggers a stress response, do they know what it feels like in their body to feel stressed, overwhelmed and so on. As each person may react to stress differently, some situations will stress one person and not another. This is very much individual. In my opinion the source of most illness lies with stress. The body is not at ease! The longer we remain in this state the more the energy flow gets stuck. So with this in mind I found a system (Qest 4) that would tap into the body's unique flow of energy and identify where the body is out of balance.

The role of Qest 4 in my practice is to give a deeper level of understanding as to the current state of where the body's energy is blocked. Getting an

accurate account of this information direct from the source (the body) is providing me with a vast amount of in-depth knowledge on where the body needs support. This system can also identify what foods the body is sensitive to which is vital information.

Having practiced homeopathy for over a decade, Sinead has successfully treated many clients with chronic inflammation, joint pain, IBS, migraine, endometriosis, asthma etc. If you would like to discuss your health challenges please book a FREE 15 min telephone consultation on her website www.sineadhurley.com.



speaking or catching your breath during the activity. Aside from joining a gym or an exercise class, you could just put on some good tunes and dance for 20 minutes, run or jog, take bike rides, go swimming or play ball.

If you can only fit in activities a couple of times a week, keep doing it and make the best of it (move as much as you can). Any activity is better than none. Look below for important pointers your training should include to maximise the effect on your health.

Important goals for your training should list improvement or maintaining of muscles and tissue (ligaments, tendons and bones).

Goals should also include movements. If you stop using your body: bend and stretch, move joints in and out/turning – they will lose their flexibility and you will find your movement range diminished, making it hard to comb your hair for example, or pick up stuff from

the floor.

Stiffening in the joints can be caused by inactivity. The cartilage in the joints can be compared to a sponge, which absorbs fluid when you rest and pushes the fluid out when you perform an activity that puts stress on the joints. If you stop moving or bending, turning, stretching your joints, the sponge will 'dry out' and the cartilage will stiffen. Therefore, the cartilage in the joint needs you to move and exercise.

Moderate weightlifting is great for keeping the cartilage, muscles, tendons and ligaments active. You can work with your own body weight or invest in a couple of dumbbells or a kettlebell. You don't need a huge selection or a gym membership to improve your health.

You should be able to perform 12-15 repetitions for three sets with the chosen weight or body weight. Remember to execute the exercises with correct technique to get the maximum

benefits. For example, if you are doing push ups it is important to keep your core engaged while moving the body up and down.

Also, if walking is your chosen activity, send a thought to your core and straighten up. Walk tall, with your chest up, back straight and shoulders relaxed.

To sum up: You can improve your health – even if you suffer from an autoimmune disease or inflammation – by incorporating exercise into your daily life. Finding the right exercise for both your liking and the condition is key to improvement.

I hope I have provided you with inspiration to find your path to a more active life and if you are already active, I applaud you and hope you enjoy the benefits of an active lifestyle.

Questions and comments are as usual welcome to @trainwithadane on Instagram or taniaskitchenfitness@gmail.com

Health Focus: COPING WITH CHRONIC INFLAMMATION

Supporting your health with SOMEGA

All of us have experienced inflammation at one point or another in our lives. Inflammation is a natural immune response that occurs when the body is injured or fighting off an infection. Acute inflammation is the reaction that occurs, for example, when you cut your finger, break your leg, or catch a cold. Acute inflammation is a natural defence mechanism aimed at protecting the body and initiating the healing process. It comes on quickly and disappears within hours or days.

Chronic inflammation, by contrast, can last months or years and is rarely beneficial. There are a number of causes of chronic inflammation. When acute inflammation goes untreated, it can lead to chronic inflammation. Another cause is an autoimmune disorder, such as rheumatoid arthritis and multiple sclerosis, which involves your immune system mistakenly attacking your healthy tissues.

Increasingly, scientists are finding that many major diseases involve low-grade chronic inflammation. The causes of this inflammation seem related not to infections or autoimmunity, but to factors like a poor diet, advancing age, obesity, a sedentary lifestyle, and stress. Chronic inflammation is linked to serious diseases including heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, cancer, Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

Some of the best-researched strategies for taming inflammation that is lifestyle-related include eating a healthy diet, exercising regularly, managing your weight, having a good sleep routine, avoiding smoking, limiting alcohol intake, and reducing chronic stress.



Dr Paula Gaynor of Bandon-based SOMEGA.

The best diet emphasises fruits, vegetables, nuts, whole grains, oily fish (rich in Omega-3s) and healthy oils and limits foods loaded with sugar and refined carbohydrate.

According to Dr. Paula Gaynor, nutritionist and co-founder of Bandon-based health supplement company SOMEGA "Research shows that health supplements can also be beneficial because of their anti-inflammatory properties. These include supplements such as Omega-3, Vitamin C and Quercetin, amongst others".

Omega-3

The Omega-3 fatty acids, eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), have been studied for their potential anti-inflammatory effects and have been found to help to reduce chronic inflammation in certain conditions. Research has shown that Omega-3 supplementation can decrease the serum levels of several markers of inflammation and individuals with conditions whose pathogenesis is related to chronic inflammation, such as cancer,

kidney diseases, diabetes mellitus, and heart diseases, can benefit from Omega-3 supplementation. The anti-inflammatory properties of Omega-3 are also partly responsible for their beneficial effects seen in people with Alzheimer's disease.

SOMEGA Easy Omega-3 and Vitamin D3 is a delicious, peach-mango flavoured supplement, which can be enjoyed straight from the spoon or added to yogurts, porridge and smoothies.

Vitamin C

Vitamin C is an essential vitamin that plays a huge role in immunity and inflammation. It's a powerful antioxidant, so it can reduce inflammation by neutralising free radicals that cause damage to your cells. It also helps optimise the immune system in several other ways, which can help regulate inflammation.

While regular Vitamin C supplements are poorly absorbed. SOMEGA Liposomal Vitamin C is different. "We want to make sure that Vitamin C is well absorbed which is why we use liposomal technology to maximise vitamin absorption, thereby leading to enhanced health benefits. Our Liposomal Vitamin C is a high strength Vitamin C supplement and can be taken from the spoon or added to drinks and smoothies" according to Mark Clifford, co-founder of SOMEGA.

Quercetin

Quercetin is a yellow pigment naturally found in small amounts in some fruits, vegetables and green tea, coffee and wine. Quercetin is a powerful antioxidant helping to fight against free radicals that both damage your cells and activate

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genes that promote inflammation. In a study in women with rheumatoid arthritis, it was found that participants who took 500 mg of quercetin experienced significantly reduced early morning stiffness, morning pain, and after-activity pain. They also had reduced markers of inflammation.

SOMEGA's newest product, Liposomal Quercetin, is a concentrated source of quercetin (500mg/serving) and can be taken from the spoon or added to drinks and smoothies. Dr. Paula Gaynor notes "it is made with liposomal technology to overcome the poor absorption seen with regular quercetin

supplements".

SOMEGA supplements are available in health food stores and pharmacies throughout West Cork and nationwide and online at gosomega.com.



Clonakilty students among winners of Young Social Innovators of the Year

A high-impact social innovation project by young people from Clonakilty was among the winners at the Young Social Innovators of the Year Awards, which took place on May 2 at Croke Park. The YSI awards celebrate excellence in youth-led social innovation.

Thirty-four teams of short-listed Senior Cycle students competed live in a range of challenges in front of three expert judging panels.

The winner of the Relationship and Sexual Health Challenge Award, in partnership with the HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme, was a YSI team from Sacred Heart Secondary School, Clonakilty (pictured), for a project titled 'Red Light Green Light' that addresses the issue of consent in teenage relationships.

Commenting on the Young Social Innovators of the Year Awards, CEO of YSI, Roger

Warnock, said: "More than 5,000 young people from all over Ireland got involved in social innovation projects with Young Social Innovators in 2023. I was blown away by these young people's ideas, bravery and creativity. Their projects are proof that change is possible and that young people have the power to make a difference."

people Food, Health & Lifestyle



Timoleague National School featured in Our World Irish Aid Awards

Timoleague National School has been selected for inclusion in the popular online magazine 'Global Goal Getters', which features the work of primary school pupils across Ireland taking part in this year's Our World Irish Aid Awards.

The Our World Irish Aid Awards form an important part of Ireland's commitment to overseas development and global citizen education. This helps to reinforce the importance of the global development work carried out by the Government on behalf of the people of Ireland. This year the

awards attracted more than 250 submissions from schools across the island of Ireland.

This year's theme urged pupils to follow the lead of activists such as Pakistan's education campaigner Malala Yousafzai, who in 2014 became the youngest ever winner of the Nobel Peace Prize at the age of 17, and raise their voices in support of Equality for All.

Third Class pupils from Timoleague National School created colourful posters showing what equality means to them.

Memories of kindness

“Oh, the Summer-time is coming, and the leaves are sweetly blooming and the wild mountain thyme, grows around the blooming heather...”

The glorious sun is beating down as I write these well-known song words that resonate so deeply and softly with me, they capture the promise of Summer and hold very kind and special memories. Over this past month, the focus in my compassion-based mindfulness classes has been on exploring kindness and compassion (as well as any blockages in this area) and how it can flow in

all directions (1) kindness, and compassion from ourselves to others (2) kindness and compassion from others towards ourselves and (3) kindness towards ourselves or self-compassion.

In between classes I've been encouraging people to notice kindnesses in everyday life and have been paying close attention myself. And not so much for us to intellectualise the concepts by thinking about them, or analysing them, but to be physically aware of and moved by kindness and compassion, to notice how it feels in your body when you give or receive kindness, or indeed to be

curious when there is resistance there. And even to be aware that sometimes when we begin to focus our attention on kindness it is not unusual to feel a dearth of it, or a resistance to it.

There are some beautiful meditation practices that help us to cultivate kindness in our lives, including a practice called memories of kindness, where we are invited to recall memories of being kind to another, of receiving kindness from another and of being kind to ourselves. In terms of being kind to myself, mindfulness meditation is what I consider an act of kindness to myself in daily life. With this as my foundation to help manage my grief alongside everyday life, I have been consciously introducing sometimes tiny, but kind and wholesome habits: Little by little, step by step, because when you begin a new habit, it may seem like you've a mountain to climb. If you start slowly and gently, and if you can be consistent with it, you will feel the benefit, for example, my now sustained habit of a weekly West Cork sauna session combined with a swim in the sea.

The sauna reminds me that I want to focus on how it feels to receive kindness from another. And I only need think back to last Summer and am reminded and ever-appreciative of all the great kindnesses shown to me by such good and kind lifelong friends that helped me survive the initial trauma of a house fire and subsequent bereavement. Grief can be such a lonesome journey, and no one escapes it. But the weight of grief is made so much lighter by kindness. Months later, as I found myself still suffering and struggling deeply, I recall one very dear



MENTAL HEALTH & MINDFULNESS

Susan O'Regan

Susan O'Regan, Msc Mindfulness Studies teaches compassion-based mindfulness. She is a teacher member of the Mindfulness Teachers Association of Ireland (MTAI) and The Mindfulness Association.

friend who was particularly consistent, even persistent, as she noticed that I was still unable for most aspects of life. She repeatedly mentioned that she was going to a mobile sauna every week at a beach close to her and that she felt I would love it. I kept refusing, feeling unable for almost everything that I would previously have loved. But, seeing my vulnerability and fragility, she remained consistent with her invites, until one Friday in November, I felt able enough to go along with her. I have been going almost every week since then.

She remained so consistent with her kindness, all year round and never gave up on being kind to me, even when there was very little coming back to her. I was, like so many others who have suffered great trauma and loss, absolutely depleted, my tank was empty. My

nervous system was so dysregulated at that time that I couldn't relax very well or even get in the sea despite being a regular swimmer all my life. But my experience of showing up at the same time every Friday at the sauna just the way I was, a bit 'shook' and very vulnerable but feeling no judgement, only warmth and kindness, from people who were then strangers, now friends, prompted a shift in me. I felt welcomed and included by this merry circle of sauna buddies; I had found a place where you can be yourself. I feel tears in my eyes now and a felt sense in my body of soft gratitude as I recall these early days and recognise how it feels to receive kindness.

Now, the journey over in the car to The Balmy Barrel Sauna at Broad Strand in Courtmacsherry is the beginning of one of my favourite days of the week. I find the hour alternating between the sauna and the sea such a very mindful and deeply embodying experience. It is therapeutic not only for the mind and body but in every way. I've laughed more in that sauna than I might sometimes have laughed all the rest of the week and have made lovely new sauna friends and had such gorgeous times there celebrating happy occasions. And all because a good friend was consistently kind and wouldn't take no for an answer! She had enough kindness and compassion in her to spare, to keep asking and including me, even though I didn't know what would be good for me and was far from being the best company.

It takes genuine friendship to accept you as you are, in every state of human imperfection, to expect nothing from you,

and to walk beside you on your journey, enabling you to restore yourself so you can walk beside someone else on theirs. Difficulties in life, like any experience of grief, trauma, or loss can rock your very foundations and your confidence, so kindness, in all directions, becomes a very important thing. I feel this poem 'The Rose' by Hafiz is a perfect fit when recalling how gentle acceptance, encouragement, and kindness can offer hope and friendship at times of great need. Is there anyone in your life at the moment that you can offer "the encouragement of light" to?

"How / Did the rose / Ever open its heart / And give to this world / All its / Beauty? / It felt the encouragement of light / Against its Being. / Otherwise, / We all remain / Too / Frightened."

My next monthly 'Simplicity and Ease' workshop is on at CECAS in the old chapel at Myross Wood, Leap on Sunday June 18 from 2-5pm and offers a gentle introduction to compassion-based mindfulness, using indoor and outdoor settings.

Drop-in compassion-based mindfulness sessions at CECAS, ie Myross Wood (now in the old chapel), Leap on Tuesday mornings from 10am-11am. €10. All welcome.

*For more information: www.mindhaven.ie
Phone: 087 2700572 or email: susanoreganmindfulness@gmail.com
Facebook: [susanoreganmindfulness](https://www.facebook.com/susanoreganmindfulness)
(The Balmy Barrel Sauna - Instagram @westcorksaua or message Donie on 085 101 3648)*



SIMPLICITY AND EASE Sunday 18th June, 2-5pm

Myross Wood House, Leap €30
A gentle afternoon of mindfulness meditation

Learn about mindfulness meditation and how it can benefit us.
Practice techniques to settle your mind and ease your body.
Explore how compassion-based mindfulness can help us in everyday life.



MINDFULNESS MEDITATION Drop-in Sessions, Tuesday, 10-11am Myross Wood House, Leap €10

Contact Susan 087 2700572
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Training to support a relationship-centred approach in frontline practice

Relationships in Practice is an evidence-based programme to support frontline practitioners to take a relationship-centred approach in their work and to understand the transformative impact of positive relationships in their work.

The programme runs under the Social and Health Education Project (SHEP) and in collaboration with the Ag Eisteacht Foundation. While based in the SHEP offices in Ballintemple, Cork, the programme has national reach via its national network of trainers and through its online initiatives.

The Relationships in Practice team is Fern Higgins Atkinson, Programme Manager; Robyn Pinkham, Training and Development Coordinator; and Norma Roche, Advocacy and Training Coordinator.

The team gives us an insight into the Relationships in Practice programme.

What is involved and how does it work?

There are four strands to our work: ABLE brief intervention training, advocacy, collaboration and evaluation.

We aspire to an Ireland where all practitioners are empowered with the skills and resources to respond in a sensitive and focused way when someone turns to them for help, particularly during times of change or relational distress.

Using our evidence-based ABLE training model (Adopt a relational approach, Build, Listen and Empower), we share knowledge, insight and tools to enhance practitioners' understanding of the transformative power of relationships. The ABLE model also gives a framework to manage their time and boundaries, which is so important given the pressure people and systems are under.

How does this contribute to better health and wellbeing?

Relationships are one of the key social determinants of our health and wellbeing. Evidence shows that positive relationships in our lives are buffering and protective; they make us feel safe and

secure.

Frontline practitioners are ideally placed to build positive relationships in community settings, schools, healthcare and social care settings, and this has a positive impact on health and wellbeing outcomes for the service users, clients/patients they support.

The greatest gift we can give someone is our time, attention and respect so everything we do is centred around our mission to enhance their capacity to be present and attuned.

Take our work with schools, for example. When school leaders, teachers and SNAs understand the transformative impact of relating with empathy and compassion – or simply of listening actively and reflectively – we know from our evaluations and from the feedback we receive that this has a positive impact on outcomes.

But it's not just about training. On the advocacy side of our work, we have provided free and facilitated screenings of the documentary, 'Resilience: The Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope' to 700 diverse community-based practitioners throughout Ireland to date to

raise awareness of the buffering impact of positive relationships, particularly for those who have experienced childhood adversity.

A big milestone was having this work honoured at the All-Ireland Community and Council Awards 2021 when we were awarded the Best Community Health Initiative and the overall Grand Prix award for our 'Relationships matter: building ACE awareness in the community' initiative.

Who can participate?

Every strand of our work has a focus on early intervention so the practitioners we welcome on our ABLE training programmes and other initiatives include early years professionals, teachers, principals, youth and community development workers, family resources workers, healthcare and allied professionals, social care and social work teams, speech and language therapists and many more disciplines.

Where does it take place?

We provide online and in-person courses. Our ABLE training offer includes a three-day ABLE4Practitioners programme, one-day commissioned



Fern Higgins Atkinson, programme manager, Robyn Pinkham, Training and Development Coordinator and Norma Roche Advocacy and Training Coordinator.

courses, a five-day summer course for teachers and this autumn we will be running our online programme for principals and aspiring school leaders – ABLE4School Leaders: How and Why Relationships Matter in Schools.

This interactive, evidence-based programme has been endorsed by the Centre of School Leadership (CSL) and is now in its third consecutive year.

As it is online, this makes it accessible to school leaders from all over the country, and we hope that principals from schools throughout West Cork will join us in this small group, experiential learning experience this year.

Bookings are now open as it starts on September 21, and

it will run over five days until October 19. It will include two further days to help establish a community of practice for school leaders interested in taking a relationship-centred approach in their schools.

As with all our courses, it is heavily subsidised as we work on a not-for-profit basis.

In a course evaluation, 83.3 per cent agreed that the course was relevant to being a school leader and agreed that it developed their skills to build quality relationships.

A previous participant said: "It provided me with the critical skills to deal with complex issues that arise daily in a dynamic environment. Keep doing what you are doing – the training is

fantastic and the more people that avail of it the better for our education system. Míle buíochas – you are amazing people and you understand the needs of children and adults especially those with significant aces in their lives."

For training details please see www.relationshipsinpractice.ie/able4schoolleaders or contact robyn.pinkham@relationshipsinpractice.ie to secure a place or phone her on (087) 1466011.

For programme details contact fern.higginsatkinson@relationshipsinpractice.ie or (087) 1751259

For advocacy information contact norma.roche@relationshipsinpractice.ie or (085) 8619468

ABLE4SCHOOL LEADERS: How and why relationships matter in schools



An interactive on-line training programme developed for school leaders and aspiring school leaders.

Endorsed by the Centre for School Leadership.

A unique opportunity to network with colleagues nationally in an on-line interactive space and establish communities of practice.

This on-line course consists of 5 days (9am-3pm) with 2 (3-hour) follow-up community of practice sessions

AUTUMN 2023 DATES:
Wed, 11th October
Wed, 18th October
Wed, 25th October
Wed, 8th Nov
Wed, 15th Nov

Community of Practice Dates – Wednesday 17th and 31st January (2024)

This course will be facilitated by two licensed Relationships in Practice trainers in an experiential, small group, on-line learning experience for up to 12 participants.

How will this course help you?

Our programme will give you the skills, insight and knowledge to nurture positive relationships in your school for better outcomes. It will also give you a framework to manage your time and boundaries for your own health and wellbeing.

Price: €350

(20% non refundable deposit required at time of booking)
Please note this is a heavily subsidised fee.

For further information please contact Robyn Pinkham on 087 1466011 robyn.pinkham@relationshipsinpractice.ie www.relationshipsinpractice.ie



Relationships in Practice is a collaboration between the Ag Eisteacht Foundation and the Social and Health Education Project (SHEP). SHEP is an Irish Charity (Registration No. 20025120).



OUT & ABOUT IN WEST CORK



JJ Hayes of the Old Head Signal Tower museum accepts a presentation by UK Cllr Graham Carr-Jones marking his relative Edward Carr-Jones who was the pianist onboard at the annual Lusitania Commemoration held at the Old Head Signal Tower. Picture: John Allen

people Food, Health & Lifestyle

June beauty edit

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.

Bioderma Sensibio Defensive Serum

Did you know that sensitive skin affects over 60 per cent of the Irish population? Fortunately, the latest product innovation from Bioderma, the Bioderma Sensibio Defensive Serum, has been specifically formulated to prevent premature skin ageing on sensitive skin caused by external aggressors to the skin barrier. With its unique defensive technology that works to soothe and strengthen the skin's defences, this serum targets the symptoms of sensitivity, as well as the biological causes, increasing the epidermis's ability to defend itself against external stressors, helping to rebalance skin and prevent premature ageing. The serum is enriched with vitamin E, which intensely hydrates and nourishes the skin, while carnosine soothes the skin with powerful antioxidant properties. Additionally, hyaluronic

acid draws moisture to the skin and promotes a plumper-looking complexion. Its light texture and rapid absorption works to protect against free radicals, while improving skin radiance and reducing wrinkles and fine lines, €32. Available from online retailers, and pharmacies nationwide.

REN Everhydrate Marine Moisture Replenish Cream

If you're looking for hydration without heaviness, REN's newest addition to the family, Everhydrate Marine Moisture Replenish Cream harnesses thirst-quenching natural actives to deliver dewy, deeply hydrated skin for up to 48 hours. Powered by a moisture-maximising matrix infused with pioneering water-retention technology and sustainably sourced Algae Extracts this lightweight, yet rich, water-locking cream floods skin with moisture, then traps it on the skin's surface to intensively replenish and deliver relief from dehydration deep down when, and where, you need it most. Cellular pectin from hydrating freshwater plant delivers instant and long-lasting hydration to help smooth the appearance of fine dehydration lines. Freshwater microalgae boosts skin's resilience and helps to protect against water loss. Hyaluronic and polyglutamic acid replenish the skin's moisture reserves, while REN's Hydra-Smart Technology locks in moisture for longer. And while this cream is heavy on results – it's surprisingly light on texture for a comfortable finish, even on oily skin types, €37. Available from REN stockists nationwide and online from www.renskincare.ie

et al Beauty Collective

et al. is the makeup that does more – delivering the joy of

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Time is free yet it is priceless. We can never own it but we can use it and spend it; but once we have lost it, we can never get it back because it is a nonrenewable resource. If you are waiting for the perfect time to do something or to wear something, don't wait, the time may never be just right. When and if, two words that often push our hopes and dreams into the abyss of the future. How many times have you stopped yourself from wearing something because you decided that 'someone like you' couldn't wear it or because you need to lose some weight to look better in it or because you would never look as good as 'all the others'. The trouble is that you are spending too much time thinking and not enough time living life. Summer is here, grab it with both hands ever so

Sizzling summer style

tightly and to hell with white legs or fat calves or varicose veins or whatever obstacles that prevent you from wearing that dress or putting on those shorts! Perfectionism has taken over our psyche and it is destroying our natural zest for life.

There is nothing better than getting your toes out in the sunshine. While we all have, in the name of fashion, worn uncomfortable shoes to be taller or trendy, footwear can make or break your mood... and your back! The summer of 2023 shoe trends offer an exciting assortment of practical and minimalist to fashion-forward options. Sporty sneakers, embellished ballerina flats, Mary Jane pumps and a wonderful collection of sandals offer a variety of choices to even the pickiest shopper. The humble ballerina shoe or pump is a fashion must-have and this is a super way to inject colour into your summer wardrobe. From yellow to pink to nude or green, buy as many colours as your budget allows; with the addition of insoles or inserts, even the most flat-footed among us can comfortably wear them. They are a no fuss yet instant glamour, light shoe, perfect for day and all night wear.

The wedge returns and is the ideal summer addition for those seeking height and comfort. You can rush out to buy some new ones or wear the ones that you have tucked away in the back of the wardrobe because the comeback styles include new bright colours but also a mixture of

what has been 'out' before. So-phisticated sporty sneakers, some retro-inspired with a contemporary touch, can be paired with anything from spring dresses to tailored trousers, shorts, skirts and jeans...so why wouldn't you pick up a pair. I am a fanatic for clean sneakers, let's just say it is probably 'many-a-washing-machine' that I have murdered washing sneakers – but my technique has gotten better; now I only wash them with lots of towels to make sure that my machine has a long and healthy life! Perhaps they are not the most ideal footwear for the hottest summer days but I generally go from flip-flops to sneakers for most of the season. Micro heels have completely taken over from the much higher heels; most often we all just want a little height without the foot pain and these heels provide exactly that. They are the ideal summer shoe for the days that you want to feel a bit more 'pulled together'. Many of the styles available are a thong sandal or a sling-back with a kitten heel attached and the colours available are simply divine.

Who doesn't love some sparkle or a few gems here and there. Embellished footwear should no longer be reserved for evening wear. Crystal studded pumps and sliders look incredible with jeans and a t-shirt, don't save them, just wear them for an instant bit of glam and a whole lot of compliments.

While we have all become wizards when it comes to re-inventing our summer clothes,



Block colour dresses can be worn multiple times and accessories with almost anything.

Pic: Gooseberry, Clonakilty

and this is a fantastic thing, as there will always be those new summer essentials required to top up our ample summer wardrobe. However Whites, I can't say this enough, will only last a certain length of time and then need to be laid to rest FOREVER. We can get away with so



Jewel bright slingbacks add just a little height. Pic: Batemans

much more with other colours; they tend to last longer and live to be re-invented. I spotted the most gorgeous tan/caramel safari style knee length, semi-fitted, short sleeve dress on a beautiful woman the other day. As bold as always, I marched straight over to compliment and enquire about where she had purchased it. She said that it was hanging in her wardrobe for a few years and she decided to wear it again... needless to say it was so stylish in an effortless chic way. I can't say enough about block colour dresses, especially in a muted shade, you can wear them multiple times and accessorise with just about anything or any colour. Belts, wedges, pumps, a straw hat, a colourful bag, the choice is limitless. We all have dresses like this, perhaps we have pushed them to the back of the wardrobe or for whatever reason they have fallen out of favour, but a good cut and colour will allow you to reinvent it, time and time again.

While headbands are doing the rounds as the official 'wedding head gear' this season, there is no reason why you can't add a more casual version to your day-to-day summer wardrobe. They are a super way to add colour and class in an instant and it

doesn't matter whether you have short or long hair, google how to make it work for your hairstyle or shape of your face. The big straw sun hat is no longer just for the beach, you need to wear it whenever you are out and about. Not only does it protect coloured hair but it protects your scalp from the hot sun that we are now becoming somewhat accustomed to...and it is super stylish too, especially with big sunglasses in tow.

What can I say about crocs? Well it's officially a Croc-Girl-Summer! Whether you are firmly in Camp Croc or can't stand them, crocs are everywhere now. On the plus side they are great for breathability, can be supremely comfortable and give excellent traction (for whatever you might be up to) even outside of the garden. For an extra sense of individuality, you can accessorise your crocs with charms, they are super cute and not just for kids. I must admit that my daughter has a bright yellow pair with Winnie the Pooh charms and heart jibbitz on them and I will leave the house wearing them some day, if she ever takes them off. Podiatrists recommend that you spend a little on your crocs to make sure that they don't damage your feet.

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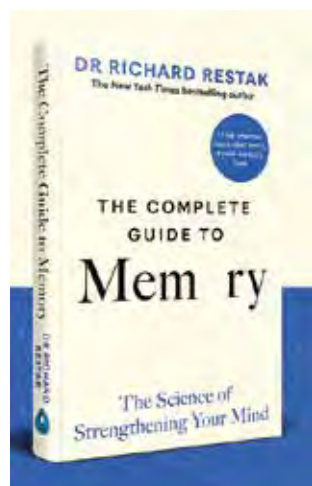
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Book Review: A guide to exercising your memory



Author: Dr Richard Restak
Reviewed by: Kim Boland

Aging is one of the big problems of the times we live in. As the proportion of elderly people increases we hear more of the difficulties this brings to society. The possibility of living into one's eighties or nineties brings with it the need to look after oneself in order to enjoy these wonderful extra years of life. The world is full of information on exercise and diet and the contribution that these can make to one's health and how these are of enormous value to physical wellbeing and also to mood and enjoyment of life. It is broadly accepted that better food and more exercise make for a better life.

What is spoken of less and possibly thought about more, is the question of memory. How many people who are in their 60s, 70s or 80s have not had some decline in their memory. If our skin and bones and the rest of our bodies show the effects of aging, how could it be that our memory would not decline over time. There is a great deal of worry about memory, forgetfulness, dementia and Alzheimer's. Eventually a person may no longer be able to care for themselves if their memory is no longer adequate for the job. Where this happens we become a burden for those around us or face the costs of a nursing home.

People try to exercise every day because they know that the muscles they depend on will fade away if they do not use them. They eat good food to avoid disease and maintain the many miraculous processes that keep the body working.

Should we be doing something every day to exercise our memory?

One of the great things about the book 'The Complete Guide to Memory – The Science of Strengthening Your Mind' By Dr Richard Restak is that it was written by an eighty-year-old man and it is not a book that could be written by someone without a good memory. Dr Richard Restak is still working as Clinical Professor of Neurology at the George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences, another indication that he has successfully applied the methods put forward in his book. After a lifetime studying the brain, and the publication of twenty books on neurobiology, he appears to have applied what he has learned and it has worked for him.

The purpose of the book is clear from two sentences in the first chapter. 'This book will provide you the means of

developing your memory.' and 'I have never encountered in my many years of neurological practice a patient with highly tuned memory skills who was suffering from Alzheimer's disease or any other degenerative brain disease.'

One of the main themes running through the book is that there are many occasions where we do not remember something, but this does not indicate any failure of our mental processes. There are circumstances where a failure to remember is quite natural and sometimes beneficial. There is one story of a man who was unable to forget and in the end this turned out not to be a blessing. For some of the people mentioned, the ability to forget the details of the previous day's work made it possible to have an amazing memory of the current day.

Another reason for an apparent failure of memory is that a memory has not been made. An example would be a person who leaves their work in the garden to go into the house and have lunch and then is unable to remember where their gardening gloves are. If they consciously put their gloves in a place which they would return too, then they would have made a memory. They would have used their ability to make a memory and would have been able to recall

where their gloves were.

If someone has not paid attention to where they put something then they will not be able to find it.

It is one of the most fundamental points made. To have a memory one must have first of all paid attention. Without the paying of attention one cannot have a memory.

I found the book fascinating and read it cover to cover as soon as I got it. It is packed with information and I will need to study it carefully to get the best out of it. If I do set out to work on my memory as a regular practice, I will certainly want to refer back to it. The history of memory is given a chapter and possibly the written word was the first method of storing data that did not depend on the brain and its memory capacity. A highly developed memory was once an important ability for academics. I think that ten or eleven different categories of memory are discussed. Reading about these is like opening up the bonnet of a car and discovering the engine, battery, alternator, radiator, and many other components that are essential to the working of the car. I feel that trying to understand the different categories and functions of my memory will be a great help.

At one point Dr Restak sug-

gests that one finds one's own ways of improving one's memory using the information that he gives. I have started to do this myself in three very small ways. When I go on a shopping trip I write out a list and then visualise the shelf where I will find each item. I then get in the car and go to the shop. Before I go to the checkout I check the list. I have also given up using a bookmark for the book that I read before I go to sleep at night; instead I memorise the page number. Both of these use visualisation to aid memory, one of the major recommendations.

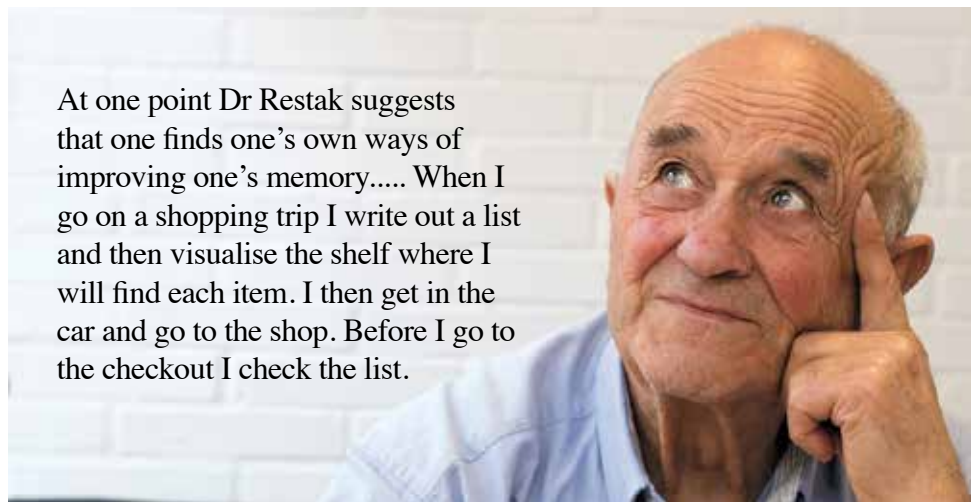
I also do Wordle without using a pen and paper, which requires me to hold words and letters in my working memory. I am not perfect at these simple memory exercises but I am finding an improvement and I feel I have therefore started on the path to improving my memory.

For many years I have read about the benefits of exercise and diet and how they delay or prevent the onset of dementia but until now I have not found anything to help people deal directly with memory.

I can now study the book in detail so that I may be able to exercise my memory as well as my arms and legs and be able to look after myself and enjoy life.

A great book.

At one point Dr Restak suggests that one finds one's own ways of improving one's memory.... When I go on a shopping trip I write out a list and then visualise the shelf where I will find each item. I then get in the car and go to the shop. Before I go to the checkout I check the list.



Alzheimer Society launches Experience of Dementia in Ireland Survey 2023

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland (ASI) is running a national survey to capture a snapshot of the experiences of people affected by dementia – those living with the condition and their families, caregivers and supporters. The Experience of Dementia in Ireland Survey 2023 aims to understand more about this cohort's critical challenges and the support they need.

This research aims to use the

information gathered from the survey in our political advocacy, service planning and awareness-raising about dementia.

To be eligible to take part in this study, the following people are needed:

- Individuals over the age of 18 who are currently providing (informal) care or support to a family member or a friend who is living with dementia
- Persons living with dementia
- Participants can be located

anywhere in the Republic of Ireland

The survey takes just ten minutes, and there is an option to complete it over the phone with a staff member from The Alzheimer Society of Ireland.

Dr Laura O'Philbin, Research and Policy Manager at The ASI said: The Alzheimer Society of Ireland are passionate about using research and evidence to ensure that we are meeting the needs of people affected

by dementia through all of the facets of our work. This is really important research, and we are appealing to people living with dementia and those who support them across Ireland to take part and have their voice heard.

An estimated 64,000 people are living with dementia in Ireland, and the number of people living with dementia is expected to double by 2050.

To access the surveys, please visit alzheimer.ie.

The Complete Guide to Memory: The Science of Strengthening Your Mind

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Carbery Youth Service launched

Carbery Youth Service was officially launched on Monday, May 8 in Clonakilty as part of the YMCA Youth Spaces provision in the Cork region.

Cindy Kingston (Carbery Youth Service Coordinator) and her team of staff and young leaders have been working hard since last September to make The Shack a welcoming space for young people in the new Clonakilty Community Youth Centre.

The Shack is open Monday to Friday, supporting young people in the area. All of YMCAs Youth Spaces are youth-led, informal spaces where young people can make friends, make and create together, make a difference in their community and make progress in their lives. The young people are supported by skilled staff, but all the ideas, energy and outreach are cultivated by the young people themselves. To help make this possible, YMCA has developed a Leaders in Training programme where young leaders partner with them to create the brave spaces and social networks they need to thrive.

Besides the Shack, Carbery Youth Service also provides two other youth spaces called The Hive in Skibbereen Family Resource Centre on Thursdays 4-7pm and The Den in Dunmanway Family Resource Centre on Fridays 1-3pm, with the support of the West Cork Development Partnership.



The launch was opened by the Mayor of Clonakilty, Paddy McCarthy, with many from the local community in attendance. Christopher O'Sullivan TD and Michael Collins TD spoke about the importance of Carbery Youth Service in West Cork and the new opportunities and supports that this service is providing to young people in the area. Special thanks was given to the Clonakilty Community Youth Centre committee and Cork ETB Youth Services for all their support. As Cathal Geraghty, Cork ETB Youth Services Youth Officer said, "people make places".

It was clear from the launch on Monday that there are plenty of passionate and dedicated people who want to support the young people of Clon-

akilty and West Cork. The Clonakilty Community Youth Centre Committee has put in an exceptional amount of work over many years to raise funds to secure and develop the new centre. In April, the Committee was the worthy recipient of a Cork County Council Mayoral award and they are continuing to plan for future developments of the centre.

Robyn, a young leader in The Shack, spoke about its importance for her and her friends over the past four years and told us that: "it is not just a service but a home. It has given me many opportunities to develop skills and to make friends with people I may not have gotten to know otherwise. I was able to learn new skills such as photography and work-

ing in the recording studio and I was also given the opportunity to be myself and to improve my communication skills in a safe environment. I was treated like an equal, it was not like a school, [it was] a place I could truly be myself".

The Carbery Youth Service is open to all young people between 13-19 for fun and free creative activities such as music, recording studio, arts, drama, sport and informal hang out time. A leadership training programme is also offered to young people who want to in-

crease their skills and co-create the youth spaces.

For more information contact Cindy Kingston, Co-Ordinator Carbery Youth Service on 086 032-7866, cindy.kingston@ymca-ireland.net @theshack-clonakilty

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MTU's Enterprise Camp offers secondary students an enterprising opportunity in West Cork

For the first time, MTU are running their very popular Enterprise Camp in two locations, one serving the West Cork area in Clonakilty and one Camp in Cork city.

How we used technology during the pandemic highlighted an opportunity for MTU's Enterprise Camp to grow its impact beyond the bounds of Cork city. For the Hincks Centre, it highlighted how the problem of access for students in regional areas could be addressed, while creating a greater positive regional impact. In previous years, when the Enterprise Camp was moved online due to Covid-19, it was noticed that many students then had the opportunity to join from provincial areas, whereas

they were restricted by location before.

The Hincks Centre decided to try and reduce access barriers this year by piloting an Enterprise Camp in Clonakilty, West Cork while maintaining the Camp that has been running in MTU for the last 10 years.

Both Camps will take place over three days from 10am-2pm and will include idea generation sessions, fun activities where students develop valuable skills. Students will also receive talks from entrepreneurs and will have the opportunity to win prizes through challenges.

The popular Camp is free to attend and would particularly benefit teens who have a keen interest in enterprise and entrepreneurship. All 2nd, 3rd, 4th

and 5th year secondary school students are welcome. Apply through the QR code on the advert on this page. Closing date for applications: June 9, 2023.

• Camp 1: June 26 – 28 June, 10am-2pm, at Clonakilty Agricultural College (Darrara)

• Camp 2: July 3 – 5, 10am-2pm, at MTU Bishopstown Campus, Cork

Places are limited and booking is essential. Apply online now. If you have any queries, contact Rebecca Robinson by email rebecca.robinson@mtu.ie. The Camp is delivered and coordinated by the Hincks Centre for Entrepreneurship Excellence, supported by MTU School of Business and funded by the Higher Education Authority (HEA).

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people Food, Health & Lifestyle

Clonakilty stories brought to life in community quilt

A wall hanging created by members of the Community Participation Through Textiles class at the Further Education and Training Centre in Clonakilty, depicting ten areas of interest in the locality including the landing of the Flying Fortress 'Taint a Bird' in White's Marsh in 1943, the Old Linen Hall, the Model Railway Village and Inchydoney Beach, was unveiled at the FET Centre on Western Road in Clonakilty on May 30. A full colour brochure has been produced to accompany the quilt.

Under the mentorship of their tutor Catherine Foley, for the past four months the class has produced a work of art that involves a variety of needlework and crafting skills. Techniques used include knitting, crochet, embroidery, Trapunto quilting, weaving, appliqué, wet and dry felting.

Good friends and retirees, Mary Heaton and Anne Brennan, travel down from Cork on the bus every Thursday morning availing of the Free Travel Scheme. "We both enjoy

crochet and knitting and have learned so much on the course, from felting to appliqué and weaving," they share.

Retired primary school teacher, Kay Ryan, from Ardfield, says the course was the best thing she ever did. "I absolutely loved it. It was all new to me but I learned so much and have met such lovely people. Catherine is a great teacher."

Yamira from Chile has been living in Ireland for 13 years, moving to Clonakilty four years ago. She has been attending the FET Centre in Clonakilty since before the pandemic and loves it. She hopes to use the skills she has learned to set up her own craft business.

Mary Leahy is a Clonakilty native now living in Crookstown. She loves coming back to Clonakilty and this is her fourth year attending the centre. With a farming husband and a family to feed, the retired primary school teacher is up early every Thursday morning to prepare the dinners and check the calves before leaving to make the trip to Clonakilty. "It's



a wonderful facility, tutor and group," she says.

Brid Murphy, who runs the FET Centre in Clonakilty, explains that the project has been transformative for all of those who have taken part. "Ranging in age, ethnicity and skill level, the groups have really formed an amazing community of learning to achieve this wonderful piece of work. Equally they have formed friendships far beyond the classroom and showed that returning to learning as an

adult can be a fun and fulfilling experience. We are so proud of what they have achieved."

There was a real sense of achievement and pride in the centre when the wall-hanging was completed and finally unveiled and, with great interest from the local community, in the following months the quilt will begin its travels around the town, visiting Clonakilty

Library and other local venues. It will feature at Clonakilty Agricultural Show, the Clonakilty Old Time Fair and in shop windows in the town.

In gifting their work to the people of Clonakilty, the creators of the quilt hope that it will become part of the archival history of the town for many years to come. Maith sibh go léir!

The Cork College of FET Clonakilty Centre is part of the Cork Education and Training Board Further Education and Training service. More information about the courses that they run can be found on their Facebook page @Clonakilty-FET or drop into the centre on Western Road.

Dunmanway primary school reaches all-island debating final

A Dunmanway primary school debating team has reached the final of the all-island Concern Primary Debates competition.

The sixth class girls from St. Mary's Senior Girls National School in Dunmanway defeated a team from Ballyadams National School in Laois in a semi-final in Dublin on May 25.

The young debaters successfully proposed the motion that 'Ireland's commitment to climate change is a load of hot air' in the contest, which is run by the humanitarian organisation Concern Worldwide.

The students from St. Mary's will face Deravoy National School from Co. Monaghan in the Concern Primary Debates final, which will take place on June 15 in The Helix in Dublin.

If St. Mary's win the final it will be the second year in a row that the debating champions are from Cork, as it was won last year by Ardfield National School in Clonakilty.

The winning team said they

are delighted to have reached the final in a competition that had over 260 school teams participate this year.

"We are so proud to be part of our school debate team and really like having the opportunity to debate against other primary schools from all over Ireland," said team captain Danielle Crowley-Healy.

The St. Mary's team who took part in the semi-final were Danielle Crowley-Healy, Lauren Mawe-Downey and Georgina Farr, who are all 12-years-old.

Their team mentor Mairéad Twohig said the whole school and community are very proud of what they have achieved.

"It has been a pleasure to watch the pupils become so confident and competent in articulating their thoughts through the Concern Debates, and the knowledge they have gained about global issues through the debates is immeasurable," she said.

"We are incredibly proud of

our children's achievement in reaching the finals and would strongly encourage any school to get involved with the Concern Debates."

Anyone who would like their school to take part in next year's competition is asked to ring 01 417 7733 or email primarydebates@concern.net.

New Pieta service in West Cork

The Suicide Prevention Charity Pieta will have a new base in the Dunmanway Family Resource as it brings its free therapy services to the west of the county.

Pieta, the national suicide prevention charity, will be providing free counselling in Dunmanway, West Cork as part of an expansion of its services in the county. The charity's current location at Shanakiel has supported thousands of people through in-person counselling since it was opened in 2019. Furthermore, the announcement comes at a time when

the number of young people reaching out to the charity is increasing with one third of Pieta's clients now under 18 years old.

Speaking about this new development Stephanie Mahan, CEO at Pieta said, "I am delighted to be announcing that we are bringing our service to Dunmanway. Bringing our in-person counselling services to the west of the county will greatly help those in the area at risk of suicide and struggling with self-harm. My team has worked with local community groups to identify the best loca-

tion for the new service and the town's family resource centre is ideal for our in-person counselling. This service will come on stream later in the summer.

With the aftermath of the pandemic continuing to put stress on the nation's mental health, the demand for Pieta's services is continuing to rise and Pieta is recruiting therapists to join its clinical team. The charity currently employs more than 200 qualified therapists and support staff across 20 locations nationwide.



Georgina Farr, Danielle Crowley-Healy and Lauren Mawe-Downey

people Food, Health & Lifestyle

Pebbles looks forward to another stylish summer in Schull

Stella Thery of 'Pebbles' boutique in Schull has been dressing fashionable women of West Cork and beyond for 26 years now. Ahead of a busy season, Stella speaks to **West Cork People** about her circuitous route to fashion retail and what's in store for her customers this summer.



world when a short holiday to West Cork, to visit her sister, the artist Christine Thery, encouraged her to change course once again.

"I had no idea I would change my life completely after that short break," Stella fondly recalls. "My partner and I thought 'we would love to give Ireland a go' so we returned to Holland, sold up, and four months later we were here!"

Keen to be her own boss, fashion retail was an easy choice for Stella, who grew up making most of her own clothing. "I loved my sewing machine in the old days and used to wonder how people survived without one! Also, I lived in Fiji for a few years and worked for someone in the fashion industry, which I very much enjoyed."

The couple took over a shop in a beautiful building in Schull village and feel blessed to have watched 'Pebbles' go from strength to strength in the intervening years.

Stella's personal style, reflected in Pebbles' stock, is built on casual comfort in natural fibres: "I like wearing trousers mostly, in linen, denim and cotton. I also love jackets and in winter I adore my wools – we stock lots of knitwear! I'll often then accessorise with a beautiful scarf, which I think frames the face and lifts any outfit."



Pebbles is known for casual yet elegant summer dresses such as this striped design by an Italian label.

With loyal customers from all walks of life, Stella ensures she has a wide range of styles to choose from each season. "We have collections for all ages and I love seeing our regulars browsing and then spotting

something they can't resist. The oldest person we have dressed was a well known publican in Ballydehob for her 100th birthday; I was thrilled for her and she looked beautiful."

This season her Spanish and Italian labels, and a few really upmarket ones from Germany, have gone with a subtle colour palette of soft blues, pinks, yellows and some greens, and neutrals of course. "Pants have gotten a little wider," Stella observes, "a style my customers are embracing." And with hot weather on the cards again, her casual dresses, skirts, shorts (in all styles) and tops are sure to be snapped up.

Stella has also carefully chosen jewellery, from fresh water pearls to beads from Spain, that complement her clothing collections, as well as a wide selection of accessories including some shoes, hats, scarves and sunglasses, raincoats and wellington boots!

With so much else going on in the village – in terms of shopping, food and entertainment – a day trip to Pebbles and Schull is guaranteed to be enjoyable for all the family.






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Why not pop in and browse, there is so much to see!

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


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Emer Sweeney 086 8395058
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Born in Hong Kong and well travelled, Stella Thery was happily employed in the Dutch advertising





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people Food, Health & Lifestyle

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Supports for family carers

People providing care for family members often are so busy with their caring responsibilities that they don't always have time to look at what supports are available to them.

It is important that they know that carers may be entitled to a number of supports from the Department of Social Protection (DSP).

The two main social welfare

payments for carers providing full-time care are Carer's Allowance and Carer's Benefit. One may also qualify for an annual Carer's Support Grant. Another consideration would be taking Carer's Leave from work to care for a loved one. There are also some secondary benefits for which the person who is caring, may qualify.

What is the difference between Carer's Benefit and Carer's Allowance?

Carer's Benefit is a short-term payment paid for up to two years to people who give up employment to care on a full-time basis for someone who requires full-time care and attention. It is PRSI based and you have to have a certain number of PRSI contributions paid. People who are self-employed and paying a Class S PRSI contribution will not qualify.

Carer's Allowance is a payment for people who are caring on a full-time basis for someone who requires full-time care and attention and will require it for at least 12 months. You must satisfy a means test and the habitual residency condition to qualify for Carer's Allowance.

To claim either payment, you must complete an application form and submit it to DSP. It is important that you put in detailed information in relation to the level of care that you are providing to support your application.

What does 'full time care' mean?

A person is seen as needing full-time care when they need continual supervision to avoid danger to themselves or they need continual supervision and frequent assistance throughout the day with normal bodily functions. For example, help to walk and get about, eat or drink, get washed or dressed. The Department of Social Protection will decide if the person needs full-time care. This decision will be based on the information that the Carer provides on the application form.

This Medical Report is not needed if the person being cared for is a child who is getting Domiciliary Care Allowance.

You or the person needing care must not be living in a hospital or institution. However, you can continue to be seen as providing full-time care if you or the person being cared for is having medical or other treatment in a hospital or institution for no longer than 13 weeks.

Do you have to be caring for a set number of hours to qualify for a Carer's payment?

The time spent providing care must not be less than 35 hours per week, over five to seven days. If you are away, you must

be able to arrange full-time care for the person you care for.

Can you do any paid work while on Carer's Benefit or Carer's Allowance?

You can be employed, self-employed, in training or in education outside the home for up to a maximum of 18.5 hours per week.

If on Carer's Benefit, the maximum amount you can earn is €350 per week after tax, PRSI & Union dues are deducted.

If you are single, €350 of your total weekly income is not taken into account in the means test for Carer's Allowance. If you are married, in a civil partnership or cohabiting the first €750 of your combined total weekly income is not taken into account.

What is Carer's Leave?

Carer's leave allows employees to leave work temporarily to provide full-time care and attention for someone who needs it. You can take carer's leave for a minimum of 13 weeks and up to a maximum of 104 weeks.

Carer's leave from employment is unpaid but your job will be kept open for when you return.

You must have worked for your employer for 12 months without a break in employment. Employers are entitled to at least six weeks written notice from the employee of the intention to take carer's leave.

The person you will be caring for must need full-time care and attention..

What is taken into account in the means test for Carer's Allowance?

First of all, like Carer's Benefit, you must be providing full-time care and attention to a person

who requires that level of care. In addition however, you must be habitually resident in the State and pass a means test. In certain circumstances you may be eligible for Half Rate Carer's Allowance.

The main sources of income included in the means test for Carer's Allowance are any cash income and capital income – this includes savings, investments, shares or any property you have (but not your own home). The first €50,000 of your capital is not taken into account. Any payment from the Department of Social Protection is not included in the means test.

You can get up to €14,000 per year for renting out a room in your own home without it affecting your payment.

What are the qualifying conditions for Half-Rate Carer's?

If you are in one of the following situations you may qualify for half-rate Carer's Allowance:

- Already getting Carer's Allowance but also meet the qualifying criteria for another social welfare payment
- Changed from another social welfare payment to get Carer's Allowance
- Caring for someone and being claimed for by a spouse, civil partner or cohabitant
- Getting a social welfare payment other than Carer's Allowance and caring for someone

You cannot get half-rate Carer's if you are in receipt of a jobseekers payment or signing for unemployment credits.

What is the Carer's Support Grant?

The Carer's Support Grant is paid to carers once a year by the Department of Social Protection (DSP). It is €1,850 for 2023.

It is paid once a year, usually

on the first Thursday in June, for each person you are caring for. It is not taxable. You cannot be working outside the home for more than 18.5 hours or signing for Jobseeker's Credits. You can apply for this payment even if you are not receiving Carer's Allowance or Carer's Benefit.

You can apply for a Carer's Support Grant for any given year from April of that year until December 31 of the following year e.g. you can apply for the Carer's Support Grant for 2022 at any time from April 2022 up until 31 December 2023. The grant rate for 2022 was €1,850.

Are there any additional supports available to Carer's?

If you get Carer's Allowance you may also get the Free Household Benefits Package (if you are living with the person you are caring for) and Free Travel.

If you get Carer's Benefit or Carer's Allowance, at full or half-rate, you are eligible for a GP visit card.

If the person that you are caring for passes away, your Carer's Benefit payment will continue for six weeks following the death, while Carer's Allowance continues for 12 weeks.

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

WEST CORK HELPLINE
0818 07 8390

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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West Cork Autism Support Group

Information event for parents & carers of Autistic children

Thursday 27th July 2023
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- Mary Lucey, Senior Occupational Therapist (Sensational Kids)

All proceeds will be donated to Croi, Autism class in Clogagh National School

For further info contact us on Facebook

OUT & ABOUT IN WEST CORK



Volunteers Jade Segrillo, Benjamin Rupprecht, Rob and Shannon Corrigan at the opening of Fastnet Film Festival in Schull. Photo by Carlos Benlayo

Fernhill named fifth 'Best Hotel In Ireland'



Fernhill House in Clonakilty was named in the top five best hotels, out of a total of 883 hotels in Ireland, and the number one hotel in County Cork in Tripadvisor's annual rankings of hotels for 2023. For travelers and experiencers alike the Country House came up trumps for their renowned family-run hospitality, excellence in food, service and attention to detail. Many reviews note upgrades throughout the bedrooms, public areas in the hotel and gardens alike. They also highlighted that an overwhelming support and genuineness at the West Cork property is what sealed the top place in this prestigious awards. One review noted that:

'What you get with Fernhill that I have never seen in a hotel before is that they are one big family and each and every one of the staff take so much pride in wanting to make sure you as the guest are happy. It's truly a special place.'

The top ten included Ashford Castle, Muckross Park, Dromoland Castle and Adare Manor so Fernhill was in excellent company.

Proprietor and Lady of the House, Teresa O'Neill commented: 'We are overjoyed to have received such a fantastic recognition amongst some of the best hotels in Ireland. We are always very lucky to have an amazing team of staff who love our hotel and grounds as

much as we do and take such pride in it every day. It must be the beautiful West Cork scenery inspiring them!'

Fourth generation of the O'Neill's at Fernhill, Michael O'Neill Jnr commented: 'We are always working on new and exciting projects here at Fernhill and maintaining a high standard of service combined with a sustainable future and that level of care that can only be found in West Cork is always our priority. We would like to extend a huge 'thank you' to all our guests, couples, locals, team, family and friends, whatever category of those or a few of those that you fall in to, it is all due to your continued support over the years.'



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Life and death in nature



END OF LIFE MATTERS

Melissa Murphy

End of life Doula Melissa Murphy, a companion, guide and resource supporting our community in end of life matters.

May has become a favourite month of the year. With its abundance of wildflowers in meadows and roadsides as well as colourful blooms in

the garden at every turn. Then there is the sweetness of bird chatter; their songs begin earlier in the day and longer into the night. The sun (at last!) gives us a good dose of vitamin D and verdant new growth envelops hills and trees in endless hues of green.

Have you paused to think about how all of this is orchestrated because, and in spite of, the naturally occurring decay – the dying – that happened in the months prior? We know this to be part of the cycle or web of life. The topic for this month came naturally (pun intended) as I've been met with opportunities to reconsider my relationship to nature. I've been reflecting on the way that not only I am living with the natural world, but I actually am it. Humanity is entangled with nature. In the book 'Ethics for Tending the Dead', by Cody J. Sanders, he offers an example that goes straight to the core (quite literally!) of us: "the human body is inhabited by bacteria outnumbering our human cells ten to one. In other words,

our body has ten times 'more' non-human bacteria than human cells." Sanders also gives a nod to molecular biologist Joshua Lederberg, who coined the term microbiome, and writes "these microorganisms literally share our body space. And when we die, there is paradoxically an aliveness that reclaims our body." As we leave behind these bacteria, we also part from atoms, molecules...we are this ecosystem now as well as when we die!



I'm far from alone in my relational re-thinking. There seems to be a collective remembering of our nature as just this month, I've listened to several

talks with reference to (re)-embracing our nature as mortal creatures. This has included learning from a series on nature, death and grief. Even Hozier's new album 'Unreal Unearth' with its evocative images of a face engulfed in soil (all but the teeth are revealed holding a daisy) and legs lying in topsoil have contributed to my wonder. How can I be useful in the cycle of nature when I'm dead? Culturally people – myself included – have considered the ways that many of our ancestors have practiced this when death occurs. A couple of examples include 'natural' or green burial, which is actually not new, but has re-emerged globally as a choice. Here in Ireland, some are familiar with Woodbrook Natural Burial Ground in Co. Wexford and Knockma Woodland in Co. Galway. Both are equally tranquil spaces and open to visitors curious to learn more. Another resource is organic reduction – human composting – where the deceased is placed in a vessel with simple natural materials such as

alfalfa, straw and wood chips to aid the decomposition process. According to 'Recompose', the world's first such facility, "the soil created becomes a "biologically valuable material that can be used to nourish trees and plants or donated to conservation efforts such as reforesting land." While this option has existed for about five years, it's only available in six of the states (with twelve other states considering it) as a legal and available option. There are quite a number of other choices these days with varying degrees of nature friendliness for what it means to return to the earth or go from 'dust to dust'. However, when it comes to final disposition of the body, most are habituated to think there are just two – burial or cremation. Mostly this is because we prefer not to think about death until it is on our doorstep. It's a deeply personal decision and part of my role as an end of life doula is to provide resources and education.

It's been said that the fact that one day we will die affects the

choices we make – (essentially everything we do!) – while we're alive. I deeply believe this to be true and it leads me to think about not only the choices until my death, but those that 'include' it. Could my dying be an opportunity to make the planet a better place – even in a small way? While perpetually in awe of the astounding natural beauty of life, simultaneously I witness our changing earth and climate loss – how can this guide my final dying wish? Being that I come from nature, that I 'am' nature – does it make sense to then offer my dead body directly back to that cycle of life when my time comes?

"From my rotting body, flowers shall grow and I am in them and that is eternity." – Edvard Munch

To learn more or to connect with Melissa, email her at starsbeyondourskin@gmail.com or visit www.starsbeyondourskin.com. She also welcomes your questions or ideas for future columns.

A jewel on Kenmare Bay



Emerald Outdoors promises to keep you warm, dry and comfortable, whatever the weather!

Born on the banks of the Nile river in Uganda during a conversation between Cork man Colin Wong and Scottish native Jamie Stevenson-Hamilton, Kenmare's Emerald Outdoors is now heading into its seventh summer. The successful kayaking business offers morning, afternoon and night trips on Kenmare Bay.

Boasting 30 years of guiding and coaching experience between them, working across Africa and Asia, a shared passion for kayaking and a 14-year friendship, the duo have designed their kayaking experiences to be as accessible as possible to everyone.

"We don't require people to be able to swim, nor do we put you in an uncomfortable wetsuit; instead we provide waterproof protective clothing and kayaks that just want to stay upright," they explain.

"Too many people have a negative view of kayaking because of experiences when they were younger being forced to turn their kayak upside down in cold water. We keep you dry and comfortable instead. In fact one of our guests joined us for her first ever kayaking experience at the age of 92 (at night), that was one of our favourite moments since we started the tours."

Emerald Outdoor's most popular tour is the Night trip, paddling through the sunset into a world of bioluminescence.

"It really does have to be seen to be believed!" says Jamie.

"But some of our favourite moments are the still mornings out on Kenmare Bay when the seals and the birds are waking up and coming to say hello."

When starting the business the kayakers were looking for 'a place'. "We didn't know it was Kenmare until we saw it and from that moment on there was no turning back," they share.

"Kenmare is a very special place, with mountains, rivers, lakes and the sea all so close together there is no better place for somebody who loves the outdoors! Combine that with welcoming nature of the town and the incredible restaurants, accommodation and shops and we never looked back."

Both men have now bought houses in the area and Colin has started a family. Kenmare is home.

Colin and Jamie have both worked extensively in the world of whitewater kayaking, coaching everyone from absolute beginners all the way to kayak professionals. Colin was also part of a team that completed the first ever traverse of the Arabic gulf covering 2500km from Ku-

wait to Oman by sea kayak. He also founded the Irish Whitewater Racing league and spends the winters training and qualifying kayak instructors with Canoeing Ireland qualifications.

While they have both travelled extensively with kayaking, one of their favourite things to do is spend the day on a mission to a remote island off the Irish coastline in a kayak.

"There is nothing that can beat the sense of accomplishment when you get back from a mission to the Skelligs or the Fastnet and the views that you experience along the way are as spectacular as anything either of us has seen across the world."

"We love every moment of it, even the wet and windy days. There is a real pleasure to being out on the water in the rain, it is an isolating experience where you find yourself in your own little world with just the pitter patter of raindrops for company."

While the wind can make things adventurous and can be fun, it is also the only reason they ever cancel a kayak tour.

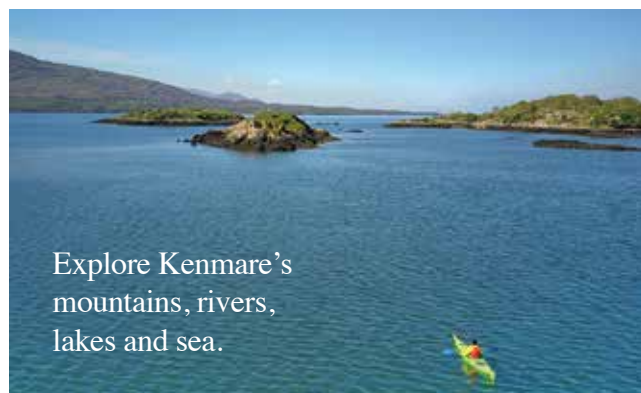
"Safety first!" they agree.

For the most part their vision is shared but when an agreement can't be reached on something, the friends take it down to a game of FIFA on the Xbox with the winner getting their way!

Continuously striving to improve their offering and, as a result, welcoming a huge number of clients back time and time again, Jamie and Colin's main goal is to get more people from the local area interested in progressing their own kayaking skills.

"It is a wonderful sport that has led both of us on a lifetime of adventures and we would love to share that passion with others so that they can start a new adventure for themselves."

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THE DNA OF WEST CORK PEOPLE

Mark Grace

Mark Grace is a genetic genealogist and family historian at Ballynoe House, Ardfield, Co. Cork

This month provides the eighth synopsis for my wife's ancestral lines in County Cork and what has been learned from atDNA matching. If you have taken a DNA test and related to any of these family, do get in touch and consider adding your DNA information to the project.

O'NEILLS of Reenroe

Reenroe is a townland in Kilgarra parish Clonakilty. There are many O'NEILL families in the greater Clonakilty area, extending from Ring in the south and as far north as around Enniskeen. Interestingly, DNA has shown no genetic connection between the Reenroe family and the wider group. The answer lies sometime before the C19th and prior to any church records. The family has no stories of their origins. The most famous son of Reenroe is Stephen O'NEILL (1889-1966) who was the Third Section Commander, Clonakilty Company IRA at the Kilmichael Ambush in Nov 1920.

Reenroe is situated on the western side of the R588 that runs north between Clonakilty and Enniskeen. The Reenroe family have suggested connections to those of the same name who lived at neighbouring Cashelisky and Fourcuil.

The history of farming at Reenroe is suggested from the earliest C19th involving at least two likely brothers, Peter and Felix NEIL / O'NEILL senior, who were probably born in the 1770s or 1780s. Other brothers are suspected, for example James NEIL at neighbouring Cashelisky. My wife's Reenroe family is descended from Peter's apparent only son John NEIL, my wife's 2xGGF. Peter's first baptised child in 1810 at Darrara (records start in 1809) indicates that the O'NEILLS were already well established a Reenroe by that time.

John O'NEILL (1811-1883) of Reenroe married Anne DONOVAN (c1812) of Templebryan/Shannonvale in 1840 at Darrara church and are my wife's 2xGGPs. John appears to be the 1813 s/o Peter NEIL and Mary O'SULLIVAN Bouge (possibly the daughter of James SULLIVAN alias BOGUE of nearby Knockskeagh, based on the gravestone at Kilnagross). Peter is listed c1826 in Tithe Applotment Book at Reenroe, and son of Peter senior, Felix, was recorded as farming at Knockskeagh.

3xGGF Peter NEIL married Mary BOUGE sometime prior to 1809. Five children are baptised at Darrara church between 1810 & 1824.

A DNA connection has been established between the descen-



Local IRA Battalion outside shop of Felix and Stephen O'NEILL (taken during the 1921 truce period), Ashe Street, Clonakilty. The shop was later run by Stephen's sister, Lena. Stephen (in overalls) is standing in the shop doorway. Identified people include Dan HARTE (bottom left, sitting with dog), Jim 'Spud' MURPHY (standing in doorway next to Stephen), Flyer NYHAN (arms folded, in front of door pillar), Mick AHERNE aka O'SULLIVAN (sitting right, with striped tie).

dants of John O'NEILL/Anne DONOVAN and the line of Felix O'NEILL/Catherine WHITE. By 1860 Felix and Catherine had settled in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and established the family line that became O'NEIL.

To date, two DNA lines are established from John and Anne's children – Mary O'NEILL (1841-1919) who married Denis MURPHY of Kilmacoda in 1870, and Denis O'NEILL (1847-1913) who

married Ellen MENNIS (as per previous articles). Four DNA lines are established from Denis and Ellen and provide the majority of DNA matches.

Early O'NEILL graves can be found at Kilnagross churchyard, near Shannonvale.

It is highly likely that Peter O'NEILL senior is buried at Kilnagross, along with many others who aren't referenced on any headstone. It is known for certain that Thady MURPHY,

a descendant of the marriage between Mary O'NEILL & Denis MURPHY in 1870, was buried in the O'NEILL plot but no marking bears his name. He was a sailor who was drowned in the Argideen river, just across the road from Kilnagross church, although located a week later closer to Castleview Mill. His story is documented. Donal Barrett, living in Reenroe, identified another grave plot where the O'NEILLS are buried,

as he helped dig this grave with two other locals. In this instance, nothing would be known without the old gravedigger's personal knowledge!

Questions that can be answered as part of future articles can be emailed to DNAmatchingprojects@gmail.com or follow the West Cork DNA projects on Facebook "My Irish Genealogy & DNA."

OUT & ABOUT IN WEST CORK



Pictured at West Cork Campus' End of Year Show for QQI Level 5 Art were: Back from left: Paula Marten (Coordinator of the QQI Level 5 Art, students: Rebekah Weatherall, Pauline Conroy, Tierna McDermott, Yuliia Kolomiets, Patricia Southern, Stephen Bowkett, Anastasiia Kiriienko and Emma Lupton(Teacher).

Front from left: Máire O'Sullivan (Coordinator of the West Cork Campus), Alison Ospina (Special Guest), Beatrice Egli (Student).



Clare Sexton, Clonakilty and Mary Madden, Barryroe, pictured at a special Health & Wellbeing event recently held by Clóna Dairies and the National Dairy Council at Dunmore House in aid of West Cork Rapid Response. Picture: Alison Miles / OSM PHOTO

people Arts & Entertainment

OUT & ABOUT IN WEST CORK



Pictured at the launch of the annual Innishannon steam and vintage rally were members of the rally committee with, seated in the vintage car, John Kelleher PRO, Sinead Power ICS and Martin O'Leary, ticket seller. Picture Denis Boyle

Clonakilty Show an outing for all in the community

As always, the annual Clonakilty Show on Sunday, June 11 has something for all ages and all interests.

Children will love seeing all the animals and birds in attendance, particularly the very entertaining alpacas and donkeys. You can enter the family dog in one of the competition classes and those that have a pedal tractor are encouraged to bring it along and enter the first West Cork Junior Tractor Run! No show day is complete without a ride in the funfair and there are many delicious locally-made treats for sale such

as ice-creams or Irish Yogurts.

Teenagers will enjoy viewing the Macra competitions and the car, machinery and sport stands – and maybe have a few words with a celebrity sports star!

Adults can visit 100 stands in the voluntary, emergency and educational spheres or purchase something from the 'Country Market' section. There will also be cookery demonstrations at the Clonakilty Blackpudding stand. There is always an opportunity to catch up with old friends and neighbours over a cuppa in the indoor café, or sitting outside listening to the music of Kieran Cooke.

There will be the usual horse, donkey, beef cattle, dairy cattle, sheep, poultry and dog competitions, with national qualifiers and qualifiers for other shows over the season. These could not take place without a number of very generous sponsors, as well as the 80 volunteers who steward and run the show.

Finally there are 56 baking, photography, arts and crafts competition classes and these exhibits are required to be brought to the Domestic Hall for judging on Saturday, June 10 between 12 noon and 2pm and will be on display for all to see on show day.

Saddle up for the Clonakilty Bicycle Festival 2023

From Thursday, June 8 to Sunday, June 11, Clonakilty will host its 12th annual bicycle festival. With a wide range of events to suit all ages and abilities it is a fantastic weekend of relaxed, social, foodie, kid-friendly and get-to-know-Clonakilty-better events that will leave you feeling replenished and reconnected – ready for a summer of cycling to the beach and beyond! Co-hosts this year include Birdwatch Ireland, The Bike Circus, Clochán Uisce, Duchás Clonakilty Heritage and

chef Caitlin Ruth.

The festival will kick off with the annual lap of the town on Thursday June 8, followed by a Jukebox social at the Bike Circus. On Friday children are encouraged to cycle to school and later in the day there will be a bicycle orchestra and bird-watch cycle. Saturday morning at 10am will be the annual family morning at Croppy park with fun events for the smallest of cyclists. The Pop-up Picnic cycle on Saturday afternoon will be one of the highlights for sure,

with picnics prepared by chef Caitlin Ruth and an open-air concert by members of the Vespertine Quintet. The Big Bike Open Mic will be an evening event with stories from cycle adventurers, campaigners, builders and artists! Sunday we kick off with a Stop, Look, Listen – a lap of the town followed by listening to three pieces of music – a weekly event hosted by Justin Grounds, and at noon all kids are called for the Kidical Mass Cycle (lap



of the town for kids). At 3pm on Sunday there will be a Historical River Cycle which will deepen your knowledge of the history and health of the Feagle and later in the day a Curry Supper Cycle. The festival will end with an evening of Bikeoke, can you pedal your way through your favourite song?

All details can be found on www.clonakiltybicyclefestival.org

The schools' art, writing and computer-aided drawing classes are now closed, with a huge number of entries, and all these may be viewed too on show day. This is only possible with the tremendous support from all the schools and teachers in the area.

Start the summer off with a visit to the Clonakilty Show for a fun-filled day for all the family.

26TH INNISHANNON STEAM & VINTAGE RALLY

in aid of Irish Cancer Society

JUNE BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND

SUNDAY JUNE 4TH & MONDAY JUNE 5TH

The Largest Steam & Vintage Rally in Ireland!

Over 1,500 exhibits on a 40 acre site.

Gates open at 11am, arrive early! FREE CAR PARKING

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Ecumenical Service on Rally Field (Sun 1.45pm)

All Usual Exhibits - Fun Fair - Working Area Threshing - Wood Sawing - Pets Corner Fire Engine Display - Fairground Organs Parade of Steam Engines - Old Harvest Machinery Stationary Oil Engines - Rural Crafts - Cake Sales Book Stalls - Spinner - Butter Making Vintage Club Displays - Trade Stands & Stalls Slow Steam Engine Race - Slow Tractor Race Cross Barry Vintage Displays Auction of Old Vintage Memorabilia (Mon 12 noon) Dog Show (Mon 3pm), Music on the Rally Field, Stationary Oil Engine Record Attempt

CLONAKILTY SHOW

SUNDAY, 11TH JUNE 2023
at Clonakilty Showgrounds, Bypass Rd

Horse, Donkey, Beef Cattle, Dairy Cattle, Sheep and Poultry Competitions.

- Inaugural West Cork Junior Tractor Run
- Baking, Photography, Arts & Crafts exhibits
- 100 stands to browse • Cookery Demos
- Music by Kieran Cooke

DOG SHOW & AGILITY DISPLAY!

PET FARM! FUNFAIR!

ClonakiltyShow

org including how to book in for the Pop-Up picnic and Curry Supper cycles. All other cycles are open to all and the more the merrier, just come along on the

day. Don't forget to grab this year's limited edition t-shirt to support the festival, you can also get in touch and find us on facebook @clonbikefest.

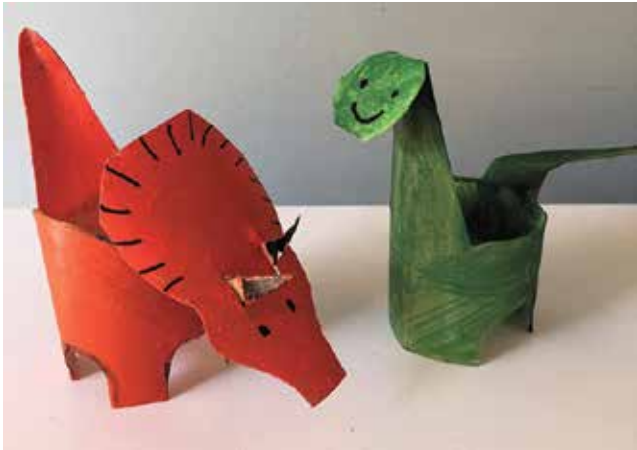
The Craft Corner

This month **Natalie Webb** is showing us how to make toilet roll dinosaurs.

- Materials:
- 3 toilet roll tubes
 - Pencil
 - Scissors
 - Paint
 - Paint brush
 - Marker

Flatten the toilet rolls to make it easier to draw on them.
Draw the shapes shown in picture A on one side of the rolls and then cut out the shapes.
For the first dinosaur: unflatten the toilet roll shape, then bend down one side to make the tail and bend the top of the other long side to make the head.
For the second dinosaur: bend the long bit for the tail, then bend the other side down and bend the horn

shapes up. Next, bend the front part of the smaller shape (looks a bit like a balloon!) and mark two lines for the horns to poke through. Cut these and unfold so there are now two slits, this is the head shape for the second dinosaur. Feed the horns through the slits to sit the head on the body.
Paint the dinosaurs whatever colours you like and when they are dry you can draw on the eyes.
Have a roarsome time making these!



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

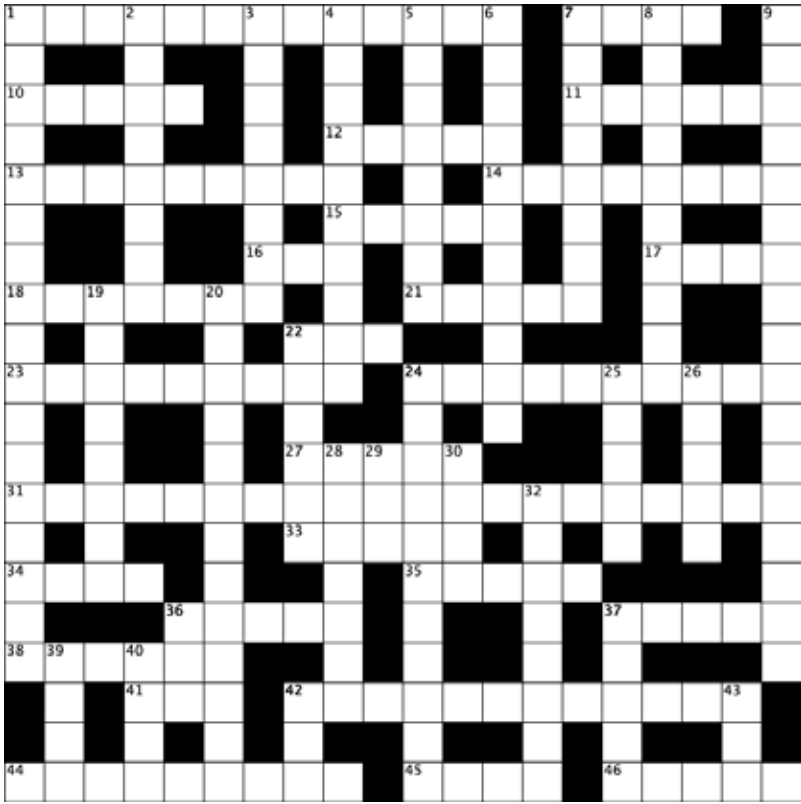
| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | 1 |
| | | 4 | | | | | | |
| | 8 | | | 7 | | | | |
| | | | | | | 2 | 6 | 7 |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | 6 | 9 | 5 | 1 | | | | 8 |
| 5 | | 1 | | 4 | | | | |
| | | 8 | | 3 | | | | 2 |
| 9 | 4 | | 1 | 6 | 7 | 5 | | |

#212646 Difficulty: hard

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 2 | | | 5 | | | |
| 7 | | | | 6 | | | | 1 |
| | | | | | | | | 3 |
| 6 | 9 | | | | 1 | | 7 | |
| | 1 | | 3 | 9 | | | | |
| | | 4 | | | 8 | | | |
| | | | 7 | 3 | | | | |
| 5 | 3 | | 8 | | | 4 | | |
| | 6 | | | | | 2 | | |

#34679 Difficulty: moderate

In the news Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Controversial ex-Fox News presenter (6,7)
- 7 Temporary accommodation (4)
- 10 Can be digital or Bedouin (5)
- 11 Get ale brewed for young flier (6)
- 12 The meek's inheritance, proverbially (5)
- 13 Asian country that gained independence from Indonesia in 2002 (4,5)
- 14 An enzyme found in the pancreatic juices (8)
- 15 Less of a lie (5)
- 16 Gentle bite (3)
- 17 Muslim who has made the journey to Mecca at least once (4)
- 18 Accessory found on a plane and in a spa (3,4)
- 21 Hard-to-detect amount (5)
- 22 River and famous Kung-Fu fighter (3)
- 23 Site of British government administration (collq) (9)
- 24 Maltese did damage to some Arab countries (6,4)
- 27 A.A. _____, creator of Winnie-The-Pooh (5)
- 31 Release Tom from confinement - and give the game away (3,3,3,3,2,3,3)
- 33 Saucy music! (5)
- 34 Lhasa ____ (dog of Tibet) (4)
- 35 Scottish group given metallic sound (5)
- 36 Nationality of brothers Uday and Qusay (5)
- 37 Drink a little whiskey at the theatre (5)
- 38 Expansive tattoo that won't keep you warm (6)
- 41 Ancient cities and culture in Myanmar (3)
- 42 Someone who studies elections and voting statistics (12)

- 44 A sleeping berth on a long distance train or boat (9)
 - 45 Slandorous remark, say (4)
 - 46 Worcestershire, for one (5)
- DOWN
- 1 'Cat on a Hot Tin Roof' playwright (9,8)
 - 2 Sounds like a capital place to bury cars (8)
 - 3 Alvin, Simon or Theodore perhaps? (8)
 - 4 Founder of London's Metropolitan Police Service who inspired 'bobbies' and 'peelers' nicknames (6,4)
 - 5 70s popstar surname or 80s Irish disaster (8)
 - 6 Home of 7 down (11)
 - 7 Seat of the International Court of Justice? (3,5)
 - 8 Tomato / aubergine family (10)
 - 9 German-born empress of Russia who overthrew her husband (9,3,5)
 - 19 The "E" of UAE (8)
 - 20 Gloating over another's bad luck (13)
 - 22 "Camels" of the Andes (6)
 - 24 Documents produced in a scriptorium (11)
 - 25 Skater's 'figure' (5)
 - 26 Sun-dried brick or Acrobat's parent (5)
 - 28 Inclined characters (7)
 - 29 Text speak for 'very funny' (3)
 - 30 "And so forth" abbr. (2,2)
 - 32 A cheat or swindler (8)
 - 36 Woman in league with American universities? (3)
 - 37 Fruits of Tinder (5)
 - 39 Identifying symbol (4)
 - 40 Depict entertaining story (4)
 - 42 That stone of mine (3)
 - 43 Twitch, regularly observed? (3)

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Wide Range of

LEGO playmobil Sylvanian families

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Across: 1. Thicker Carlson; 7. tent; 10. nomad; 11. eagle; 12. earth; 13. East Timor; 14. elapse; 15. true; 16. mp; 17. Hag; 18. eye mask; 21. race; 22. Lee; 23. Whitehall; 24. Middle East; 27. Mline; 31. let the cat out of the bag; 33. salsa; 34. apso; 35. clang; 36. frag; 37. drama; 38. sieve; 41. P yu; 42. pspchologist; 44. couchette; 45. slur; 46. source
Down: 1. Tennessee Williams; 2. Kharoun; 3. chipmunk; 4. Robert Peel; 5. Stardust; 6. Netherlands; 7. The Hague; 8. nightshade; 9. Catherine the Great; 19. Emirate; 20. Schadenfreude; 22. llamas; 24. manuscripts; 25. eight; 26. Adobe; 28. italics; 29. lot; 30. et al; 32. finagler; 36. Ivy; 37. dates; 39. logo; 40. epic; 42. pit; 43. tic

Children's and teenager's creativity nurtured in summer art camps at Rita's Clay House

A fun and relaxing place to build on your artistic skills, Rita's Clay House was set up over 20 years ago to primarily provide pottery classes to both children and adults. Shortly afterwards summer camps were introduced for primary school age groups; initially over two weeks per summer but this increased to six weeks due to demand. Two of these six weeks are now designated for teenagers. Many of the participants to these camps return each year, with one child saying "It is so lovely seeing so many familiar faces".

A qualified and awarded art teacher (MA in Art Education), Rita has extensive experience working with all age groups from pre-schoolers to retired community groups.

At the request of the children and their parents evening art classes were also introduced. This past year, art classes started mid September. Teenagers join Rita on Mondays and Tuesdays with the younger school age groups attending on Thursdays and Fridays. Having two evenings running for each age group has the added advantage for those attending that if they miss an evening due to, for example a match scheduled or



feeling unwell, they can make up the time lost at the other evening's class. Classes follow the same schedule as the school term.

For all those who attend, be it camps or classes, all materials are provided, so you just need to bring yourself along.

Rita's Clay House is located about three miles outside of Clonakilty town towards Rathbarry and one-and-a-half miles from Lisavaird.

Back in 1991 when Rita first arrived in Clonakilty and set up her pottery business she knew no-one locally. Apprehensive, but wanting to share her passion

for pottery and also get to know people from the community, she decided to give evening classes in the local Community College. And thus the seed for the love of teaching was planted.

From there Rita was offered hours in the school teaching pottery to transition year students. After doing this for a number of years, she felt it was time to go back to college to undergo a teaching training course. Once qualified, she started teaching art in Sacred Heart Secondary School and also increasing her hours in Clonakilty Community College. Loving every minute of her teaching, she decided to undergo yet another course, an MA in Education. This course was done part-time over two years, "I always believe it's so important to keep upskilling," she says. "The demands in education are always changing and we need to constantly aim to improve how we go about doing things."

Most of Rita's teaching now occurs in the studio but prior to Covid she spent many weeks working in conjunction with the Craft and Design Council of Ireland running CRAFTed programmes in primary schools. Rita also worked with numerous Active Retirement and Com-

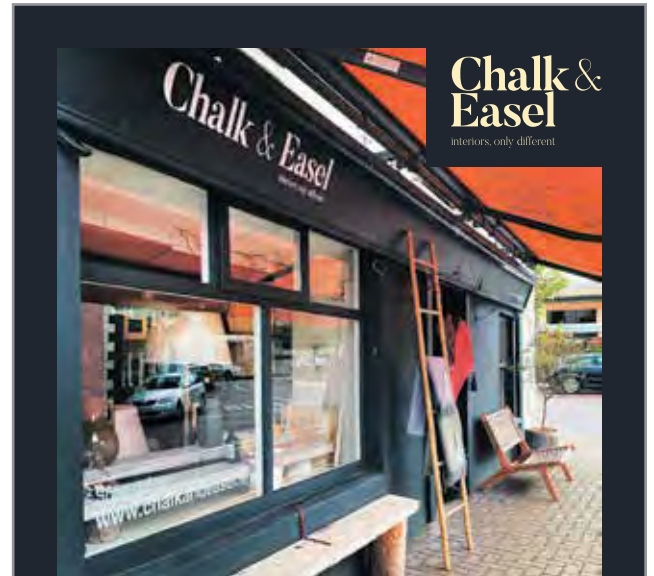
munity groups and from time to time the Irish Wheelchair Association along with various other groups too.

Right now she is getting ready for summer camps, which will begin on the final week of June and run for six weeks. Camps give the participants the opportunity to explore and gain knowledge in the process of Batik, Screen Printing, Pottery and Silk painting. There is always one or two other crafts too but Rita keeps that a surprise especially for all those returning each year.

If you would like to see some of the work done in previous years, you can do so by visiting Rita's Clay House Facebook page and scroll down along to see the amazing work created by the participants.

Rita can't wait to be joined by familiar and new faces once again this summer. If you think you might be interested, please do not hesitate to make contact with Rita for any information that you may require.

Call Rita on 023 8840703 or 086 107 2347
www.ritasclayhouse.com



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OUT & ABOUT IN WEST CORK



Students and staff pictured at the opening night of 'Aurora', the final year art exhibition for Level 5 and Level 6 art students from Kinsale Campus. Picture: John Allen

RITA'S CLAY HOUSE

once again welcomes everyone to join
us this summer for a fun packed

ART, CRAFT, DESIGN CAMP



Time:
9.30am – 12.15pm each
weekday morning.
Places limited to 11
participants per week.

For teenagers: week starting **June 26th**
and week starting **July 31st**.

For primary school ages: week starting
July 3rd and running each week of July.
(Please note weeks of July 3rd and 10th now full)

To see more work by previous participants
please see Rita's Clay House Facebook page.

Rita's Clay House, Carrigroe, Clonakilty. For any further
information or to book please contact **Rita on 086 107 2347**

people Arts & Entertainment

For the love of Cork



MUSIC BOX

Lauren Guillery

Lauren Guillery is a rock musician and music lover. Her album 'Disaster in La La Land' is available on all music platforms.

A familiar fixture on the Cork music scene, indie-folk musician and event facilitator Caoilian Sherlock, returns to DeBarra's Folk Club in Clonakilty on June 25. With a debut album, 'Teenage Jesus' set for release on May 26 and an upcoming tour that will see him perform across the country with some UK dates to boot, Lauren Guillery meets with Caoilian to find out more about the album.

Having played in bands since the tender age of fifteen, Caoilian Sherlock is a self-taught musician and the front man in Cork alternative rock outfit The Shaker Hymn, who he has been playing with for years. Sherlock also plays covers with The Tan Jackets, performing takes on 60s psychedelia with songs by the likes of MC5, Van Morrison's original band Them, and The

Sonics. For his solo project, Caoilian's compositions are a lot more introspective and folk, and despite being accompanied by a full band he explains how different an experience it is to work as a solo artist. "With previous bands, I edit a lot because I want to impress the people I'm in the band with, as if I'm writing music for them and I want them to be happy with what they're playing. Whereas with a solo thing, I think about it a little bit less, I edit a bit less. So it comes out a little bit more emotional and sometimes a little bit more clumsy as well, which I think is kind of cool."

In 2017, he released his debut EP 'The Faraway' under the moniker Saint Caoilian. But what started as a pure folk approach to songwriting in his early recordings morphed over the following years into a blend of indie and folk music, with lo-fi pop tracks and catchy choruses thrown into the mix, and a more experimental approach. With influences as varied as Nick Lowe, Stereolab, and John Prine, Sherlock cites the lyrics and storytelling in country music and hip hop as well as electronic music as having an impact on his songwriting. "I'd like to get as weird as it can get," he confesses.

Caoilian has always been involved in music one way or another. He currently works with The Good Room, an events company that puts on shows in Cork city in venues such as St Luke's and the Opera House. He also runs Quarter Block Party, a DIY arts and music festival which, after a Covid hiatus, will be coming back with a bang this summer. The collective has put on many events around the



Caoilian Sherlock. Pic: Izabela Szczutowska

city this last decade, including plays, art exhibitions, dance and music performances, and art and craft markets. Sherlock explains he loves to get involved in whatever takes place in the city and county, especially artistic projects. "I love meeting people, and the best thing about art and music is that you get to trade perspectives with each other. And if you want to be an artist, you need to fully lean into other people's perspectives."

Talking about his upcoming album 'Teenage Jesus', he explains that all the love songs were collected over a decade of writing, and the reflective elements are about becoming more experienced as a person, learning more about the world, and trying to view that in a healthier way. The recording started in 2019 with Brendan Fennessy of O Emperor, and by March 2020 when the first Covid lockdown hit, 80 percent of the album was done. "Some of the songs might not have been finished, but they had drums and bass and all the instruments on them." With the pandemic putting a stop to the project, Sherlock saw that time as a way of experimenting with production, and he set up a little studio in his spare room. He started playing around with keyboards, synthesisers and a drum machine and sent his home recordings to various musician friends so they could record better versions than he could ever do. "There's a lot of different musicians on the album that I've never played live with. I just knew they had recording

facilities and they're really good players."

The song 'Teenage Jesus' was written during the very first few weeks of lockdown, and he immediately knew that the album should be called the same name. He explains that the song weirdly tied the whole thing together sonically and thematically, as if it put a full stop to the rest of the songs. The inspiration for the name 'Teenage Jesus' came from watching Friday Night Lights, a TV show about American teenagers who play for the local sports team. "They were all kind of heralded as heroes of their town. I thought about that in reflection of all of us being locked in our house, that we were all sort of heroes of our own story."

"...the best thing about art and music is that you get to trade perspectives with each other. And if you want to be an artist, you need to fully lean into other people's perspectives."

But Covid lockdown also proved a positive experience for Caoilian, who started studying for a Master's Degree in Music Technology at the School of Music in Cork. During these uncertain times, a lot of musicians had a moment where they

could kind of opt-in or opt-out of being a musician for the rest of their lives. "It's not like you're making tonnes of money all the time, you've got to do it for the love of it, so there was definitely an opportunity, and for a brief moment I started looking around at different universities, different courses that I could do, maybe that could be a change of career, but in the end I ended up coming back to music and it probably focused my mind and convinced me more than ever, that this is what I love doing."

In 2021, he released his second EP 'Big Child' with four songs that were part of the same recording sessions as the album. Lockdown boredom, and a sense that these songs had a different atmosphere to the rest of the recordings encouraged him to release them as their own separate entity. He explains that the choice for the title 'Big Child' was about not wanting to grow up – the Peter Pan Syndrome and the idea that musicians never want to get a 'real' job. "For the launch of the EP, I called the band The Big Children, which I don't know if they liked immediately," he laughs.

The album will be released on vinyl with a cover art illustration by Annie Forrester. "I just gave all the bands their test pressings last night," he says excitedly. "It feels much more real when you have it in your hands than when it's on digital. I play records at home all the time, and it felt so tangible to have it sound just the same as anyone else's album."

Caoilian has played around

Ireland with just an acoustic guitar and sometimes a drum machine, but for the upcoming tour he will be joined with Paul Leonard on drums, Ruairi Dale on bass, Peter O'Sullivan on keyboard, and Leah Hearne on backing vocals, flute and percussion. It will be their first full live band show since the last EP launch. He explains that before the pandemic they were really hitting a stride as a band and that everyone was really excited about where they were about to go. "The very last gig we had before lockdown was in the Green Room of the Cork Opera House for the Right Here Right Now festival. We had some festivals lined up and it all fell apart. We're getting back to that place right now, so I'm looking forward to our first show."

With eight dates booked for the tour, starting in the lovely Prim's Bookshop in Kinsale and ending at the Green Room in Cork, Sherlock admits he loves to perform live and that there's something quite special about meeting people first hand. "These days you're not just up against the band that's playing down the road, you're also up against Netflix and PlayStation and TikTok, and I'm personally on a one-man mission to get everybody out of their houses. And you might come and see me, but really I just wanted you to come and hang out'.

Caoilian Sherlock, with support from Andy Wilson, plays DeBarra's Folk Club on June 25.

June West Cork Gig Listings

Compiled by Lauren Guillery

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 1 June | John Spillane DeBarra's Folk Club |
| 2 June | Leanne Tennant Levi's Corner House |
| | Tau & the Drones of Praise Connolly's of Leap |
| 3 June | Viper Central Levi's Corner House |
| 4 June | I Draw Slow Levi's Corner House |
| 5 June | Melody Walker & Jacob Groopman Levi's Corner |
| 7 June | Aoife O Donovan DeBarra's Folk Club |
| 8 June | Tribute to Nanci Griffith & John Prine DeBarra's Folk |
| 11 June | Jess Kerber & Will Orchard Connolly's of Leap |
| 15-18 June | Jim Dowling Uilleann Pipe & Trad Festival Glengarriff |
| 16 June | Yann Tiersen Connolly's of Leap |
| 17 June | Clare Sands Levi's Corner House |
| | Luka Bloom Eccles Hotel |
| | The 4 of Us Connolly's of Leap |
| 18 June | Idiot Songs – 10 yr anniversary DeBarra's Folk Club |
| 23 June | Dogtail Soup DeBarra's Folk Club |
| 23 June - 2 July | Chamber Music Festival Bantry |
| 25 June | Caoilian Sherlock DeBarra's Folk Club |
| 29 June | Fanny Lumsden Levi's Corner House |
| 30 June | Fanny Lumsden DeBarra's Folk Club |

Clonakilty Folk Group charity fundraiser raises over €10,000

Clonakilty Folk Group is delighted to announce that its recent concert in Inchydoney Lodge and Spa, in memory of Jean Lyons, raised a staggering €10,031.

The group is grateful for all the support it received from

everyone who attended, and all those who offered support and various services to help achieve such a phenomenal sum.

The group would also like to extend huge thanks and appreciation to the many talented local musicians and singers who

added such variety and interest to the concert; The Whelton family, the Deiseach/Ni Mhuiri family, Sean Ruddy, Margaret Deegan, Caoimhe Peppard, Ailbhe Byerley, Luisne Deiseach, Aine Deiseach and Aoife White. Huge appreciation and thanks

also to Sigrid Rose, musical director for the concert.

The money raised through the concert is being donated to Cork Arc Cancer Support House and Irish Community Air Ambulance (now known as CRITICAL).

Great line-up for international Fastnet Maritime and Folk Festival in Ballydehob

The tenth international Fastnet Maritime and Folk Festival takes place in Ballydehob from June 16-18, 2023.

A merger of 'Sliabh Luachra' instrumental music and Irish and UK maritime songs and traditions, the festival concert at Ballydehob Levis Corner House on Saturday, June 18 features Martyn Wyndham Read, SteveTurne, Matt Cranitch and Jackie Daly, Gemma Khawaja, Pat Fleming, Maria Cotter, Jim Mageean and Pat Sheridan.

Martyn Wyndham Read (*pictured*) is an English folk singer, who was a collector and singer of Australian folk music. He lived and worked in Australia from 1958 to 1967 and was subsequently a regular visitor to



the country.

Jackie Daly and Matt Cranitch are acknowledged masters of the rich musical tradition of Sliabh Luachra in the southwest of Ireland. The words 'Button Accordion' and 'Jackie Daly' are synonymous in the world of Irish traditional music. He was described in the New York Times as "probably the best accordionist in Ireland". Matt Cranitch is renowned as a

fiddle-player and teacher, both at home in Ireland and abroad. He is an authority on the music of Sliabh Luachra and received a PhD from the University of Limerick for his study on the fiddle-playing tradition of this region.

Gemma Khawaja is a singer/guitarist from the Midlands UK (now based in Norfolk) performing traditional songs of the British Isles and creating songs

inspired by folkloric customs, folk poesy and poetry.

Jim Mageean is an English folk singer based in Cullercoats, Tyne and Wear, England, specialising in Sea Shanties, traditional maritime music and 'Geordie' songs from his native North East of England. He will be singing with Irish Shantyman Pat Sheridan, an expert on Irish Sea Songs

Pat Fleming will be performing with Maria Cotter, and friends. They have a CD of local Sliabh Luachra music available. The CD is a mixture of old and newly-composed tunes from the heart of this rich tradition.

Admission €10. Most other events, except the workshops are free during the festival.

For full programme and tickets go to fastnetmaritime.com

FASTNET MARITIME FOLK FESTIVAL 2023

Ballydehob

Fri June 16 – Mon June 19

An international festival featuring shanty singing, traditional music & more...

Matt Cranitch & Jackie Daly

Concert Sat June 18 @ 7pm

Tickets from Ballydehob Post Office

and at www.fastnetmaritime.com

Free Song & Session Trail

with over 20 performances

throughout the village

Extraordinary musicians & eclectic events

Tickets available online at fastnetmaritime.com



South of Ireland Band Championships

The South of Ireland Band Championships will be held on July 1 in Clonakilty. Chairman Ger O'Driscoll and his committee are really looking forward to the 42nd event with all previous bands expected to return to compete this year.

Sponsorship letters have already been issued with committee hopeful for as generous a response as in previous years. This weekend of music, competition, performance, and camaraderie could not take place without the generosity of venues, time, money, and other facilities made available by the

people and businesses of Clonakilty and numerous patrons.

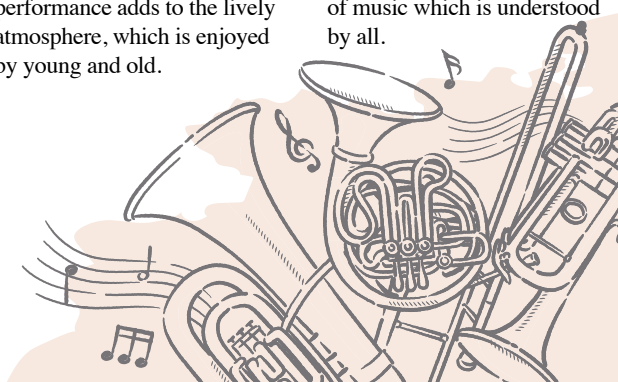
The committee would like to give a special thank you to Cork County Council's Arts Department, the Municipal District of Cork County Council, Cork County Council's Local Festival Fund, Clonakilty Chamber of Commerce and its many local sponsors for their continuous support to the festival.

Junior and Senior Competitions will be held in the Clonakilty Community Hall and the Intermediate Competition will take place in the adjacent Clonakilty Community College.

The Old Time Fair also takes

place on the same Saturday as the competition. After competing, a number of bands take to the streets to perform to the crowds already gathered for the Fair. The diversity of each performance adds to the lively atmosphere, which is enjoyed by young and old.

So, make a note in your diary, come to Clonakilty on July 1 to see the Band community showcase their abilities, and communicate with each other in the international language of music which is understood by all.



Unleash your creative spirit for Cruinniú na nÓg

Cork County Council's Cruinniú na nÓg, a day of free creativity for young people, takes place this year on June 10. A programme of events around West Cork being young people and families together to enjoy a wide range of activities from workshops and tutorials to recitals and readings in every town and village across the country.

Below are some highlights from the programme in West Cork. All events are free:

Dunmanway Library. Age Range: 9-12 years. Time: 10:30-12:30pm. Fabric painting

workshop with artist Gwen McGuirk.

Glengarriff Theatre. Age Range: 10-18 years. Time: 11am-3pm.

Uillinn West Cork Arts Centre. Age Range: 13-18 years. Time: 10:30am-1pm. Introduction to Youth Theatre.

Clonakilty Library. Age Range: 9-12 years. Time: 10-12pm. Using a selfie taken on the day, participants will print, assemble then deconstruct their image.

Schull Library. Age Range: 9-12 years. Time: 11-1pm. Create fantastical characters and

imagine other ways of living in the world.

Sherkin Beach/Sherkin Library. Age Range: All Ages. Time: 11am-2pm. A fun sandcastle making workshop using found object such as driftwood, shells and seaweed.

Castlefreake Woods. Age Range: All Ages. Time: 11am-2pm. Forest bathing, drawing, live music & more.

Bandon Library. Age Range: 9-12 years 11.00-11.45am; 13-18 years 12.00-1.00pm. Theatre workshop.



Dress-up in costumes from any period to be in with a chance of winning fantastic prizes!

July 1 is also

the 42nd South of Ireland Band Championships

Saturday

July 1 from 12pm

Lots of family fun and entertainment with pedestrianised streets all day.

30 bands coming to town!

A day of free musical entertainment both indoors and outdoors.



Vintage Cars & Machinery
Live Music
Farm Animals
Crossroad Irish Dancing
Tea Party at Emmet Sq
Art & Craft Demos
Parade
Steam Engines
Country Market



people Arts & Entertainment

Clonakilty Brass Band's annual fundraising concert a resounding success



After a three-year break, on April 23, Clonakilty Brass Band Held their annual concert at Dunmore House Hotel. With a large Senior Band comprising of 45 musicians, a Beginner band of eight and a Junior Band of 13, there was magnificent music to be heard in the packed venue, including a very special piece written by trombonist Jack Mahony. Guest Artist for the night was Courtmacsherry man Paul Finn, a beautiful tenor who was accompanied by pianist Denis O'Regan.

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MOVIES THIS MONTH

A passion for poetry

Catherine Ronan, the next guest at DeBarra's Spoken Word, is passionate about poetry, as anyone who has met her in poetry circles, workshops, classes, at festivals and readings knows shares **Moze Jacobs**. A regular attendee at Ó Bhéal (Cork) in person and virtually at Lime Square Poets, Blue Mondays, and Cultivating Voices, she is proof of a flourishing poetic ecosystem in Ireland and far beyond its borders.

"That's the one good thing to come out of Covid," says Catherine. "The local became global and the global became local. I made so many new friends. My poetry reached so many different corners of the world. Malaysia, all parts of America, Germany, Switzerland, you name it. There were poets from everywhere." Poets present their pieces usually

to a virtual live audience or via Facebook and YouTube. Because of this global virtual reach, Catherine's work has ended up on the opposite side of the Atlantic Ocean and will shortly be published in the Long Island Sounds Anthology in New York. Catherine Ronan's talent and appetite for poetry is innate and manifested early in life. "I started when I was nine. Last year, I did a poetry workshop with Paul Muldoon in Bantry. He asked if I could remember the first poem I ever wrote. Oh I can, I said. This new shopping centre had opened up and I bought a spiral notebook. One day I was so mad with my mother that I opened it and wrote:

'My jeans are dirty / I have no others / I would wear some clean ones / If they were washed by my mother'

That's a long time ago. She's never read it!"

An interesting question about poetry and other art is, does it appear out of nowhere ('chan-nelled' you could say)? Or, is it the result of a lengthy process of careful crafting and hard graft? Both, it would seem according to

Catherine. "Sometimes you are a conduit. Then I can hear the words coming in, usually into my right ear. Almost as if carried by the wind. You just write down whatever you hear and you can work on it afterwards. Other times, I do a lot of research. I won the Winter Solstice Poetry Competition after looking into the different rituals all over the world associated with that particular day."

Many of her poems are brilliant. One of them, 'Black Eagle', took three years to complete. "During a class we were asked to explore our inner animal. I'm fascinated by the idea that humans and animals might share the same spirit." It will appear in Long Island Sounds.

It is not unusual for a poem to take such a long time to 'ripen'. A bit like good wine, or whiskey! Many poets/authors who get published and win prizes, eventually make a name for themselves precisely as they spend aeons of time perfecting their words. Some of Catherine's team mates at DeBarra's Spoken Word, where she is one of the or-



ganisers, prove this point. Nick Smith (Rosscarbery) twice won the From the Well Short Story Competition. Lauren O'Donovan (Carrigaline) won the Cúirt New Writing Prize in 2023 and was shortlisted for Listowel Writers Week Collection Award 2023. Which, this year, is won by Paul McMahon (Clonakilty), another team mate. Way to go!

Catherine Ronan reads at DeBarra's Spoken Word on Tuesday, June 6, 8:30pm. The event starts with a five-word challenge, includes a Q&A, and ends with The Open Mic. DeBarra's Folk Club, Pearse Street, Clonakilty.

'Echoes of Isolation' art exhibition on Spike Island

Running from June 2 to August 31 on Spike Island, 'Echoes of Isolation' is a solo art exhibition by Sinéad Barrett which draws attention to the historical con-

text of isolation on Spike Island, while also inviting reflection on the broader implications of isolation in contemporary society. The impact of isolation and displacement has become all

too relevant, particularly in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic and the ways in which it disrupted our lives and our sense of connection to others.

During the 1800s, Spike Island was used as a convict depot and prison. Many of the prisoners were subjected to solitary confinement and it is estimated that almost 1,200 convicts died on the island. This exhibition shines a light on these forgotten voices, exploring the emotional

and psychological impact of isolation. Speaking ahead of the launch of the exhibition, Sinéad said: "For the last six months, I have been doing a residency on Spike Island which has been hugely rewarding as well as educational and informative. I have loved spending time on the island wandering through the buildings and the different histories of the Fort and the island. For my residency, I concentrated on the 36 years from



1847-1883 when Spike Island was a convict depot and prison. This residency will culminate in a solo exhibition 'Echoes of Isolation'.

Exhibition opens Thursday 1 June 5-7pm. Ferry departs Cobh at 5. Ferry tickets for the opening are free but booking is required on eventbrite.

people Arts & Entertainment

Cork musician announced for Glastonbury

Following an electric appearance alongside musical soul brothers Hothouse Flowers last year, Clare Sands returns to Glastonbury this summer for a headline show, opening the Acoustic Stage on Saturday, June 24.

Sands, who is currently on tour as special guest to Hothouse Flowers across the UK, is set to return to sunny Somerset this summer to open the legendary stage – alongside Mary Wallopers, Sharon Shannon Trio, Saw Doctors, Glen Hansard and more. Other upcoming festival appearances include the Stendhal Festival, Cambridge Folk Fest, Belfast Trad Fest and closer to home – Cork Summer Show and Tracton Arts Festival.

The Whitechurch native released her self-titled album in September 2022 to critical acclaim, earning her a Best Folk Singer nomination at the RTE Folk Awards and voted The Irish Times 'Top 5 Folk Albums of 2022.'



Her latest project, Gormacha, is a 4 track EP of carefully crafted macaronic songs in Irish and English to be released throughout this year. The next release, Dealán Dé featuring Brian Finnegan (Flook) will be released on June 14.

Ukrainian soprano joins West Cork Choral Singers in concert on Sherkin

In September last year the West Cork Choral Singers were very fortunate in having a wonderful Ukrainian singer, Lyubov Parkhomenko, join the choir; her strong and beautiful voice, and her musical knowledge enriched the Singer's repertoire, vocabulary and technique. Before fleeing Ukraine, Lyubov worked as a teacher in the vocal and choral department of Mykola Gogol Nizhyn State University.

On Sunday, June 18 at 7pm, the choir will perform on Sherkin Island in St. Mona's Church where you can hear Lyubov for yourself. Tickets are €10 from Courtyard Crafts, Schull and Thornhill, Skibbereen. Islander tickets available at The Jolly Roger.

The Singer's are also asking for reader's help as they renew their search for accommodation in or near Cork City for Lyubov, her husband Oleksandr and their three children (aged 13, 11 and 8), who all arrived in Ireland in May 2022. Oleksandr works in the city, whilst Lyubov attends English language courses and wants to do an internship at Cork School of Music and to be able to do teaching and solo practice.

If you want more information, can help, or if you know of anyone who might be able to help, please call or text Jacqueline Weij, PRO West Cork Choral Singers on 086 226 4797 or email myrossmusic@outlook.com

Beatles gig to give some 'Help!' to Glengarriff Hall

If you want to know what 'The Swinging Sixties' were all about, then look no further than the music of The Beatles. The iconic Liverpool band wrote the soundtrack for that decade and their many songs and albums still stand up, all these years on.

All of those great sounds will be reproduced faithfully in Glengarriff village on June 30 by The Beatlebums, Cork's own 'Fab Four', who are rapidly making a name for themselves with their reproductions of those timeless classics. The band has consistently played to rapturous applause in sold-out venues.

The Beatlebums play all

of the classics, from 'Please Please Me' right through to 'Get Back', as well as some rarely heard album tracks and B sides. They also include an intimate acoustic set to showcase some beautifully melodic softer tunes. Check out the clips and reviews on Facebook.

This gig is a badly needed fundraiser for Glengarriff Community Hall and it is hoped that a successful night in the venue will lead on to other musical events. Tickets are €15 and are limited by the size of the venue, available to purchase now on www.eventbrite.ie. Search for 'Beatlebums'.

Countdown to Bantry Kupala Festival

It's four weeks and counting to Saturday, June 24, when an eclectic mix of multicultural entertainments hits the streets of Bantry for the Bantry Kupala Festival 2023. The programme features a unique range of artists from across the globe, who are based in Ireland. Performing for the first time in Bantry will be Bolivian Group Alma Boliviana and The White Horse Vikings, a reenactment group. Other performers include the Amdie Mexican Dance Group, Aatma Indian Dance Troupe, Chinese Community from Confucius Institute from UCC, Ukrainian dancers, Polish and traditional Irish musicians. There will be garlands, workshops, games and activities for all ages. The Festival will take place on Saturday, June 24, between 12pm and 5pm on Wolfe Tone Square.



New album tour from Pearse McLoughlin to stop in Clonakilty

Combining modern folk stylings with an indie rock heart that weaves between the tender and the uplifting, Pearse McLoughlin has been honing his singular songwriting craft since before his debut record 'Busy Whisper' appeared in 2009. Often dealing with literary themes his writing speaks to the personal and the nostalgic, sometimes recalling actual events, at other times reaching out into the fantastical and the "artistically hifalutin".

Pearse's latest work and his sixth studio album 'Keg' is an upbeat delve into the rag and bone shop of the psyche, channeling Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Neutral Milk Hotel, Joe Meek and the lo-fi glint of a nineteen sixties documentary film. It is a melting pot of personal nostalgia, drum machines, spectral tape hiss, grief, glossolalia, media overwhelm, quiet country roads and giddy highs.

Pearse has provided soundtracks and music for film

('Shine' and 'Around Here'), myriad art projects (his music has featured in the Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo (collaborating with his brothers, directors, Kevin and Páraic) and in commercial advertising. The music has been described as captivating, elegant and nuanced and has appeared in The Irish Times, on the BBC and RTE as well as at festivals such as Electric Picnic and on Irish television TG4.

Keg was recorded to tape by

producer Julie McLarnon (Jefrey Lewis, The Vaseline) at Analogue Catalogue in Newry, Northern Ireland. "We recorded Keg over a series of studio sessions in 2022. The process (of recording direct to tape) is more exacting than working digitally as you only get a few tries at it. You have to literally rewind the tape (and in so doing, write over your previous takes) to do another shot. So in

a way, this album is actually a multi-layered collection, the final recordings most prominent among the ghosts of previous takes running through it."

It is often said that the best way out, is through.

McLoughlin plays De Barras in Clonakilty on June 18, celebrating the 10 year anniversary of 'Idiot Songs' with Justin Grounds.

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The Domestic Gallery: living with works of art



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.

Every morning my partner and I wake up to a row of three small etchings and two small paintings. I never tire of contemplating them; they are visual mysteries which

always seem to hover on the brink of some revelation. Created by the tangible trace of an artist's hand, the promises they offer are, conversely, intangible. In contemplating them, I find myself wondering who 'that person' is, where that other 'figure' is going?

I absolutely love one beautifully coloured aquatint, titled 'The face of history'. It is of a small supine figure, quite medievalesque, with tiny yellow hands and a bulbous nose. The etching plate was, judging by the impression, cut to the shape of the figure, which itself is quite unusual, and the delicate colours probably required multiple plates or impressions, again going beyond the norm.

I enjoy it for all of these reasons, but also for the hidden history of the printmaker who made it; it came from an artist's print studio somewhere in St Petersburg, where I bought it in 2013, before Putin's new iron curtain blocked Russia's 'window to the West' once more.

I wonder about the artist and his studio, about the imagination that conceived this small,

enchancing figure. I wonder about the story behind it, which feels always tantalisingly out of reach. It is not only a reminder of a journey, it is a journey in itself, and through it I never stop travelling.

My partner and I have a small art collection of mostly small work, as befits the walls of an old cottage, and every now and then the collection grows. Just this month we acquired a beautiful wood engraving, titled 'Buddleia' by the very talented Niki Tait, whose work has been on show in Gallery Asna (Clonakilty Arts Centre) over the last month. It did not cost the earth, and yet it brings the earth into our home, joining another of Niki's works on our walls.

If you are thinking of starting an art collection, now is a great time to do so, with a plethora of great exhibitions on and opening around the county. It need not break the bank, and all you need is a single piece to start enriching your visual space. Below are a few places you might start.

The Blue House Gallery in Schull has a packed programme through the summer with three concurrent exhibitions at any one time. On view, at the time of print, are the ever-enchancing paintings and ceramics of Etain Hickey, impressionistic landscape paintings by Damaris Lysht and Janet Murran, and a group show of printmakers, curated by Shane O'Driscoll, which includes the magical illustrative etchings of Brid Moynahan.

In Working Artist Studios, Ballydehob, there is an exhibition titled 'Nature Soft and Evil Materials' by German artists Carolyn Liebl and Nikolas Schmid-Pfähler. The work is of



'The face of history'. Aquatint and etching by Yuri Shtapakov (b. 1958)

kinetic, robotic sculpture, incorporating recycled plastic and electronics. Made for plinths and ceiling suspension, this work is for the more adventurous collector.

The newest gallery on the West Cork scene, Cnoc Buí, in Union Hall, is hosting some exciting group exhibitions through the summer, including an August edition of 'West Cork Creates,' which was a hit over Easter.

Group exhibitions are a great chance to find that special jewel that hits the eye and the heart, and 'West Cork Creates' along with Uillinn's annual members exhibition in Skibereen (June/July) are bound to be good ones to scout.

In Clonakilty, Gallery Asna also has a packed summer programme with a group show by Cork Potters, titled 'Re Imagine' opening on June 3, and solo shows by photographer

Stephen Hayes and painter Mike McSwiney coming up in July and August. Also in Clonakilty, The Loft Gallery and Frames carries a constant selection of local artists' work, which can be framed on site. There are gems, small and large, to be found in Clon.

If you're a business owner it is helpful to know that purchasing a work of art can come under 'capital expenditure' if it is viewable by clientele, and thus entitles the trader to the annual wear and tear allowance of 12.5pc (Wear & Tear - Legislation S284 TCA 1997).

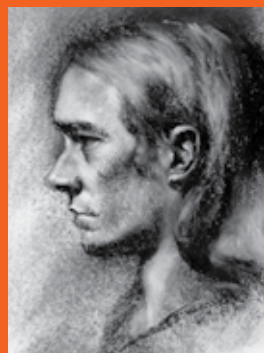
All art collections start with one work and gradually grow. Being a painter of frugal means for many years, it was something I never allowed myself until that trip to St Petersburg in 2013. For me, a small etching, grandly or ironically titled 'The Face of History' started a desire to collect other artists' work and

to enrich my everyday domestic space with spiritual traces of the many rather than the few.

Collecting art is a journey of riches for which you do not need to be a millionaire. It began, for ordinary folk, with the rise of the middle class in the Renaissance. The Medicis may have had the lions' share of Titians and Raphaels, but with the advent of open art fairs and markets, merchants, and even peasants could purchase cheaper versions of the 'Adoration of the Magi.'

Of course, back then there was no electronic media. Imagine, for a moment, that silent, screen-free, player-free dwelling. An artwork on the wall and a dulcimer in the hall lifted life to another level. It was slower, and ever-present and it can be so for you as well.

CLONAKILTY SCHOOL OF PAINTING WORKSHOPS



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2 day intensive course, 10-1pm & 2-5pm, Saturday – Sunday. €220

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4 day intensive course, 10-1pm & 2-5pm, Tuesday – Friday. 24 hours of instruction. 2 canvases included, video recording of demonstrations to take home €440.

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Community Art Exhibition on Sherkin

Sherkin Island will hold its annual Community Art Exhibition in the Community Hall on Sherkin Island from June 22 - July 3, 2023 from 12 noon until 5pm.

The exhibition will showcase the community's diverse creative talent and will include paintings, photography, sculpture, textiles and ceramics.

As this year's theme is 'Saol', meaning life in Irish, everyone on the island has also been invited to submit a photograph of what life on Sherkin means to them.

The exhibition is being curated by island artist, Mona



O' Driscoll.

Known as 'Island of the Arts', Sherkin Island has at-

tracted a population of creative individuals including professional and non-professional

artists, musicians, writers and photographers.

Aisling Moran, community development coordinator with Sherkin Island Development Society (SIDS) said: "This is a celebration of life and creativity here on this vibrant island. As always, we are grateful to Cork County Council and SIDS for their support in helping this to happen. We see it as a great opportunity to showcase the great creative work that is being done here and to welcome people to the island."

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

Cork Potters Society exhibit in Gallery Asna

Gallery Asna, Clonakilty Arts Centre is delighted to announce its June exhibition, 'Re-Imagine', the annual Member's Exhibition from Cork Potters Society. It opens on June 3, with a reception from 5.30 to 7pm. to which all are invited.

This year 14 Society members are exhibiting re-imagined work from their studios, which are dotted throughout the Cork county. As society members continue to re-group, recalibrate and, for some, re-imagine their futures, this exhibition reflects the artist's interpretation of our collective experience of today's cultural environment, through the beautifully expressive material of clay.

The potters are joined by a new member, Oksana Muzychenko, who transported her life



and her ceramic practice from Ukraine to Ireland in 2022 and now works from her studio in Inchigeelagh.

Participating artists: Martha Cashman, Sinead Fagan, Cillian Gibbons, Susan Herlihy, Etain Hickey, Jim Kelleher, Patri-

cia McCoy, Oksana Muzychenko, Kate Standen, Aisling Roche, Brendan Ryan, Catherine Ryan, Bernadette Tuite and Jim Turner.

The show runs until July 1. Gallery Asna is open 11am to 5pm Tuesday to Saturday.

Blue House Gallery in June

Summer is well and truly here and there is no better place to enjoy it than Schull village. Whilst there, it is essential to visit Blue House Gallery, a leading contemporary art gallery with the remit of promoting the best work being done in West Cork in painting, sculpture, printmaking and ceramics.

In the month of June the gallery continues with its 'Two Painters' (Janet Murran and

Damaris Lysaght) exhibition, which is situated downstairs, alongside Etain Hickey's 'Nature' exhibition, featuring ceramics and watercolours, and the 'First Impressions' printmaking exhibition upstairs. This continues until Wednesday, June 7.

Opening downstairs on Friday, June 9 is the Ceramics Group Show, which will include work from Ayelet Lalor, Antonio Lopez, Andrew Ludick

and Cormac Boydell and is guaranteed to be a vibrant show. Upstairs will be Emmet Brickley's solo exhibition 'Between the nights'; Emmet's paintings merge figures and environments together conveying metaphors for identity, solitude and place. Finally in the Boiler Room will be the very beautiful miniature figurative work of Mary E. Carter.



Damaris Lysaght



Mary E Carter

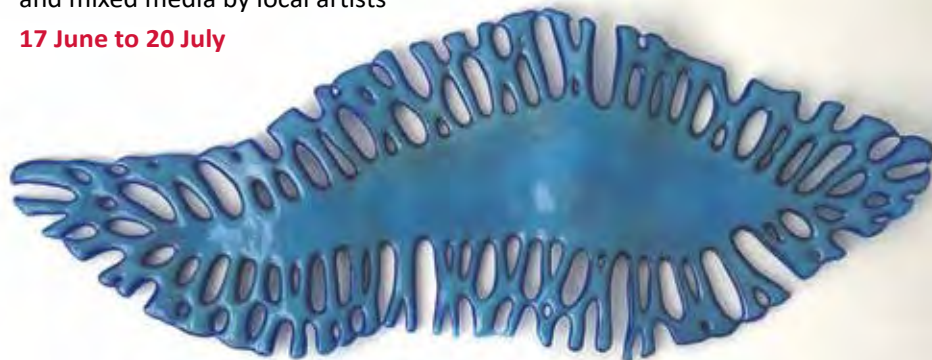


Emmet Brickley

Uillinn: West Cork Arts Centre's Members and Friends Exhibition

purchase paintings, sculpture, drawings, prints, photographs and mixed media by local artists

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Image: Trish Goodbody, Uisce, kiln-formed glass.

CLONAKILTY SCHOOL OF ART PAINTING CAMPS!

JUNIOR ART CAMP: 10 – 13 JULY

Faeries and Gargoyles! 3-6 pm (ages 9-13)

Drawing inspiration from fairy tales, book illustration, manga and medieval gargoyles, students will embark on a week of drawing, printmaking, painting and book binding. All materials provided. €120

TEEN ART CAMP: 3 – 6 JULY

Paint, Print, Draw! 3-6 pm (ages 13-18)

Students will have the option of two streams: drawing & painting or drawing and printmaking. Printmakers will make a concertina book with the prints they create. Painters will be given an introduction to oil and acrylic painting, looking at a variety of subjects. They will have the option of making a sketchbook. All materials provided. €120

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Cork hosts Ireland's largest art and sculpture event

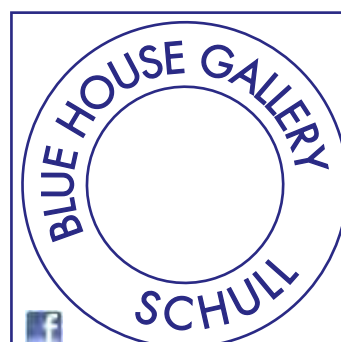
Ireland's biggest art and sculpture event, featuring works by Salvador Dali, Andy Warhol, Damien Hirst and Francis Bacon, is currently on at the Castlemartyr Resort.

International art and sculpture fair 'Art and Soul', hosted by Gormleys at the five-star resort until June 18, showcases €7million worth of works by some of the biggest names in international and Irish art.

The free event features a major outdoor sculpture exhibition of 80 large sculptures and installations set throughout the 220-acre grounds of the 17th-century manor estate.

All of the artworks are for sale, with prices ranging from €1,000 up to €450,000.

This is the eighth major art and sculpture event Gormleys has organised, but the first time they have brought it south of Dublin.



Set in the midst of Schull Village on Main Street. The Blue House Gallery showing local, national & international art is open Everyday between 11am and 5 pm from Easter to October



www.bluehousegalleryschull.com



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

June Sun Signs

June brings us the Summer Solstice and the turn of the Astrological year. With the Full Moon on June 4 in fire sign Sagittarius, it looks like the heat of Summer is not over just yet. This month puts a focus on social connections and sorting out practical issues from the past. There is a sense of busyness and even a hint of things reaching fever pitch. Communication and news travel at high speed.

The first week of June brings new energy as Venus moves into Fire sign Leo on June 5 just after the Sagittarius Full Moon on the 4th. This could bring out the dramatic in people as Leo loves to put on a show and wants to be part of something significant.

Venus the planet of love, enjoyment and harmonious connection is getting very creative in this sign. So this is a good time to get any relationship issue or complication smoothed out. It is also a great time to put energy into developing your creative projects and for self-pro-

motion. We have the once-in 18-month retrograde phase of Venus starting in July so Venus will be in this sign until early October. She passes over the 'shadow' degree around the 18th and until then it is helpful to use this retrograde phase to sift through relationship difficulties or review any social connections in your life to evaluate what needs attention now.

The sphere of relationships is even more highlighted during this time by the presence of Mars in Leo until early July. These two 'love' planets in Leo can bring a sense of the theatrical to the area of your chart where Leo is prominent. This is a great combination for creating your desired public image. On the world stage, we may see the drama of social media ignite. We also may get to see where we have been distracted by the show and have-not fully taken notice of the underlying reality. Many things may turn out to be nothing but a staged production to create the

desired effect.

Mercury the fast-moving communication planet slips into its own sign Gemini, on June 11. This allows Mercury to speed everything up to the highest pace when it comes to taking, writing, and transfer of information. At the same time Pluto, the planet of depth and detoxification, moves back into Capricorn. These two make a strong and positive connection between them just ahead of this adding to the theme. Expect to see deeper topics and even scandalous topics that have been bubbling away in the background come to light now. There may be threads that are brought out into the news dating back to when Pluto moved into Capricorn in 2008. This is a time of clearing out the old patterns, corruption and self-interest that relate to financial institutions and established order of government or civic authorities.

The New Moon in Gemini on the 18th keeps the Mercury themes

very active and we may look back to see how this month began a new phase. Saturn starts its retrograde phase in Pisces on the 17th. This puts a practical slant on dealing with the difficulties that have been highlighted so far this month. Pisces adds a compassionate and also more collective or metaphysical overview to any solutions that we propose now. On June 19, Jupiter exactly connects with Saturn for the first time since the 'Great Conjunction' of December 2020 that brought a whole shift in the way we viewed the world and how we behaved in society. This current connection is a supportive one that can bring about some of the more positive attributes of this important pairing. There are shifts occurring that we may not see play out in their entirety for many years.

The following weeks of June have an intensity that may bring some destabilisation or unexpected actions. Mars the passionate action planet makes a challenging angle

with Uranus the planet of discontinuity on June 26. There could be a volatile quality to this and we may see tempers erupt or a swift shift in direction by some. The Mars focus coming from Leo can really get our attention. We may make changes around the way we deal with our personal resources and finances. Any tension that builds up during this time will be short-lived, as Mercury swiftly moves into Cancer and this is a very gentle and considerate or empathic way to connect or conduct business compared to the recent high energy of Mercury in Gemini.

It is a month of big shifts and it is not only the turning of the Sun in its annual path that we see over the Solstice period but also, potentially a shift in the tide or direction for our collective future.

June has a Full Moon in 14 degrees Sagittarius on June 4 at 4.41 am and a New Moon in 27 degrees Gemini on June 18 at 5.37 am.



Aries: The coming Full Moon is the culmination of energies from the past two weeks so now you can push on toward whatever goals you have in mind. Whilst you have the right mood compelling you, it's a good time to adopt a new approach. You want to improve your position and are willing to take advice or seek extra knowledge. There may be additional details, communications or travelling to attend to but keep your focus on the bigger picture. Backed up by so much strong energy you are likely to feel an incredible drive to accomplish and achieve in life.



Taurus: You find yourself thinking about your needs concerning the others in your life and how much time you have to offer them. Consider how much your physical needs and personal resources are already tied up. You'll need a balance so no one feels overly indebted.

This Full Moon you'll have the courage to do some serious mental or physical housecleaning. Throw out any useless things you've been hoarding and make some space in your life. The burst of freedom will do you good and make it easier to keep things in perspective.



Gemini: With the Sun in your sign and this Month's Full Moon focus on your house of relationships it's no surprise that you want to take a fresh look at your close associations. You're inclined to let go of anything you believe to be holding you back or simply uninspiring.

Find a balance between individual or personal concerns and any desire you have to be of help or service. Doubts fade into the background as a new sense of self, a more assertive personal style and a more dynamic approach to life will emerge now. Your relationships need to reflect this energy so everyone gets a good deal.



Cancer: This month is a time of change. You have been considering your foundations, responsibilities and basic security needs. Your practical sense is enhanced and you can make difficult decisions affecting your material welfare. What you willingly sacrifice now will

be more than repaid with an increased ability to make your dreams a reality later. The Full Moon will intensify any effort on your part to improve your health, diet, and physical condition. Being of service to others or taking on extra responsibilities this month will prove to have been an investment in your future in the long term.



Leo: You want to make your dreams a reality and any attempt to put into practice your hopes and ambitions will pay dividends this month. Your tendency to compromise and settle for less than you are capable of can be a problem. Tension results when you ignore your

desires for achievement or acknowledgement. This Full Moon brings you a very creative phase so allow yourself time to be playful with any new ideas and inspiration you experience. You may then find that you're actually on course, full steam ahead, for getting to where you want to be.



Virgo: Your feelings and sense of security may find you seeking seclusion for a time or losing yourself in memories. Events make it difficult to make good decisions concerning your life direction. However, it's a good time to make some changes so you can reach new levels. The Full Moon shines on your home and private life, which could be very rewarding now. Circumstances may urge you to make a greater effort. But don't overdo things or try to go too far too fast. Despite appearances things are working with, rather than against, you so don't get overwhelmed. Let things take their natural course.



Libra: The next two weeks are the perfect time to act on any impulses to better yourself. Take up a study course, make a journey, or just mix with people who are culturally different to you. A career opportunity or the chance to impress someone of importance is likely during this

Full Moon phase. Giving extra attention to details and keeping up with everyday business could be time-consuming but the small things also contribute to the longer-term plan. Feeling good about yourself and what you are doing with your time ensures an improved sense of well-being.



Scorpio: This month is a time for getting down to business. Start by stripping away and discarding non-essential items, memories and old habits. It's a good time to put the past behind you as you're likely to be less sentimental during the next weeks. Keep moving onwards, concentrating on the important things. Use your imagination and follow your intuition as you focus on your goals and ambitions around the Full Moon. The drive to improve your finances and material security is strong now and you could find some welcome inspiration for a new direction or possibility you hadn't previously considered.



Sagittarius: You want to assert yourself and take the lead now. You may not always get full support from others as you tend to create resistance in those around you. Some may even find you unusually overbearing, as your enthusiasm runs counter to whatever is wanted by them.

Your basic energy and vital principles are strong around the Full Moon so you will soon manage to charm even the most obstinate. Your desire to get out and about to express yourself could find you enjoying an extra busy social scene later this month.

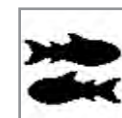


Capricorn: You're sorting through the experiences of the last several months, separating the precious from the worthless, salvaging what you can. These next two weeks are a time of self-examination. You want to get things right and contribute something worthwhile. You

are happy to take on new opportunities now. Make time to talk things through and you may find sincere understanding coming from friends or co-workers. The needed support will be offered if they see your true intention is to be helpful and give something of yourself. Taking care of your needs both spiritually and physically is a balancing act you can achieve now.



Aquarius: Your attention will be on improving and making the best of the current situation in the next week. Try to bring an unusual twist or insight to anything you have to accomplish now. During the Full Moon phase, you can reap rewards from past efforts. There is strong support and goodwill from those around you. Remember though that not everyone is ready to make the required changes at the same time as you. Your vision is probably further reaching than theirs and includes the broader issues. After the 15th you will see your creativity increase and have an enhanced sense of enjoyment.



Pisces: You've created a solid base to build on in recent weeks so now decide how you can make it work to your benefit. You know what your limits are and it's time to move forward. Now you can see what was holding you back. This next phase marks a welcome end to so much self-questioning and uncertain feelings. Emotional issues may not be your priority as you approach this Full Moon so if you encounter a cold shoulder, don't be surprised. Misunderstandings can be the result of having a different agenda but the later part of the month will see improved communications.

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Nissan X-Trail e-power charges as you drive



CAR REVIEWS

Sean Creedon

The Qashqai is Nissan's most popular car and its best seller. A few years back a Qashqai + 2 was tried, but it wasn't very successful. So if you want a seven-seater from Nissan the massive X-Trail is your only man or indeed your only woman!

Nissan has been producing this mid-size crossover since 2000. We got the second generation in 2007 and the third

version in 2013. In 2017 there was a face-lift for the X-Trail with restyled headlights and tail light which included restyled twin LED projector headlamps.

The X-Trail is one of Ireland's favourite family SUV's. Since the introduction of the X-Trail, more than seven million have been sold worldwide. The latest model introduces hybrid power to the X-Trail range for the first time.

Recently I got to drive this much talked about e-power version, a system that Nissan is gradually introducing to all of their models. I remember when Nissan first launched their X-Trail. It was advertised with an amber-coloured car which had three bicycles locked on to the roof and in the background some rugged looking terrain about to be tackled by the owners and their family.

I drove a win-coloured version and it certainly attracted a lot of favourable comments from people in shopping centre car parks.

We have seen sales of fully electric and hybrid cars grow this year, but what is e-power?

Well the main difference is that you won't be spending hours sitting at charge points around the country; the car charges itself as you drive.

Nissan's exclusive e-power system combines a petrol engine and an electric motor, but operates different to a standard hybrid system.

The e-power technology is different to your regular hybrid car as it uses a 1.5-litre turbo-charged petrol engine, a battery and an electric motor. It charges the 2.1kWh battery or directly supplies power to the 150kWh motor to drive the wheels.

But only the motor drives the wheels.

At no time does the engine directly drive the wheels as is the norm with regular hybrids. It has been described as similar to having an electricity generator on board.

Inside the car first thing you will notice is the display in the windscreen right in your line of vision telling you what your speed is and the speed limit on the road you are driving.

The leather seats were cream and looked great. My top of the



range version also had a sun roof and two cameras, front and rear. Now a rear camera is normal for reversing, but not many cars have front cameras. The controls on the dash are well laid out and the huge infotainment screen is easy to use. I also liked the central button for volume control.

In the back seat there is plenty of room for three adults, but the third row of two seats are really suitable only for children.

The e-power version of the X-Trail is certainly smoother and more refined to drive

than previous diesel versions. Difficult to say for certain that it's more frugal than a regular hybrid but I think there is potential to run the X-Trail more efficiently in urban areas.

The new Nissan X-Trail, badged as e-power starts at €45,995 for five seat version and from €54,995 for the seven-seater which also offers four-wheel drive. My top of the range test car with lots of goodies will cost you €61,995. Road tax is €270.



people Farming

A Farming Life: Áine O'Donovan, PRO Irish Shorthorn Society

Interview by Tommy Moyles

Earlier this year West Cork woman Áine O'Donovan was elected to the role of PRO with the Irish Shorthorn Society.

Tell us about yourself and your farm?

I work locally as a Deputy Manager in a Community Pre-school while also farming with my father Seán. We have a small herd of Pedigree Beef Shorthorns under the prefix Kildee. Although I spent the first half of my life living in Ballineen, I spent most of my time in Kildee near Ballygurteen on the family farm, which my father inherited from my late grandmother Annie. My father then gifted the farm to me in 2021 and my husband Adam and I hope to build here soon.

My brother and I were always encouraged by our parents to buy our own animals and have them on the farm. We would buy a commercial weanling each year and sell them as fattened bullocks when the time was right. This was a great lesson for us and gave

us a greater understanding and appreciation when it came to money and hard work.

Over the years we branched more into pedigree breeding, for years we bred mainly Pedigree Aberdeen Angus, however, Dad and I always had a love for Shorthorn cattle. We would often drive past the Late Donal Lehane's farm in Deshure just to admire his beautiful animals in the field. In May 2018 I was lucky enough to purchase one of Donal's animals, a beautiful yearling roan heifer called Deshure Primrose 20th. She is a wonderful cow and has been a great producer for us. We fell in love with the breed and made the decision to move away from Aberdeen Angus and grow our herd of Beef Shorthorns. Over time we acquired some more females and have since purchased a lovely bull called Creaga Tucker from Noel and Lisa Dowd of Creaga Shorthorns. He is two-years-old now and is often mistaken for a Charolais because of his shape and quality.

You have a new role with the breed society this year how

did that come about and what do you hope to achieve?

This year I was lucky enough to join the Irish Shorthorn Society council. At my first meeting I was elected as the new PRO of the Society. This was a great honour and something I am very passionate about. It is clear to see social media has become a major part of life over the last number of years and is an effective form of advertising. My new role involves running to social media accounts for the Society, this includes our Facebook page 'Irish Shorthorn' and our Instagram page @irishshorthorn society. I try and post quite often and update members on upcoming sales, shows, and society news. Many people will also send in photos of bull progeny and animals for sale. This is a quick and cost-effective way of advertising for many breeders while also showcasing what the breed has to offer.

Can you tell readers a little bit about the breed and its benefits?

There are many benefits of Shorthorn Cattle, for us at Kildee the main one is the

docility of the breed. We have tried to incorporate other breeds into the herd as a commercial element, but we have found it difficult to obtain animals as quiet as our Shorthorn cows. As I work off farm it is important to have animals that are easily managed for a person working alone. Shorthorn genetics are a bonus in any herd, from their fantastic maternal traits to their docility, and their wonderful colour. There has been a real craze for roan cattle in recent years and this is a beautiful colour in many Shorthorn herds around the country. I am hoping to see more Shorthorn semen used in both Dairy and Suckler herds in the near future, as AI companies have a wonderful selection of top-quality Shorthorn Bulls available and the popularity of the breed continues to grow. This year we ran a breeding initiative called 'Breed a Roan'. Shorthorns come in a range of colours, from pure red or pure white to a combination of red and white or a roan mix. This roan colour marking has proved very popular when crossed on other breeds in commercial cattle showing.



Aine O'Donovan with some of her pedigree shorthorn herd.

As part of the scheme the Irish Shorthorn Society offered a quantity of free AI straws to both beef and dairy farmers. The demand was extremely high and it was fully subscribed within 72 hours. Hopefully there should be several hundred more shorthorn cross calves on the ground next year because of it.

My goal is to set up a sale or club in West Cork for Short-

horn breeders and enthusiasts; farming can be a lonely job at times, and I believe it is important to have a community to reach out to. There are sales in Ennis, Elphin, Blessington and so on each year and they have inspired me to try and organise similar down this end of the country. Hopefully this dream becomes a reality.

people Farming

Preparing for a dry summer

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
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Milk price

The Irish Farmers Journal annual milk price review showed eight milk processors in the country had an average milk price of 58c/l excluding VAT in 2022. With five of those eight processing milk for west Cork dairy farmers, it meant a lot of extra income came into the region last year. The review is based on variable milk price, so milk sold under fixed price contracts where a proportion of the milk is locked into a price for a period of time is not included. Also excluded from the review are bonuses for milk quality and for trading with the co-ops. Factoring these bonuses meant the west Cork co-ops and Dairygold

paid out anything from 60.95c/l to 62.16c/l to their milk suppliers last year. Those were almost dream like figures that the market returned last year but 2023 is proving to be a different kettle of fish. Milk prices have been slashed since earlier this year and when the prices for April milk were announced in the middle of May, all base prices had collapsed from that high to below 40c/l. Luckily down here remains the highest with Carbery paying out a base of 39.1c/l excluding VAT and Dairygold are 1c/l behind them. Looking west, Drinagh co-op suppliers who border Kerry suppliers are getting a base price that is 3c/l ahead of their neighbours.

Prices dropping by one third in such a short space of time are generally unheard of in agricultural circles. The big challenge however is input prices haven't followed suit and the on-farm challenge for dairy farmers now is to try and keep a margin.

Weather

The blast of good weather makes things easier now especially given how challenging it was for farmers for the 10 weeks from the start of March to the middle of May. Wet conditions saw work back up for agricultural contractors too and for a while at the beginning of May some of them were juggling planting maize, beet, grass seed and even barley in some cases along with trying to pick off silage where they could. The sunny weather is certainly welcomed by them.

From early June, I find there's a bit of a wind down on the farm. Sheds are empty, silage stocks are usually well replenished and breeding season is around the half way point. Once that's out of the way the daily routine on this farm eases off and there's



Breeding and silage cutting season is in full swing on many west Cork farms at the moment. Here a stock bull is with heifers on Tommy Moyles farm at Ardfield, Clonakilty.

a bit of time to recharge the batteries. Not just because of the workload easing off but I find this one of my favourite times of year. Blue skies and walking out to a field of content cows can be relaxing on a sunny evening and I could easily lose half an hour when I'm checking the cows for AI around 9pm. You wouldn't lose that time if it's raining though.

Given what we've had in terms of rainfall already, I'm half planning for a dry summer. I have a good proportion of silage cut and for now nothing will be taken cut from the grazing block until there's a drop of moisture again. It never ceases to amaze me how fast weather can turn around.

Farm payments

Farm advisers are due a bit of a break and I hope they get

one too. They're after a few hectic months as they got their clients applications sorted for a plethora of new farm payments associated with the latest CAP (Common Agricultural Policy). For many farmers it was a case of clicking the no changes button and applying but with more of an environmental focus in the 2023 to 2027 version all farmers had to pay more attention to their application. Land eligibility changes especially with regard to the space for nature element saw ground that was previously rendered ineligible for payment now qualify. It's a move to be welcomed from a biodiversity perspective as previously it would have been in a farmer's interest to try and reclaim that ground whereas now it can be left be and there's a small financial reward for it.

EIP projects

In a similar vein of financial gain and improving biodiversity, a public consultation is underway to find new European Innovation Partnerships (EIP) projects. EIP projects are locally-led schemes which are designed and implemented by collaborative groups involving farmers, scientists, ecologists and other experts to deliver specific goals. That's something that may interest farmers and environmentalists in west Cork, who wish to collaborate. Results from previous EIPs have gone on to aid the creation of the flagship agri-environmental scheme ACRES. EIP projects are supported across two streams; A and B. Stream A projects will address wider competitiveness, modernisation and animal health and welfare challenges in the sector and/or, stream B will address areas relat-

ed to environmental, biodiversity and climate change challenges.

There is a pot of €36m available for new EIPs under CAP 2023. Launched in late May by Minister of State for land use and biodiversity Pippa Hackett. The minister said:

"EIP projects bring together a range of actors to trial and test innovations that may improve the environment, animal welfare and the livelihoods of those that work to provide quality food."

This consultation is to seek the views of all stakeholders and public on the key themes for the next round of EIPs before a call for proposals is launched later this year. The survey is open from Tuesday May 23 and will remain open until 11.59pm on Monday, June 12. The survey can be found on <https://commission.europa.eu/>

Tillage Capital Investment Scheme now open

Cork South West deputy Christopher O'Sullivan says the opening of the Tillage Capital Investment Scheme under the Targeted Agricultural Modernisation Scheme (TAMS 3), aimed at supporting the tillage and potato sectors, is now open for applications.

The TCIS is aimed at facilitating the Tillage Sector in adopting a targeted and precise approach focusing on environmental dividends, efficiency, and growth, while also improving competitiveness and contributing to the enhancement of agricultural incomes.

"The Tillage Capital Investment Scheme (TCIS) will empower farmers in West Cork by enabling them to adopt a targeted and even more precise

approaches towards agriculture," Deputy O'Sullivan said.

"With a focus on environmental dividends, efficiency, and growth, this scheme not only enhances competitiveness but also contributes to the improvement of agricultural incomes. By reducing inputs like pesticides and fertilisers and promoting soil quality through minimum cultivation techniques, this scheme plays a pivotal role in supporting tillage as a crucial land use in Ireland."

For the first time, the scheme includes a variety of potato handling, planting, and harvesting equipment, aiming to foster the development of the seed potato sector in Ireland.

Farmers engaged in tillage can also benefit from rele-

vant investments available in other TAMS 3 schemes, such as slurry storage and LESS (Low Emission Slurry Spreading) equipment.

This scheme marks the seventh of ten schemes to open under the new TAMS 3. Previously, successful launches were held for the Solar Capital Investment Scheme (SCIS), the Animal Welfare and Nutrient Storage Scheme, the Pig and Poultry Investment Scheme, the Organic Capital Investment Scheme, the Low Emission Slurry Spreading Scheme, and the Dairy Equipment Scheme.

"The tillage sector is a vital part of Ireland's agri-food industry, and it contributes significantly to the State's agricultural output," Deputy O'Sullivan said.

"I firmly believe in its potential for further growth and development."

The Food Vision 2030 strategy and the Climate Action Plan 2023 will underscore the sector's importance, with a target to increase the tillage area to 400,000 by 2030, Deputy O'Sullivan added.

In addition to the Tillage Capital Investment Scheme, Deputy O'Sullivan said several measures to support the sustainable growth of the sector had also been introduced.

These include the Tillage Incentive Scheme, the Straw Incorporation Measure, an increase in Protein Aid supports to €7 million, and specific tillage supports under the new Agri-Environmental Scheme (ACRES).

Former Darrara students
finalists for Student of the
Year

Congratulations to Owain Buttiner (pictured) and Paul Dineen, former students at Teagasc Clonakilty College who were both finalists in the Teagasc/FBD Student of the Year Awards 2023. Owain completed the Level 6 Advanced Certificate in Agriculture (Dairy Herd Management) in Clonakilty whilst Paul Dineen went on from Darrara to complete the Level 6 Advanced Certificate in Agriculture (Mechanisation) in Pallaskenry.

Ellen Vaughan is the Teagasc/FBD Student of the Year for 2022. Ellen hails from a dairy farm in County Meath and



works part-time on the farm along with being a full-time teacher. Ellen completed the Level 6 Distance Green Cert at Teagasc, Navan.

Bring your garden to life with a Peppermint Farm glasshouse or conservatory



On his retirement last year Achim Hoffman (centre) passed on the Peppermint Farm to new owners Lisa Rauch and Hendrik Lepel.

Since 1999 leading glasshouse supplier Peppermint Farm, based in West Cork, has been installing freestanding greenhouses, lean-to's, conservatories and pavilions to customers nationwide. Originally started by Achim Hoffmann, on his retirement he passed the helm to another German living in West Cork, Hendrik Lepel, who took over the company with his partner Lisa Rauch in January 2022. Peppermint Farm has a display area with a large range of different models near Bantry and Hendrik and Lisa pride themselves on offering innovative glasshouse solutions with exceptional quality and service.

Their premium glasshouses and conservatories include three very innovative designs:

The Solar porch 'Berlin' is a lean-to with curved side-walls. This award-winning design looks out of the ordinary. All front panels – featuring a patented bolt-sliding-technology – can be pushed up into the ceiling. "This way, people sit sheltered in their porch but can also connect directly with their garden," shares Lisa.

The 'Rondo' is a circular pavilion, a free-standing feature in the garden, that consists of two overlapping revolving sliding units that can open to a full half of the structure. Plus, the whole shape can be turned all the way around – with the sun and twistable against the wind! It is an ideal al fresco sitting area, an all-year round meeting spot for the whole family, it can be a band stand, part of a restaurant dining area, a destination in a park, an artist workshop and so much more!

The newest glasshouse in

the Peppermint range is the free-standing greenhouse 'Euro Cottage'. With its pointed roof, it combines the practicalities of their best-selling greenhouse 'Euro Maxi' and the elegant looks of the 'Euro Rustiq'. It's a must-have for every hobby gardener who wishes to give their garden that special touch!

It's not only flowers that bloom in West Cork's garden paradise. Although Hendrik was studying Permaculture at the College of Further Education in Kinsale at the time, on a trip back home to Germany in 2007, he met Lisa. Their long distance relationship blossomed over a year of trips back and forth until Lisa decided to quit her job as an event manager and join Hendrik in West Cork. Their son was born in 2015 and the couple continued to put down roots in Ireland. After working as the operational manager of a language school near Kinsale for over 10 years, when Covid hit and her employer, an Austrian tour operator, went out of business as a consequence, Lisa decided to pivot and joined the Art Course at Kinsale College, where she quickly developed a passion for ceramics and sculpture. Meanwhile Hendrik had been asked to design a garden in Kinsale, including a glasshouse, which is how he met with Achim Hoffman and the seeds of Peppermint Farm under new ownership were planted.

Today the couple make a good team, with Hendrik responsible for delivering and installing the Peppermint glasshouses and Lisa taking care of the administrative tasks and the customer service. "Hendrik is hands-on in his work, a clever and effective

worker with a lot of experience in making customer dreams come true and I bring along good organisational skills from my experiences in my previous jobs," shares Lisa.

Peppermint Farm's products are renowned for their quality, the sturdy box-style aluminium frames and insulating gaskets making them ideal for Ireland's rough coastal climate. They are the sole distributors for greenhouse manufacturers Hoklartherm and KGT Germany and Euro-Serre Belgium and offer a warranty of 10 years on aluminium frames.

Key to Peppermint Farm's success is the personal service provided. "We listen to our customer's needs and wants and find out from them how and what they would like to use their glasshouse for – whether they would like to grow vegetables, flowers or cacti – there are specific solutions for each theme. And if they want to use it as a conservatory – we have models with thermal-insulated frames and double glazing that make the space extra cosy in the winter-time or cool in the summer. Or if they like to combine the use – to grow a few plants but also enjoy the evening sun – there are models that can provide this multi-use, too!"

Peppermint Farm also offer a call-out service to customers. "We will take a look at the area they want to place their glasshouse and give advice on sizes, staging or dwarf walls, types of glazing, i.e. toughened glass or polycarbonate," says Hendrik.

The couple get immense enjoyment from seeing new glasshouse owners take charge, making their glasshouse their

own. "When we come back later, we're blown away by the sight of tomato and strawberry plants growing furiously, or finding tables, chairs, and sun-loungers all set up inside. It's like witnessing a plain space transform into a gardener's paradise or a little peaceful oasis amidst our busy lives."

The new website www.peppermintfarm.com is nearly ready for its launch in July and Hendrik and Lisa are planning to develop a display area with a range of interesting glasshouses from their suppliers in the next two years. Also in the pipeline is a new offering of a wide range of accessories, such as heating and irrigation systems, staging and other useful items, which will be available to buy online.

For now the next big adventure is a summer road-trip to install a solar porch 'Berlin' on the Shetland Islands. "With four ferry crossings and a veranda in tow – it will be an experience for sure," laughs Lisa.

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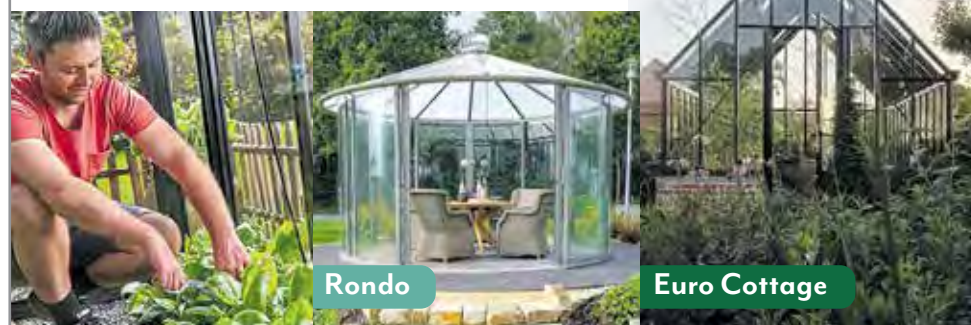
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An edible paradise at the foot of Beara

When Kloë Wood steps outdoors, it's usually never without a wicker basket hanging from her arm. The edible paradise that she and partner Adam Carveth, founders of Two Green Shoots, have created in the almost six years since they have been in Glengarriff, aptly named The Garden of Re-imagination, boasts over 200 varieties of rare and unusual plants, as well as many native species; many of which end up as ingredients in Kloë's kitchen. Throughout June, July, August, and early September, the public are invited to explore this beautiful haven at the foot of the Beara peninsula in a series of edible experiences – including a new 'Guided Foraging Walk and Fireside Lunch Feast'. As Kloë strolls around their new woodland foraging trail, a multi-sensory botanical adventure, it's with a sense of passion and purpose, as she points out to Mary O'Brien some of the many edibles that most of us walk past unseeing every day: Her basket fills up with delicious greens in no time.

Bright green spruce tips, high in Vitamin C, can be used when making a variety of dishes from salads to syrups or just simply pour boiling water over for a delicious tea. "Interestingly each spruce tree tastes different," shares Kloë animatedly. Bramble tips, she says, are an excellent accompaniment to other greens in pestos or sauces. Hawthorn and whitethorn blossom, are used like elderflower, to make syrups and cordials. Wood sorrel adds a lemony kick to salads. Later in the summer, she will make marmalade using the berries from the Rowan tree.

The foraging trail, just completed, is set on two-and-a-half acres within the impressive 280-acre site that stretches right up to the

Kerry border. Their vision is to re-wild much of the land over the coming years with ribbons of mixed species woodland and edible tree crops on the lower flanks of Esk Mountain.

"Our hope is that this and future trails will connect people with the magic of what used to be here – temperate rainforest humming with life rather than the razed and ravaged landscape, which sadly now dominates and puts Ireland 227th out of 240 EU countries for biodiversity."

Over ten of the wettest days in March, with the help of a team of landscaping students and WOOFERS, the trail pathways were created and finished using a mulch made from the smorgasbord of invasive species including Rhododendron ponticum, Chilean Myrtle, Himalayan honeysuckle and Griselinia littoralis cleared out of the woodland.

"Taking out these invasive plants means that there is so much more light now able to reach the woodland floor," says Kloë. On the downside this also means that millions of dormant seeds will be springing to life over the coming years so the couple will have to be extra vigilant with weeding so that the mix of Hawthorn, Hazel, Holly, Alder, Oak, Willow, Scots Pine, Rowan and carpets of herbaceous and woody plants don't get smothered once more.

"As well as connecting people to the flavours of this landscape, the new paths have created access for enabling us to be constantly monitoring for invasive species," she says. "Each year just one mature ponticum plant produces a million seeds!"

In the fifties this site was owned by a German man, who bought it with the aim of creating a hunting and fishing retreat. Aside from digging lakes, he planted dense conifer forests that Adam and Kloë are thinning



Kloë Wood Lyndorff

Pic: Kate Bean Photography

out now to let life back into the woods. "Within five or six years our hope is that with clearing and careful replanting the patches of coniferous desert will be transformed into a healthy woodland with a carpet of plants growing and tree saplings beginning to regenerate," explains Kloë.

She points out pennywort growing on a group of rocks. The leaves are edible and taste slightly like peas. Further on past the duck pond, there's a newly-planted

Aronia, Blueberry and Tea plantation, as well as a small vineyard.

After an hour's amble exploring and collecting edible plants, participants will get to gather around a crackling campfire for a demonstration on how to prepare the wild botanicals gathered on the walk into a delicious two-course picnic lunch. The menu, which changes with the season, might include dishes like Nettle and Wild Garlic Soup with Bread Rolls freshly baked on the camp-

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PURE CORK
 WILD ATLANTIC WAY



After an hour's amble exploring and collecting edible plants, participants will get to gather around a crackling campfire for a demonstration on how to prepare the wild botanicals gathered on the walk into a delicious two-course picnic lunch. Pic: Kate Bean Photography

people Home & Garden

fire and filled with Wood Sorrel, Bramble Tip and Hawthorn Pesto, followed by Nettle and Honeysuckle Muffins topped with Woodland Blooms. A choice of Sparkling Spruce Tip Cooler, or a cleansing brew of Nettle and

Water Mint Tea with Local Honey for refreshment will further enhance each diner's connection with the surrounding landscape.

Off the foraging trail and closer to the house and Botanical B&B you'll find the edible garden

where the rest of the tours are hosted; here you'll find such exotics as Sichuan pepper trees giving a harvest of pink peppercorns in the Autumn; Carolina-allspice bush – the stems used like cinnamon sticks and a giant celery-like plant called Fuki. "Delicious in risottos," shares Kloë.

Other summer, edible experiences include a Breakfast Tour, an Afternoon Tea Tour, and a feast for all the senses – an immersive Garden Tour & Three Course Lunch Feast, freshly prepared by Kloë and Adam using seasonal botanicals from the gardens and surrounding landscape.

Other events to look forward to this Summer include a bushcraft skills weekend led by Outdoors Ireland, garden yoga brunches hosted by teacher Aileen Slein on the newly installed rooftop terraces and mindfulness workshops with nature coach Wendy Robinson.

For further information and tickets go to www.twogreen-shoots.com.

The Garden of Re-imagination features on the West Cork Garden Trail, which boasts 23 fabulous gardens to explore this year. (www.westcorkgardentrail.com)

Mindfulness with Wendy Robinson

Wendy Robinson (pictured left)



is a Chartered Psychologist, Nature Coach, and Accredited Mindfulness Teacher. She loves combining these three specialisms, to offer tailored support and advice to people from all walks of life.

"It's important to me to be authentic and open," she shares. "I don't hide behind a professional mask; I struggle with life at times too, and have needed the support of others, to find my way through."

Wendy's experience and training is far-reaching ranging from psychology to psychotherapy to coaching to mindfulness in nature. She currently offers coaching supervision to support coaches in their practice; one-to-one coaching of leaders, managers and professionals; and mindfulness for stress and mindfulness in nature courses, online and in-person.

She will be running mindfulness classes in the Garden of Re-imagination in Glengarriff over the summer. In September she will be offering a three night Executive Retreat for business or civic leaders in these beautiful surroundings. This is an opportunity to get headspace and support to recharge your batteries, amongst fellow leaders. Combining time in nature with one-to-one coaching and sessions foraging and feasting, sunset kayaking in the ocean, and nature

reserve walking this is a sanctuary for busy, pressurised leaders, providing space for wondering, for insight, for healing and for inspiration.

At her home on the beautiful Sheep's Head, Wendy will also be running a four-week mindfulness course in a series of two-hour sessions on Monday mornings or Wednesday afternoons throughout July. This is an all-women group suitable for beginners or those wishing to build on their mindfulness practice. Participants will take away a regular mindfulness practice for at home; access to audio recordings; mindfulness-in-nature practices and ideas; and reduced stress and improved wellbeing from regular mindfulness practice.

For more information, and to book your place, please contact Wendy: Wendy@WendyRobinson.org or 083 171 9104.

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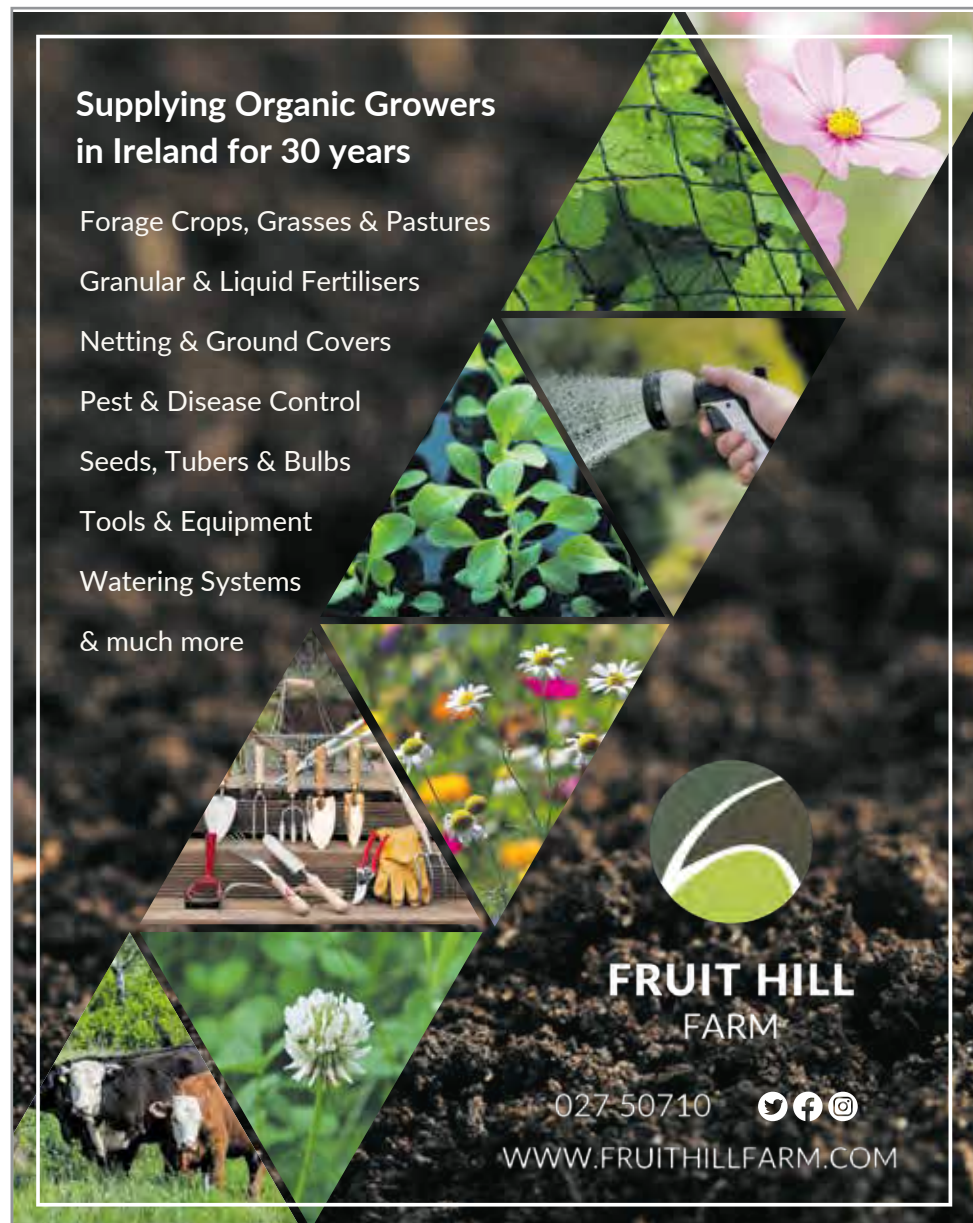
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June in the Garden

As June arrives many of the glories of summer are in full flower with roses, shrubs and perennials coming into peak flowering time. There is still time to plant to provide colour with long flowering bedding plants, perennials, roses and patio plants that will continue to flower right through until late autumn.

Choose Roses while they are in flower in the garden centres. Do also check out their fragrance. Roses may be grown with low carpeting perennials that are not over competitive but still extend the period and durability of colour. The lower varieties of hardy Geraniums, Aubretia, Campanula, bedding Begonias, Arabis, Iberis, Cerastium, Lithodora, Stachys lanata (lamb's ear) all make good companion plants.

Roses will benefit from a top dressing of a good rose fertiliser early this month. Water in well especially during dry spells. Remove Rose suckers as they appear, sourcing them back to their source of origin. Protect against blackspot, rust and downy mildew. Deadhead frequently to encourage a succession and continuity of flower.

Water recently planted plants. Keep a check on recently planted trees and hedging, watering thoroughly twice weekly during dry spells.

Plant bedding plants in drifts to fill spaces in borders.

Dahlias are available in packs of six or individual containers for the larger named varieties. Dahlias are a terrific plant that will flower continuously until

a few weeks' time. I am really happy with the feedback that they received from both Minis-

**GARDENING**

John Hosford
The Weekend Garden Centre

the end of October. Choose the dwarf, compact varieties for container displays and in bedding schemes. The taller varieties are ideal at the back of the borders and provide a succession of cut flowers throughout the summer and well into the autumn. Ensure taller varieties are well staked with strong, stout robust stakes. Keep a close eye on slugs especially during damp weather. Regular liquid feeding with a seaweed-based organic liquid fertiliser will encourage a succession of quality blooms.

Lift and divide spring bulbs that have become overgrown. Choose a sunny, well-drained position, avoiding waterlogged sites. Label carefully with sturdy labels.

Vegetable Garden

All tender vegetable plants can now be planted outdoors. French beans, runner beans, climbing French beans can now be planted in their summer quarters.

Outdoor tomatoes can now take up their summer quarters. Choose a sunny, sheltered position for your tomatoes where they will get the benefit of maximum sunshine. You can mulch the tomatoes with a clean straw mulch, which will both retain moisture and suppress weeds. It also will keep the fruit clean from splashes. You can now plant the following in rich, moisture-retentive soil – pumpkins, courgettes, outdoor cucumbers, squashes, pumpkins (including the spectacular heavyweight varieties and melons.

Add plenty of well-composted stable or farmyard manure or use the excellent Gee-up. Keep well-watered in dry spells. A weekly liquid feed will repay with bountiful crops. Protect against slugs.

Make late sowings of carrots, peas, salad vegetables and parsley.

Sweet corn may be planted out now. Plant in blocks or squares to optimise pollination.

The Cabbage/Brassica Family

This mainstay of the vegetable provides tasty, fresh nutritious vegetables all the year round. Plant cabbage, savoy cabbage, Brussel sprouts, broccoli, cauliflower, kale, kohlrabi for late autumn and winter maturity. Make a late sowing of Swedes for winter harvesting before June 15. Purple sprouting broccoli is an invaluable vegetable for maturity in February to May.

Protect all members of the cabbage family against infestations of cabbage rootfly by applying a protective collar at

the base of the plant immediately after planting.

This will act as a barrier and will prevent adults depositing eggs.

Fruit Garden

All new fruit trees and bushes should be watered twice a week during dry spells. Look out for gooseberry sawfly caterpillars. If left without corrective action they can completely defoliate a bush.

Support plums carrying heavy crops.

Greenhouse

Give grape vines a regular watering. Christmas cherries can be put outside for the summer. Putting them outside gives them heavy access to pollinating insects.

Continue removing side-shoots from tomatoes. Tomatoes should be receiving seaweed based liquid feed twice a week once the plants have fruits developing.

Keep the greenhouse well ventilated in warm weather. Shading will be required in hot weather.

Keep an eye on watering, as with long days and sunshine combined with active plant growth; plants will be quite thirsty! All plants in pots will now require weekly feeding. Use a seaweed-based fertiliser or specific feed designed and formulated for specific types of plants such as cacti, fuchsias, orchids, citrus, African violets and Streptocarpus.

people Sport

West Cork Jesters and St Finbarr's National School to meet Ministers to discuss Astro Turf Project

This week, members of the West Cork Jesters and staff of St Finbarr's National School, Bantry met with Minister for Disabilities, Anne Rabbitte and Minister for Sport, Thomas Byrne.

This meeting was organised by Deputy Christopher O'Sullivan and was aimed at assisting the group's efforts to build an Astro Turf pitch at St Finbarr's National School, to be used by West Cork Jesters.

West Cork Jesters are a mixed ability sport's organisation who came to prominence with the mixed ability Rugby World Cup back in 2020.

Cork South West based TD

Deputy Christopher O'Sullivan said "I am really happy with how the meeting went, it was first of all important to bring awareness to Minister Anne Rabbitte, the Minister for Disabilities about the West Cork Jesters and the fantastic work they do.

"It was important to highlight to her also their desire to open a community space for activities such as boxing, workshops and other events."

He continued "Meeting Sports Minister Thomas Byrne was also incredibly important. The idea is that the group will apply for the Sport's Capital grant when it is opened up in

ters and I will be doing my best to make sure that the project progresses."



Below: Members of the West Cork Jesters and staff of St Finbarr's National School, Bantry who recently had round table discussions in Leinster House with Minister Anne Rabbitte, Minister Thomas Byrne and Deputy Christopher O'Sullivan to discuss their Astro Turf project.

Meela Moos get ready to play stateside in New York

Started as an activity for ‘Mothers and Others’ aged over 25 to try out Gaelic football, The Meela Moos of Kilnameela ladies football club in Ahiohill, has since morphed into an impressive initiative. **Matthew Hurley** meets Rosaleen O’Brien, one of the mothers behind the team that met on the school run and now has 35 women signed up for the season.

Started as an activity for ‘Mothers and Others’ aged over 25 to try out Gaelic football, The Meela Moos of Kilnameela ladies football club in Ahiohill, has since morphed into an impressive initiative. Matthew Hurley meets Rosaleen O’Brien, one of the mothers behind the team that met on the school run and now has 35 women signed up for the season.

Started in August 2021, the Meela Moos are coached by Dwane Twomey, whose wife Diane came up with the name. It is non-competitive, a huge pull factor for any woman in the age bracket to try football for the first time.

“My own club had started one and I started coaching Kilnameela ladies football club when my own daughter started. I was talking to a few ladies one night about it and they went ‘yeah right’. We got in Dwane Twomey as coach, who’s fantastic. It’s gone from strength to strength from there to be honest,” O’Brien explains.

She is now PRO for Kilnameela ladies football and is delighted with the progress of this project, which ties in a lot of clubs in West Cork. The group even got a day out in Croke Park

on LGFA All Ireland final day back in August.

“We have a catchment area, there’s girls coming from obviously Ahiohill and a gang coming from Enniskeane, Balineen, Ballinascarthy. It’s fantastic, we played at Croke Park last year at half time after winning a social media campaign. It started off as a joke. Getting to Croke Park was a fierce lift.”

The national media have even taken the time to give them coverage beyond their wildest dreams.

“Pascal Sheehy came down and did a piece on us and we were on the RTE News before the women’s All Ireland. When he came down, there was a great buzz around the place. There were kids, husbands, partners, grandparents, you name it,” O’Brien recalls.

There were six sides from Gaelic Mothers and Others across the country for the All Ireland final, as well as six U12 teams, giving great exposure to local clubs; the Meela Moos weren’t the only ones represented from West Cork.

“Clonakilty were one of the U12 sides there, which was lovely because some of the Ballinascarthy camogie girls would



have been part of that team.

“I’m 41 this year and I played up to U16 and then dropped out, as so many girls do, but I was back playing football at 39 and I got to play in Croke Park. What an unbelievable experience,” O’Brien says.

Croke Park wasn’t the only stadium that the group played in. They also ran out in Pairc Ui Chaoimh in March at half time of an Allianz National Football League fixture between Cork and Derry.

“There was only 10 allowed to be picked to play in Croke Park so we did a raffle and whoever wanted to play put their name into the hat. I wanted to give everyone the experience of playing in a stadium but then a load of us got to play in Pairc Ui Chaoimh, which was great.”

The group are going stateside to play in Gaelic Park, New York on Sunday, November 12, which

will be some experience for all involved. Despite the coverage this gets however, O’Brien still sees the social aspect as being important.

“Most people are new to football or haven’t played since Sciath na Scoil, a few would have played junior. The social media pages put it out there but the main thing we are trying to do anyway is to promote women’s sport and to encourage other teams to try it,” she explains.

“It’s such a community thing and all the kids are playing at the back of the goals too. It’s very good for our children to be able to see us. The chances of my boys playing longer is probably much higher than my girl, so we have to show our daughters that we can still play football in our 40s.”

Everyone involved enjoys the sport, seeing it as a sort of escapism from work or other

commitments.

“The fun is what drives me there every week. I love football too though and the fact I was out of football for so long, when I was coaching, it made me realise that I missed it.

“Covid was awful for everybody’s mental health. There was a woman that was 50 who kicked her first football; she was on the sideline helping out for years and never would have imagined playing herself. This initiative has given so many women across the country a bit of purpose to their week. The football is still going on but this is to show you can have fun too. We’re getting fit, it’s fantastic on so many levels,” O’Brien says.

The group has great fun while promoting it too. “Women give up sport for so many reasons. You have junior teams across the country struggling for numbers. This is to keep women in sport

whether you are a mom or a person constantly working, you can spare one hour of your day to have a bit of a laugh and forget the stress,” she says.

“It’s like a therapy session for women. If the ball drops 10 times, each time you go and pick it up again. It also brings you back to your childhood.”

The Meela Moos are here to stay and hope to keep doing what they’re doing to promote women’s football.

“You come and go as you please and there’s no pressure to go to training. It is the social side that pulls everyone in, the friends you make. At the start, some may not have known each other, but now we support one another. We’re all friends now which is brilliant. It’s lovely just to tune out for an hour during the week and we hope to stay around for another while hopefully,” O’Brien concludes.

Take on the challenge of the Tour de Beara in support of local organisations

Saddle up to discover the delights of the Beara peninsula at the Tour de Beara cycle on September 9, 2023. The not-for-profit, community-run event, formerly known as The Rebel Tour, has established itself as one of the most popular and scenic one-day sportives in the country, and competition will be fierce for its limited places.

The Tour de Beara’s three routes offer great experiences for cyclists of all abilities, introducing them to the colourful villages and dramatic ocean views this unspoilt West Cork peninsula is renowned for.

With over 2,600 metres of climbing, the full 160km route – which includes tackling

the iconic Healy Pass twice – will challenge even the most hardened of cyclists, but all their training will be rewarded by one of the most spectacular cycling routes in the country. The circular route begins in the scenic coastal village of Glengarriff, and a stiff ascent over the Caha Pass delivers spectacular views across Bantry Bay. Cyclists will pass through a series of beautiful hand-hewn rock tunnels that take them across the border into County Kerry, before returning to the wilds of West Cork.

Even on a day when the peninsula will be humming with cyclists, there will be time to soak in its peaceful silence and enjoy its rugged terrain.

The shorter routes – 120km and 85km in length – explore the byroads of the Beara and bring visitors into the heart of colourful villages, like Allihies and Eyeries. The local community turns out to create a festival atmosphere and a hero’s welcome awaits all finishers.

Whether cyclists set off independently or with the pack, they’ll find plentiful support at food and water stops along the way to fuel their adventure. The stops are managed by volunteers from many of the local charities and organisations that benefit from the event.

Sports clubs, including many GAA clubs, as well as rugby, rowing, and soccer clubs, local



defibrillator groups and national schools throughout Beara are among the many organisations that have received a share of the €150,000 in funds generated over the last three tours. The not-for-profit cycle, organised by members of Glengarriff Community Development Group, Adrigole GAA, and Glengarriff Golf Club, brings many benefits to the local community.

“We’ve been proud to support local organisations such as Cancer Connect, West Cork Women Against Violence, and West Cork Rapid Response over the last few years, as well as Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind, the Irish Red Cross and the Turkey and Syria Earthquake Appeal,” explains event committee member Cormac O’Sullivan.

“We are able to support to

the community throughout the year, as well as creating a great cycling day out, and we manage the event carefully, so that it is a great experience for locals, as well as the many people who travel for the event from across Ireland and beyond.”

To register for the Tour de Beara 2023, visit tourdebeara.ie

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OUT & ABOUT IN WEST CORK



Munster Champions; Clonakilty Divison 3 hockey team celebrate at Harlequins grounds after winning the Munster Cup final, left to right: Suzie Forristal, Emer Helen, Laura Moloney, Lydia Sutton, Clara Crowley (Captain), Niamh Murray, Lynda Donovan, Ellen Lawlor, Lizzy Boston.

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Dear Sacred Heart of Jesus In the past I have asked for many favours. This time I ask for this special one(mention favour). Take it Dear Heart Of Jesus and place it within your own broken heart where your Father sees it. Then in his merciful eyes it will be your favour not mine. Amen. Say the above prayer for 3 days, promise publication and favour will be granted no matter how impossible. Never known to fail. K.O'C.

ST. JUDE'S NOVENA
May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored, glorified, loved and revered throughout the whole world now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus pray for us. St. Jude worker of miracles pray for us. St. Jude, helper of the hopeless pray for us. Say this prayer nine times daily and by the end of the 8th day, your prayers will be answered. Say it for nine days. It has never been known to fail. Publication must be promised. Thanks St. Jude. K.O'C.

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MIRACULOUS PRAYER
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ST. JUDE'S NOVENA
May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored, glorified, loved and revered throughout the whole world now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus pray for us. St. Jude worker of miracles pray for us. St. Jude, helper of the hopeless pray for us. Say this prayer nine times daily and by the end of the 8th day, your prayers will be answered. Say it for nine days. It has never been known to fail. Publication must be promised. Thanks St. Jude. A.T.

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