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Hannah, Tom and Elsie Hayes with Sheila Lordan from the Old Head pictured at the launch of 'Peninsula People, Photographic memories of the Old Head of Kinsale' at the Speckled Door. Pic: John Allen

## National Women's Enterprise Day to be held in West Cork

Cork County Council's Local Enterprise Office North and West is delighted to welcome the return of the Southwest's National Women's Enterprise Day Regional Event to Cork for 2023. Taking place on Thursday, October 19, at Dunmore House Hotel in Clonakilty, National Women's Enterprise Day is Ireland's largest female enterprise event.

Deputising for the Mayor of the County of Cork and former Mayor, Cllr Gillian Coughlan said, "National Women's Enterprise Day continues to highlight female entrepreneurs, encouraging them to build their community, share their successes and inspire others to follow their paths. I wholeheartedly encourage women in business from across Cork County

to register to attend, and to embrace the theme of 'Empowering Business Together' through networking, knowledge sharing and following the journeys of real-life entrepreneurs with four Leading Light Client companies speaking on the day. Cork County Council is delighted to welcome this event back to Cork this year, and to continue to collaborate with our Local Enterprise Office colleagues across Cork and Kerry."

The Southwest National Women's Enterprise Day Regional Event will feature a welcome address by Sharon Corcoran, Cork County Council's Director of Services, Economic Development, Enterprise and Tourism. Cork based Amy Jane Keating, Host and Creator of the 'Go Do You'

podcast will be the days host and facilitator, which will include Guest Speaker Pat Kane. The day will also include a panel discussion with Cork and Kerry Leading Lights, followed by Keynote Speaker Laura Dowling, Fabulous Pharmacist and Founder and CEO of fabÜ Wellness.

Event Ambassador and Leading Light representing LEO Cork North and West at this year's event is Caroline Murphy of West Cork Eggs.

This initiative is led by the 31 Local Enterprise Offices nationwide, and funded by the Government of Ireland, in partnership with Enterprise Ireland and Local Authorities. To book your place for the Cork and Kerry event please visit [www.localenterprise.ie](http://www.localenterprise.ie)

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# A Sunday kind of life

#loveinwestcork

Growing up in Monterrey, the second largest city in Mexico and an industrial metropolis, Sonia Viridiana Castro lived a very different lifestyle back then to the one she married into in West Cork 11 years ago. Today Sonia runs an organic growing business and Veg Box scheme with her husband John Kingston on the rich rural pastures of Coolkelure, in the shadow of Nolwen Hill, not far from Dunmanway town – farmland that has been in the Kingston family for five generations. She chats to **Mary O'Brien** about love, life and starting a business in West Cork.



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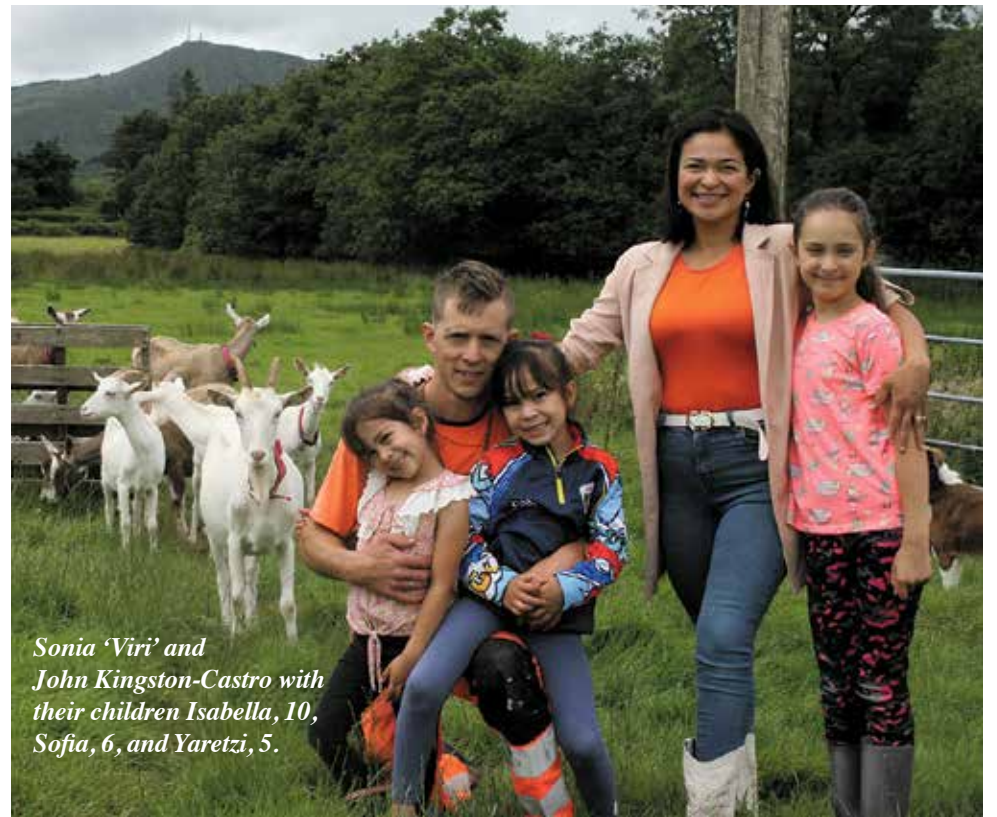
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*Sonia 'Viri' and John Kingston-Castro with their children Isabella, 10, Sofia, 6, and Yaretzi, 5.*

Sonia, a student of engineering and industrial management, was just 20 and working in her parent's busy catering company when she met West Cork farmer John Kingston, 26, at a wedding in Mexico in 2010. "John's good friend from Innishannon was marrying my childhood friend," shares Sonia. While neither one spoke more than a few words of the other's tongue, the bridesmaid and groomsmen were drawn to each other, spending the night together on the dance floor, their connection developing into a long distance friendship that culminated in marriage when Sonia accepted John's romantic proposal at a viewpoint overlooking Monterrey two years later. "I definitely couldn't understand his West Cork english when we first met but my understanding was much better by the time he proposed," laughs Sonia.

On July 26, 2012, Sonia and John married in a small civil

ceremony in Ireland with just close family and friends in attendance.

Determined not to be pegged as a city girl, Sonia got stuck into farm life in West Cork straight away, learning to drive a tractor, getting her driving licence and helping to tend to the animals; her vivacious personality and love of fashion bringing colour to the busy sheep farm.

"For me it was like a big adventure," shares Sonia, who felt very welcomed and supported by John's family, friends and the local church community.

Three years later at another viewpoint, this time on Nolwen Hill overlooking the Kingston family farm, Sonia was swept off her feet again when John got down on one knee, proposing they renew their vows in Mexico.

The couple, including their child Isabella (2), travelled to Sonia's home country to get married for the second time, in

a traditional Mexican ceremony, which included a big church wedding with 250 guests, followed by a feast and after party with mariachis playing traditional Mexican folk songs.

Sonia and John's family grew quickly with two more children following Isabella, so while John continued working full-time as a plasterer and studying homeopathy; Sonia became a stay-at-home mum, helping out on the farm when she could. With more time on her hands as the children got older and started school, Sonia determined to expand on her knowledge of permaculture so she could contribute something more to the farm. She started growing trees and vegetables and invested in some hens and a goat. A course soon followed on regenerative agriculture, a system which reintroduces carbon and nutrient resources back into the land, encouraging biodiversity and conserving water.

In 2021, Sonia began making



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her own compost and building growing beds, of which she now has 28.

While she had already decided to start growing organic vegetables commercially, she enrolled in the Sustainable Horticulture and Permaculture course at Kinsale College, which is where the seed of a veg box scheme business was planted.

“When I moved here I was very young and I think I was looked on as being a bit naive she shares, “but I was a very capable and skilled person before I arrived in West Cork and grew up in a business environment, helping my parents from a young age. After doing the course in Kinsale, I felt confident that this was my chance to prove myself, that I would show I could start and run a successful business here in West Cork combining my Mexican heritage with my love of growing that has been nurtured here in Ireland. It felt right.” Sonia’s aim was to grow enough food to feed her family but also the local community; filling 20 boxes to bring in enough income to make the enterprise worthwhile.

As well as growing vegetables in her poly tunnel and garden, she now keeps bees, goats, pigs, chickens and bees. She has one Vietnamese pot-bellied pig and two Kunekune, a small long-haired domestic breed native to New Zealand. The pigs are much-loved pets and useful soil rotovators. The goats are Saanen and Toggenburg breeds from Switzerland, both excellent milk producers.

Sonia and John have already planted over 800 trees on the farm and all of the crops are grown without the use of chemicals. Water comes from a pure mountain stream, a precious resource, and the couple hope to generate their own electricity in the future.

Thursday is prep day at Coolkelure, when Sonia checks what’s ready to harvest from her bounty, which this time of year includes an abundance of tomatoes, kale, chard, courgettes and herbs. She also grows more ex-



otic chillis and yacon. The farm shop is open every Friday and veg boxes can be supplemented with raw honey, eggs, goats milk and Sonia’s homemade dulce de leche y cajeta, a Mexican recipe for caramel syrup made from goats milk that is delicious served with ice cream, fruit, crepes, even bread.

“If it’s a wet day and I can afford to wait, I’ll cut the vegetables as people come to collect their boxes,” she says. “The older people especially love to be there while I’m harvesting. It’s an experience you won’t find in a shop.”



While Sonia grew up in a city, permaculture and goat-keeping are in her genes: Her great grandfather was a goat farmer and the last conversation she remembers having with her grandmother before she passed away during the pandemic was about how to make goats cheese. “My granny was very proud of me,” shares Sonia “as the only one in the family to be living the type of lifestyle she came from herself. She was a very strong woman and my inspiration... In fact I think I have become my granny!” she jokes.

Sonia’s memories of her childhood centre around Sundays...visiting her grandparent’s country house with them, milking goats, collecting eggs and drawing water from the river. “They were such happy memories, playing in the river and picking up feathers dropped by the birds,” she recalls.

“Life in Mexico was good. I do miss my family and friends, the banter in my own language...I’m a very funny person in Spanish,” she laughs.

But life in West Cork is better than good.

“It’s busy and hard work but I feel like I’m living Sunday every day,” she shares passionately.

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# Connecting to the land

With the purchase of a piece of land ten years ago, Aga Mitka's life changed irrevocably. Setting foot on the eight-acre site, give or take, in the hills of Inchigeelagh at the edge of a Gaeltacht, the Polish born Cork city-dwelling biologist, now 47, tells **Mary O'Brien** how she felt a call to the land that she couldn't ignore. "It's hard to describe," she says "but on reading Manchán Magan's books more recently, I could understand what he means when he talks about the connection to the land and how it calls to you. It was like that for me, I really felt like the land was speaking to me."

Aga's smallholding is wild and beautiful, rich in biodiversity and fauna, with the minimal amount tamed for habitation. High up in the hills of Inchigeelagh but nestled in a valley overshadowed with trees and rocks, it feels like the land is holding you, grounding you. "With the higher hills all around, it's like being in a crater; you feel very protected here," explains Aga. In 2013, she moved into her half-finished new build and before long had made friends with her neighbours. "While I arrived here on my own, knowing nobody, it very quickly became home and now I can't imagine ever leaving," she shares.

In 2020 Aga made another life-changing decision: She quit her job and, as you do, she started hand-building a treehouse! This coming into being of the Ark Ranch Treehouse – recently featured on the Channel 4 programme 'Extraordinary Escapes with Sandy Toksvig' – means that Aga's little piece of paradise is now shared, with anyone welcome to book a short stay, settle into the cosy cabin hugged by the trees for a few days and experience life closer

to nature.

"People come here for all sorts of reasons," shares Aga. "Some are on a retreat, some come simply for solitude, others are on a romantic getaway or celebrating an occasion." There have been proposals and even serenades at the cabin. "About a month ago, one Romeo endeavoured to serenade his girlfriend on the balcony but the donkeys kept joining in," laughs Aga.

There is no Wi-Fi, which offers a welcome respite for most visitors. "Except when a proposal is accepted," she shares, smiling "then access suddenly becomes very important as they want to share their good news with the outside world!"

"So many couples have said it's the first proper conversation they've had for years without distraction," she explains. "They play cards, talk and get to know each other again," says Aga, who also shares how her friends thought she was crazy when she first came up with the idea of building a treehouse in the middle of nowhere.

Undeterred, Aga, – who had never so much as picked up a tool before moving to Inchigeelagh but for months



had shadowed the builders working on her own house – got planning permission and started digging, pouring concrete and erecting telegraph poles – the strong stilts required for holding this impressive structure in place.

"I think the roof was the most difficult part of the project for me," she says. "It took me two hours just to build up the nerve to swing my leg over the apex."

"I had no experience of building prior to this but I'm determined and a fast learner...it didn't take me long to graduate from a drill to a chainsaw," she laughs.

The project started in the

midst of the pandemic so materials weren't easy to source, but with necessity being the mother of invention, the keen DIY-er didn't allow this to faze her and before long she had the corrugated metal roof in place, which allowed work to continue through the winter.

"I think the roof was the most



difficult part of the project for me," she says. "It took me two hours just to build up the nerve to swing my leg over the apex."

Once she had gotten over her initial reluctance, with some gentle encouragement from her partner, and, even after a soft if prickly fall into the gorse below, Aga, secured by safety ropes, was soon swinging up and down the ladder and scaffolding like a monkey in the trees, completing the roof in just under two weeks.

Inside however is where this maker's creative spirit really

shines. Floorboards have been cut and fitted in a herringbone pattern, stained to varying depths in a rich brown, walls are clad in Douglas fir, its warm and inviting scent permeating the small space that feels bigger because of the tall ceiling and large windows. The counters are carved from oak, the handles and banisters from ash and the larger handles on the cupboards are pine branches. Much of the wood used to create decorative pieces in the treehouse, such as the beautiful lamp and clock crafted by Aga, were collected



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after being stripped from trees on the land by the resident donkeys. There is a small stove for when the weather turns cold and a small balcony to relax outside on. Aga did all the plumbing herself, going so far as to dig the trench needed to connect the cabin to the septic tank.

"That part was quite overwhelming," she shares "as I was so close to being finished but absolutely exhausted while digging the trench."

Aga prevailed, working through the wall of tiredness, and reaped the rewards of her efforts when one week after putting the treehouse up on Airbnb, it was completely booked out for the season. "I think people were looking for an adventure, to get away from the busyness of life," she says. "There is something very healing and spiritual about the land here, you can feel it when you arrive."

Walking the land with Aga, her words resonate. The only sound is the twigs crackling underfoot, occasionally interrupted by birdsong. There used to be an old famine cottage on the property but in the building



of a service road over bogland close to a hundred years ago, the cottage was knocked for its stone. The old famine cottage now lies beneath the road. Ancient ditches and walls still divide fields and a pure spring well spouts from underneath the rock.

Aside from planting hundreds of native trees and plants and grazing her animals, including two wild mountain horses she broke in herself and four donkeys, Aga has left much of the land untouched.

Closer to the main house, she grows organic vegetables and fruit and has created a wild-life pond and meadow. After a storm blew her polytunnel away, she hand built a glass-

house.

This enterprising homesteader has made her well house into a cellar to store her bounty after harvesting. "My friends call it a nuclear bunker," she laughs. "But mark my words, I'll be eating one-year-old carrots that will still be perfect."

She explains how in the old days in Poland every family would have had some kind of storage space underground, usually with just a board covering it, for keeping potatoes and other vegetables. "It's important to me to keep that tradition alive," she says.

Aga keeps chickens for eggs and bees for honey and makes soaps and salves from her herbs and beeswax, selling some of

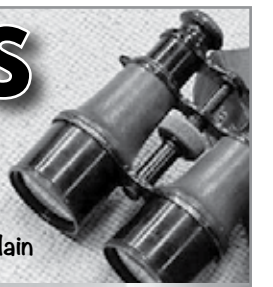
the products to her guests.

For anyone interested in exploring the natural beauty spots of the area, Lough Allua is less than 5km down the road and suitable for fishing, kayaking and swimming in and Gougane Barra is only a 20-minute drive away.

Always with a project on the go, Aga has nearly completed a sauna and hot tub (for her own personal use). Until that's finished she's making do with an old cast iron bath propped up

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## OUT & ABOUT IN WEST CORK



Members of The Emerald Society Pipes and Drums from the New York Fire Department playing at the Kinsale Garden of Remembrance to honour the memory of the 343 firefighters who lost their lives in 9/11. The Emerald Society is composed entirely of either retired or active New York City firefighters. Since 9/11, because of its dedication in providing dignity to the member and their families at over 500 funerals and memorial dedications, the band has grown increasingly popular in the Fire Department and has almost doubled in size.  
Pic. John Allen

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# Latest Kilbrittain historical journal launched



*Pictured at the launch of 'Kilbrittain Historical Society, Articles & Records from the Past, 2023/2024, Volume 7' are the committee of the Kilbrittain Historical Society John Hickey, Michael Lordan, Grainne Barrett, Denis O'Brien, Triona O'Sullivan-Enright, Diarmuid O'Donovan and Con McCarthy. Pic. John Allen*

Kilbrittain Historical Society has just launched its new journal, 'Kilbrittain Historical Society, Articles & Records from the Past, 2023/2024, Volume 7'. Padraig Ó'Macháin, Professor of Modern Irish, UCC, and foremost authority on the Leabhar MacCarthaigh Riabhaigh (Book of Lismore) officially launched the journal.

Articles include: the final part in the series on the Book of Lismore, the Heard family of Coolmain, Kilbrittain

Cumann na mBan, the stories of local lives lost such as Patrick Crowley, Rev. Charles Ferguson, James Roche Howe, Jeremiah and Timothy O'Leary, and Daniel Roche, ornamental stones in St. Patrick's Church, Courtmacsherry House, the fate of Paddy O'Neill in Australia and the special Kilbrittain connection to US President John F. Kennedy are included. Tributes to much-loved community people no longer with us and beautiful local photos from various contributors round out

another worthy volume in our series of historical journals.

The cost is €15 per copy with discounts for members (€10) and those purchasing multiple copies. All are welcome to the launch, a celebration of our local community heritage and we look forward to seeing you there. The journals will be available from local shops as of tomorrow. This journal is supported by the Cork County Council and the Heritage Council under the County Heritage Plan Funding 2023.

## Two new West Cork bus routes in operation by Christmas

Two new bus routes that will connect residents in Cork and Courtmacsherry as well as Baltimore and Union Hall and Glandore will be active by Christmas, Cork South West Deputy Christopher O'Sullivan says.

It's expected the services will be provided by Local Link buses as part of the National Transport Authority's Connect-

ing Ireland 2023 plan.

"We are really ramping up public transport in West Cork. These routes will commence before Christmas," Deputy O'Sullivan said.

"It's going to be a great addition to the public but also to tourists who want to get down to places like Timoleague and Courtmacsherry from the city."

Of the two bus routes, one

will connect Cork to Courtmacsherry and Butlerstown via Bandon and Timoleague.

A second bus route will connect Baltimore to Union Hall and Glandore via Skibbereen.

"People will now be able to travel by bus from Baltimore to Glandore via Skibbereen and Union Hall. This new route will also be operational before the end of the year.

## Surveying for National Broadband Plan commences on the Beara Peninsula

National Broadband Ireland (NBI), the company rolling out the new high speed fibre broadband network under the Government's National Broadband Plan (NBP) in August announced that engineering survey works for almost 1,500 premises in the rural surrounds of Eyeries are now underway. This includes

the rural surrounds of townland and villages such as Ardgroam and Castletownbere.

In Cork, there are approximately 82,000 premises in the Intervention Area (IA), which includes homes, farms, commercial businesses, and schools. Under the National Broadband Plan, Cork will see an investment of €314M in the

new high speed fibre network. This will enable e-learning, remote monitoring of livestock or equipment, e-health initiatives, better energy efficiency in the home, and facilitate increased levels of remote working.

Visit [www.nbi.ie/map](http://www.nbi.ie/map) and enter your Eircode to see if you are ready to connect.

## Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the September edition of West Cork People,

As we bask in an unexpected but welcome wave of heat, summer suddenly feels closer than winter. My sister was visiting from New York in August so we had much fun enjoying the best of West Cork. We swam in Lough Hyne in the sun, walked the wilds of Goleen in the rain, got lost in the rich sound of gamelan music in Myross and danced to Kila on a farm in Ardfield...and so much more in-between. West Cork certainly gives New York a run for its money, with never a dull moment.

Going into September, the calendar is no less full. From Clonakilty Guitar Festival to Drimoleague Singing Festival to Bere Island Arts Festival, the only complaint might be that we have too much to choose from! In our entertainment section this month we have interviews with talented Kenmare harpist and singer Aisling Urwin, who is supporting Susan O'Neill at St Matthew's Church, as part of the Drimoleague Singing Festival; and with singer-songwriter and acoustic solo performer Jon Gomm, who plays the Clonakilty Guitar Festival.

This month I got to meet two exceptional women: Sonia Viridiana Castro from Mexico, who runs an organic growing business and Veg Box scheme on the rich rural pastures of Coolkelure near Dunmanway; and Aga Mitka a Polish native who moved to Inchigeelagh and handbuilt a house in the trees from scratch. I hope you enjoy hearing their stories as much as I did.

Closer to home, I enjoyed a visit to Castlevue Mills just outside Clonakilty, where an inspiring conservation project is underway. Joe O'Leary, the seventh generation direct descendent of the original mill operators, gives us a glimpse into this beautiful old building's past and shares his vision for its future.

We continue our focus on education this month and also have a wedding feature showcasing some of West Cork's finest services and venues.

In health, Hannah shares the age-old wonders of castor oil with us, Rosari reminds us of the antioxidant effects of the humble blackberry and Aoise Tutty Jackson chats to Adrienne Murphy, chairperson of the Cork Mental Health Foundation about her work in the community.

Farming columnist Tommy Moyles finds out more about Korean Natural Farming and what it can do for the soil in West Cork and on the environment front Dr Jeremy Dorman educates us on the important role salps play in the marine food chain.

You'll find lots more interesting articles inside.

I hope you enjoy the read,

Mary



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Editor



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West Cork People



# Affordable Houses in Clonakilty by year end

Clonakilty's first affordable housing scheme will be open for applications before the end of 2023, Cork South West Deputy Christopher O'Sullivan says.

Cork County Council is set to start advertising the 38

affordable housing units when they become available in the fourth quarter of 2023.

"This is the culmination of a three-year campaign for an Affordable Housing Scheme for West Cork. At the end of this year it's happening," Deputy

O'Sullivan said.

"There are so many middle-income earners that earn over the income threshold for a council house but yet can't get a mortgage. This is the start of addressing housing needs for this group of people."

Under the affordable housing development, more than 140 new homes are to become available to buyers in West Cork.

Deputy O'Sullivan said the Affordable Housing will be followed by at least 113 houses more in Kinsale.

## Duchas September lecture looks at 'The Impacts of the Lisbon 1755 Tsunami Event on Ireland's Coasts'

Duchas Clonakilty's first lecture of the autumn on September 21 is bound to be of huge interest to all in West Cork. During the early hours of November 1, 1755, Lisbon was affected by a very powerful earthquake that violently shook the western and southern parts of Portugal.

Some 40 minutes after the earthquake, a large tsunami followed, consisting of multiple waves which engulfed the city. The tsunami-train reached Brazil to the west, North Africa to the south and Britain and Ireland to the north.

'The Impacts of the Lisbon 1755 Tsunami Event

on Ireland's Coasts: Fact, Speculation and Fantasy', an illustrated lecture by Dr Robert Devoy, will look at the 1755 event, the different sites and evidences (e.g., historical, geomorphological) for the event on Ireland's coasts, together with issues of its past and future significance for coasts, both in

Ireland and globally.

Dr Devoy is Professor in Geography (emeritus), UCC and Prof. of Physical Geography, UCC.

The lecture takes place on Thursday, September 21 at 8.30pm in Clonakilty GAA Club, Ahamilla. All are welcome.

## Active travel needs to be supported not discouraged in West Cork

The Clonakilty Greenway – the Joe Walsh Walkway to give it its full title – is a lovely amenity. An initial 620 metre section opened in late 2019 set back from the N71, with set back seating looking out over Gallanes Lake: it is broad, well-maintained and a pleasant excursion for hospital patients and their families, children learning to cycle, joggers and those working in the technology park. The new section, opened recently, links to the Technology Park and the rugby club – a further few hundred metres.

But does it mean, as has been stated, asks **Bass Tyrrell**, that the employees in the Technology Park and users of the rugby pitch can safely walk or cycle into town?

Many of those hundreds of employees and future rugby players may live across town in the new estates at Lady's Cross or up behind Clogheen and their active travel journey is already complicated by the need to get across, or round, the town. The N71 is uncomfortable cycling at the best of times, and for walkers and wheelers it is even worse: broken pavement, walkways criss-crossing the road, pavement parking, high kerbs and all the other detritus we have become too used to in a society that puts the convenience of the car driver above all else. Western Road and Pearse Street, or Kent Street for cyclists, provide an alternative but especially at peak hours barely less busy and equally poor quality: closer to town the pavement parkers are as bad or worse, forcing users, including parents with buggies and

small children, into the road or making them squeeze past the vehicle whose driver will, of course, "just be a minute".

The difficulties and dangers of passing through the town on a bike – or indeed as a pedestrian or wheelchair user – merit a whole other piece: this is about the route to the technology park and we'll start from the Fax-bridge roundabout: the closest point to the technology park that can reasonably be called "town". This is a horrible spot in the best of circumstances: five roads (strictly four but the Old Timoleague Road comes off the Ring road only a few metres from the roundabout) plus the entrance to Scally's, with no safe spaces for pedestrians to cross. Wide junctions encourage drivers to speed through faster than necessary: even in good weather this intimidates active travellers, in bad weather it will often mean that



people risk a soaking as drivers go through the puddles. There are no signs for the technology park or even for the hospital: nothing indicating a walking or mobility route. It is not clear whether the footpath – too narrow in any case – is intended for shared use here.

So the cyclist has a choice: pavement and conflict with pedestrians, or the road. For the experienced the road is generally better but you will be slower because of the uphill gradient and some drivers can be aggressive, distracted by merging traffic or just thoughtless. It is little wonder that those who are nervous or inexperienced are put off. The pavement is little better: a narrow track hindered in parts by collapsing wall of the Convent – a bit of cultural vandalism in itself. Poor drainage both on the road and the path adds to the danger as well as the discomfort in bad weather.

The Old Timoleague Road provides a less busy alternative but one that adds two and a half kilometres to the journey, a kilometre of which is on the R600: another road not always for the faint-hearted. It's also more of a climb: fine for an e-bike but another minor discouragement to

the new or less confident rider – or even to someone who just has no opportunity to shower when they arrive at work.

Approaching the hospital it becomes clearer that the cycle path is intended to be integrated into a shared lane with the footpath. At least it is clear if you know about the greenway, there are no physical indications. The path takes you in front of the bus stop, providing more opportunities for conflict with pedestrians – incidentally this nice newly refurbished bus stop has neither shelter, seating nor timetable indications, but that too is another story.

Proceeding from the bus stop toward the start of the greenway we really see what Cork County Council thinks of cycling and active travel generally: stop lines painted across the path. What traffic is so important that it must be given priority here? Private driveways. The cars on the N71 are not expected to give way to people entering or leaving these driveways – of course, it makes no sense. But walkers, wheelers or cyclists using the path should, apparently, although this makes no more sense. Here the risk of momentary inconvenience to a motorist has been deemed worse than

**Christopher O'Sullivan TD**

FIANNA FAÏL  
THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

If I can be of any assistance to you please do not hesitate to get in contact.

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endangering wheelchair users, pedestrians or cyclists.

If we want to promote active travel we need to give it an equal footing, provide proper segregated infrastructure that prevents conflict with pedestrians as well as with cars and does not always put the car first: here that means at the very least giving the active traveller the same priority as

the other through traffic: side roads and certainly entrances to private property give way to the through traffic, whatever form that through traffic takes.

Painting new lines deliberately to discourage and slow active travellers trying to get to work in the Technology Park is not just failing to support active travel it is actively to oppose it.



# A new chapter for Castleview Mills

A restoration project on the banks of the Arigideen River is breathing new life into what has been identified as the best preserved mill in Cork County – the only one out of 500 in the county still in working order – and one of Ireland's top five, recognised internationally for the significance of its industrial archaeological heritage. Spearheaded by Joseph O'Leary, the seventh generation of direct descendants of the original mill operators, the Hayes'; the conservation of Castleview Mills is a labour of love that will take great time and effort, but once completed will be a piece of living history. **Mary O'Brien** takes a walk through the mill and the past with Joe, as he shares his vision for the future of this beautiful old building.

After UCC industrial archaeologist Dr Colin Rynne quantified the historical value of the building, funding was secured 18 months ago under the Community Monuments Fund, which to-date has allowed the mill to be re-roofed and repaired by Silvabuild, a company renowned for its unique timber structures; the lower levels preserved and a new loft built on the third level that may in the future be used as an event or educational space.

"Silvabuild are doing an exceptional job in retaining the character of the building by preserving as much of the original wooden beams and stonework as possible," shares Joe, who is passionate about maintaining the original features and story that goes with them.

Joe O'Leary grew up just over the hill from Castleview Mills, his father's homeplace, and spent many hours there as a child, sitting around the fire in his late uncle Pat O'Leary's kitchen, listening to the histori-

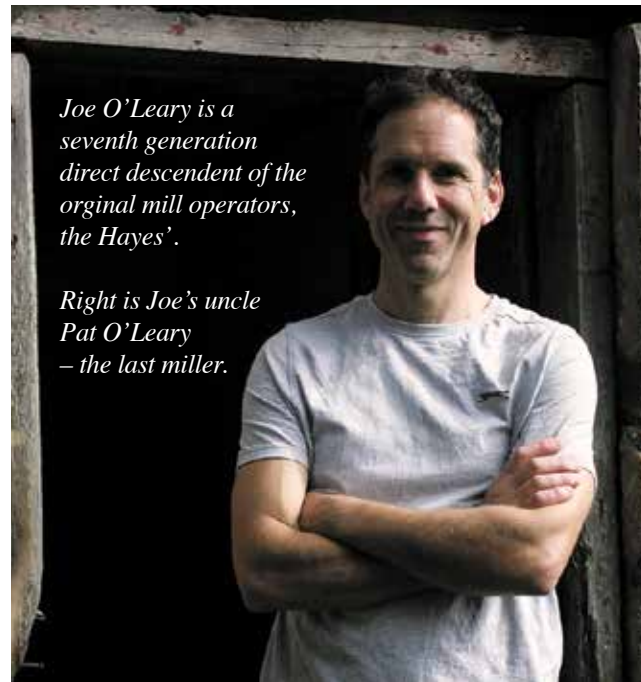


*Castleview Mills is famous as being the site of a failed eviction attempt in 1886 of Tim Hurley, his wife Catherine and their children.*

an recount stories of yore.

Originally built by George Hayes in the 1800s, on the site of an older mill, for the purpose of exporting flour to Britain, Castleview Mills is famous as being the site of an eviction attempt in 1886. Interestingly, the failed eviction of Tim Hurley was reported in a number of British newspapers including the Illustrated London News. It's reported that on word of

the planned eviction, a hut was constructed in Clonakilty for the Hurley family, with an estimated crowd of up to two thousand conveying it through the town to Castleview, in a procession with bands playing and banners waving. After erecting the hut in a field near the mill, the crowd gathered to witness the eviction that had Tim Hurley leading a group of 20 to 30 men in defending his home that he shared with his wife and five children. Bailiffs used a makeshift



*Joe O'Leary is a seventh generation direct descendent of the original mill operators, the Hayes'.*

*Right is Joe's uncle Pat O'Leary – the last miller.*



battering ram to attempt getting through the barricade but, after bricks and stones and boiling water were thrown at them by Hurley and his men, they were forced to retreat.

Today the O'Leary family are still in possession of the horn that was blown by a neighbour on the side of the hill to warn of the eviction.

The day after the eviction attempt, Hurley was arrested with packages of dynamite in his pockets, claimed to be for felling trees.

Tim Hurley eventually ended up in Wales where he died from injuries resulting from a purported altercation. He now rests in an unmarked grave under a yew tree in Merthyr Tydfil.

His wife Catherine, a seam-

stress in Clonakilty also died young and the younger of their ten children were raised by her relatives.

Poignantly, in clearing out the mill, Joe found a draft of a letter written by his grandad when he was younger, asking for legal help, as the rent had gone up and the family were struggling financially. "He talks about how they are honest, decent folk trying to make a living," shares Joe. "The letter ends by saying they don't want to end up like Tim Hurley and his family, scattered to the four corners of the earth."

The mill inside today offers a fascinating glimpse into the past.

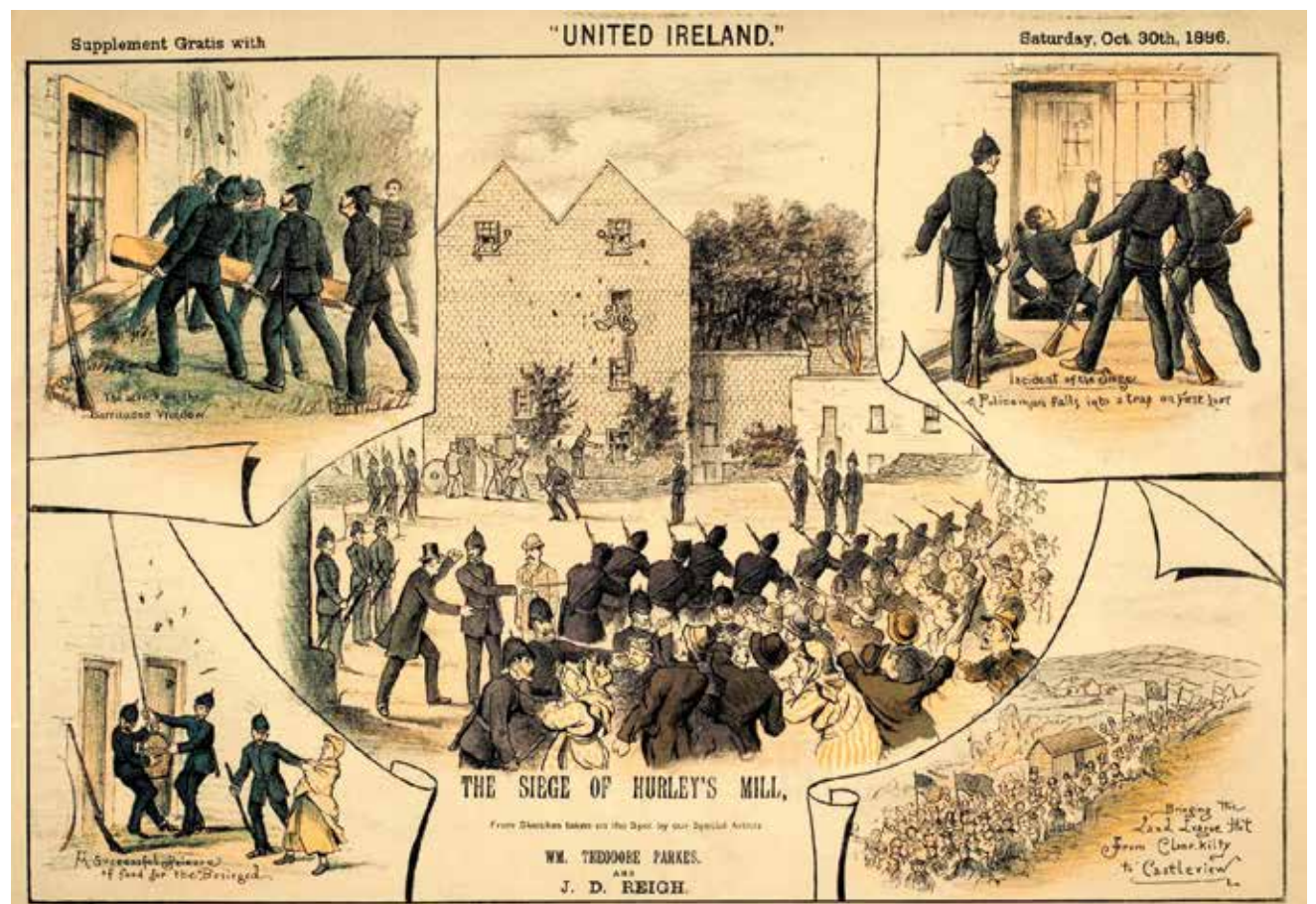
Joe points out the old hammer mill used to grind grain. He

remembers the roller mill working to grind corn for the cattle when he was growing up.

For Joe, who went on to become a student of mechanical engineering and set up his own engineering business, the mill was a fascinating playground during his childhood. "It was my treehouse," he laughs. "If my mother only knew!"

Stories of his grandfather, the late Thomas O'Leary, who died in 1958, 20 years before he was born, fuelled Joe's romantic interest in the past, in particular his own family history in the mill.

"My dad talked about him a lot," he shares. "He was called 'the auld boss' and was a great storyteller. He used to wear a waistcoat around the mill and







had a little stubby pencil that he'd pull out when noting the revolutions per minute of the pulleys."

Working on the mill has offered Joe an insight into the grandfather he never met. "Walking in his footsteps, I feel I've gotten to know him and his ways," he says.

Like his grandson, Thomas O'Leary had an engineering mindset: Without any formal education, in 1918, he replaced the breast shot waterwheel that powered the mill with a turbine system. "The vibrations from the wheel were making cracks in the side wall," explains Joe, who recalls finding the same equations he studied in applied mechanics on opening his grandfather's old notebook.

"You do what you need to in order to survive and he had a young family and a mill that was falling apart, so it was a case of needs must I think when it came to doing the repairs himself."

The turbine hadn't operated for ten years, give or take, so Joe spent many nights taking it apart and tinkering a few years ago, eventually getting it running again.

Prior to that, when his uncle Pat was still alive, together they got the old lathe going again. "It was pretty dangerous, as it felt like the building was vibrating when it was running," shares Joe.

The old mill stones and mechanism, which would have moved at 160rpm and was used for grinding the grain into flour and the mechanism for separating the flour are still in place. The mill was operated by Joe's uncle up until his death in 1995.



One of the miller's tasks was to dress the stone, chiseling the furrows by hand, a slow and tedious task, which Joe got to experience doing with his uncle.

The bedroom of Joe's father Jerry, now 81, was less than 20 feet from the mill stones; he remembers waking up to the sound of the stones grinding.

A winnowing machine to separate the chaff from the grain was made by Joe's grandfather. "I'd love to get it going again just to hear it," he says nostalgically.

He points out what have been identified by an industrial archaeologist as taper burns on some of the old beams. "These could have been deliberate burn marks created to ward off evil spirits or prevent fire," explains Joe.

While most of the beams have woodworm, the inner hardwood is perfectly preserved, making conservation easier.

A shelf heaving with old containers and tools remains untouched, giving a sense of people and place.

It's a building that is perpetually revealing something.

Old stones with bullet marks, salvaged from the scene of the Kilmichael Ambush, were allegedly hidden under the stairs.

An old door still in place holds names inscribed from the past; F Hurley and Pat Hurley, both sons of Tim Hurley.

In the living quarters, Joe winds up the old gramophone, releasing a crackling melody: the 'Boys of County Armagh' spills out, transporting the room back to old Ireland.

In the kitchen, a modern fireplace has been ripped out to

reveal the original open hearth and the original timbers have been exposed in the ceiling. This is where stories were told around the fire until the early hours of the morning. It's a scene that Joe would like to recreate; his vision for the space is one that embraces scríochting and wellness.

High up on the third floor under the eaves of the roof are the remains of a kiln, which was used for drying corn. Unusual to have an open fire placed so high in the building but it could possibly have been used to heat the main bedroom underneath.

Outside, the year 1945 carved into one of the stones in the building by Pat O'Leary marks the end of WWII. The year Pat died, 1995, has been carved in a stone alongside by Joe's brother.

Tools for sharpening blades and cutting slate remain in place.

Almost hidden, an overgrown but serene courtyard garden lies to the side of the mill.

Along the river path, Joe, and his wife Claire, a conservation ranger with the NPWS, have planted native trees by the remnants of an ancient woodland. They hope, in time, to get some animals and manage the land, preserving its biodiversity.

Old workmen's cottages may be developed for accommodation.

But it's small steps: The work is currently dependent on funding but the hope is to eventually make the project sustainable so that any income can be ploughed back into the upkeep of the building.

As more of the mill reveals itself, a picture of its future emerges.

"There are so many possibilities...education, wellness retreats, storytelling, events," says Joe

"Whatever happens here, I'd like to encourage people to be in the moment, switch off their phones for a while and just experience."

While the mill stones may have stopped turning, it's a turning of time for this beautiful old building that will add an exciting new chapter to the story of Castleview Mills.

Mill photos by Julie O'Brien



## LEO Autumn Food Series

### Green for micro information session for food and drink businesses

**Date:** 20th September 2023 **Time:** 9:45am - 12:30pm

An interactive morning workshop aimed at Food & Drink Businesses that want to either take the first step towards becoming more sustainable or to further develop existing 'Green' initiatives within their business.

### Food starter programme

**Date:** 20th September 2023 **Time:** 9:30am - 1:00pm

This programme is for anyone with a food idea, or those at the early stage of starting up a food business. It will cover everything from an overview of the Irish food sector to starting a food production business.

### Improve your food business operations

**Date:** 26th September 2023 **Time:** 1:30pm - 2:30pm

From Paper to Digital: Helping small food producers to improve business operations with simple and effective digital tools such as paperless records, digital cleaning schedules and digital stock management.

### Improve your visual story – videography and photography for food & drink businesses (2-part workshop)

**Date:** 10th Oct & 17th Oct **Time:** 10am - 1pm

To promote your food or drink business, it's vital to communicate with customers in order to grow brand awareness and increase sales. Learn how to achieve this with cost-effective techniques, through visual storytelling and video marketing.





# The Hiroshima Shadows phenomenon



## THE HISTORY CORNER

Shane Daly

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

*"The owner of the shadow is my mother." - Sachiko Ochi*

The atomic bombs that were dropped on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki encapsulate one of the darkest periods in human history, exemplifying humankind's ability to inflict the most heinous of crimes on one another. The complete capitulation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki within seconds of the blast and the in-

stant death of 80,000 people on impact is merely a percentage of the damage done on the days 'Fat Man' and 'Little Boy' were dropped: A deplorable time in history that left physical scars on the Japanese people and one that created some of the most eerie and haunting images ever – the Hiroshima Shadows.

J. Robert Oppenheimer was the lead scientist in the production of these bombs and has recently come to prominence due to the self-titled film 'Oppenheimer'. Online you can find pictures of the bombs and, written in marker on the sides of both 'Little Boy' and 'Fat Man' are some of the names of engineers and soldiers that helped create and transport the bombs. Truly haunting photographs.

The Hiroshima Shadows are outlines of the bodies that evaporated from the heat of the blast. People closest to the blast site were incinerated by the heatwave that was initially emitted from the bomb's explosion. Contrary to popular belief, the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, 'Little Boy', did not detonate on impact, but above ground whilst still falling. The immediate radiation release, along with the power and heat of the blast evaporated anything and anyone in its vicinity. It was

a heat so powerful that bodies struck by the blast were permanently etched into the concrete they stood on.

On August 6, 1945, Enola Gay, the B-29 bomber, was nine kilometres above Hiroshima when 'Little Boy' was released: 44.4 seconds later, at 8.15am, it exploded. 'Little Boy' contained 64 kilograms of uranium 235. The blinding light that was emitted is estimated to be 1,000 times brighter than the sun and the heat was roughly 4,000 degrees Celsius. According to the World Nuclear Association, the explosion was equivalent to 16,000 tonnes of TNT exploding, which sent a pulse of thermal energy rippling across the city, flattening 13 square kilometres. Roughly 25 per cent of the population of Hiroshima died immediately. Another 25 per cent died of the effects of radiation poisoning and cancer in the months that followed. Three days after that blast, on August 9, the United States detonated the second atomic bomb, nicknamed 'Fat Man', over Nagasaki. The plutonium 239 bomb released a 21,000 tonne explosion that yielded identical results to that of the destruction in Hiroshima.

On the morning of August 6, 1945, the Sumitomo Bank

in Hiroshima was just about to open. Some of its employees were already inside, while others were on their way to work when the nuclear bomb was dropped. All 29 of the employees were instantly killed. Some survivors of the blast died a few days later due to radiation sickness. According to Hiroshima City's archives, passersby took refuge in the building because it was close to ground zero. A huge pile of bodies were recovered inside the building during the search and recovery operations.

One victim was sitting outside the Bank; the Blast Shadow left of this person has become the most prominent of its kind, the most famous of all the Hiroshima Shadow photographs.

In 1971, moves to demolish the Hiroshima Branch of Sumitomo Bank prompted a survivor to come forward and plead with the government to preserve the Blast Shadow. Sachiko Ochi claimed she was the daughter of the victim. The Peace Memorial Museum initially refused, but eventually acceded to her request. "Every time the shadow faded, my mother seemed to move away from me," said Ochi. "I'm glad that she is finally recognised."

The demolition of the bank



*The imprint of a person who was sitting on the stone steps at the entrance to the Sumitomo Bank waiting for it to open. The bank was 250 metres east of the hypocenter.*

proceeded and the stones showing the Blast Shadow were carefully removed and donated to the museum. There, they were meticulously reassembled. You can visit the museum to see that artefact today. Other photographs of the Hiroshima Shadows are available online.

Six days after the second

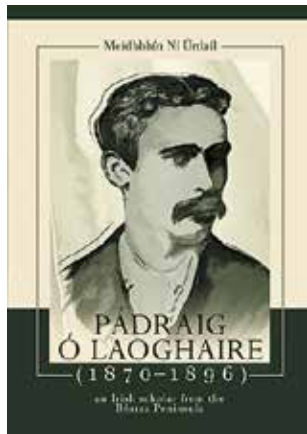
blast; on August 15, having witnessed the devastation of the bombs, and eager to spare his people from further misery, Emperor Hirohito announced Japan's surrender. He signed the formal declaration on September 2, 1945 ending World War II. Nuclear weapons have not been used since.

## A forgotten Gaelic revivalist from the Bérarra Peninsula

The focus of a new book is an utterly neglected, important figure from the period leading up to the foundation of the Gaelic League and the early years of that movement, Pádraig Ó Laoghaire (Patrick O'Leary) (1870–1896), from the Bérarra Peninsula in West Cork.

Taking her reader on a biographical tour in the opening chapter, in 'Pádraig Ó Laoghaire (1870–1896): an Irish scholar from the Bérarra Peninsula', Meidhbhín Ní Úrdail follows with an analysis of the development of this key scholar from an emerging author to a respected man of letters, both at home and abroad among the Irish diaspora worldwide. Ó Laoghaire's position and influence in the Gaelic League is then examined alongside his role as important confidant of fellow Gaelic revivalists, Douglas Hyde and Joseph H. Lloyd.

Also examined are Ó Laoghaire's own poetry and his pioneering 'Sgeuluidheacht Chúige Mumhan', a unique collection of seven folktales from Bérarra's oral tradition that appeared in 1895. This, in fact, is Ó Laoghaire's most acclaimed



publication and has, as Ní Úrdail points out, the distinction of being the first published folktale collection of its kind to emanate from Munster. She also believes that its concluding linguistic notes' section makes it the first serious scientific study of contemporary Irish as spoken in the province. Assessment by contemporaries of Ó Laoghaire's standing, not least in his obituaries, provides a further layer in this multi-faceted investigation.

Over time, Pádraig Ó Laoghaire seems to find brief mention, if at all, in studies of the resurgence of Irish nationalism and culture in the final decades of the nineteenth-century.

This, Ní Úrdail argues, is due in no small part to the legacy of the other famous Ó Laoghaire and towering figure from Cork, 'An tAthair Peadar'. That the Bérarra man died of tuberculosis at the young age of twenty-six years is, she notes, a contributory factor.

We have here a new study of Pádraig Ó Laoghaire in his own place and time. Meidhbhín Ní Úrdail provides the reader with an account that sheds new light on a period of enormous cultural, linguistic and political significance in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Meidhbhín Ní Úrdail, originally from Glanmire but with close family ties to Bérarra, is a graduate of UCC and the University of Freiburg, Baden-Württemberg, Germany. She lectures in Modern Irish at University College Dublin where she is currently Head of Subject. She was elected a member of the Royal Irish Academy in March 2021.

*'Pádraig Ó Laoghaire (1870–1896): an Irish scholar from the Bérarra Peninsula' by Meidhbhín Ní Úrdail, Cumann Staire Bhéarra / Beara Historical Society, 445pp. RRP €30*

## OUT & ABOUT



*Winner of the Kinsale GAA 'Win a House in Kinsale' fundraiser, Emma Tyrrell, celebrates with husband Sonny Greenwich, and underage players Aibhlinn (8), Hannah (5) and Jack (3) Murphy at the GAA club last week. Pic. John Allen*





## HISTORY & POLITICS

Kieran Doyle

I have a love-hate relationship with historical movies. If you're into historical material, of course you'll be enticed to go see one. But so many historical movies have led to misleading facts and wrongful portrayals, like the much-loved Micheal Collins movie; with its 1970s-style IRA car bombs going off in 1920s Dublin and ensuring that a generation grew up thinking Dev ordered the hit on Collins at Béal na Bláth. With movies such an easy and wide-ranging medium, compared to heavy reads, it can be difficult to disentangle truths from fantasy when historical movies hit the screens.

Even allowing for some Hollywood dazzle, the Oppenheimer movie that chartered the secretive Manhattan project and the race to create the world's first atomic bomb was riveting and accurate material. At three hours duration, I wondered whether it was going to be a tough viewing, but it flew by. Director Christopher Nolan successfully walked a tightrope



The memorial in Trinity College Dublin that is dedicated to Professor Ernest Walton.

# Oppenheimer movie hit of the summer but what about Ireland's atomic man?

of knitting atomic cinematography, scientific but accessible conversation and historical accuracy, to keep viewers glued to the screen.

The dropping of the Atomic Bomb on Nagasaki and Hiroshima are regrettably two of the most enduring moments of history. They remain to this day a stark reminder of how easy it is for humanity to be wiped out by weapons of mass destruction, something Putin troubling has threatened us with in the Ukraine-Russian war. This premise of the movie is based on who could literally make the first Atomic Bomb – the Nazis or the USA. It's based around two key figures: an energetic and determined general by the name of Groves and a brilliant scientist who had embraced the emerging science of quantum and nuclear physics – Robert Oppenheimer (brilliantly played by the diverse and talented Cillian Murphy). There is no spoiler alert if you intend to watch it, as we know the Americans won the race and Japan became a grotesque testing ground, much to the scientist's disgust. But what you will learn about is how they ran the Manhattan project, the array of great scientists and thinkers behind it, inspirationally led by Oppenheimer. He would be emblazoned over the cover of Time Magazine, 1948, and labelled, 'Father of the Atomic Bomb'. Yet he was later discredited in the crazy paranoia of the 1950s when any left-thinking scientist, writer, actor or politician was dishonoured in the great McCarthy witch hunt, (named after senator McCarthy, who led the trials that were to rid America of the 'red scare' i.e. sympathetic American communists – real or imagined). Yet the man who split the atom was an Irishman, and Trinity College Dublin graduate – Ernest Walton. Most people won't have heard of him or what he achieved (in fairness working with a team of other scientists who I will come to) but it has led to the modern world we have today.

In fact, Oppenheimer and Walton were just part of a long line of scientists, each who broke new ground, each allowing the next scientist to push the boundaries of discovery to a new level. Never was Isaac Newton's most famous quote so apt: "If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants". Watching the movie got me curious about the evolution of atomic discovery and also the significance of it. I don't think I'm being unfair to say most of



..the man who split the atom was an Irishman, and Trinity College Dublin graduate – Ernest Walton.

us (outside students of and fans of physics) tend to associate the splitting of the atom simply as the key element behind creating a bomb. Yet the discovery of the atom and its many components has had an impact on all the modern gadgets and machinery we have at our disposal today. I don't have enough knowledge about physics to get into the nitty-gritty (thank you Dave Pegler for fact-checking my science), nor is it something easy to explain, but I would like to take you on a leap from when another Trinity College professor, James Ussher, in the 17th century calculated that the world was only 6026 years old, to the 20th century when fellow Trinity man, Earnest Walton and others from that fruitful period 1890-1932, peering into the tiniest invisible particles, atoms and elements, really saw how big the universe was and how old the earth had been in existence.

Even to this day, it's hard to imagine how the scientists of the late 20th century made these wonderful discoveries, based on things we can't see, with primitive self-made equipment, on which they performed their experiments, which proved their discoveries true. Indeed, that part is as amazing as the maths and physics.

Where to begin with such a massive topic? We know now that there are four forces of nature [as I write this, scientists believe there might be a fifth – but let's not get ahead of them here!] – gravity discovered by the aforementioned Isaac Newton, electromagnetic forces that carry our phone, radio, television signals for example and the other two forces that are called 'strong forces' (that keep atoms together) and weak forces (that pull atoms apart).

The scientists were not just merely discovering and simply categorising matter, protons, nuclei, neutrons, atoms; they were understanding and unlocking the impact these seemingly invisible natural things make and shape our world. They also allowed us to unlock the secrets of the past. Newton's gravity force theory explained how we revolved around the sun and our interaction with our galaxy. In the late 20th century, there were the beginnings of electricity and magnetism which gave scientists an understanding of electromagnetism. A German scientist Rontgen, when working in his lab, came upon a reaction of light that gave an invisible ray that seemed to travel through objects. What he had stumbled across was what he dubbed X-Ray. (x often being used in maths to denote an unknown quantity). But what caused this was puzzling. It was the first step in understanding what the atom comprised of, because unbeknownst to him, electrons particles had been discovered, elements smaller than atoms. This is not just scientific lab talk – eventually understanding atoms and how they could be manipulated has led to X-Ray machines, CT Scans and 3D medical scanners, remote controls, sensors and most modern complex equipment.

Henry Becquerel and Marie Curie's discover of radioactivity was also a massive step forward in splitting the atom, because radioactivity is the natural break down of so-called stable elements. It led others, like Cambridge Professor Ernest Rutherford, to understanding and discovering 'particles'. Up until then scientists believed that chemical atoms were immutable, in other words could not be broken down until Curie's and Becquerel's work on radiation. A new question emerged – could atoms be broken down 'artificial'? I suppose we also may ask, why bother? Well for a start because radiation changes an element's form, it was the start of what Rutherford would call 'radiometric dating', which meant one could now date the age of matter, and show that professors Ussher's date for how old our earth was, was based on a biblical fantasy timeline. But Rutherford and other came to understand that all matter which is made up of atoms were: 'dense positively charged nucleus, surrounded by negatively charged electrons', i.e. even smaller components than the atom. Remember I mentioned four natural forces?

Understanding the components of the atom allowed the scientist to come to grips with the other two forces of nature, i.e. the strong force that keeps these elements together and the weak force (as in radiation) that breaks them apart. But could humans split an atom and what would happen if they could?

You need energy – light. In this journey, understanding cosmic rays, then learning how to manipulate them was the next step. In fact, key to splitting the atom was when scientists worked out, in theory and with mathematical modelling, that the energy emitted from cosmic rays could split the atom. Now imagine in the 1920s, with primitive equipment, and working with invisible forces [detected through ingenious ways such as cloud trails to identify atoms in cloud chambers] 24-year-old Ernest Walton, was invited to Cambridge to work with Rutherford and others. Together they had to put all their theories into practise. It was Walton's 'particle accelerator' concept that did the trick. [Standing on the shoulders of giants and all the other steps that it took to get to this point]. They needed to build a machine that had yet to be invented or conceived. But now, with their understanding of light, energy, radiation, and the various components of an atom, they knew it was possible. The answer? They had to send particles through a high voltage,

to push up the energy of those particles. That beam of energy [light can be particles and waves] had to then be smashed into a target [i.e. an element. It turned out to be lithium after trial and error], but they then needed a detector system to see what they had done. It's difficult to conceive this in 2023 with all we know, let alone back in 1932. Rutherford, Cockburn, Chadwick all were part of this experiment, but it was Walton, who in one of their many hundred experiments, on the morning of April 17, 1932, when working alone in the lab, ever-so-slightly making new adjustments to their previous experiments, became the first man in the world to split the atom. What Oppenheimer and the Manhattan Project team did a decade later, was to weaponise the splitting of the atom into a force so powerful it could destroy cities. On the eve of their discovery many of the scientists in the Manhattan project were to realise its implications and wanted the American government not to use it as a starting point but as an ending point to tell the world – look what we have done, we must go no further. Nuclear physics can give us energy – great amounts of it from splitting the atom. The American government wanted to do more than just that, and after Japan, we could never turn the clock back again.

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## people Farming

# Korean Natural Farming can increase the health of soil in West Cork

By Tommy Moyles

West Cork has a wide and varied range of agricultural practices and now Korean Natural Farming can be added to the list. Initially developed in South Korea in the 1960s by a man named Cho Han Kyu, Korean Natural Farming or KNF aims is to maximise farm productivity while minimising chemical inputs and reducing as much physical effort as possible. In effect what the method does is increase the health of your soil by using what is naturally available in your soil mostly through fermentation and promotion of wild microorganisms. As a result, fertiliser becomes unnecessary and the method can work for any type of farm or garden.

Thanks to a surge in interest in regenerative farming practices over the last decade, KNF is in use in a number of farms in the country ranging from dairy farms to vegetable growers. Over the summer, Drinagh based couple Ananda and Darren Donohue held a course on the practice on their holding at Derryclogh, Drinagh and hope to host more in the near future. They have been using KNF practices on their land for almost four years at this stage – three years on land they leased – and now have almost completed

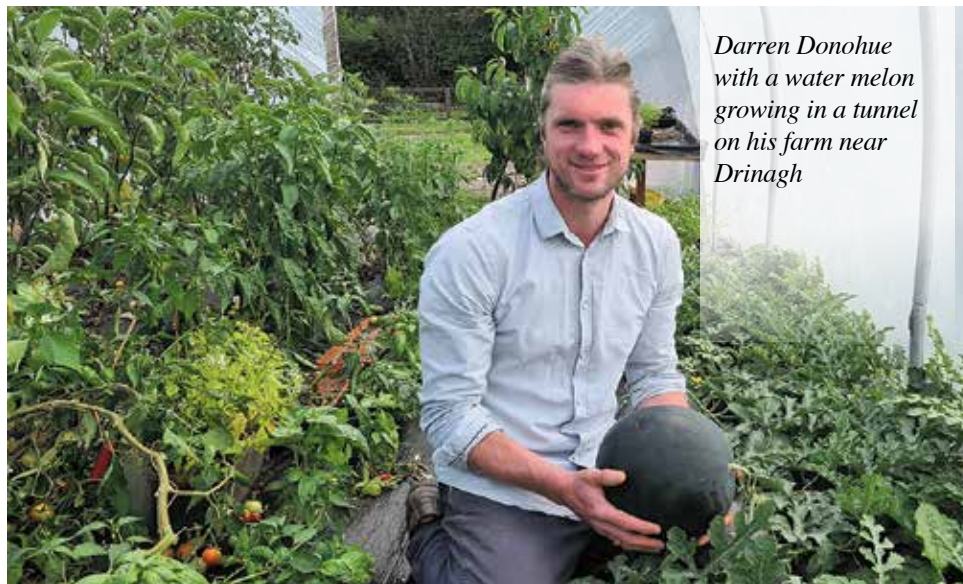
a year of KNF on their five-acre holding.

There they run a small herd of cattle, some sheep, and a flock of 35 hens and also an extensive vegetable garden. One of the standout features of this is a polytunnel containing an array of herbs, fruit and vegetables, including the likes of water melons, chilli and sweet peppers, four varieties of tomatoes, aubergine, French beans, a grape vine and, if that wasn't variety enough, there's a peach and nectarine tree to go in.

So, what is involved in the process of Korean Natural Farming?

Darren explains: "We harvest microbes from the forest or old undisturbed areas of growth. We bring them to our farm here and we culture them out. Then we adapt them to the soil into which they are going and then we brew that into an aerated bubble kind of tea that we spray out onto the land. The idea is after a number of applications, the expert in KNF globally, American, Chris Trump says that after three years of applying the microbes, they become self-sustaining."

Ananda has been organically gardening all her life so they tried not to be tied to chemical inputs on their land. That, combined with an ambition to boost biodiversity, have been



Darren Donohue with a water melon growing in a tunnel on his farm near Drinagh



Microbes growing on wood shavings. This is one of the initial stages of the Korean Natural Farming processes.

the drivers in farming a more natural way that would be similar to what Darren said his grandparents would have done when they were farming.

"It's been helpful for us," says Ananda. "I'm really hoping it will help other people as well. Having seen organic and how difficult it is, especially at large scale. This is more attainable because you can make something quite concentrate, which are kind of mirrors what conventional farmers do in spreading fertilisers, where a small bit goes a long way, which is simi-

lar to this. That's what appealed to me. I've gardened a long time and I like to find things that make it easier; I think this can do that because you're employing a work force in the form of microbes that work away underground."

The inputs used are ones that farmers can make themselves. This includes five stages of what are called IMOs, or indigenous microorganisms. These are plant based, diluted microorganisms, which can be brewed into a tea and sprayed onto the land. Other KNF inputs such

as Fermented Fruit Juice (FFJ) and Fermented Plant Juice (FPJ) are added as required during the growth cycle of the grass.

An IMO is completed in five different stages. In cooking terms, you could liken it to making a sourdough starter; you provide the captured microorganisms with moisture, food and warmth to enable it to multiply. Ultimately OakstoneKNF hope to be in a position to supply farmers with IMO for use on their own land and will continue to run courses to spread the information on this farming method with soil health at its core.

To a first-time observer, something that stands out about Korean Natural Farming (KNF) is that there are quite a few acronyms involved. Here is a small explainer of some of the principal ones.

**IMO (Indigenous micro-organisms):** Made in five steps over a lengthy period of time, the end result is a living soil which can then be incorporated into fields and gardens, either by spraying or feeding directly under the grass level.

**LAB (Lactic acid bacteria):** This can be made from fermenting raw milk and the liquid made from soaking rice. It aids in digestion. A beneficial probiotic, LAB is entirely safe for human consumption but in Korean natural farming, it helps with fermentation.

**FPJ (Fermented plant juice):** If you have a field full of (non-toxic) weeds, you can pick them when they are beginning to bud and ferment them into your plant juice. This is done by massaging them with brown sugar until their properties are released. This juice will help balance your soil biology.

**OHN (Oriental herbal nutrient):** This is a combination of five ingredients: angelica root, garlic, ginger, liquorice and cinnamon. They are extracted with alcohol and then fermented with brown sugar. Then, they are combined and added to IMOs or directly to plants as needed. This mixture encourages beneficial bacteria. At OakstoneKNF, OHN is fermented with brown sugar first and then extracted with alcohol.

**FAA (Fish amino acids):** Similar to if you've ever added a few drops of fish sauce to a stir fry. The resulting concoction does not have a fishy or rotten smell and is an excellent food source for plants and soil.

**Vinegar (brown rice or apple cider):** In traditional Korean natural farming, brown rice is the vinegar of choice. The vinegar has a natural cleansing effect and kills bad bacteria.

## OUT & ABOUT



Glenilen Farm in Drimoleague recently celebrated making it to number 89 in Shelf-Life's Top 100 'Masters Brands at Home' list, by taking a boat trip to the Fastnet Rock with their team of 60 and their families. Blessed with glorious sunshine, the mood was upbeat and celebratory on the Cape Clear Ferries boat, run also by a West Cork family company.

Glenilen Farm began in the kitchen of Valerie and Alan Kingston's home in Drimoleague in 1997. The husband and wife team made use of an abundant supply of milk creating cheesecakes and yoghurts for the local country market. The company now employs over 60 people, producing a wide variety of yoghurts using milk from neighbouring farms.

Citizens Information



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## people Farming

# Clonakilty Macra celebrates 75 years

St. Mary's Theatre, Rossmore will be the venue for the 75th Anniversary of Clonakilty Macra na Feirme on September 30, 2023. Doors will open at 7.30pm with the night's festivities beginning at 8pm.

This is a remarkable milestone, as Clonakilty, founded in 1948, is one of the few Macra clubs in the country to have run continuously for the past 75 years, 2023 was a successful year for the club, winning three national titles, and Carbery Club of the year, the highlight winning the All-Ireland Capers Competition.

A performance of this All-Ireland winning show (20-minute, light entertainment show) by the winning cast, will be the main event in this celebratory night;

rounding off the night full of musical and comedy entertainment from shows down through the years, performed by past and present club members

For the past 75 years Clonakilty Macra have had a long and successful tradition in the community for providing young people (18-35) with opportunities for social engagement, community involvement and skill development. Nothing portrays this tradition better than club's recent Capers National Title.

Developing a Capers show fit for competition requires months of teamwork, discussion, practice, laughs and fun. This was the perfect tonic for Clonakilty Macra members this year, coming from a world of isolation following Covid 19.



Macra Clubs across the country just like Clonakilty offer young people a chance to be part of a community where every interest, talent and idea catered for. Clonakilty Macra's door is always open to new members, so if you are between 17 and 35 and want a preview of what the club does, Rossmore is the place to be.

For more information on the 75th Celebration, to share your memories, or to enquire about joining Clonakilty Macra, please contact the club at clonakiltymacra@gmail.com.

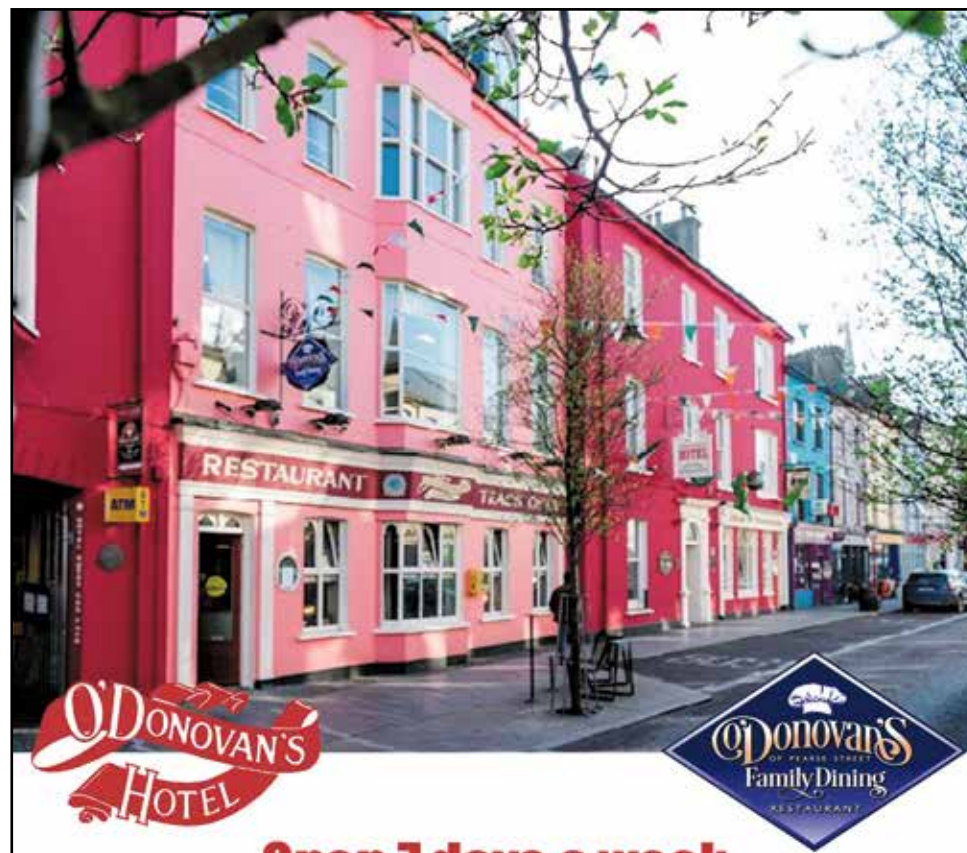
## Shorthorn sale

The Irish Shorthorn society are holding a special sale for their Cork and Kerry breeders at Macroom mart on

Saturday, September 30. The sale which will run in conjunction with the weekly will include two sections, one for pedigree registered beef shorthorns and another for commercial stock too. Prior to the establishment of this sale, Ennis was the nearest venue for the breeds society sale.

PRO for the society, Aine

O'Donovan said: "There will be special prizes for the top priced animals on the day and that there would also be a youth development and breeders information day at Bandon mart on 14 October. Hopefully these events will lead to a club being set up for breeders in the south west.



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## people Farming

## Interesting political times ahead with new Farmers' Alliance

FARMING  
IN WEST CORK

Tommy Moyles

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

In association  
with



I think it's fair to say this summer has been a far cry from the sunshine and record commodity prices of summer 2022.

Rain has made for an incredibly difficult harvest for tillage farmers. The washout summer, a contraction in milk price in excess of 30 per cent and continuing uncertainty about what, if any changes will happen to the nitrate's derogation are among the challenges faced by dairy farmers at present. The former has managed to stay in the farming news or certainly the consciousness of farmers for much of the year and there's little respite from it in sight either. There's a line that the European Commission will make a decision in October while there's another line of thought that a call won't be made on it until early in the new year.

The unknown timing is making it very difficult for farmers to plan and as John Fitzgerald

of Bank of Ireland said at a meeting recently, it's difficult for them to sort long-term finance for farmers when they have no idea if there are potential production cuts ahead or not. As agri-manager covering three counties, Cork, Tipperary and Waterford, where dairy underpins the rural economy, he knows the challenges financially that will be placed on farmers if their production is compromised.

As difficult as that would be for someone trying to sort a loan now, I'm sure it could cause even more headaches for those with well-established loans and could lead to some restructuring. Teagasc had a study out recently where almost two-thirds (57pc) of farmers had experienced stress on anxiety in the last five years and that figure didn't surprise me. I find it's best not to dwell on every possibility that could occur on-farm because there are just too many uncontrol-

lables. Weather, workload, markets, finances or animal health issues not going your way can be difficult to deal with as standalone items but if two or more come at once and there's not a good support network around you.

**Political shake up**

While some constituencies experienced changes, the electoral commission decided against tinkering with the boundaries of Cork South west but from an agricultural perspective at least it became a key constituency.

Among the current Oireachtas members, there's a pair of party spokespeople on agriculture, one of whom, Holly Cairns, is also a party leader, while Senator Tim Lombard was appointed to that role for Fine Gael. Michael Collins has been very vocal on agricultural issues as part of the Rural Independents grouping and Fianna Fail's Christopher O'Sullivan has increased his contributions

on agricultural topics significantly since elected. All four have maintained prominence in the national media throughout the year representing an area where the primary sector plays a large part in the local economy. Outside of the incumbents in Leinster House, Sinn Féin are touted as a government-in-waiting, so it will be interesting to see if their candidate, Clare O'Callaghan can get elected. Although relatively unknown, if the party repeats their general election performance of 2020, there's every chance she could be in the mix for a seat.

Throughout the country however, there are a growing number who feel farming isn't represented enough politically and among their number are a group who have set up a new political party.

The Farmers' Alliance have stated they intend to run candidates in upcoming elections and as one of their

most prominent spokespeople to date is Bantry suckler farmer Helen O'Sullivan, there's every chance they could be an option for voters in the constituency in future elections.

History has shown, establishing a new political party isn't easy but there's an increase in farmers' views towards both Fine Gael and Fianna Fail in recent years. Their vote has mainly drifted towards independent politicians so now a new farmers' party could draw more votes from them. A recent Irish Farmers Journal poll of 2,000 farmers showed that three in four farmers would be willing to give their first preference vote to a farmers' political party if one was to be on the ballot. With local, European and national elections all ahead in the next 18 months, there's interesting political times ahead for farmers.

## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

## Supports for farmers

**I am a farmer but I'm finding it hard to manage on the income from farming.**

**What social welfare schemes can help?**

You may be eligible for Farm Assist, a weekly means-tested payment for low-income farmers. To qualify, you must be a farmer farming land in Ireland, aged between 18 and 66, and you must pass a means test. There is an online calculator for Farm Assist is on the IFA website [www.ifa.ie](http://www.ifa.ie) which will help you work out whether you are eligible for Farm Assist.

You are considered a farmer, if you farm land that you own or lease and that you use for the purpose of husbandry (working the land with the aim of taking produce from the land). It is not sufficient for a person simply to own a farm of land.

The current maximum rate of Farm Assist is €220 per week. There are also increases for:

- An adult dependant (€146)
- Child dependants under 12 (€42 full-rate, €21 half-rate)
- Child dependants 12 and over (€50 full-rate, €25 half-rate)

All your sources of income are assessed in the means test, including cash income, capital (the first €20,000 of which is not taken into account), and maintenance paid to you.

The means test includes

income from the farm and off-farm self-employment, farm schemes and direct payments, leasing of land, and other employment. Only some of your income (70pc) is assessed and there are disregards if you have children and if you are on certain farming schemes.

Your income from farming is assessed as gross income that you, your spouse, civil partner or cohabitant may be expected to receive minus any expenses you incur to earn that income. Your income from the previous 12 months is used to assess your likely future earnings. However, it is not simply assumed that your previous year's earnings will be repeated the following year as farmers can have significant variations in income from year to year.

When you apply for Farm Assist, a social welfare inspector will call to see you and ask to see various documents. For example, accounts prepared for tax purposes, creamery returns, cattle registration cards, details of headage payments and area aid. They will also want information on the sale of crops, cattle, milk and other produce. The inspector will then assess the costs actually and necessarily incurred in connection with the running of the farm. These costs may include rent, annuities,

the cost of inputs like feed and fertiliser and the depreciation of farm machinery. Labour costs are taken into account, with the exception of the labour of the farmer and their spouse, civil partner or cohabitant. You are entitled to receive a copy of this farm income calculation.

If you or your spouse, cohabitant or civil partner has other income from self-employment, this is also assessed, taking into account the costs incurred in the business. The income from farming and other forms of self-employment is added together and the costs involved are deducted.

If you have leased part of your land, the income from the leasing is assessed in full. None of it is disregarded. If you have leased all your land, you are not eligible for Farm Assist.

**How do I apply?**

To apply for Farm Assist, you should complete the application form, which you can download or pick up from your local Citizens Information Centre or Social Welfare Office.

**Are there any additional benefits available to people in receipt of Farm Assist?**

There are some extra supports which may be available, depending on your circumstances

such as:

- Fuel Allowance – a payment to help with the cost of heating your home during the winter
- A medical card – many farmers qualify for medical cards even if they are not getting a social welfare payment (apply on the medical card form or online on [www.medicalcard.ie](http://www.medicalcard.ie))
- Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance
- The Rural Social Scheme

**What is the Rural Social Scheme?**

The RSS is aimed at low-income farmer and fishermen/women. In the scheme, you get a 'top-up' payment in return for providing services to the community.

Work under the scheme can include maintaining walking routes and bog roads, social care and care of older people, community care for pre-school and after-school groups.

You work 19.5 hours per week. These hours are based on a farmer-friendly schedule so participation in the scheme does not affect your farming activities.

To qualify for RSS you must either be getting Farm Assist or be actively farming and getting another social welfare payment, such as Jobseekers Allowance or Disability Allowance. To

prove you are actively farming you must provide confirmation of your application for the Basic Payments Scheme for the current year and a valid herd number. If you are eligible but do not wish to participate in RSS, your dependent spouse, civil partner or cohabitant can take the available place.

If you are a child or sibling of a herd number owner and you can certify that you are resident and/or working on the farm and you are getting one of the qualifying social welfare payments, you may be eligible to participate in RSS on the basis of your parent's/sibling's herd number.

The rates of payment for new participants on RSS depends on your qualifying DSP payment. The minimum weekly payment increased to €247.50 in January 2023.

If the actual social welfare payment (including dependants) you were getting is €220 a week or less, then you will get the minimum RSS weekly rate of €247.50 (that is €220 plus €27.50). If your actual weekly social welfare payment (including dependants) was €220.01 or more, then you will get the equivalent rate plus €27.50.

**Does a person who is farming have entitlement to any other Social Welfare payments?**

A self-employed farmer usually pays Class S PRSI. These Class S contributions cover you for a limited number of payments.

- Maternity benefit
- Adoptive benefit
- Paternity benefit
- Widow's, widower's or surviving civil partner's contributory pension
- State Pension Contributory
- Treatment benefit scheme
- Invalidity Pension

You should contact your local Citizens Information Service to clarify the eligibility criteria for each of these benefits.

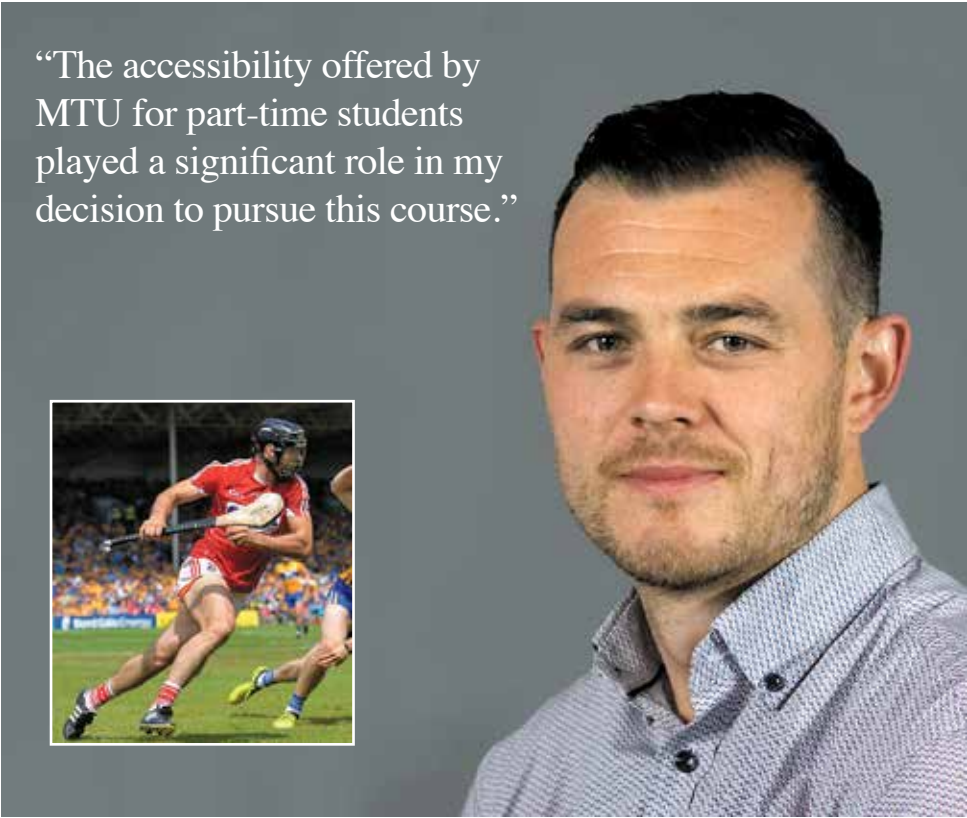
If you need further information about this topic or you would like information on other issues, you can drop in to the local Citizens Information Service in Bantry or telephone them on 0818 07 8390. They will be happy to assist you and if necessary arrange an appointment for you. WEST CORK HELPLINE 0818 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](mailto:bantry@citinfo.ie) or log on to [www.citizensinformation.ie](http://www.citizensinformation.ie)



Special Feature: LIFE LONG LEARNING

Part-time Business Degree Pathway: My transformative journey back to MTU



“The accessibility offered by MTU for part-time students played a significant role in my decision to pursue this course.”

After leaving CIT (Munster Technological University) in 2011 and diving straight into the workforce, the desire to return to college and complete his degree never truly left **Christopher Joyce**, who works as Associate Manager Onboarding at VelocityEHS in Cork and played for the Cork senior hurling team from 2011 to 2020.

“For years, I debated with myself, often talking myself out of it, but the longing to upskill and achieve my educational goals persisted” Christopher says. “Finally, summoning the courage, I decided to embark on a part-time course, easing myself back into the academic world after such a long hiatus. While I am grateful for the valuable work experience, I gained in my previous company, I knew that obtaining a degree from Munster Technological University (MTU) would propel me to the next level in my career. “In 2021, I took the first step and enrolled in a Certificate in Project Management (QQI level 8). This course proved to be a

game-changer, not only easing my transition back into learning but also providing me with valuable skills. Completing the course with distinction, I moved to a new company and assumed the role of Project Manager. Witnessing the immediate pay-off from my upskilling efforts, I felt even more determined to pursue my next goal of achieving a business degree. Without hesitation, I enrolled in the part-time Bachelor of Business (Honours) degree programme at MTU. “The accessibility offered by MTU for part-time students played a significant role in my decision to pursue this course. Online recorded lectures allowed me to study at my own pace, while on-campus lectures provided an excellent opportunity to network and forge new connections. The practicality of the curriculum and the knowledge I gained during the programme have been invaluable in my new role as an Associate Manager. I proudly completed my degree in December 2022. The icing on the cake was achieving a First Class Honours, making the journey of going back to college all the more fulfilling and rewarding. “The growth in my career over the past few years can be attributed in large part to my decision to return to MTU and upskill in this exceptional university. As I continue to

advance in my career, I am confident that the learning and experiences from this transformative journey will continue to drive me forward. Though initially daunting, this pursuit has proven to be an enriching experience, contributing significantly to my personal and professional growth.”



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QQI Level 5 Graphic Design Skills	Mon, Sep 25th	7-9pm	12 weeks	€230
Introductory course in Herbal Medicine	Mon, Sep 25th	7-9pm	6 weeks	€110
QQI Level 5 Mathematics	Mon, Oct 2nd	4-6pm	22 weeks	€390
Microsoft Excel - Intermediate Level	Mon, Sep 25th	6.30 - 8.30pm	6 weeks	€100
Naturalist Art	Mon, Sep 25th	7-9pm	6 weeks	€110
QQI Level 5 Intellectual Disability Studies	Mon, Sep 25th	7-9pm	12 weeks	€230
Tai Chi	Mon, Sep 25th	5.30 - 6.30pm	6 weeks	€90

For information on the above ring the West Cork Campus on **028-21644** or email [westcorkcampus@morrisonsislandcampus.ie](mailto:westcorkcampus@morrisonsislandcampus.ie) or email the Coordinator [maireosullivan@morrisonsislandcampus.ie](mailto:maireosullivan@morrisonsislandcampus.ie)

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## Special Feature: LIFE LONG LEARNING

# Commercial diving opportunities at BIM's National Fisheries College of Ireland

Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Ireland's Seafood Development Agency provide a broad range of services and supports to Ireland's seafood sector. Specialised training programmes are delivered from the two National Fisheries Colleges of Ireland, based in Greencastle, Co Donegal and Castletownbere in Co Cork. The colleges offer a broad range of courses including, Deckhand training, navigation, firefighting, engineering and now Commercial Diver Training at the National Fisheries College in Castletownbere, Co. Cork. Certification from BIM can lead to full-time employment in the fishing and aquaculture industry.

Commercial Divers are an essential element of the work force on any fish farm and provide vital services to other forms of aquaculture. The role of the diver is varied and depends on the stage of the fish production cycle. Typically, this includes site and mooring inspections, seabed sampling and surveys, net inspection and repairs, attachment or removal of net weights, removal of mortalities from cages and recovery of items from the seabed. Most aquaculture sites are situated on the west coast, amongst some of the most spectacular and dramatic scenery in the country. It is a beautiful place to work and offers a quite different working environment to office-based jobs.

The aquaculture industry is now the largest employer of divers in Ireland. Many are full time employees, and some are contract divers who provide services to fish farms during busy periods and then work in other areas of the diving industry for the rest of the year. Anyone who is comfortable in the water can learn to dive, and anyone with a recreational diving qualification can become a commercial diver.

Courses are delivered at the National Fisheries College in Castletownbere and are approved by QQI and by the HSE (UK). This ensures divers trained in Ireland receive internationally recognised certifications.

The College is well placed

for the delivery of these courses with a waterfront school and direct access to a sheltered body of water for the safe delivery of all elements of the course. Bere Island provides sheltered waters even in the most challenging weather conditions enabling divers to dive safely every day. BIM have invested in a complete diver training system that includes an IMCA certified containerised surface supplied diving system, recompression chamber and a bespoke dive barge, together with the necessary ancillary equipment to deliver world class training here in Ireland.

Divers start with the basics using commercial scuba equipment and hand tools and learn both the necessary theory and practical skills required for industry and certification. The tasks undertaken by a commercial scuba diver are limited. Surface-supplied equipment is preferred when divers are required to conduct works involving power tools, cutting, burning or welding underwater. Surface supplied diving, as the name suggests, means that the diver's air supply is provided from the surface via an umbilical which also includes communications and depth monitoring capabilities. This is a safer alternative to scuba where the diver's air supply is limited by the size of the scuba cylinder. The correct choice of equipment and dive skills required are driven by a Dive Plan and Risk Assessment for any diving project, both of which are covered in the BIM diver training course.

New Irish diving regulations came into force in 2019. Statutory Instrument 254 SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELFARE AT WORK



(DIVING) REGULATIONS 2018, specifically includes the aquaculture industry. In the past, divers with recreational diving qualifications would sometimes conduct diving jobs on fish farms. Under the previous regulations, there was uncertainty regarding the qualifications required and the application of the regulations to fish farms. This is however no longer the case, and any employer of divers is required by law to ensure that the divers are suitably qualified and competent to carry out the works required and meet the legislative requirements for minimum team size, type of equipment used, and the appointment of a diving supervisor who is suitably qualified and competent.

BIM engage a team of specialised instructors to deliver the courses to the highest standard. Brian Murphy, Course Director, is a qualified Mixed Gas Saturation Diver and Dive Supervisor with over 40 years'

experience as a commercial diver and instructor working in the North Sea and around the world both inshore and offshore. Cillian Gray is a qualified commercial diver, instructor and equipment technician with over 30 years' experience as a commercial diver in inshore civil engineering, scientific diving and aquaculture. Tiernan Gray is a qualified commercial diver, instructor, Life Support Supervisor and Diving Medical Technician with over 20 years' experience both offshore and inshore. This blend of experience, qualifications, and state of the art equipment, ensures that students learning at the National Fisheries College will benefit from world-class tuition and be fully prepared for industry on completion of their course.

Anyone interested in pursuing a career in diving or finding out more about the courses should contact

Capt. Shane Begley, College Principal, 021 71230 or Brian Murphy, Course Director, on 087 2378471.

### **Hannah Douglas completed the five-week commercial diver course in November 2022:**

*"By the end of the commercial diver course, we had covered every aspect of life as a commercial diver in both theory and practice. We were incredibly lucky that each topic covered on the course was taught to us by an expert in that field, meaning that any and all questions we had were answered in detail and often with real life analogy to bring the learning home. It was an intensive and challenging few weeks but at the end we each had been given a wealth of knowledge and had developed as divers and as a team. I am so glad to have been trained by the calibre of diving instructors at BIM."*





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# Commercial Diver Training Courses at the National Fisheries College of Ireland, Castletownbere Co. Cork.

### Would you like to be a Commercial Diver?

Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) offer Commercial Diving courses in Castletownbere Co. Cork. These courses are open to anyone with a recreational diving qualification and you will be qualified in under 10 weeks to work as a diver in aquaculture and others areas where divers are required inshore.

BIM Commercial Diving courses are run to international standards, certification is recognised by the HSE UK. Courses are run twice yearly, commencing in September and February.

### For more information contact:

National Fisheries College of Ireland, Castletownbere, Co. Cork  
T: 027-71230  
E: [diving@bim.ie](mailto:diving@bim.ie)

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**Surface Supplied Diving**  
6 November – 1 December 2023

**Commercial Scuba Diving**  
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## Special Feature: LIFE LONG LEARNING

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• **Denny Street Campus** delivers social care, nursing, and healthcare programmes. Learn practical job-ready skills on its Healthcare Support course,

prepare for third level with the QQI Level 5 Nursing Studies courses, or qualify as a fully trained Emergency Medical Technician through the Emergency Care Studies course.

• **The new Listowel Campus** is a key Further Education and Training hub for North Kerry. It is home to a range of courses for progression and employment.

• **Monavalley Campus** offers more than 60 courses

and is a key provider for those wishing to jump-start their career. It houses a Digital Skills Centre, equipped with professional grade recording and broadcasting studios.

All Kerry based Phase Two apprenticeships run here also. The Monavalley Campus is known to generations of people from Kerry and beyond for its excellence in apprenticeship and skills training.

• **Killorglin Campus** is

located just outside Killorglin. Programmes offered here focus on personal and professional development through the medium of adventure sports where students develop their skills and talents in the great outdoors.

If you are interested in finding out more, visit [www.kerrycollege.ie](http://www.kerrycollege.ie) or contact the admissions office on 066 714 96 96.



Amanda Roe  
Trauma therapist  
& Mind coach

## Five practical skills for managing Leaving Cert stress

**A**s the new school year begins, it's a good time to look at skills that can reduce stress surrounding the leaving cert and other

exams. How young adults manage stress at this time lays the foundations to how they will cope in the future, so learning how to manage stress

and practical study habits will support good mental and emotional wellbeing for life.

Leaving Cert is a two-year cycle of study. After the freedom of transition year, the first challenge for fifth years is settling back into structured classes and a homework routine. They may not be feeling the pressure yet but, by sixth year, students are more aware of the deadlines.

There is mounting pressure to revise last year's content, learn this year's content and decide what they want to do with the rest of their lives? Where should they apply next year, will they get the points to be accepted and if all that works out, will they be able to get accommodation?

Encourage your children to follow their dreams, as this will boost self esteem, confidence and motivation to work hard. Stress can become debilitating for some students, so yes, encourage them to do their best, but please remember that third level education is not for everyone and Ireland has a fantastic selection of FETAC courses and apprenticeships for those students who are more practical or prefer to join the workplace.

I know it is only September but the sooner they set up good study habits and learn coping strategies the better, so here are five practical skills for managing Leaving cert study stress

**1. Start with the end in mind.** What is the goal? How many weeks do they have to achieve it? How much time can they study each day. Get them

to be honest about what they can achieve each day or week and month and create a realistic timetable. If they still aren't sure, coaching can help them to clarify their thoughts.

**2. When we turn off all distractions, so much more can be achieved.** Vilfredo Pareto's 80/20 rule is a helpful concept for life, study and business time management, as it explains how 80 per cent of our productivity comes from 20 per cent of our time. In short, make a to-do list and identify the most important 20 per cent. Doing these items first will be most productive for your day and achieving your goals.

**3. Stress reduces our ability to think and retain information.** At the beginning of each study session, take a few minutes to relax using self-hypnosis, breathing exercises or acupressure. State your intention and mental purpose i.e. "I want to learn and remember the information in this session so I can recall it for my exams and get the points I need to..." When your body and mind are relaxed you will be able to work to your best, be more focused and have more capacity to absorb, retain and recall information.

**4. Work with your natural strengths** by identifying which learning styles – visual, auditory or kinaesthetic – work best for you and tailor

revision techniques accordingly. Incorporating skills like photo reading, mind mapping, recording and listening to their own notes, making a revision timetable and planning to study with others can all help. There are self-assessment quizzes online that will help to identify specific learning styles and give study ideas.

**5. Being active and having fun is important.** Studying, particularly if you feel you haven't done enough, can cause foggy thinking. If stress escalates it can lead to difficulty concentrating, procrastination, anxiety, fear and panic attacks. Allocating time for hobbies and extracurricular activities, as well as getting enough sleep at night and eating nutritious foods, will all help to relieve stress, focus the mind and recharge energy levels.

*Amanda Roe is a Clinical Hypnotherapist, Acupuncturist, Life and Health coach. She uses a range of holistic therapies including guidance around food to improve physical, emotional and mental health. Supporting fertility and natural recovery from trauma, eating disorders and other chronic health conditions. For more information or to book a session visit [www.roehealth.ie](http://www.roehealth.ie) or call/text Amanda on: 087 633 1898.*



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**Special Feature: LIFE LONG LEARNING****Simple Study eyes European expansion plans**

Although Simple Study supported more than 17,000 Irish students in exam preparation last year, its founders, Phillip McKenna, Oisín Devoy and Zac Dair, are not resting on their laurels. Instead the West Cork tech trio continue to innovate and plan to expand into Europe in the new few months.

An exam prep platform for the Leaving Cert and Junior Cert exams,

SimpleStudy is fast becoming the study platform of choice for students. Built with study fea-

tures and revision content that matches the exams and curriculum for each subject, the study platform prepares students with the right resources so they can ultimately perform at their best in exams. There is a big demand for tools like this as exams and CAO points become more and more competitive.

"We continually engage with our users through surveys and one-on-one interviews to better understand their needs and refine our offerings," Phillip explains. "We surveyed nearly 300 students in the past few weeks, and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Students have been using our platform 10 or more times per month, and we are confident that engagement will translate to higher grades for them."

"We are constantly innovating," Oisín adds. "We're launching a native mobile app this month, allowing students to access our platform on the App Store."

On the horizon, Simple Study is eyeing plans to expand in Q4 2023. "We intend to bring this Irish innovation to a new Eu-



The Simple Study team at Dogpatch Labs in Dublin: (l-r) Zac, Phillip and Oisín.

ropean market in the next few months," Oisín confirms.

The Simple Study team have been accepted into the NDRC accelerator programme for "globally ambitious entrepreneurs" at Dublin's Dogpatch Labs, and have also raised angel investment from Charlotte Street Capital. They also receive continued support from the Local Enterprise Office.

"All this support has been instrumental in allowing us to expand our team and enhance our platform for our users. Our mission remains consistent: to empower as many students as possible. We aim to bring more top talent into the SimpleStudy team in the coming months to put us at the forefront of European ed-tech."

SimpleStudy is offering

packages for entire schools to give SimpleStudy accounts to their students. They will be offering these school packages for FREE to any DEIS school across Cork County. Please get in touch through the website for more details.

[www.simplestudy.ie](http://www.simplestudy.ie)

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The project is co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union.

**Cyberbullying poses a serious risk for children's safety**

Over 25 per cent of primary school children (aged 8 to 12) have experienced cyberbullying during the last school year, according to new figures published this week in CyberSafeKids' Annual Trends and Usage Report. The incidence of cyberbullying significantly increases at secondary school (aged 12 to 16) to 40 per cent, with girls more likely than boys to have been victimised online (43pc vs 30pc).

Ninety-three per cent of 8-12-year-olds have their own smart device, with YouTube the most popular app, followed by WhatsApp, Tik Tok and Snapchat. Online gaming is also popular with young children, with 15pc playing over-18 games like 'Call of Duty' and 'Grand Theft Auto', which contain violent and sexually explicit content. Whilst boys were more likely than girls to play over-18 games, young girls are more likely to post

videos of themselves online.

The survey by Ireland's online safety charity of over 5,000 children included secondary school aged children for the first time. Almost three-quarters of 12-16-year-olds said they can go online whenever they want, with 40pc posting videos of themselves on social media platforms. Younger children face more controls at home from parents, but 31pc of 8-12-year-olds say they are free to go online whenever they want, and 15pc of primary school children have no rules in place for going online at home.

Posting pictures without permission, creation of fake profiles, and being excluded from chat groups were amongst the commonly reported forms of cyberbullying behaviour. The research found that only 52pc of primary school children, and 39pc of secondary school children told a parent or trusted adult they were being bullied. Between

a quarter to a third of children didn't tell anyone.

In the report, the charity highlights several areas in which younger children are vulnerable to undesirable contact from people they don't know. Forty-two per cent of young boys and 27pc of girls have gamed with a stranger online.

Over a quarter of all the children surveyed had seen or experienced something online in the last year that "bothered" them (defined as content that scared them, upset them or made them wish they hadn't seen it) such as sexual or violent content. Nearly half of the younger children didn't tell a parent or trusted adult about this experience, rising to 67pc for secondary school children in this position.

CyberSafeKids CEO, Alex Cooney, said: "Online safety for children remains a critical issue that is not being sufficiently

*Continued on next page...*



## Special Feature: LIFE LONG LEARNING

## Supporting back to school health with SOMEGA

With the classroom doors open again, now is the perfect time to kick-start a good health routine for children. Supporting back-to-school health is crucial for their overall well-being and academic success. The best approach to help ensure children have a healthy start to the new school year is a holistic one which incorporates exercise, sleep, good nutrition and health supplements.

**Regular Exercise**

Encouraging kids to be active is very important. The National Guidelines on Physical Activity for Ireland recommend that kids should be active at a moderate to vigorous level for at least 60 minutes daily. Regular exercise not only helps build strong muscles and healthy bones, it can also result in better sleep, improved moods, lower stress levels, and increased circulation of immune cells in the body which contributes to a healthy immune system.

**Sleep Hygiene**

Good sleep habits are vitally important for all of us but especially kids. Sleep allows the body to rest, regenerate and heal and the lack of sleep can affect the immune system. Research shows that people who don't get quality sleep or enough sleep are more likely to get sick after being exposed to a virus, such as the common cold virus.

**Well-Balanced Diet**

Good nutrition and a well-balanced diet are key to supporting kids' health. A well-balanced diet includes plenty fruit and vegetables, full of vitamins and antioxidants, lean protein, healthy fats including omega-3s from oily fish, wholegrains and probiotic rich foods, such as yogurt (ideally low sugar varieties).

**Health Supplements**

While not a replacement for a well-balanced diet, health supplements can help to provide extra support for kids' health, including support for their immune systems, brain health, energy levels and bone health.

Vitamin C is a great all-rounder supplement for kids and adults alike and is one of the most popular go-to supplements for supporting immune health during the oncoming cold and flu season. Vitamin C also helps reduce tiredness and fatigue which many kids experi-

ence when they head back to the classrooms. For kids with low iron levels, taking a Vitamin C supplement at the same time as they take an iron supplement is very beneficial because Vitamin C increases iron absorption. It's important to note that not all Vitamin C supplements are created equal – liposomal Vitamin C is the best absorbed form available. SOMEGA Liposomal Vitamin C is a great-tasting and sugar-free supplement that is suitable for the entire family. It can be enjoyed straight from the spoon or added to drinks and smoothies.

A Vitamin D supplement is important all year round in Ireland, but particularly as children head back into the classrooms and have less access to the outdoors and sunshine. Vitamin D supports the immune system and is vital for bone health as it helps increase calcium absorption. Combining Vitamin D with the lesser known Vitamin K2 provides enhanced support for healthy bones. Pure and natural SOMEGA Vitamin D3 + K2 in liquid drop format is ideal for children and adults and is placed under the tongue for fast and effective vitamin absorption.

Omega-3s, naturally found in fish oil, play a major role when it comes to supporting brain health throughout life. The omega-3 fatty acid called

Docosahexaenoic Acid (DHA) is found within the grey matter of the part of the brain known as the frontal cortex which is responsible for attention, problem-solving, decision-making, learning, memory, emotions and behaviours.

Omega-3 fatty acids have been shown to help children with their concentration, attention, behaviour, mood and

how well they learn. Unfortunately, the majority of Irish kids don't consume enough oily fish so a high quality omega-3 fish oil supplement can be a great alternative. Of course, for many kids, the taste of omega-3 supplements can be a real no-no! SOMEGA Easy Omega-3 + Vitamin D3 consistently gets the thumbs up from kids and adults alike - this creamy,

smoothie-like supplement has a delicious, natural peach and mango flavour and can be enjoyed straight from the spoon or added to drinks, smoothies and yogurt.

SOMEGA now offers a range of Back to School bundles at gosomega.com. SOMEGA supplements are stocked in health stores and pharmacies throughout West Cork.



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## Cyberbullying

... cont'd from previous page

addressed in Ireland's education system or by the social media companies whose platforms are being used. Our data shows children are extremely active on social media, often unsupervised, leaving them highly vulnerable to bullying, grooming, and exposure to violent or sexual content.

"We've been reporting on these patterns for the past seven years, but not enough is being done. We urge the Government to invest heavily in more resources and campaigns to support both parents and educators. Whilst organisations like CyberSafeKids barely have the funding to survive, many online service providers report annual profits in the billions."

Carmel Hume, Principal of Presentation Primary School, Terenure said: "This report confirms the findings of our own teachers. Children feel disempowered by social media, especially in large group chats. They are afraid to leave a group, and afraid to speak up if they

see others being ridiculed. We were shocked by the number of children who had access to their smartphones in their bedrooms late at night. Many slept with phones under their pillows. Negative commentary online has become normalised and the nuances of face-to-face communication and engagements are being lost. As principal of an all-girls school, I worry about the influence of social media on image and body positivity, and I urge parents and guardians to exercise stronger control."

Tips for parents:

• **Start the conversation now!** As soon as your child shows interest in your phone or tablet, talk about what's okay and not okay to do online in an age appropriate manner. Normalise talking to your kids about what



they do and see online. This is increasingly important as children get older and parents have less access to their devices.

• **Do your research.** Check out the apps and games that your child is using or wants to use. Download it yourself or watch videos on YouTube about it and see what functionality it has. Look at whether it has a chat facility, how to apply safety/privacy settings and how to report abuse. Use websites such as Common Sense Media, Webwise and CyberSafeKids to better understand the latest games and popular apps.

• **Agree the rules.** Set limits and establish a clear digital etiquette

within the home. What, where and when is online activity allowed? Apply them consistently, e.g. where they can use their devices, who can be on their friends lists, what behaviour is acceptable, and not to share location. Most importantly, check in on a regular basis (daily if possible) with your child's online activity. Try and do this in an open, trusting and transparent way.

• **Gaming.** Children should be encouraged to game with people they know or against the computer, limit voice and chat interaction and never to click on links or download anything without permission from a trusted adult.



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## Special Feature: LIFE LONG LEARNING

# Safeguarding in sport – The legal complexities



Niall Geaney is a qualified solicitor since 2009 having worked with a solicitors practice in Dublin from 2004 to 2010 before setting up his own office in Clontarf in Dublin. He opened his Clonakilty office on Emmet Square last year having relocated with his family to Clonakilty in August 2020.

Niall has acted in many business sales and purchases over the years and advises small and medium business owners on all legal issues including business structures, contract negotiations and agreement, intellectual property rights, shareholders agreements, employment law and commercial property transactions. He also works a lot with sports clubs and associations in relation to governance, disciplinary matters and corporate matters and is a financial cap judge for the FIA Formula One Championship.

As we leave the summer months behind and face the back to school and back to sports season, it is an opportune time to be aware of the obligations of sports groups, trainers, mentors and parents when it comes to our children's rights in a sporting environment.

I spend many hours each week discussing issues with concerned parents in relation to bullying, harassment, social media abuse, isolation issues and other scenarios in sport, which can be extremely difficult for children and their parents to deal with. Clubs too struggle to implement policies and follow best guidance when run by volunteers who have the best interest of their members at heart.

One of the biggest issues of concern currently is bullying, which includes negative behaviour, verbal, psychological and physical on and off pitch harm to a player. This can be from another player, a mentor, trainer or in rare situations, another player's parent. Verbal

abuse particularly is becoming extremely common place.

Sport in an underage context should entail the protection of childhood values, the needs of the child being understood, creation of integrity in relationships, fair play, a quality atmosphere and ethos, fair competition and equality between all young people. This is what we all strive for however more and more these desires are under threat.

We are all aware of the general rules of Garda vetting procedures however the creation of Child Safeguarding Statements and Policies are the first step in creating a safer environment.

So firstly, what is the law on the issue?

*Under the Children First Act 2015 Section 11-*

*(1) Where a person proposes to operate as a provider of a relevant service, he or she shall, within three months from the date on which he or she commences as such a provider—*

*(a) undertake an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of the service (in this section referred to as a "risk"),*

*(b) prepare, in accordance with subsection (3), a written statement (in this Act referred to as a "child safeguarding statement") specifying the service being provided and the principles and procedures to be observed to ensure as far as practicable, that a child, while availing of the service, is safe from harm, and*

*(c) appoint a relevant person for the purposes of this Part.*

*(3) A child safeguarding statement shall include a written assessment of the risk and, in that regard, specify the procedures that are in place—*

*(a) to manage any risk identified,*

*(b) in respect of any member of staff who is the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child availing of the relevant service,*

*(c) for the selection or recruitment of any person as a member of staff of the provider with regard to that person's suitability to work with children,*

*(d) for the provision of information and, where necessary, instruction and training, to members of staff of the provid-*

*er in relation to the identification of the occurrence of harm,*

*(e) for reporting to the Agency by the provider or a member of staff of the provider (whether a mandated person or otherwise) in accordance with this Act or the guidelines issued by the Minister under section 6,*

*(f) for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons, and*

*(g) for appointing a relevant person for the purposes of this Part.*

### Guidance for parents

So what are parents to do to ensure your child is attending an activity that is compliant with the law in relation to child safeguarding?

Ask the question – is there a child safeguarding policy in place? When was it last reviewed? Who is responsible for its implementation? What does the policy say is to occur when an issue arises?

It is a parent's obligation to ensure this exists and have the knowledge to know what to do calmly but quickly when a situation arises.

These are the first basic steps to ensure your child is attending an activity that is legitimately operating in compliance with the Act.

What happens if an issue then arises? I have seen many situations of children feeling isolated due to poor mentoring and training skills, bullying by other participants or worse by adults in the club and harassment in the general locality when questions are then asked of the club.

From my experience, for a

parent the best route to take in negotiating these minefields are as follows –

- Talk to your child firstly and get a full overview of the issue
- Request a meeting with the child protection officer in the club and document in writing the issues of concern – it is worthy to note that the GAA rules on child protection issues now insist on a formal written compliant being submitted to the Child Welfare Officer in the club.
- Set out the full issue to the child protection officer and ask them to investigate and refer back to you within a specified time. If they require a meeting with your child be mindful as to how that is undertaken in the best interest of the child and always accompany the child.

- Do not discuss the issue locally or pitch side with others until the child protection officer has conducted a full investigation – privacy is important and the best interest of the child must be protected throughout the process.

Sport Irelands Safeguarding Guidance is an excellent document to refer to as a parent or as a club official. Use the resources that are available and seek professional advice if required.

Many of the main sports governing bodies in Ireland are now taking child safeguarding extremely seriously and have multiple child safeguarding policies, strategies and provisions in place. Many have child protection tool kits online to allow parents and clubs navigate this area. The GAA for example state

"The Association shall

safeguard and encourage the interests and wellbeing of everyone under 18 years of age playing GAA. They will take all steps to protect under 18's from forms of abuse, harm, discrimination and degrading treatment, while respecting all under 18's rights, feelings and wishes."

Under the GAA code disciplinary action can be taken against any individual deemed to have breached the code after a full investigation has taken place. Most other national sports governing bodies have similar procedures in place.

### Guidance for clubs

Generally at the other end of such complaints is a club or voluntary organisation. Every club or organisation involved with a sport where children can partake has a duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Some suggestions of where to start to fulfil this duty are as follows –

- If you have not already done so, create a robust child protection statement and policy and publish it clearly for all members to be aware. Seek professional advice in doing so as this might well be the most important document you have. A well-drafted policy document can guide you through the process and ensure full due process and fair procedures are followed. Funding is generally available for such help. Assign three to five club members including the child protection officer to undertake these tasks.

- The policy should be underpinned by common values and principles based on a child rights approach and aligned with Irish Law in respect of

Children's Rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

- Review it every two years to ensure it is in compliance with changes in legislation and/or government guidance and/or as required by Tusla (the Child and Family Agency) and Sport Ireland and/or as a result of any other significant change or event.

- Establish a Critical Incident Response Plan. Easy steps to follow for all members and officials when an incident occurs.

- Ensure that any individual whose role will have regular contact with children or vulnerable persons in the provision of relevant services must complete safeguarding training. Again funding is generally available. Sport Ireland Safeguarding Workshops are also available.

- Ensure full Garda vetting takes place regularly.

- If a serious child welfare issue is reported request the individual to step away temporarily from their position until the investigation is completed. To ensure fairness to all the investigation should be completed as swiftly as possible and in complete privacy. Due process and fair procedures must be followed to protect the interest of the child and the accused.

- The complaint may require external intervention by state agencies – do not hesitate to do so if that is the case. Failure to do so can lead to a legal liability for the club for failure to act.

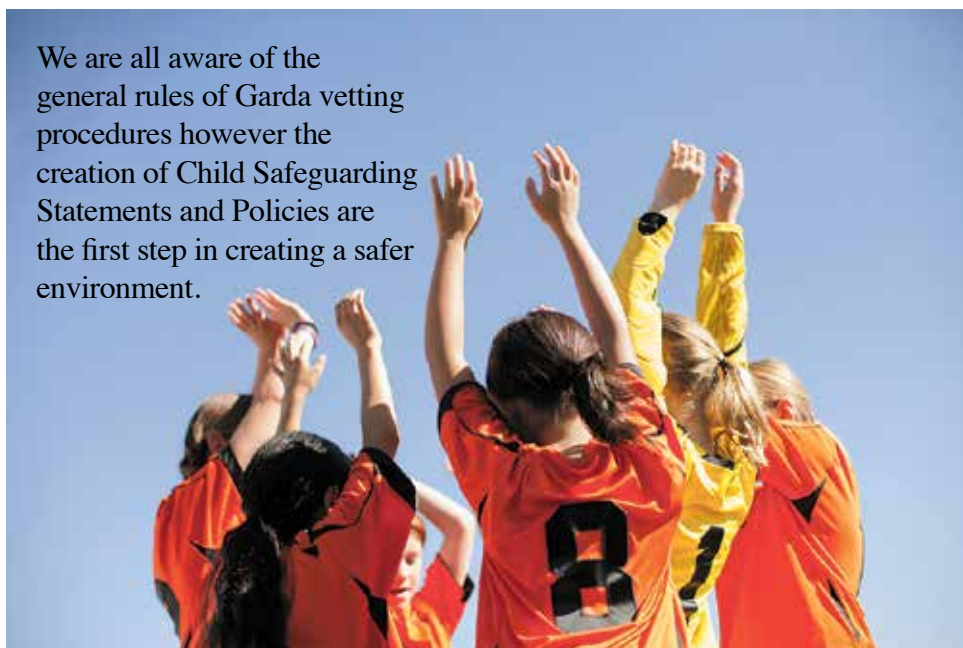
- Establish a monitoring and evaluation system through clear records and link the allocation of funding to the implementation of the safeguarding strategy.

- Establish a clear disciplinary procedure for any resulting sanctions to be applied with a clear appeals process also.

Overall the provision for child safeguarding in Irish sport is in a positive place, however as parents and as club officials it is important to act quickly when necessary and to always follow the fair procedures as set out in the clubs Child Safeguarding Statement and Policies. Take it step by step and enlist professional help where needed.

Feel free to email or call to discuss any issue on [niall@geaneysolicitors.ie](mailto:niall@geaneysolicitors.ie) or call 087 2308797.

We are all aware of the general rules of Garda vetting procedures however the creation of Child Safeguarding Statements and Policies are the first step in creating a safer environment.





## Feature LIFE LONG LEARNING

# Bantry Credit Union launches €10,000 Education Scholarship for 2023

In a good news story, this year Bantry Credit Union has increased the value of its annual Third-Level Education Scholarship Scheme from €6,000 to €10,000 over four years. That's a 67 per cent increase.

Launching this year's scholarship, Bantry Credit Union Chairperson Anna Fitzgerald said "We are delighted to announce that

we have increased the value of the scholarship from €1,500 a year to €2,500 a year, for up to four years. Twenty years ago, in 2003, the credit union set up this scholarship scheme. And this year, to celebrate its 20th anniversary, the Board of Directors has decided to increase the cumulative value of the scholarship from €6,000 to €10,000 over four years."

Explaining the decision, the Chairperson said that the value had remained unchanged since the introduction of the scholarship scheme. If its value was to be increased to allow for inflation during the past 20

years, the scholarship would be increased to €2,000 a year. But the Board decided to go further than this and increase it to €2,500 a year.

"We are all aware of the severe pressures on students and their families in recent years", Anna said. "The rents they are being charged are crippling, and that's for the ones lucky enough to find accommodation. Then there is the cost of living crisis. We hope that this increase in the value of our scholarship will help to ease the burden for one student this year."

Also speaking at the launch, Bantry Credit Union Manager

Finbarr O'Shea encouraged as many people as possible to apply. He pointed out that there are three second-level schools within the credit union's qualifying areas – Coláiste Pobail Bheanntraí in Bantry, Scoil Phobail Bhéara in Castletownbere and Scoil Mhuire in Ballineery. He urged Leaving Cert pupils from all three schools, as well as people from the area who may have gone to second-level school elsewhere and mature students, to apply for the scholarship.

Finbarr also highlighted the special low-rate Education Loan that Bantry Credit Union offers.

"Last year we reduced the rate of interest on Education Loans from seven to three per cent. This is the lowest rate charged by any financial institution in the country. It's basically breakeven. The Board of Directors decided to keep the interest rate at three per cent again this year, even though many other financial institutions are increasing the interest rates they charge on loans." Finbarr said "Like the increase in the value of the scholarship, our low-rate Education Loan is one of the ways the credit union shows

practical support to students and their parents in these increasingly expensive times."

The closing date for receipt of scholarship applications is Friday, September 22. Full details of the scholarship scheme including application procedure, application form and T&Cs are available on the credit union's website ([www.bantrycu.ie/scholarship2023](http://www.bantrycu.ie/scholarship2023)). Application forms are also available at the credit union's two offices in Bantry and Castletownbere.

## Review of School Transport Scheme must be published urgently: Lombard

The review of the School Transport Scheme must be published without further delay, says Fine Gael Senator Tim Lombard.

Senator Lombard said that the Department of Education needs to publish the details of its review on the eligibility, trends, costs, and the overall effectiveness of the system, amidst ongoing chaos around school transport as the school year begins.

"It's hard to believe that another school year has just started and still we haven't seen this review," Senator Lombard stated.

"A review of the School Transport Scheme began in February 2021 and an interim report was published in June the same year. This saw the introduction of temporary alleviation measures to provide transport arrangements for post-primary students. Unfortunately, the experience of families that I'm dealing with is that these alleviation measures aren't applied in practice.

"Minister Norma Foley has said final phases would be completed soon, but there have been no updates on this urgent review since. Where is the report?

"How can real changes be made when the true extent of the issue has not yet been made clear? It is completely unacceptable to be waiting over two years for this report when the issue is so urgent for families.

"The current Post Primary School Transport Scheme is based on a document published

in 2012. What may have been a suitable scheme 11 years ago may not be the best option now and a new plan is needed to deal with these new concerns.

"We've seen significant issues in the last few weeks with school transport, including driver shortages. Whilst close to 130,000 tickets have been issued, this means nothing if the transport is not actually there when it's needed.

"I've previously called on Bus Éireann to allow drivers over 70 to continue in their roles after passing an annual medical examination. This has been dismissed as an option by Bus Éireann, yet no alternatives are being put forward by the company or the Department.

"School transport has been the single biggest issue for parents contacting my office over the last month and yet there seems to be no sense of urgency in addressing these issues from the Minister.

"I'm calling on the Minister for Education, the Minister for Transport and Bus Éireann to come together to publish the report immediately so that the concerns of worried parents can be addressed and a plan that's fit-for-purpose can be devised.

"The Minister for Transport Eamon Ryan, who is also responsible for Environment and Climate, also has an opportunity here to be innovative in moving towards the 20% reduction in car journeys target outlined in CAP 23. Putting more school children on buses takes more cars off the road – it's that simple.

"A bit of joined up thinking here in relation to the school transport scheme would be a significant step in helping us achieve that target and would remove the uncertainty and hassle around concessionary school transport places for families," concluded Senator Lombard.



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## people Environment : Making a difference

## Cape Clear Observatory



It seems appropriate that, as the Branch's next event is an outing to Cape Clear, this island and its Bird Observatory should be the focus of this month's article writes **Nicholas Mitchell**.

Cape Clear is now the only Bird Observatory in Ireland. It came into being when five young Englishmen (four were mere secondary school pupils!) ventured to Cape in the autumn of 1959, landing there on August 19. Their trip was supported by the British Trust for Ornithology, allowing them to arrive with all the necessary bird-ringing equipment and a set of bird skins (to assist bird identification). During the next eleven weeks 17 bird species, previously considered rarities in Ireland, were recorded. The success of this small expedition culminated in the establishment of a permanent observatory on Cape the following year. By the end of 1962, Harbour House, situated in North Harbour, was purchased. This has been the home of the Observatory ever since and in 2000 it came under the management of BirdWatch Ireland.

Since its founding over sixty years ago, the work and importance of the Observatory has changed. During the 60s, it

was initially one of discovery as the incumbent warden(s) and volunteers started to record and learn about the migration patterns of birds through this south-west corner of Ireland. Later, as the records built up, volunteers were able to monitor and recognise any changes and this continues to this day. By the end of the decade an educational element was introduced with residential courses being run at the Observatory for budding young ornithologists. These have become a main fixture of the calendar. Circa 2007, my own introduction to birdwatching (albeit at the later age of fifty) was a trip to Cape that autumn with the Branch, followed by a weekend course on Cape the following spring with the warden Steve Wing. Therefore, from experience, I thoroughly recommend signing up for one of these courses (details below).

In Steve Wing's excellent book 'The Natural History of Cape Clear 1959 – 2019' (an invaluable source for this article!) he lists rare birds recorded on a day-by-day basis, so I thought it would be interesting to see what birds have been recorded over the years on September 17, the date of our next outing. The list includes Pectoral Sandpiper, Wryneck, Melodious Warbler, Aquatic Warbler, Bluethroat and Snow Bunting. The Pectoral Sandpiper breeds in North America and north-east Siberia. Those breeding in eastern Canada follow great circle routes on their post-breeding migration route down to Argentina in the later summer and early autumn. This can bring them quite far east and explains why this American wader turns up so



Here: Cape Clear Observatory  
Warden Steve Wing  
Right: A Snow Bunting



frequently here in Ireland. The other birds all breed in different parts of Europe and are passage migrants. As none of these birds breed in Ireland, the only time that they can be seen in here is during migration, and Cape Clear is one of the best places to be in spring and autumn for migrant and vagrant birds from Europe and North America.

Following on from the article last month by Karl Woods, Cape Clear is another outstanding place in West Cork for sea-watching, and not just for birds. Situated as it is, a few miles off the mainland, it is a great place for searching the seas for cetaceans. Eight of the twenty-four cetacean species recorded in Irish waters can be seen off Cape, these being Harbour Porpoise, Minke Whale, Common Dolphin, Fin Whale, Bottlenose Dolphin, Risso's Dolphin, Killer Whale and Humpback Whale.

Cape Clear is special place and, if you have not been, it is well worth a visit, whether for a day out, a weekend break, on a Branch outing or on a BirdWatch Ireland course. The Observatory, and the important work that it does, also needs your support, whether it is through BirdWatch Ireland membership subscription or donation. Last year the Branch donated €1,000 to the Observatory. This was only

made possible from fund-raising during our events and the public's generous support. So thank you very much and we look forward to seeing old faces and meeting new ones at future outings.

#### BirdWatch Ireland Cape Clear courses

*From Seabirds to Songbirds*

September 11-15

*Wildlife Weekend*

September 23-24

Ring 01 281 9878 or visit [www.birdwatchirelandwestcork.ie](http://www.birdwatchirelandwestcork.ie) for more information.

#### BirdWatch Ireland West Cork Branch News

Upcoming events being held by the Branch are:

*Cape Clear*: Sunday Sept 17

*The Mizen*: Sunday Oct 15

Visit our website [www.birdwatchirelandwestcork.ie](http://www.birdwatchirelandwestcork.ie) for more information about these events. To receive news and reminders about our events join our mailing list by sending an email to [mailinglist@birdwatchirelandwestcork.ie](mailto:mailinglist@birdwatchirelandwestcork.ie). For more information about the Branch, contact Fiona O'Neill at [secretary@birdwatchirelandwestcork.ie](mailto:secretary@birdwatchirelandwestcork.ie).

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## Clochán Uisce: Stressed trout and a Shannonvale shout-out

The Clochán Uisce group has started to compile a list of the various species of bird, plant, insect, invertebrates and fish that are found in the river Feagle and its tributaries.

The river Feagle has a small population of brown trout and

on some rare occasions a couple of large sea trout can be seen up as far as Bridge street in the centre of Clonakilty. Little is known about why some brown trout make the decision to leave the river where they are born and head to the sea and become sea trout. Migration takes place

in healthy rivers as well, but research has shown that competition, reduced food supply and poor ecological conditions can trigger migration behaviour; but changes in water temperature, due to global warming, are also affecting the brown trout's decision to migrate or not.

Researchers from UCC asked how changes in water temperature and food availability can influence the migration of brown trout? By rearing the offspring of wild trout for two years under conditions of reduced food and increased temperature, and then recording the numbers of future sea-going migrants, the team found that food reduction increased the numbers of fish migrating to sea, but warm temperatures had the opposite effect, with increased numbers remaining resident in fresh water.

With conflicting pressures mounting from global warming and environmental degradation, trout will come under increased pressure to make complex decisions about whether they should

migrate. The study noticed that fish choosing migration were smaller and in poorer condition than fish that remained in fresh water, indicating sea migration occurred when the fish urgently needed to consume more food. But how will they balance this with the urge to remain in the ever warmer rivers? Sea trout populations have shown dramatic declines across Europe. Warming temperatures cause fewer fish to migrate to sea, with more fish remaining in fresh water to reproduce earlier. Research suggests that climate warming, which in turn is warming our rivers, may cause us to see further declines in sea-going trout.

As a local rivers group, Clochán Uisce aims to highlight

the problems that resident flora and fauna face and look for ways to improve the overall ecology of our rivers. The group will highlight these issues on World Rivers Day on September 24.

Also, later this month the groups plans on gathering in Shannonvale to highlight the massive environmental issues that the community there has been battling for years, as a result of the sewage and pollution that drains into the Argideen river. Keep an eye on Instagram or email the group for more details. You can find Clochán Uisce on Instagram or join the mailing list by emailing [clochanuisce@gmail.com](mailto:clochanuisce@gmail.com).





## people Environment : Making a difference



## THE ANIMAL WORLD

Dr. Jeremy A. Dorman

Dr Dorman is a zoologist and teacher living in West Cork.

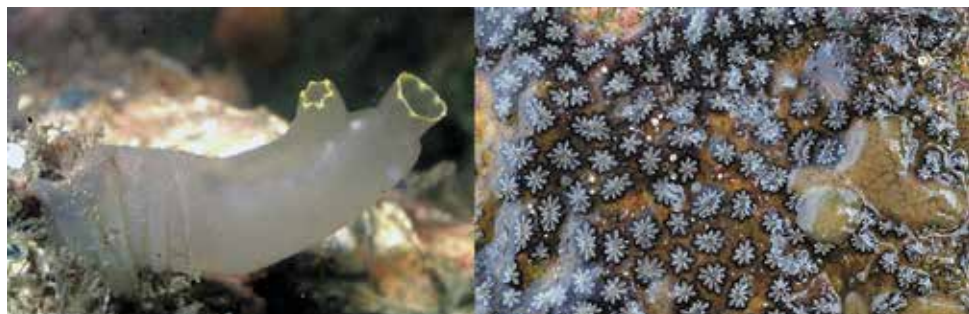
Last month, in the article about marine plastic pollution, I mentioned animals called salps. Not everyone will know what a salp is. They belong to the Tunicata, a division of the Phylum Chordata – animals with spinal cords, which includes all the vertebrates, and us.

The most familiar of the tunicates are the sea squirts, so called because they resemble bags of hard jelly which, if squeezed, squirt out water from their siphons. This bag – the tunic, hence the group's name – is made of cellulose, the only example of the compound in the animal kingdom. Sea squirts can be either single, for example, *Ciona intestinalis*, which you might see on the lower shore, or colonial, like the beautiful *Botryllus schlosseri*, whose individuals resemble little flowers set in colourful gelatinous encrustations growing on rocks or sea weed. They are all filter feeders, sucking in water from one siphon, trapping food particles in their mucus-lined pharynx, and expelling waste through another siphon. They are eaten by humans in some countries – if you ever go to Japan, you might try sea squirt sashimi, said to taste like rubber dipped in ammonia.

Other tunicates, including the salps, are planktonic. Fishermen sometimes come across them unwittingly, because salps get caught around fishing gear, appearing as small strings of clear jelly. On closer examination, this jelly can be seen to consist of many identical parts, each like a transparent barrel with a small dark blob that is the creature's digestive system. This string of jelly is a salp colony. The individuals are usually just a centimetre or so in length; a colony can be several metres long. Other planktonic tunicates are solitary and mostly very small, but one species, *Thetys vagina*, can reach 20 centimetres.

A particularly strange group

## Your ancestor was a sea squirt



*Ciona intestinalis* (l) and *Botryllus schlosseri* (r)

of planktonic tunicates belong to the class Appendicularia, tiny creatures that look like tadpoles a few millimetres long, living in a sort of transparent house. Water is pumped into the house and food particles filtered out; when the house becomes clogged up with food, it is shed and a new one secreted. One appendicularian, called *Oikopleura*, occurs in large numbers in the plankton – I recorded 1,842 per litre in a collection made in 1984.

Why should we be interested in salps? My answer is, of course, that we should be interested in all living things – without knowledge of our fellow creatures, we can't fully understand the world in which we live, so can have no comprehension of what we are doing to it, or how to repair the damage. Personally, I find animals, all animals, far more attractive and interesting than anything humans can create, and while the average sea squirt might not be much to look at, some colonial ones on the sea shore are very pretty, and the salps and their relatives, floating ghost-like in the oceans, are strangely beautiful.

Without knowledge of our fellow creatures, we can't fully understand the world in which we live, so can have no comprehension of what we are doing to it, or how to repair the damage.

Salps have an important role in the marine food chain. During plankton blooms they can reproduce asexually, at a faster rate than most other multicellular animals, and so are able to consume huge amounts of phytoplankton. Their resulting faecal pellets, and eventually their own dead bodies, form a large component of the carbon-rich detritus that has been raining down on the

sea bed for hundreds of millions of years. But as I wrote last time, salps, like all marine creatures nowadays, ingest plastic particles. Recent research, by scientists in Cork, Galway and Villefranche-sur-mer in France has shown that salp faecal pellets containing plastic remain at the sea surface for longer than normal, so instead of being safely locked away on the sea floor, they have more time to break down and release yet more CO2 into the atmosphere. There are worse manmade sources of greenhouse gases contributing to climate change, but this nevertheless shows how our disregard for nature can have all manner of unforeseen consequences.

Planktonic tunicates provide homes for other creatures – small fish have been recorded taking shelter inside them, and certain species of pelagic amphipods (related to sandhoppers) use salps as homes, eating their insides and using the barrel-like body as a nest for their eggs and a sort of micro-submersible to travel in.



*Amphipod inside a solitary salp*

But what should really make us respect tunicates is that without them, we might not be here at all. Of course, that could be said of a great many organisms, but we are directly linked to these humble creatures. Adult sea squirts bear no resemblance to any vertebrate, but their larvae do.

The life cycle of the planktonic tunicates is complicated, often alternating between a solitary asexual and a colonial sexual stage, but reproduction in the sessile sea squirts is simple. They are all hermaphrodites,

i.e. they have both male and female parts in the same body. Eggs and sperm are released into the sea, where fertilisation takes place. In all the sea squirts and many of the planktonic tunicates, the fertilised egg develops into a tadpole-like larva similar to the adult appendicularian. This stage is for distribution only and lasts just a couple of days, because their digestive systems are undeveloped. When they have found a suitable home, they settle down, head first, and stick themselves to the substrate. Their tails degenerate, their feeding apparatus develops, and they grow into the adult filter-feeding bag-like animal.

The interesting thing is that the larva not only resembles a tadpole, it has, running through its tail, a notochord – the precursor of our spinal column, and one of the characteristics of the Chordates.

The interesting thing is that the larva not only resembles a tadpole, it has, running through its tail, a notochord – the precursor of our spinal column, and one of the characteristics of the Chordates.

The fossil record of the sea squirts is poor – jelly doesn't fossilise well – but creatures resembling tunicates have been found in Cambrian rocks. One, named *Shankouclava*, was described from southern China in 2013. It resembled a modern sea squirt, but lived about 520 million years ago.

We will never know for certain where the first chordates came from, but one generally accepted theory is that the larva of a very ancient tunicate, instead of settling down on the sea bed and becoming a filter-feeding lump, remained free-swimming, and its reproductive and digestive systems

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developed so that the animal could live its whole life in the plankton. Put simply and unscientifically, it had become a very primitive little fish.

This strange development could have come about by a process called neoteny, which results in paedomorphism – an adult retaining juvenile characteristics. This has occurred many times in the animal kingdom: the appendicularians are paedomorphic; there are several species of paedomorphic insects; there are paedomorphic garfish too (more of them another time). But the best-known example is the axolotl, a salamander found in Mexico (now critically endangered in the wild). Like all amphibians, it starts out as an egg in the water, from which hatches a tadpole, with a tail and external gills. This tadpole grows into a salamander up to 30 centimetres in length and capable of repro-

duction, but instead of developing lungs and moving onto land, the adult axolotl retains its gills and stays in the water. Neoteny in axolotls is caused by a lack of thyroid-stimulating hormone, so the thyroid gland is unable to produce thyroxine, which controls metamorphosis. Axolotls in captivity can be induced to metamorphose into normal salamanders by injecting them with iodine.

So if you ever come across a sea squirt or a salp, stop to think – if those ancient ancestors had not become paedomorphic, but had changed as usual into sessile, filter-feeding bags, there might never have been any fish, and so no amphibians, no reptiles, no birds, no mammals – no us. The seas would instead be ruled by very intelligent octopuses, and the land by giant ants, and the planet would probably be in a far better state than it is now.

## OUT &amp; ABOUT



Young entrepreneur Adeline Heffernan from Ardfield, Clonakilty was busy in Courtmacsherry during the recent Harbour Festival, with her crafting business 'Meadow Sweet Creations.'



## people Environment : Making a difference

A  
WEST CORK  
LIFE

Tina Pisco

Is there any other feature of the Irish landscape more iconic than a field? From John B Keane's masterpiece to nostalgic childhood images of running through summer meadows, the field is quintessentially Irish. Sure, there's cliffs and mountains, lakes and rivers, forests, and the wild Atlantic way; but for me it's the fields that hold my heart. I love it when they are first ploughed in the Spring. The rich brown earth looks like chocolate cake

## The field

batter. I love watching the crops growing over the summer. My favourite is barley, but the corn this year has been spectacular, and I can't help myself singing that line from Oklahoma: "the corn is as high as an elephant's eye!" as I drive past. I love the way the fields look like abstract paintings after the grass has been cut; ribbons of green creating spiralling contours across the land, round bales casting shadows. I love the way cut fields attract all manner of birds from huge murders of crows to flocks of seagulls in from the coast to the hungry buzzards circling above. And I can't think of a more fitting picture of contentment than a herd of cattle up to their oxters in sweet grass. Actually, I can: A field of cows lying in the long grass soaking up the sun. If the cows are hanging out like tourists around the pool on a Costa holiday, you know it's going to be a good day.

For over thirty years I have

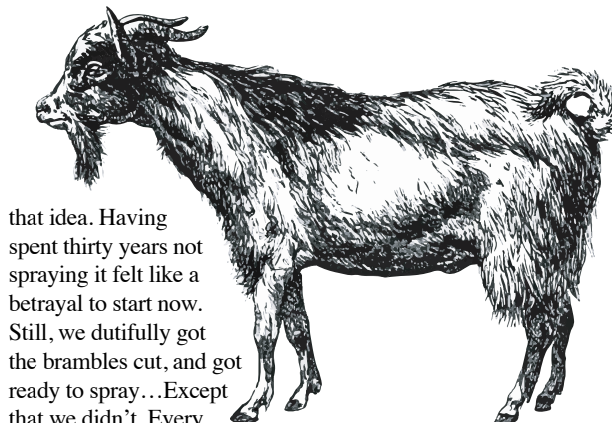
looked out onto my own little field. It's a little less than an acre and has been largely left to its own devices. I tried for years to establish a vegetable patch in one corner, but the field kept fighting me, so I finally gave up and set the patch out the back, where the growth rate is more manageable. The field has been left largely untouched. In over thirty years it has never been sprayed or sown. Beautiful and inspiring as working fields are, the Queen of them all is a meadow. We often spoke of properly creating a meadow, but had neither the time, manpower nor the money to really make a go at it. Grass gives the landscape its forty shades of green, but a meadow is all of them and more with native wildflowers punctuating the green with pops of bright colours.

Instead, as with most of the 'garden', we let it go its own way with only a few gentle corrections to keep the nettles and brambles down. We've

managed the nettles by strategic strimming, and the brambles by digging them out in the winter. The result was a pleasantly messy field with each Spring bringing more daffodils, wildflowers and tiny orchids in the long grass. It is also a thriving habitat for insects, butterflies, birds, frogs, and small mammals.

Alas, as with so many parts of our lives, Covid put a spanner in the works. Strategic strimming and digging brambles require a lot of manpower. Over the years we have enlisted helpers, but Covid put an end to that. Four years later and a sea of brambles was taking up about one third of the field. Not exactly a meadow. What to do?

The advice was not what we wanted to hear. It seemed that the only way to go was to cut down the brambles at the end of winter and spray them in the summer when they started growing again. That would kill them at the root. We didn't like



that idea. Having spent thirty years not spraying it felt like a betrayal to start now. Still, we dutifully got the brambles cut, and got ready to spray... Except that we didn't. Every time I'd look out to the field this summer, I couldn't help thinking of all the life that was supported by my messy, overgrown bit of lushness. All the butterflies and buzzing bees, all the little furry animals, all the birds feeding on the grasses, all the creepy-crawlies on and beneath the earth, and all the lovely network of mycelium that has grown undisturbed in the dark for over thirty years. What to do?

Then, like a ray of light piercing the grey clouds, like an answered prayer, I came across an article about a man who had goats: [www.billysrentagoat.ie](http://www.billysrentagoat.ie)

William Walsh of Billy Rent a Goat runs a business clearing land in a way that is environmentally friendly. William offers: 'ecological solutions for controlling invasive species and overgrowth. Promoting biodiversity by restoring the environment. One goat at a time.' He even uses rescue goats. Better yet – he's in West Cork, just a few miles up the road from us. Finally, it looks like we might make our dream of a meadow come true without using harmful chemicals. Watch this space for updates!

## Ventilation is essential for a healthier living environment



## 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.

Many of you can remember growing up in cold, leaky houses – where there was plenty of fresh air coming in through

the single glazed windows, and gaps creating draughts. So getting enough fresh air into homes wasn't really a problem; although damp and mould has typically been common in the same homes.

Over the last few months in this column, we have been looking at the fabric of the home, seeing how we can improve insulation and seal out any draughts - from the simplest and cheapest ideas like blocking up any leaks around windows to a full wrap of the house with external insulation. All of these ideas aim to make your home warmer, which means you will need less energy to heat it.

But there is something important to consider.

Many of the improvements we have discussed reduce the amount of air that comes into the building through leaks and, while this is important when it comes to saving energy, we need to be mindful of the impact that can have on how the building ventilates overall and provides us with the fresh air we need to be healthy.

The more air tight we make a building, the more attention we need to pay to providing adequate ventilation.

There are two different types of ventilation typically used in housing.



## Natural Ventilation

This includes opening windows, installing background vents (opening in a wall with a vented cover inside and outside) and trickle vents. Trickle vents are attached to modern windows and allow fresh air to come into the building. They can be turned on or off and allow air to flow through them. It is important to make sure to keep them open and not to block them with curtains or blinds.

## Mechanical ventilation

Mechanical ventilation refers to intentionally designed systems that use fans and other mechanical components to provide controlled and efficient air renewal within your home.

Most of us are familiar with the extractor fan in a kitchen to remove vapour created through cooking and the extractor fans

that typically turn on in a bathroom after you have a shower. Both of these help to remove damp air from the rooms which in turn helps avoid a build up of moisture which can then lead to mould or mildew. Mechanical ventilation also includes more sophisticated systems which are now more common in new builds and deep retrofits with their high insulation requirements.

If you are doing a whole home retrofit through a One Stop Shop, your contractor will be able to design a suitable system and you can avail of a grant for airtightness testing and mechanical ventilation as part of this package. If you are doing the retrofitting yourself or through a SEAI approved contractor, it's important that you think about ventilation so make sure to speak to your contractor about this.

## To avoid damp building up in your home, here are some additional tips:

Avoid drying clothes inside if you can, if you have to dry them inside, try to do so in bathrooms and kitchens where finishes are better able to handle moisture and you can use an extractor fan to help remove moisture.

Try to contain moisture as much as you can, by placing lids on pots when boiling and using an extractor fan or cooker hood if available. If you are using the bathroom, leave the door shut after use and use windows or extractor fans to clear the moisture from the air.

Airing the home can be very effective at removing a build-up of moisture generally along with other pollutants and odours and the home will soon return to normal temperature once the windows are closed again.

In summary, ventilation is essential during house retrofitting to maintain indoor air quality, prevent moisture-related issues, ensure occupant health and comfort, and address potential safety concerns. Balancing energy efficiency with proper ventilation design is crucial to create a well-rounded, sustainable retrofit solution for a healthier and more comfortable living environment.



CHERIS helps West Cork homeowners to make home energy upgrades, save money and contribute to a greener future.

It is no secret that most of us want to make our homes more energy efficient but don't know where to start. What do I need to do? How much will it cost? Are there any grants available? How much will I save in the long-run? Who is out there to do this work? How long will it take? These are the questions we all want answered before taking on a project like this.

The CHERIS project team (Ludgate Hub, The Wheel and RetroKit) have enrolled a number of energy mentors from housing associations, credit unions, community organisations and sustainable energy communities. The team will be trained to deliver a home energy upgrade information service using a new digital toolkit.

The service will be rolled out later this year through a series of free clinics helping individuals who are searching for advice on how to get started on their home energy upgrade journey. Take your first step now by registering for the clinics at [www.ludgate.ie/cheris-westcork/](http://www.ludgate.ie/cheris-westcork/)



# UfirstPhysio opens in Clonakilty

With a passion for helping people recover, rehabilitate, and optimise their physical health, Seán Woods is delighted to announce the opening of his new chartered physiotherapy and sports injury clinic in Clonakilty, a town he has many connections with though his love of sport. UfirstPhysio, located in the SuperValu complex at Faxbridge, includes a specialised rehabilitation gym to facilitate faster returns to pain-free movement.

Murragh native Seán has extensive education and training in his field, including a Masters degree in Physiotherapy from the University of Cumbria and a Bachelors degree in Sports Rehabilitation and Athletic Therapy from Carlow Institute of Technology. Before returning to Ireland from the UK, he spent time working with the NHS across multiple settings including hospitals, care-homes and community based clinics; since returning home he has furthered his knowledge through extensive work in private practice, treating patients of all ages and backgrounds.

"I have experience in a wide variety of evidence-based treatment strategies including

manual therapy, therapeutic exercise and functional rehabilitation, electrotherapy (including TENS and ultrasound), thermotherapy, and taping and strapping," Seán outlines.

A pillar of UfirstPhysio's approach is the synergy between exercise based rehabilitation and physiotherapy treatment. "Research strongly advocates this connection to optimise patient outcomes," Seán explains. "Exercise therapy can reduce or even eliminate pain, improve mobility, increase strength and flexibility. It can facilitate quicker rehabilitation when combined with manual therapy, and, in the case of sports-related injuries, result in a faster return to play.

"Our advanced on-site reha-



bilitation gym is designed to cater to a wide array of patients of various fitness levels and exercise backgrounds."

A dedicated sportsman himself who has competed in a variety of sports including GAA, rugby, hockey, golf and

Olympic weightlifting, Seán has also worked with various sports teams as the lead therapist.

"This firsthand experience gives me valuable insight into the demands placed on athletes' bodies and their unique challenges, on and off the field of play," he says. "I am well-versed in sports-specific treatments, injury prevention strategies, and performance enhancement techniques.

Personalised care is of the utmost importance to Seán, who is continually expanding his knowledge and skills through ongoing professional development and attending advanced

training courses. "Whether you are seeking rehabilitation from an ongoing condition, injury, pain relief, or performance enhancement, I will work closely with you to create a customised treatment plan that addresses your unique circumstances," he promises.

Take your first step towards a healthier, more active life and contact UfirstPhysio to schedule an appointment. Call 087 474 6030 or visit the clinic to book in. Open Mon to Fri, 8am to 6pm – weekend availability also.

[www.ufirstphysio.ie](http://www.ufirstphysio.ie)

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## AUTUMN 2023 CLASS TIMETABLE

SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

\*These classes are run by external instructors. Contact them directly to secure your place.

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI
<b>SPINNING</b> 7.00am – 8.00am <b>KETTLEBELLS</b> 10.00am – 11.00am <b>YOGA (Barbara 083 0733060)*</b> 5.30pm – 6.30pm <b>ZUMBA (Flavie 087 6548138)*</b> 6.45pm – 7.45pm <b>AERIAL YOGA (Barbara 083 0733060)*</b> 8.15pm – 9.15pm	<b>HIIT CIRCUITS</b> 10.00am – 11.00am <b>AQUACISE</b> 11.00am – 11.45am <b>CORK CITY BALLET (Alan 087 7851225)*</b> 3.30pm – 7.30pm <b>SPINNING</b> 6.30pm – 7.30pm <b>STEP</b> 8.00pm – 8.45pm	<b>SPINNING</b> 7.00am – 8.00am <b>CIRCUIT</b> 10.00am – 11.00am <b>YOGA (Barbara 083 0733060)*</b> 5.30pm – 6.30pm <b>ZUMBA (Flavie 087 6548138)*</b> 6.45pm – 7.45pm	<b>STEP</b> 9.00am – 9.45am <b>AQUACISE</b> 10.00am – 10.45am <b>SPINNING</b> 6.30pm – 7.30pm <b>AERIAL YOGA (Barbara 083 0733060)*</b> 7pm – 8pm <b>AERIAL YOGA (Barbara 083 0733060)*</b> 8.15pm – 9.15pm	<b>SPINNING</b> 7.00am – 8.00am <b>CIRCUIT</b> 10.00am – 11.00am <b>ZUMBA GOLD (Flavie 087 6548138)*</b> 10.30am – 11.30am <b>TEEN FITNESS</b> 4.30pm – 5.30pm <b>BELLY DANCING (Mila 086 4551257)*</b> 7pm – 8.30pm
<b>PRICES</b>	<b>MEMBERS:</b> €5 per class, 10 class pass €45 <b>NON-MEMBERS:</b> €8 per class, 10 class pass €72. Teen classes €5. <b>The jungle gym (normal opening hours) is available to members doing any class.</b> Classes can be booked through the "Clonpool" app or by contacting 023 88 34387.			<b>SAT</b> <b>AERIAL YOGA (Barbara 083 0733060)*</b> 9.15am – 10.15am



## people Food, Health & Lifestyle

# Healing through the medium of sound



**SOUND HEALING FOR YOU & YOUR CHILD**

- Reduce anxiety & stress
- Relax
- Time out to rebalance
- Improve sleep
- Help Focus

at the Sound Healing Cabin, Long Strand



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€90 includes

**30 minute session for child (with parent present)**

**2 hour session for parent (at a different time)**

**ONE-OFF SESSIONS AND PACKAGES ALSO AVAILABLE**

To find out more phone Claire on 087 2323 623 or email [claire@clairemariebarton.com](mailto:claire@clairemariebarton.com) [www.clairemariebarton.com](http://www.clairemariebarton.com)

With changes in routine, new teachers or even a new school, going back to school can be challenging for both parents and children. Add anxiety, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and autism into the mix and everyone can end up feeling stressed.

Claire Marie Barton supports families through difficult times using sound healing. Sound Healing is a lovely gentle way to relax. Just listening to the sound of the gong calms the mind and boosts the immune system. It can be beneficial for those who have ADHD with reports of improved concentration, reduced stress, increased relaxation and improved sleep.

When a child is having difficulties, their parents worry about them and sometimes there is increased anxiety in the family. Claire offers sessions for both parents and children

so that everyone's stress levels are reduced and they feel more able to cope with the trials of everyday life. Here are a couple of recent testimonials from a mother and son who came for sessions.

"I took part in several one to one sound healing sessions with Claire. Claire has a wonderful, gentle manner and I loved the cosy atmosphere of the cabin overlooking the Atlantic in which the sessions took place.

"I found being immersed in the sound healing an intense and profoundly relaxing experience. Claire used a wide range of sounds from the powerful gong to gentle bells and also pauses during which I could hear the ocean waves and gull cries. I felt I was in a deeply meditative state which I could not have achieved otherwise. Afterwards I felt that the sense of calm which I gained from the session remained with me



and allowed me to deal with the stress of life and young children more easily". A.C. Clonakilty

"I liked listening to the different sounds. Some of them made me feel calm, some of them made me feel energised.

They made me feel all different feelings. A.C. Clonakilty Age 9

To find out more contact Claire on [claire@clairemariebarton.com](mailto:claire@clairemariebarton.com) or 087 2323 623

## Outside the box aubergines



### A FLAVOUR OF WEST CORK RECIPE

Karen Austin

Our garden is like a food bank, we are awash with produce. The harvest came early this year and we have been eating a month ahead of time. The heatwave in June encouraged everything along and even though we apparently had the wettest July on record it wasn't cold and the beans and courgettes were happy out. We have picked bucket after bucket full of both. We cut down on how much we grew this year, not having the shop kitchen to supply, but I think we need to scale back a little more. Even our visitors are beginning to shy away from the armfuls of produce we send them away with.

The tomatoes and beans have been in full swing since the beginning of July, and August brought us a mega harvest of aubergines. We grew a different variety this year and they are prolific. As fast as we eat them so the plants produce more, which is wonderful, but it is a lot of aubergines. Fortunately tomatoes and aubergines make

a great partnership, both are technically fruits and members of the nightshade family and, as they generally grow in harmony with each other, they turn up together in a lot of recipes. but eventually even they lose their allure and you have to start thinking out of the box.

Here is a simple recipe for aubergines with tahini and honey, a sublime combo. It's very simple to prepare. Begin with salting the aubergines – this is step some people skip as aubergines are rarely bitter anymore but salting does prevent the aubergine from absorbing the oil that it's cooked in, just make sure the pan and oil are hot before adding the aubergine.

### Aubergines with honey and tahini lemon dressing

#### Ingredients:

- 2 aubergines
- olive oil
- salt
- 3tbs light tahini
- juice of half a lemon
- 1 clove garlic
- 1-2 tbs runny honey
- a handful of fresh mint

#### Method:

Cut the aubergines into four thick slices lengthwise then cut them into strips across.

You should end up with strips about the size of old fashioned chips.

Sprinkle over a little salt, toss well and put into a colander. Leave aside for 15 minutes. Meanwhile make the dressing.

Peel and chop the garlic and

put into a bowl with the tahini.

Mix in the lemon juice – this makes the tahini into a very thick paste – then thin out with a little water until you have a thick pouring consistency. Add a pinch of salt and put aside.

When you are ready to cook the aubergines, take a handful and squeeze so the excess juices come out. Put the aubergine pieces onto a clean tea towel and pat dry. Heat a large pan, add a little olive oil, line the aubergine chips up like soldiers then gently rotate until they are golden. Fry in batches. don't overcrowd the pan. Put them on plate lined with kitchen paper as they come out of the pan. When they are all cooked pile the cooked aubergines onto a serving plate, drizzle over the tahini sauce and a

little honey, sprinkle with chopped mint and serve.

Use any left over tahini sauce drizzled into salad sambos, over roasted veggies and beans.

The autumn cooking classes are ready to go. There are a few places free on some classes so if you fancy a little culinary sun snack do check them out. The first Mediterranean class is fully booked but there are places free on the Greek class, which is also in fact Mediterranean and all our yummy ingredients from the garden will make it sing. Let me know if you are interested.

Enjoy September, fingers crossed the sun will shine.

Karen  
Lettercollum Kitchen Project,  
Timoleague

[info@lettercollum.ie](mailto:info@lettercollum.ie)  
[www.lettercollum.ie](http://www.lettercollum.ie)  
0238846251



## LETTERCOLLUM

### COOKING CLASSES AUTUMN 2023

#### 9<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER MEDITERRANEAN

The perfect time to host this class, when the garden is still producing tomatoes, aubergines, beans and all manner of delicious things to cook. There will be lots of 'live to be one hundred recipes' from the south where a plant based diet is widely believed to be the reason that so many live to an old age.

#### 16<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER RECIPES FROM GREECE

The food in Greece is simple and seasonal. This class will be about creative ways with aubergine, peppers and tomatoes, delicious vegetable mezze and the secret to making filo pie.

#### 21<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER SPANISH

This very edible class will include tapas for sharing, the perfect tortilla, and paella or suquet. I'm not sure quite what else yet as we're about to go walkabout through Spain and hope pick up some new recipes so the menu has yet to be decided. This class will include some fish.

#### 28<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER LEBANESE

Enjoy the wonderful fresh Mezze, Pilafs and Salads of this beautiful country and learn how simple they are to put together.

#### 11<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER RECIPES FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

A class about recipes to inspire you to enjoy a plant based diet using local ingredients. The recipes will be simple and tasty. A lot of the world always eats in this way, there's a surprising amount of healthy and fun eating out there.

#### 18<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER THAI

Fresh and zippy recipes for noodle and rice dishes, curries, stir fried vegetables, fresh salads and seafood. Perfect food to brighten up grey days!

#### 25<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER INDIAN VEGETARIAN

One of my favourite vegetarian cuisines - so many possibilities! Learn to make a thali with a variety of vegetable dishes, dal, samosas, pakoras, biryani rice and all the accompaniments.

☎ 023 8846251 ✉ [karen@lettercollum.ie](mailto:karen@lettercollum.ie)

The classes are held at Lettercollum in Timoleague.

They begin at 10.30am and finish around 3pm. The cost is €120 and includes all recipes, tastings and a large lunch.





## people Food, Health &amp; Lifestyle

## Food intolerance testing may benefit stomach health



ances, which can significantly impact your quality of life says Certified Nutritionist **Michelle Ryan**. Fortunately there is a tool available to help you to identify the root causes of this discomfort: food intolerance testing. Digestive health can be complex but Michelle gives an overview of the numerous benefits of food intolerance testing and sheds light on how it can provide you with the key to reclaiming your digestive health.

Pinpointing problematic foods: Living with bloating, digestion pains and reflux can be both physically and emotionally draining. Food intolerance

testing serves as a valuable diagnostic tool, enabling you to identify specific foods that trigger adverse reactions in your body. With new awareness of the culprits responsible, you can make informed decisions about your diet and take the necessary steps towards alleviating your symptoms and allowing your body to heal.

Customised meal planning: One of the greatest advantages of food intolerance testing is its ability to provide personalised insights into your unique dietary needs. Armed with the knowledge of your food intolerances, you can work with a nutritionist to develop a specific

meal plan that eliminates problematic foods while ensuring you receive all the necessary nutrients. This tailored approach can significantly improve your digestive health and overall wellbeing.

Enhanced quality of life and a path to optimal health: Your gut health plays a vital role in your overall health and immune system function. When digestive issues plague everyday living, it can impact your overall quality of life. By identifying and eliminating problem foods that could be causing long-term damage to your gut, you can experience a remarkable improvement in your well-being with increased

energy levels, reduced discomfort and improved mental clarity just some of the benefits of a healthier digestive system. By addressing these underlying issues, you can nourish and pave the way towards a healthier gut microbiome future and reduce the risk of developing chronic conditions associated with untreated food intolerances.

If you've been struggling, don't underestimate the potential benefits of food intolerance testing. Get in contact with Michelle to take the first step

towards better gut health, increased energy and overall better health. A healthier future awaits you through informed dietary choices: "Make the right food choices for your body, the results can be life changing."

Call Michelle on 087 6704930 to enquire about a taking a test, and if it's the right option for you. You can also email your query via email [wellness@bwellhive.ie](mailto:wellness@bwellhive.ie) or visit [www.bwellhive.ie](http://www.bwellhive.ie) for more information.

If you frequently experience bloating, digestion pains or reflux after meals, you may be suffering from food intoler-

## Don't miss out on picking blackberries



## 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.rosarikingtonphd.com](http://www.rosarikingtonphd.com)

The act of picking blackberries is ingrained in the minds of most of us: We all have fond memories of carrying our buckets out into the fields and along the hedgerows to collect the luscious black fruit that hung from the brambles. It was usually sunny when we went on these excursions into the fields and along the roadsides, and the sensation of the warm sun on our backs as we leaned inwards to pick an enormous berry is embedded in my mind. At the beginning of the picking, we consumed more than we put into our assorted containers, but as the picking continued, the bowls progressively filled up, and eventually it was time to head back home.

The pleasure of the day did not finish with the picking; instead, some of our crop was placed in bowls, and sugar and cream were added. This brought the total number of ingredients to three. This dish of delicious blackberries mashed with sugar and cream reflected the essence of the day, which was pure satisfaction in the bounty that nature had provided and the pleasure we got from gathering it.

Blackberries are a fruit that are only available during certain times of the year, often ripening in late summer. Their availability is linked to the shifting of the seasons, and so they are seen as a visible change of the coming of autumn. Even if there had been a late harvest, no blackberries were ever picked after Halloween, even if there were some left on the brambles. This was because October 31 is the celebration of Samhain, signifying the end of the harvest season and the start of winter, the dark half of the year. It was said that after this date, the Púca, a mischievous and sometimes malevolent supernatural creature, would spit on the blackberries, rendering them inedible and no one wants to risk messing with the fairy or spirit world.

At a practical level, any fruit after this date would not really be worth picking as they would be rather tasteless and contain too much water. Even in the early autumn, the ability of blackberries to decompose rapidly into a mess, only fit for the compost is remarkable. The flavour and keeping qualities of blackberries in early November would, I suspect, be almost nil thus giving credence to the warning not to pick this fruit after October 31.

A story about blackberries comes from the county of Meath, where there is a hill called Teevurcher. A mythical woman named Garbhóg lived on this hill. On her way to Mass, while she was fasting, she ate blackberries from the bush even though her servant boy told her not to. She turned into a monster right away and ate everything in her way, including the boy, his horse, and anyone else who had the misfortune to meet her. St. Patrick was in a church nearby, and he ran out, hit her with his stick and killed her. She fell apart into four parts that went in four different directions. This story has been passed down from generation to generation, and a mediaeval sculptured head that is said to be of her is in a church six miles away from the original spot.

From a health perspective, blackberries are also good for us. They are full of vitamin C with over 30 mg in one bowl of blackberries. Vitamin C is important for our bones, connective tissue, and blood vessels. Vitamin C also helps to reduce free radicals in the body and free radicals are unstable atoms that can cause damage to cells, thus causing many kinds of illness. Anything that gets rid of them is good news. Vitamin C also helps to absorb iron and we are all familiar with its ability

to shorten the common cold by boosting the immune system.

Blackberries are full of antioxidants, especially anthocyanins, which can help protect cells from oxidative stress and lower the chance of chronic diseases like cancer and heart disease. Antioxidants also reduce blood pressure and help to manage cholesterol. Another role for antioxidants is that they may help to protect brain cells from oxidative damage. They do this by altering how brain neuron communicate, so this opens the possibility of blackberries being helpful in reducing the risk of cognitive decline. Anthocyanins help to improve insulin sensitivity and regulate blood sugar levels. This obviously makes blackberries good news for people with diabetes and those with metabolic syndrome.

Blackberries have chemicals in them that are anti-inflammatory, and these can help lower inflammation in the body. This may help people with arthritis and other diseases that cause inflammation.

Blackberries are high in fibre and a small bowl of blackberries contains almost 8 grams. We are all aware of the importance of fibre in our diet because it reduces cholesterol, regulates bowel movements, and helps promotes healthy gut bacteria.

Blackberries are also high in Vitamin K containing almost 29 mg in a small bowl. Vitamin K helps your blood to clot. Vitamin K also has a role in bone metabolism and lack of vitamin K may lead to bone thinning and bone fractures. Being deficient in vitamin K also causes easy bruising, and heavy menstrual periods. Unfortunately, if you are taking blood thinners, it

### BEAT THE BLOAT!

## FOOD INTOLERANCE & ALLERGY TESTING

**Do you suffer from:**

- bloating, gas or gut pain?
- anxiety, fatigue or brain fog?
- weight management issues?
- long-term Covid?

**Take control by learning which foods you are reacting to.**

Test includes consultation and support to eat the right foods from **NUTRITIONAL THERAPIST** **MICHELLE RYAN**

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is not a good idea to have too many bowls of blackberries, as they may, (depending on the quantity eaten) reduce their efficacy.

Manganese isn't as well-known as other minerals, yet it's essential for bone formation and immune system health. It also aids in the metabolism of carbohydrates, amino acids, and cholesterol. Manganese, like vitamin C, is essential for collagen production. Prolidase, an enzyme that helps manganese build collagen, also aids in wound healing. Manganese may aid in the prevention of osteoporosis, the management of blood sugar levels, and the reduction of epileptic convulsions. One cup of raw blackberries has 0.9 milligrams, providing about half of the daily required dose. But keep in mind that too much manganese can be harmful if you have a condition that prevents your body from removing extra manganese, such as chronic liver disease or anaemia. You are, however, unlikely to obtain too much manganese through diet.

Some research supports the importance of blackberries in dental hygiene. Blackberry extract possesses antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties against some types of bacteria that cause mouth illness. This information is useful to

remember when we return home with blackberry-stained mouths and teeth after a day's picking blackberries.

Blackberries are not fattening and a terrific way to fulfil a sweet tooth. One small bowl of raw blackberries contains only 62 calories, one gramme of fat, and 14 carbohydrates. This makes them simple to incorporate into a healthy eating plan.

There is also good news in relation to the effect of blackberries on glucose levels. The Glycemic Index (GI) scale ranks how carbohydrate-containing foods may affect your blood glucose response and a grade of 55 or lower is thought to be less likely to cause blood sugar spikes. Blackberries have a GI of 25. As well, their glycemic load (the GI measurement plus the amount of carbohydrates in a portion) is only four, which means they are very unlikely to affect blood sugar.

Finally, on Saturday September 16, I will be involved in a clinical training workshop at Church Cross, Skibbereen. If anybody has respiratory problems, i.e. shortage of breath, asthma, chronic coughs, bronchitis etc, please email me ([rosari@drrosarikington.com](mailto:rosari@drrosarikington.com)) for an opportunity to avail of a free consultation.



## people Food, Health &amp; Lifestyle

# Reconnect and re-engage with yourself and nature and community

Mindfulness is always about being present for what's here and now and our presence offers new beginnings with each new breath, each new moment, new day, new season. As our Summer draws to a close and we

begin to feel the season turning, many of us are preparing for a new term, settling children back to school, getting a bit more organised, introducing more structure than in Summertime, perhaps planning to take up a class ourselves. It is a time of

year that can feel like a new start, and for some of us can be an unsettled time, so we can take things nice and steady as we make our plans for the season. You might even decide that this is a time to slow down and nurture yourself.

This Autumn, for the third time, thanks to the continued support of the REACH fund administered by Cork ETB, I will be running two free three-week mindfulness programmes, called Reconnect and Re-engage at CECAS in Myross Wood, Leap. These programmes, developed to help deal with the Covid legacy of isolation and disconnect, remain as relevant as ever now. Reconnect and Re-engage offers participants an opportunity to slow down, reconnect with themselves and with nature while re-engaging with other people and with community. There are two programmes, one is specifically for family carers, beginning in late September, and a second, more general programme, beginning in November.

It can be quite hard to explain a mindfulness meditation class adequately until you try it for yourself. It is so experiential and may be unlike any class you've taken up before, but it can be life-changing. This time, to explain what the Reconnect and Re-engage programmes are about, I have included some

quotes from previous participants which I believe speak for themselves. They describe the experience, benefits and value of mindfulness meditation and capture the essence of both Reconnect and Re-engage programmes beautifully.

"The setting for this programme was exceptional and lent to the success of the workshops for me. Each workshop embraced the outdoors and nature, all in a very gentle manner, and teaching us that a walk through frosty, sparkling grass, picking up leaves, listening to the birds, looking out across still waters, is extremely soothing for the body and mind...I truly loved this workshop. I learnt so much while also relearning knowledge I had but had pushed aside. A lot of times it's easier to keep running, keep being busy, but the programme made me realise I must take better care of myself. It's my own duty, no one else can do it for me".

"The course gave me space and time to come into myself, bring my feelings and experiences, be open and real with others who I felt accepted and understood why I was there. Susan facilitated the sessions beautifully with gentleness, kindness and humour".

"Over the years to help my survival in my challenging life, I have attended many events to help keep my wellness



## 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.

intact. This is the first time that I have come away with new true friends, the only thing we had to share were our names, because we already had a sense of the rawness of the journey people are living".

"I cannot count the number of times I go back to the space, people, content, flow, sincerity and numerous other descriptions of the three weeks spent in Myross...What a tool you have given me to unlock the suppressed thoughts, emotions and so on and realise that I have within me – my breath to keep calm, cool, and less stressed".

"In countless ways my life has been enriched by caring. Yesterday I noticed the gorse flowers in the ditch, again often

not seen as beautiful, but I love them. I thought that it all depends on how you view a flower or a situation...I think your course has given me the space to realise I can change how I chose to look at something, anything."

"The food was delicious, I felt so cared for when presented with the delicious meals. The coffee on arrival was particularly delicious and again made me feel cared for. Thank you".

Reconnect and Re-engage three-week programme for family carers runs on September 27, October 4 and 11 from 10.30 – 1.30pm at CECAS, Myross Wood, Leap. Reconnect and Re-engage for those who feel the need to reconnect and re-engage with themselves, nature and community will run on November 22, 29 and December 6, from 10.30 – 1.30pm. Please get in touch if you think either of these programmes might be for you. They are run in conjunction with CECAS and supported by the REACH fund 2023.

And if you would like to give mindfulness meditation a go before then, regular drop-in compassion-based mindfulness practice sessions continue at CECAS, Myross Wood Leap on Tuesday mornings throughout September (5, 12 and 26) from 10am – 11am. €10. All are welcome to join this wonderful community of practice.

For more information, phone: 087 2700572 or email: [susanoreganmindfulness@gmail.com](mailto:susanoreganmindfulness@gmail.com)  
FB: [susanoreganmindfulness](https://www.facebook.com/susanoreganmindfulness)  
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**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> October**

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October**

**at CECAS, Myross Woods House, Leap**

Follow-up options available  
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Contact Susan 087 2700572  
[susanoreganmindfulness@gmail.com](mailto:susanoreganmindfulness@gmail.com)  
[mindhaven.ie](http://mindhaven.ie)



# The importance of getting your dog to focus



## CANINE CORNER

Liz Mahony

Liz Mahony is an experienced Dog Trainer and Holistic Therapist for all animals. In her monthly column, Liz aims to promote mutual respect between carer and dog. Contact Liz at [corkdogtrainingclasses.com](http://corkdogtrainingclasses.com).

I'm always interested in reading articles about training dogs. However, in most of those articles I read about

improving a dog's recall, getting a dog to sit and stay anywhere, I rarely read about what I consider to be the most important command: getting your dog to focus on you whenever and wherever necessary. That means that you must be able to get him to look at you despite any fearful or exciting distractions going on. As far as I'm concerned, once your dog can concentrate on you, you can teach him anything else after that.

Here are a few pointers about the focus cue. If your dog is not looking at you when you ask for a command, he's probably got his mind on devilment elsewhere. It also generally means that he doesn't respect you enough to accord you the time of day. In moments of excitement, fear or distress, he will run elsewhere rather than focus on you to solve his problems, give him a command or release him to go and play or investigate whatever has got his attention.

If you and your dog both trust

each other, this focus doesn't have to be so concentrated that he can look nowhere else. As far as I'm concerned, I'm quite happy for a nervous or fearful dog to look at any oncoming 'perceived danger' and then to concentrate on me so that I can help him. If a dog is nervous that could mean moving him away out of range from the oncoming dog or person and putting myself in between him and it, crossing the road, or doing something that allows my dog to relax so he can look at me, perform a command, accept a treat and receive lots of praise. The more we practise this, the more responsive he becomes.

The same applies to a hyperactive dog. You behave quietly around him, taking deep grounding breaths and showing him very 'high-value' treats that are irresistible. At the beginning, he may sit and look for a second, snatch the treat and run. Patience is the order of the day. Feed Jackpots in slow

time – that's five to six treats one after the other with loads of praise. By the time he gets through the Jackpot, the object of excitement or interest may well be long gone. And anyway, there's much more on offer in the form of food right where he is. As you reward with treats and praise, that's also the time to gently place him on a lead so that you can continue the positive training.

If your dog snatches a treat and runs off, it means he rewards himself twice: high-value treats from you and then fun and games with whatever has caught his attention; he's not respectful enough of you and you need to do more training at home where there are fewer distractions.



The best place to teach good focus is at home and every mealtime. Prepare his food and then hold the bowl up near your face. 'Fido, Look'. He makes eye contact, 'Good', and his immediate reward is his meal ready in front of him. Once he's got the message with his main meals, then practise it at other times of the day with your 'high-value' treats plus cuddles and praise for making that eye contact. Now, he's hooked because if you ask him to look at you, that indicates something for him! And, all dogs are

opportunists so they're not going to miss what could be rewarding. You can practise all the basic commands in and around the house using the focus cue so that your dog is hanging on your every word. You practise them in every room in the house. Then you try asking for

them outside in your garden but ensure you have him on a lead at the beginning.

When he's enjoying these games and the treats that follow, you can ensure that he comes every time to the recall. If you've practised this cue inside and around the home, then you can try him on a long lead in the garden. No matter what is going on, he can't run away, and you have the chance to get him to look at you from a distance and to call him to you with the promise of a Jackpot. No respectable dog can refuse that!

If you're really smart, you'll train him to return to you, either sitting in front of you and making eye contact, or sitting either side that you indicate and looking up while you produce delicious Jackpots. The quicker he returns to you, the more committed he has become in the game. And now both of you are having fun and getting what you both want!



## A preview of the West Cork Feel Good Festival 2023

Now in its eleventh year, the festival is offering a raft of activities



throughout the month of October. Too many to mention – the range continues to expand. To give but a sample: gentle yoga, a winter vegetable class, drama and story workshops at the Bridge Street Community Café in Bantry. On top of this, a celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Bantry Community Choir in the Maritime Hotel with four additional choirs (from Sheep's Head, Durrus, Dunmanway, Bantry), a film screening, and musical contributions by the Claddagh Rogues, whose lead singer James O'Flynn has used music to sing himself out of every tight spot imaginable. "Our words and music help you understand your own and other people's points of view, the big meanings in life, and how you feel about things."

Art as a bridge to wellbeing is one of the themes of the festival. As are community and connection. This is in line with approaches that are gaining traction, based on the insight that our bodies, minds,

communities hold many of the "feel good keys" to mental health. "Work, relationships, the creative arts, recreation, peer support, religion and spirituality and a range of other pursuits have all provided the encouragement and support that people need," wrote Dr Pat Bracken, the former Clinical Director of the Mental Health Service in West Cork, as early as 2015.

Increasingly, the festival is providing opportunities to the growing number of people who "want to work on themselves" in changing times. And the geographical area that it covers in West Cork is steadily expanding. This year, you can experience forest bathing in Glengarriff, go on a Boom Box Bike Ride in Skibbereen, and/or go for a meditative walk to the Pier in Rosscarbery with the Clonakilty Walking Group. In the first week alone, for example, there's Joy in the Yard at 49, North Street, Skibbereen (which begot the festival back in 2012) with Irish trad, rock

'n roll/reggae, and a choir. Imram an Phréacháin (Journey of the Crow) is performed at the Clonakilty Community Arts Centre, Ballydehob sees an Autumnal Rewilding Walk while there are Peer Support and Open Door Music sessions in Bantry. Plus, concerts at Connolly's and the Harbour Bar in Leap and Levis Corner House in Ballydehob where the headline acts include the Irish singer-songwriters Duke Special and Síomha, whose first album 'Infinite Space' was described by The Irish Times as "a seriously accomplished and self-confident debut", the sustainable fashion stylist Alice Halliday, the award-winning chef Rob Krawczyk, and the premiere of Aoise Tutty Jackson's 'Feel Good Festival Film'.

Most workshops are free, some events are ticketed or donation-based, see the full programme at [www.musicalive.ie/west-cork-feel-good-festival](http://www.musicalive.ie/west-cork-feel-good-festival) and in the October issue of West Cork People.

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## 'Born Too Soon' series highlights the heartbreak and joy experienced at Cork's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit

Filmed over the course of a year, 'Born Too Soon', a new four-part series from Tyrone Productions delves into the world of Cork's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, shining a light on the babies that are born too soon or need assistance at birth and the incredible nurses and doctors of the NICU at CUMH who care for them. Throughout the series, the parents of these preterm infants, including Kinsale couple Jennifer and Patrick Crowe, share their innermost struggles, fears and heartbreaking tug-of-love moments.

Series producer and director Sarah Brophy is a West Cork native and mother of twins who experienced the neonatal intensive care unit in Cork firsthand when her own babies were born prematurely.

"You don't imagine your pregnancy is going to end here, and although it's the absolute safest place for your baby to be, the constant alarms of monitors and equipment, and other babies crying, is an intense experience," she shares.

Sarah says that while the series has broken her heart a few times and was a tough one



*The Crowe family from Kinsale with Emily (left) and Hannah (right). Emily is also pictured in an incubator.*

to make as a parent, she feels very privileged to have had the opportunity to tell these stories. "I have reverential respect for the families we have met while filming this series. Their strength and resilience has amazed me and they will certainly inspire many families

who find themselves in such a tough situation in the future."

Emily Crowe and her twin sister Hannah were born via emergency c-section at 31 weeks, weighing only 2lbs 6oz and were admitted to the neonatal intensive care unit.

While Hannah went home

to Kinsale after just four weeks of learning to breathe and feed on her own, Emily continued to struggle with her breathing so was kept in for 10 more weeks to undergo a series of rigorous tests. With Emily in hospital and Hannah in Kinsale, mum Jennifer and dad Patrick were faced with the same agonising choice every day, splitting their time between their two daughters.

Identifying Emily's breathing difficulties was a process of elimination for the NICU

team. For weeks her condition remained a mystery until they eventually discovered that milk was escaping into her windpipe causing episodes where she would stop breathing.

After 14 weeks of neonatal care, Emily established a safe feeding pattern and her breathing stabilised allowing her to get home just days before Christmas, an incredibly joyous moment for mum and dad who had spent over three months worrying about her.

Emily remains under the care

of the neonatal team who will monitor her development for the next two years. Her issues have not been fully resolved but the NICU team are hopeful that time and maturity will help. She's also about to become a big sister as her mum and dad will welcome a new baby in just a few weeks time.

The first episode in the series aired on Virgin Media Television on Tuesday, September 5 at 9pm, rewatch on the Virgin Media Player.

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# Perimenopause

Dr Paula Stanley, a GP with a special interest in women's health issues, in partnership with Skibbereen Medical Centre, is rolling out an innovative model of care focusing on women's health in West Cork. Following on from the menopause, this month she focuses on the perimenopause.

In my 25 years as a GP with a special interest in women's health, what we understand by the term perimenopause has changed a lot. Years ago we thought it was just the few months before periods stopped. I have to thank Dr Olivia Ham, a GP and British Meno-

pause Society (BMS) Menopause Specialist, whose BMS Education presentation on the perimenopause last year resulted in a eureka moment for me and has been a game-changer for my clinical consultations for perimenopause.

"I think I am starting the menopause, doctor, and want to have HRT."

This is the opening line of many consultations with 45- to 50-year-old women we deal with as GPs. Let's start by looking at some definitions.

Menopause is a retrospective diagnosis. A woman is said to be in menopause if it has been 12 months since her last period.

Postmenopause is the time of a woman's life beyond 12 months after her last period.

The above two are quite easy therapeutically for a doctor. The patient no longer needs contraception and will benefit in the

short, as well as long-term, from hormone replacement therapy or HRT: job done. These two scenarios are quite a straightforward part of my clinical work.

Perimenopause, on the other hand, in terms of diagnosis and treatment is more like trying to nail jelly to the wall.

Perimenopause describes the time from the first occurrence of any symptoms to one year after a woman's last period.

The average age of a woman's last period is 51 years. Average age of onset perimenopause is 45 years. Before 45 is defined as early perimenopause but can occur. Before the age of 40 is defined as Premature Ovarian Failure, a topic for a future article.

While the median duration of perimenopause for women is four years, it might be a bit daunting for readers to learn that it can go on for as long as eight to 10 years.

What I find has improved in the last five to eight years of my practice is that women have now heard of the perimenopause and go to see their doctor. They just don't know what perimenopause means. Bottom line: what the woman in her 40s in front of me wants to know is 'Am I going mad or is it my hormones?'

It is very important that my patient understands the gubbins of what is going on in her body through the perimenopause. To that end I will do my best here to run through the workings of a 'normal' ovulatory cycle or a cycle during which an egg is released.

Ladies, essentially, we run a complicated hormonal balancing machine. It is a feedback system between the pituitary gland, the hypothalamus, both located in the brain, and the ovaries.

The hypothalamus releases FSH, follicle stimulating hormone; the pituitary gland, LH, leutinising hormone – both of these act on the ovary to facilitate ovulation.

The ovaries are our main source of oestrogen. Oestrogen is our dominant female hormone and is responsible for the changes of puberty but also has widespread effects on muscles, bones, brain, breasts, heart, blood vessels, as well as our pelvic organs, external genitalia and bladder. After a woman menstruates, during the first half of a regular, ovulatory cycle, oestrogen levels slowly rise to a peak. This results in release of LH, which then triggers ovulation. This usually occurs mid-cycle or midway between two periods. In the second half of the cycle, oestrogen levels drop and our progesterone hormone level rises. This is our premenstrual hormone and is



## WOMEN'S HEALTH

Dr Paula Stanley

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responsible for symptoms we get in the premenstrual week.

What is going on during the perimenopause is not dissimilar to what happens to our motor after 200,000 miles: the complicated hormone balancing machine stalls, backfires, splutters and does not run in the smooth cyclical fashion described above.

What starts to happen is that some months we ovulate, some months we don't. This has a kick-back effect on all of the female hormones in our hormonal axes.

This means that from 45 to 55 years of age, at different times, and in a completely random way, a woman's oestrogen, progesterone and FSH and LH are up, down, sideways, too high, too low: pretty much all over the place. Which is exactly what I have heard my patients say a hundred times: "Dr, I feel like I am all over the place!" before bursting into tears.

## Perimenopause symptoms:

Change to periods. Periods can slowly start to get further apart but more often simply become erratic and unpredictable. Periods can also become longer and heavier, sometimes flooding.

Hot flushes. Oestrogen impacts whole body temperature regulation, as heat production and dissipation relies on oestrogen receptors in the hypothalamus in the brain and elsewhere in the body.

Palpitations are a common complaint, more so than in menopause or post menopause.

Changes to body composition: women notice that it is much more difficult to lose weight than in their 30s and specifically weight gathers around the belly area.

Headaches are common and some women present with

migraines for the first time.

Joint and muscle pains.

Sleep: 40 per cent of women in the perimenopause have sleep disturbance.

Fatigue is a common complaint.

Most debilitating are the mood and cognitive changes: 69 per cent of women in the perimenopause will experience mood changes; irritability, often anxiety, tearfulness and low mood. Women aged 45 to 55 have the highest suicide rate among women.

Poor concentration, poor memory, brain fog.

Seventy per cent of women in perimenopause will experience Genitourinary Syndrome of Menopause or GSM. GSM is the term given to vulval, vaginal and urinary symptoms.

Oestrogen deprivation and fluctuating oestrogen levels affect the tissue in the genital area including the urethra, or wee pipe, which exits at the top of the vaginal opening.

GSM symptoms are: atrophy, sometimes shrinkage of tissue in the vulval area, vaginal dryness, soreness and discomfort at times, accompanied by irritation and vaginal discharge. Urinary symptoms are common with burning when passing urine, as well as frequency or passing urine very often. Not surprisingly, GSM can result in low libido and decline in sexual wellbeing, often affecting relationships.

Unfortunately GSM symptoms go under-reported. I find in my practice that they are rarely volunteered, instead I have to specifically ask about them.

## Treatment

Now, any of you that read my article on Menopause last month will probably think; is this not the same list of symptoms as for menopause?

Yes, but what is going on hormonally in a woman's body during perimenopause is completely different to what happens in the menopause state:

Perimenopause equals hormones all over the place and intermittently ovulating versus consistently low levels of oestrogen with persistently high FSH diagnostic of menopause state and no ovulation.

Understanding that is key to explaining to my patient the logic of the treatment approach, which is to switch off her current chaotic cycle and give her nice, calm steady hormone levels.

To achieve this we use contraception medication but in a slightly different way. If there are no contraindications, the combined oral contraceptive (COC), is prescribed, what many

know as the normal pill. This is safe to use up to the age of 50.

COC contains oestrogen and progesterone and works by suppressing ovulation, which prevents the hormonal swings causing her symptoms. COC for perimenopause is taken without a break to achieve steady hormone levels. Where COC is contraindicated, a progesterone-only contraceptive can be equally effective. These come in the form of pill, injection, implant or intrauterine device or coil called Mirena coil. These can be safely used up to the age of 55 years. When GSM symptoms are prominent, I will also prescribe vaginal oestrogen therapy. This usually results in complete resolution of all GSM symptoms within one to four weeks.

If symptoms are inadequately controlled on the contraception treatment alone, top-up oestrogen therapy can be added in as a patch or gel.

A scenario that I have often encountered is my 46-year-old patient who presents with all of the above perimenopause symptoms, adamant that she has looked it all up, watched the Davina McCall TV programme, and demands to have HRT. The reality is that HRT alone will not treat her symptoms, for three reasons.

Firstly, it will not stop her getting pregnant, which is a real possibility right up to age 49 and less commonly beyond: HRT does not work as a contraceptive.

Secondly, HRT in the perimenopause can actually make her bleeding pattern worse. A woman still having periods requires cyclical HRT, which will give her a HRT bleed. This will superimpose a HRT cycle on top of her own erratic cycle and she could end up bleeding several times per month.

Thirdly, HRT will not suppress the woman's own hormone cycle, which is what will eradicate her own hormonal fluctuations, which is causing her perimenopause symptoms; only a contraceptive-type medication can do that.

My take-home message is that any woman age 45 or more who is having any of the above symptoms needs support and an offer of treatment and she should start off by going to see your GP.

*Dr Stanley welcomes emails from readers requesting women's health topics for future articles or links to information. Email drstanley@westcorkpeople.ie. We must emphasise that this is not a platform for medical advice.*

*Phone the clinic on 028 23456 to book an appointment with Dr Stanley.*



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## HEALTH

Hannah Dare  
Organico Bantry

If you've been scrolling through your social media feeds this summer, you've likely come across the buzz surrounding castor oil. It seems this ancient remedy has made a remarkable comeback, touted for its multifaceted benefits, from promoting luscious eyebrows to potentially aiding in labour induction. In fact, the demand for castor oil, particularly in the United States, surged so dramatically that it temporarily vanished from our shelves. However, it's back in stock now, and the intriguing feedback on its uses has piqued my interest. This month I'm going to delve into the age-old secret of castor oil and uncover why it's become such a hot topic among health-conscious people in Ireland.

The historical roots of castor oil as a natural medicine and beauty product can be traced back over 3,500 years. The Egyptians prized castor oil for skincare and haircare and also used it to treat eye irritations. Castor oil also boasts a rich legacy in folk medicine, particularly in India, where it's celebrated for its skin-healing, digestive-soothing, and antibacterial properties. In Europe, it was historically employed as a natural laxative and, under medical guidance, for inducing labour in cases of overdue pregnancies. Spoonfuls of castor oil were given to children at the first sign of illness, as it was thought to have immune benefits and to speed up healing, and until recently it was recommended by the FDA in the United States as a natural laxative.

My own introduction to castor oil occurred roughly 25 years ago during my nutrition studies in London. Barbara Wren, a naturopath and author, recommended castor oil packs in her lectures as a key part of a health overhaul.

From Barbara's many years running a nutrition clinic, she was convinced that castor oil packs had many benefits including aiding digestion, supporting liver detoxification, alleviating

menstrual pain, and enhancing overall well-being. She would prescribe them on a daily basis to her clients.

Derived from the seeds of the castor bean plant (*Ricinus communis*), castor oil is a thick, pale-coloured mildly scented oil with a high concentration of ricinoleic acid, a fatty acid rich in omega-9. Research shows that this omega-9 has pain relief and anti-inflammatory effects.

Today, castor oil has emerged as a go-to topical solution for various ailments. When I asked our community what people used it for, this is a selection of the responses:

"Great for growing nicer lashes and eyebrows!"

"Constipation, breaking underskin lumps, getting rid of skin tags and many more. It became very popular in recent years."

"Warm compress for detoxing liver and kidneys."

"On aching muscles, sore arthritic joints, unbelievable results, hadn't realised it was back in stock, I'll have to do another online order, and your box only arrived today."

From those comments, you can see that people are turning to it to soothe muscle aches, alleviate joint pains, encourage hair growth, and even address benign lumps and bumps, as well as a compress to stimulate detoxification.

From my research, it seems people are mainly using castor oil for the following:

**1. Hair Health** – Castor oil, prized as the world's oldest and most popular herbal remedy for hair oiling, is rich in fatty acids like ricinoleic acid, nourishing and moisturising hair. It's believed to coat hair shafts, reduce damage, and promote longer, stronger locks.

**2. Hair Growth** – Castor oil can potentially stimulate slow hair growth by improving blood circulation to hair follicles. It's not limited to the scalp and is used on eyebrows and eyelashes as well. Intriguingly, research suggests that ricinoleic acid, a key component of castor oil, may balance prostaglandin D2 (PGD2) production, which plays a role in hair loss, particularly in men.

**3. Inflammation and Joint Pain Relief** – Castor oil's anti-inflammatory properties make it a potentially good choice for managing arthritis pain, joint swelling, and inflammation. Observational studies suggest it may provide analgesic and anti-inflammatory effects when applied topically.

**4. Skin Nourishment and Healing** – This natural oil



prevents water loss, making it an excellent moisturiser for dry or irritated skin. It's also known for its antimicrobial and antibacterial properties, aiding in wound healing and blemish treatment.

**5. Immune and Lymphatic Support** – Castor oil is known for its immune-enhancing effects, thanks to its positive impact on the lymphatic system. It aids in the removal of excess fluids, proteins, and waste materials, bolstering the body's natural defence mechanisms.

Since Castor oil is thick, people often mix it with other skin-friendly oils – like almond, olive, and coconut oil – to make an ultra-hydrating moisturiser. To use castor oil on your skin or hair, people mostly simply apply the oil (diluted or undiluted) directly, as applying castor oil to the skin is safe for most of us, though it's important to be aware that it can cause an allergic reaction in some people so for all topical treatments please remember to do a patch test before using.

For deeper internal benefits, you'll see a lot of people online talking about castor oil packs.

A castor oil pack (also called a compress) is a piece of wool or a cloth soaked in castor oil so you can apply it on the skin. The cloth may be cotton flannel or other dense material that can soak up a lot of liquid, which you apply to your abdomen, followed by a layer of plastic (to stop the oil staining your clothing). You then lie down with a hot water bottle on top of the pack and read or rest for up to two hours to allow the oil to penetrate. When you're done, you can store the pack in the fridge and reuse it until you notice it changing colour or starting to smell different.

I love using castor oil packs. I found it particularly beneficial when I had period related cramps – it was incredibly soothing. In researching for this article I've started doing them again, and it feels good. I'm also rubbing castor oil on my sore arm, my son's GAA injuries, as well as my husband's sore neck. It's thick and does need to be rubbed in well, but I've had no complaints! If you are considering taking it internally please seek expert medical guidance as it may cause com-

plications for some people and is not recommended for long term use as a laxative.

I think it's fair to say that whether you're looking to enhance your beauty routine, soothe sore muscles, or support your overall health, the age-old wisdom of castor oil could be worth a try. Be sure to buy the purest castor oil though so look out for organic, cold pressed oil, preferably from your local health food shop.

By the way - we are having our annual It's Your Birthday Discount Day in store on Thursday September 14, and online on September 26. Since we

don't collect data on our customers we don't actually know when your birthday is, so we're offering 10pc off everything on these dates to wish everyone a Happy Birthday.

For the online discount you'll need to be signed up to our newsletter to get the secret code... email us if you have any difficulties.

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## OUT &amp; ABOUT IN WEST CORK



Eanna Ni Lamhna, environmentalist, author and radio and newspaper contributor opening the Fastnet Area Beekeepers Association's new demonstration apiary in the parish of Goleen.



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**M**oving to Bandon in 2000, Adrienne Murphy began her career journey working as a psychiatric nurse with the West Cork Mental Health service. As her path within mental

## Local People, Local Wisdom: Adrienne Murphy, Bandon

health services progressed, she pioneered many new roles within this field, becoming a clinical nurse specialist and therapist before moving on to an advanced nurse practitioner role – both roles were the first of their kind. Her work with Open Dialogue, which began in 2011, originally stemming from Finland, led her to open a clinic in Bantry in 2016 for people in crisis, alongside Dr Iseult Twanley, Adrienne's values around openness and transparency are at the core of all her work. The Clonakilty Community Resource Centre is one of many initiatives she volunteers with. After retiring in 2021, she continues to volunteer, and has been the chairperson of the Cork Mental Health Foundation (CMHF) for the past two years.

"I was always involved in community and we did a lot of work in Clonakilty on positive wellbeing with a community

team made up of HSE staff, people who used our service and those in recovery – the idea behind it being to create a link with the community.

"The motto of CMHF is 'Is it going to do the person or the community good?' And if the answer is yes, then we do it.

"I've had trauma in my own life, I was part of the mother and baby homes scandals. I got pregnant when I was 23 and ended up in one such home for six months. Ireland in the 80s was not a great place to live. I had a brother who had a breakdown when he was 21, he developed psychosis and was treated badly by the system. Maybe that's where my values come from, because he was brought into hospital twice, sectioned under the Mental Health Act. The way he was treated was awful and he struggled all his life with stigma. People who went to prison had more rights back then than people who went into psychiatric hospitals – it always struck me because any of us could end up in a situation like that.

"The community is so important in terms of breaking down stigma in relation to mental illness. There's a saying 'A community rears a child' – community is really important for getting well, you can't survive on your own, you need a community behind you, you



thing was slowing down and becoming present with myself. I just love being in nature.

When there's an acceptance around death – that this is part of life, it really helps. I've lost a lot of people; as more deaths come your way and you become more self-aware, you look at death differently. I'm not afraid of death, it's part of who we are. We're only here for a short time. So learning to accept this allows you to cope better with things when they come your way.

"I'm involved with restoring two ancient pre-Christian wells in Bandon, they're beautiful. It's a spiritual place where people can sit, honour, and be with the water. Wells are in our DNA. I think it's something we shouldn't lose. We are looking for something to connect to. It's important to honour the tradition of the wells. They've been here before us and they'll be here after us.

"We've done a lot of damage to nature. I believe we have to respect nature and respect the animals – to see them as equals. Our ancestors lived with nature and the medicine of nature, there's a lot of wisdom in that.

We have wonderful heart here in Ireland in our communities. It's what holds us together. It's everything. Making sure that our communities are vibrant is so important."

need to be accepted for you who you are.

"There's always hope. I'm glad the mental health service has changed in that way. You will recover with the right supports.

"In 2012, I had a serious car accident; a young girl lost con-

trol of her car and crashed into me, I survived and she didn't. I remember thinking 'Why am I here?' Why did I survive?' That brought me to Shamanism. I did a course on Shamanic practice and it helped me an awful lot, getting in touch with nature and slowing down – the biggest



## The Fourcuil Connection



THE DNA OF WEST CORK PEOPLE

Mark Grace

Mark Grace is a genetic genealogist and family historian at Ballynoe House, Ardfield, Co. Cork

**W**hen delving in your local roots, you may not have family stories or evidence of connections to neighbouring families. This is where DNA matches sometimes point the way, especially for the late C18th and early C19th. Such is the case with the Reenroe O'NEILLS as some were recorded as having been born in Fourcuil, even though they were farming in adjacent

Reenroe. This probably meant ahead of giving birth, women of the family may have ended their confinement with family who were better prepared to help with the impending birth.

I have previously mentioned a suspected connection to Fourcuil for the Reenroe family, and this has recently been supported by an additional DNA match. Investigations show an O'NEILL connection to the KINGSTONS and the TWOMEYS. I am sure a number of readers will know some of the following outline and may be able to add more to the story.

Following the paper trail of the DNA matches back through occupancy at Fourcuil we reach their founding ancestral couple of John KINGSTON (c1794-1881) and Catherine O'NEILL (c1802-1869). It is assumed the DNA connection is through Catherine who would be a Reenroe O'NEILL. We cannot be certain; however, Ancestry matches can benefit from knowing if they are from the paternal or maternal side of the reference tester, and

these are appropriately paternal.

John and Catherine had 11 registered children between 1823 and 1846, all born at Fourcuil, so are assumed to have married sometime around 1822. No marriage record has been found. A number of local DONOVANS (presumably the related family from neighbouring Templebryan) are sponsors at baptisms. The known KINGSTON children are William (1823), Jeremiah (1823, pictured), James (1826), Sarah (1827), James (1829), Mary (1831), Paul (1834), John (1836), Laur? (1838; actual name partially illegible), Thomas (1841), Eliza (1844) and Peter (1846). All the DNA connections pass through Jeremiah.

Jeremiah KINGSTON married Nora LEARY and the couple lived in the townland of Ballymacowen, just outside of Clonakilty. To date, their only children Jeremiah (1851-1942) and Kate KINGSTON (1856-1938) are known, but each provides a separate DNA connection to living family.

Jeremiah married Annie

CUNNINGHAM in 1883 and lived in Barryshall, towards Timoleague. Their daughter Kathleen (1886-1963) married a Samuel BROWN and settled in Philadelphia, USA. The BROWNS provide the first DNA connection.

Jeremiah's sister, Kate, married Jack TWOMEY in 1879 and lived in Ballymacowen/Kilnagross outside of Clonakilty. The couple had eleven children between 1879 and 1899. This second DNA connection passes through their daughter Johanna TWOMEY (1896-1983) who married Denis CORBETT and settled in Washington DC.

It is hoped that further DNA matches or stories down the wider KINGSTON line will help to provide the overwhelming genetic proof of the O'NEILL connection.

Catherine TWOMEY nee KINGSTON, the granddaughter of Catherine O'NEILL (photo c/o Ancestry)

Questions that can be answered as part of future articles can be emailed to DNAmatch-



ingprojects@gmail.com or follow the West Cork DNA projects on Facebook 'My Irish Genealogy & DNA'.

Jeremiah Kingston  
of Fourcuil  
(photo c/o Ancestry)



# The healing role of art therapy

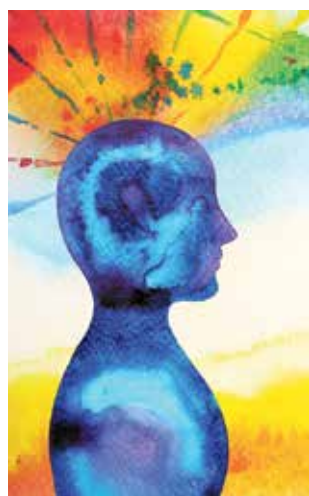
An IACT accredited trauma informed art therapist, Marta Swierad specialises in supporting people of all ages through bereavement, loss, anxiety, depression, addiction and abuse, offering individual and group sessions.

Although her background is in fine art and teaching, as an art therapist Marta also draws on yoga therapy and wellbeing practices. Having benefitted personally from the healing and life-changing potential of art making, exploring further into the relationship between creativity and mental health is what led her to becoming an art therapist.

Originally from Poland, Marta came to Ireland in 1999 and is now settled here with her Irish partner and two children.

Based in Bantry, she has been practicing as an art therapist with adults and children for seven years. Through her work she has found there is an ongoing need for mental health

services for children and adults alike in West Cork and going forward her hope is that creative therapies will become more affordable, through funding, and accessible to those who need it most. Inspired by the success of the Blue Box initiative in Limerick, a charity that provides free support and therapy services to children and youth, she is currently researching an idea for a similar initiative in



West Cork.

Marta explains what's involved in an art therapy session: "Art therapy is facilitated by a professional art therapist and is fully confidential. Unlike an art class, which focuses on technique, talent and aesthetics, art therapy utilises the process and creative techniques to provide clients with creative tools in which they make new discoveries about themselves and work through past traumas, emotions, and memories, while in a safe, therapeutic environment. It is accessible to all levels of ability and no prior experience in art making is necessary. Show up as you are."

Marta loves her work, particularly when she witnesses firsthand how people can thrive through engaging in the art therapy process, enabling them to get through difficult situations, emotions, and changes.

Book online for a free 15 minute phone consultation. [www.westcorkarttherapist.com](http://www.westcorkarttherapist.com)



## ART THERAPY HAS BEEN SHOWN TO HELP IN:

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- Encouraging self-expression
- Improving confidence & self-esteem
- Resolving inner conflicts
- Assisting with gaining a sense of control over difficult emotions & life situations
- Aiding emotional regulation
- Improving healthy psychological functioning
- Promotion resiliency & coping skills
- Supporting neuropsychological growth



## Marta Swierad H.Dip, MA

I am an IACAT accredited, trauma informed Art Therapist, specialising in supporting people of all ages through bereavement, loss, anxiety, depression, addiction, and abuse.

I offer individual and group sessions to families, schools, and in open studio groups.

I am experienced in working with clients with ASD, Intellectual Disabilities, PTSD, and mental health challenges.

For further information  
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Wolfe Tone Square, Bantry  
[marta@westcorkarttherapist.com](mailto:marta@westcorkarttherapist.com)  
**087 130 2992**  
[www.westcorkarttherapist.com](http://www.westcorkarttherapist.com)

# Limiting environmental toxins important in avoiding chronic health problems



Eoin Roe  
Chiropractic

Chronic health problems are often very complex, so paying close attention to the interaction between the nervous, endocrine and immune systems – three systems that are interconnected – is very important.

Factors that can play a significant role in how well these systems operate together and the resulting impact on your health include environmental toxins, stress, exercise, exposure to pathogens and sex and age.

The central nervous system stimulates the glands involved in the immune system and glands that produce hormones through direct nerve connection from the brain. Hormone signals from the endocrine system influence both the nervous system and the immune system and the immune system can communicate via the release of cytokines or neurotransmitters that can influence the endocrine, gastrointestinal or nervous system.

You may have read recently about forever chemicals; compounds that can have a profound effect on the signalling ability of hormones, neurotransmitters and immune proteins. When these chemicals get into your system through food or drinking water, they can bind to hormones and immune proteins, altering their shape through a process known as haptenation. This can seriously affect your functional ability and lead to problems like infertility, weight gain, energy, mood issues and autoimmunity.

Unfortunately these chemicals are becoming ubiquitous


but there are things we can do to limit exposure.

Firstly, if you work with chemicals, make sure you are using the correctly protective equipment gloves and masks. You may also want to think about what you are drinking and eating out of. Food and water are best stored in stainless steel, aluminium or glass containers and plastics of all types should be avoided. Filtering water and using a HEPA filter to filter the air in your house are also options.

Secondly, supporting your immune, endocrine and neurology can be important.

The most effective thing to help your immune system is sleep, preferably in tune with the circadian rhythm – which means going to bed early and rising early, getting seven to eight hours sleep.

Exercise is also very important. Not only will this help you to sleep better, it is the best way of dealing with stress and activation of the HPA axis (Hypothalamic-pituitary Adrenal axis).



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Dr. Eoin Roe DC CFMP

To support your nervous system, as well as sleep and exercise, making sure that you have adequate nutrition is important. Choose a diet that is high in antioxidants (fruit and veg) but also low in sugar. Your brain relies on glucose for fuel but when blood glucose levels fluctuate from skipping meals and eating a high sugar diet your brain does not function as well as it should.

Thirdly, supporting the detoxification pathways can be done through diet and there are

supplements that can be helpful.

Increasing fibre in the diet can be very beneficial to make sure that your bowels are moving efficiently. A diet high in fruits and vegetables and nuts and seeds will increase fibre intake and provide lots of antioxidants – you do want to be careful that these foods have not been sprayed and, if organic fruit and veg is not available to you, they should be washed.

At a cellular level, a supplement called NAC (N-Acetyl Cysteine) is a precursor to

glutathione, which is the main antioxidant in the body. This is a cost-effective supplement that can help your body to detoxify more efficiently. You can also use Glutathione supplements but these are more expensive.

*Eoin Roe is a Certified Functional Medicine Practitioner and Chiropractor based in Skibbereen please feel free to contact him through [www.roehealth.ie](http://www.roehealth.ie) or on 028 62081.*



# The 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.

**Neutrogena Retinol Boost**  
Neutrogena has launched its brand-new face care range, Retinol Boost, comprising of six products designed to prevent and correct multiple visible signs of ageing. Harnessing the power of pure retinol (a dermatologist-proven form of Vitamin A) for visibly youthful, healthy-looking skin, this comprehensive range is suitable for beginner to expert retinol users. Developed with dermatologists, the new innovative Retinol Boost formulas blend three key ingredients with the aim of achieving maximum efficacy with great tolerability. The powerhouse ingredient – pure retinol – is scientifically proven to stimulate cell renewal at the skin's surface, it also works to increase collagen production. As cells renew, skin looks rejuvenated and revitalised, and fine lines, dullness, wrinkles, and pigmentation spots are improved. Myrtus plant extract, known for its skin-regenerating benefits, boosts retinol effective-



ness by 83 per cent, while hyaluronic acid intensely hydrates and plumps the skin.

For retinol beginners, gradually phase into your skincare routine, start with two to three uses per week for the first three weeks, working up to daily/nightly use as tolerated. The Retinol Boost range is suitable for both daytime and nighttime use. Always use an SPF during the day when using retinol, as it can increase sun sensitivity. Available now from Lloyds, McCabes, Hickeys and independent pharmacies nationwide starting from RRP €30.99.

### Garnier Vitamin C Brightening Eye Cream

Tired, dull eyes? Introducing the latest breakthrough in skincare innovation – Garnier Vitamin C Brightening Eye Cream. Designed to rejuvenate and revitalise the delicate skin around your eyes, it's Garnier's most advanced anti-fatigue cocktail. Suitable for sensitive skin and fragrance free, superstar ingredient Vitamin C gives powerful brightening benefits while niacinamide softens fine lines and illuminates. Caffeine, a powerful ally de-puffs eye bags and banana powder, the secret of the world's most famous

makeup artists, helps decrease dark circles. The transformative formula with its lightweight texture and fast-absorbing nature is scientifically proven to reduce the appearance of eight signs of fatigue: dark circles, under eye fine lines, dullness, crow's feet, lack of firmness, smoothness, softness, and overall skin appearance. It will effortlessly become a staple in your daily routine, leaving you with brighter, smoother, and more youthful-looking eyes, €15 available from selected pharmacies nationwide.

### KASH Beauty Skin Glaze Collection

Elevate your glow to perfection with KASH Beauty's coveted makeup bag essential – The Skin Glaze Collection. Comprising of seven stunningly silky liquid blushers and bronzers to join the original bestselling duo, unlocking endless possibilities to enhance your no-makeup-makeup look with a subtle flush of colour and glow, or a deeper sun-kissed hue. The velvety smooth, vegan, and cruelty-free formula glides effortlessly across your skin, seamlessly blending with the KASH Beauty sculpting sponge or your fingertips. With just a few strokes of the applicator wand, these buildable, blendable, and

lightweight formulas work their magic, adorning your complexion with luminosity and radiance. 'Peach Paradise' adds a gorgeous coral glaze to the skin, while 'Malibu Dreamin' is perfect for sunny day looks, a candy-pink shade that adds a muted, sleek glaze to the skin, creating a fresh, youthful look. Get glowing with Skin Glaze in shade 'Honey Bronze', a warm bronze liquid highlighter ideal for light- to medium-toned skin, creating depth and radiance all at once, €19.95 available at [www.kashbeauty.com](http://www.kashbeauty.com) and stockists nationwide, including Boots, Brown Thomas and Arnotts.

### Bellamianta Archne-mesis and Tri Brow

Raise a brow with Bellamianta's new innovative brow perfecting products. Whether you prefer a natural, soft look or crave bold, defined arches – these will have you turning heads in no time.

Create the ultimate hold with Archne-mesis Eyebrow Sculpt and Hold with Brush, an intense, long-lasting clear wax, suitable for all skin tones and brow colours. Formulated to give the appearance of fuller, lifted and perfectly groomed brows – it couldn't be easier to shape and style them to their full potential.

Brush and set your brows for a flake-free and smooth finish that holds in place all day and right through the night, €15.99. Tribrow three-in-one Eyebrow Enhancer combines an eyebrow pencil, spoolie brush and brow mascara. This is the smudge-proof, long-wearing secret weapon to achieving the perfect brow. Start off by brushing through your brows with the spoolie, then take the highly pigmented pencil for precise application of super fine lines, mimicking the appearance of brow hairs, and helping to camouflage any sparse areas. Finally, create the appearance of a fuller brow and defined shape with the fibre infused tinted eyebrow gel, working to create a natural fullness and definition. Tribrow is available in four shades: Ash Brown, Brown, Auburn, and Charcoal. Available to purchase on [www.bellamianta.com](http://www.bellamianta.com) and from stockists nationwide.

### Hush & Hush PlantYourDay

A healthy body and healthy skin, starts in the gut. When the gut flora is out of balance for any reason such as diet, antibiotic use, lifestyle choices and environment, the result can lead to breakouts, skin redness, dermatitis, stomach and digestion issues,

depression, and chronic pain. That's where prebiotics, (which act like food for probiotics), and probiotics, (good bacteria that keeps the bacteria in the gut in check), come in. PlantYourDay has these superstar ingredients in their nutritious supergreens-, superfruits- and superfoods-rich protein powder that rebalances the body from the inside out. Providing long-lasting energy and a dose of fibre, the plant-based antioxidant and anti-inflammatory-packed formula limits internal inflammation, in turn helping to improve skin clarity, redness and imperfections. Formulated with organic pumpkin and pea protein, prebiotics and probiotics blended with a delicious chocolate flavour, the easy-to-digest formula doesn't come with many of the negative effects that are typically found in other protein powders, including bloating, cramping and an upset stomach. Plus, PlantYourDay also improves digestion, mental clarity, and immunity, €55, available in selected clinics and salons around Ireland. For a full list of Hush & Hush stockists go to [www.hushandhush.ie](http://www.hushandhush.ie)

### Skin Theory Antioxidant Tinted Day Cream SPF30

As we know, sun exposure is one of the leading causes of premature ageing and skin damage, making SPF a vital component in our skincare routine to protect against harmful UVA and UVB rays. The latest addition to the Skin Theory range is a moisturising day cream that is packed with antioxidants, offers UVA/UVB protection and a colour-adapting technology that leaves all skin tones with a luminous glow. President International of Thérapie Clinic, Katie McGlade comments "We are thrilled to introduce our new Antioxidant Tinted Day Cream SPF30 to the Skin Theory product family. At Skin Theory, we believe that effective skincare should be a harmonious blend of science, safety, and accessibility. With this innovative addition, we continue our commitment to providing skincare solutions that not only protect against the harmful effects of the sun but also enhance the natural beauty of every individual's skin." €49.95 available to buy online from [www.skintheory.com](http://www.skintheory.com) and in Thérapie Clinics nationwide.

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## OUT & ABOUT IN WEST CORK



Twin sister nail artists Amy and Abbie Sheehan, treated Safia Hennessy and Doireann Harrington to beautifully decorated nails at the family summer BBQ in Gaggin.



## people Food, Health &amp; Lifestyle

## New members needed to help Friends of Clonakilty Day Care

Twenty-eight years ago 'Friends of Clonakilty Day Care Centre' was set up to provide the additional comforts and extras needed to ensure a meaningful and comfortable experience for the elderly members of our community and their families at the Clonakilty Day Care Centre, which opened in 1990. Sometimes an outing to the Day Care Centre may be the only interaction an elderly person may have with the outside world all week; or it could mean a precious few hours of respite available to an overburdened carer. Today 73 clients are invited to attend the Day Care Centre each week and there is a waiting list of new applicants.

Due to past fundraising and extremely generous donations and support from individuals and the local community, great things have been achieved over the years; ranging from an outside physiotherapy area to a garden room to organising activities like Chair Zumba for the clients.

Most recently funds raised by the 'Friends' contributed to the repainting and decoration of the Centre on its reopening after lockdown. The enhanced surroundings and funded activities help to improve and maintain the clients physical, mental health and sense of wellbeing and functional ability.

Joan O'Driscoll has recently joined the Day Care Centre as Nurse Co-ordinator and runs the Centre with the help of two healthcare assistants. Joan aims to continue the legacy of her predecessors in providing a warm, welcoming atmosphere so that clients will want to come and enjoy the friendship and companionship they can find in the Centre. At a clinical level, Joan says she wants the health and social care the clients receive to benefit their mental and physical health and sense of wellbeing and be in keeping with HSE Guidelines and standards.

"Some of our clients live in isolated areas and see very few

people during the week," shares Joan. "They enjoy the companionship and social interaction and friendships have developed over the years. They enjoy 'the chat'."

Facilities and services available at Clonakilty Day Care Centre include a HSE subsidised bus; assistance with hand hygiene or a shower if required; wound care; health screening; a cup of tea and a light morning snack; a nutritious three-course lunch; guest speakers; activities

ranging from singing and art to chair-based Zumba or simply quiet time.

"It is important to know that clients are not pressurised to take part in any activity they do not enjoy," says Joan.

In order for the continuation of the 'Friends of the Day Care Centre' and their work to continue in this vital community service, more members of the community are needed to join the organisation. It is not a huge commitment, with only a few

meetings a year, depending on what is happening.

Friends of Clonakilty Day Care AGM is being held in Clonakilty Day Care Centre, Clonakilty Community Hospital on Monday, October 2, at 7pm. Everybody is welcome to attend this meeting especially anyone interested in joining the Friends of Clonakilty Day Care.

Donations are most welcome and can be sent or handed in to the Day Care Centre where staff members will ensure it is

promptly given to the Friends of Clonakilty Day Care Centre. If anyone wishes to give a cheque please write it to the Friends of Clonakilty Day Care Centre. All donations will be spent solely on activities or equipment for the clients'.

*Above: Friends of Clonakilty Day Care with staff and new Nurse Co-Ordinator Joan O'Driscoll (front right).*



## Quality of life care takes a village



### 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.

Recent weeks have offered me more connection with our local palliative care services. Oftentimes, those I support as an end of life doula wonder about the concept – what it means for themselves and their families. With 'Palliative Care Week' happening this month and

I too having many questions, a palliative care nurse in the community offered me some insight.

My intention for writing about palliative care is to offer a broad, yet basic clarification. I wish to keep learning, along with others, about what it really is and what it is not. I'm beginning to understand that in the States where I once worked in healthcare, there is more of a distinction and separation between hospice and palliative care, whereas in Ireland the services are fluid and interchangeable. Palliative care can be received until the support is no longer needed or until the end of a life. According to thepalliativehub.com, a website highlighting palliative care week (September 10-16) while providing education about the services – "misunderstanding persists, meaning some people who could benefit are less likely to seek it."

So firstly what is palliative care? I like this definition from one such organisation in the States: "Palliative care is a medical specialty that seeks to relieve pain, manage symptoms and reduce stress from a serious or life threatening illness." The International End of Life Doula

Association (INELDA) also had this to add: It's for people of any age including children who can develop a serious health condition. It's not a luxury – it is essential." In Ireland, Palliative care is a free service not requiring a medical card (more on this at [www.citizensinformation.ie](http://www.citizensinformation.ie)). Other definitions that have been shared with me in recent days: "It's another layer of care at any stage of life or illness; offering a bridge between one's current medical care and palliative support." And from the End Well Project in the States: "palliative care is a collaborative process, but it comes down to this simple truth: it is about treating the 'whole' person so they can continue living the best way possible on their terms." Palliative care can consist of a team including physicians, nurses, social workers and chaplains.

There are a number of myths about palliative care that continually need unpacking, however there are also just as many truths to match. Here are a few that are especially important to name: Myths include: \*Palliative care hastens death, \*The service is only provided in a hospital, \*It's only for people who are dying

of cancer, \*Pain is just a part of dying. \*Having palliative care means I have to give up seeing my GP, \*Any other treatments I'm receiving must cease.

Truths: \*Palliative care emphasises life and living; it's care that focuses on improving quality of life. It is not to hasten or delay a health condition, rather it is life unfolding in its natural progression. While not every issue can be solved, the hope is that such care contributes significantly to an improved quality of life for all. \*It can be received in a variety of settings – including as an outpatient at a hospital, a care home, in one's own home. Palliative care is not a place. Indeed there are facilities with some designated beds, but often people will be admitted and then discharged once symptoms are more manageable. \*Palliative care is for anyone with a serious illness, a chronic illness, or at the end of life. Everyone gradually faces old age, disease and dying. \*Pain happens, but is not something to just endure. Many people are supported by palliative care as they are experts in symptom relief. In addition, other medical professionals globally learn

from them. Other symptoms such as nausea, breathlessness, fatigue – to name a few – can be addressed to reduce impact and increase comfort. Pain is emotional too – palliative care also helps carers and families with mental health support; this includes stress relief with the education and services on offer. Knowing even that someone is a phone call away makes all the difference. \*Service and support that are already providing care do not have to cease. Holistic and other treatments (from radiation to reflexology) and a steady GP can and do continue even while palliative care happens. Hence the title of this article – it takes a village!

As mentioned, I've accompanied a number of folks who have had palliative care involved. The feedback has been consistent – they feel more supported and resourced by the enhanced support of a palliative team. This may include some hands-on care relief for the primary carer. Perhaps a social worker has helped to address financial issues. Others feel their care overall is more coordinated and attentive. I once heard a medical professional say that the only downside to

palliative care is that if you are referred, you might be turned away! Still there's no harm asking for a referral from your GP or medical team to enquire about it. For me, it's a pleasure to be able to tell folks about this service and to accompany those that have it. I can be of support in between palliative care contacts and liaise with them to make sure everyone is on the same page with the recipient's healthcare wishes.

If you would like to read more about this topic, you can visit [thepalliativehub.com](http://thepalliativehub.com) or [hospicefoundation.ie](http://hospicefoundation.ie). There have also been many books written in recent years by professionals who have worked in or are currently affiliated with palliative care. A few that I've read and found meaningful include: A Beginners Guide to the End by BJ Miller and Shoshana Berger, With the End in Mind, by Kathryn Mannix and Dear Life by Rachel Clarke.

To learn more or to connect with Melissa, email her at [starsbeyondourskin@gmail.com](mailto:starsbeyondourskin@gmail.com) or visit [www.starsbeyondourskin.com](http://www.starsbeyondourskin.com). She also welcomes your questions or ideas for future columns.



## people Food, Health & Lifestyle

# Easing into Fall fashion

It's the first week of September and we are having an Indian Summer. Soak it up, my darlings! It is good for the mind, body and soul.

Armani sums up Fall Fashion in a nutshell and it is so easy to remember; it's a lot of 'B's' – berets, blouses, boots, bucket bags, bracelets, blousons, ballet flats and booties! Of course Armani, as always, keeps the colour palette simple and

elegant, nothing too flashy or 'too memorable', which means that you can wear and wear and wear their elegant clothes time and time again and still look fresh and vibrant. I cannot say enough about investment pieces, I would always rather have 10 couture pieces in my wardrobe than 100 pieces of 'fast fashion'. I can already hear you...I know that is a struggle for some of you if your weight

yo-yo's but there are always pieces of couture fashion that can grow or shrink with you, certain cuts, shoes or accessory pieces.

Bare arms and legs have carried us through the last few months and now it is time to caress our skin with a gentle cover, not too heavy, not too light. Creams, winter white, beige, biscuit and taupe is what Armani encourages us to wear for the next while. Wonderful if you are living somewhere where you actually experience a real Fall; warmish days with a gentle breeze and glorious copper shades on all of the trees... unfortunately Ireland is not one of those places. We tend to get one storm and struggle to find our cars in the morning as they are covered with every single leaf that once lived happily on the trees around us.

That said, of course we can still incorporate that elegant palette into our wardrobe, we should, after all, continue to wear as many lighter shades as we can for as long as possible. Inevitably the darker shades will come out in force in time!

All across the world, de-



### IMAGE

Louise O'Dwyer  
Image Consultant

*louise.aneu@gmail.com*  
*Instagram: Louiseodwyer7*

signers are embracing red this season, taking the bold hue beyond the classic red dress and putting it on fresh silhouettes like silky floor length slip-dresses and bold trouser suits. If you are 'mad for plaid' then you will be overjoyed at how much of it you will effortlessly find in all of the luxury and high street stores. 1980's opulence reared its head on the runway with the re-emergence of the dramatic shoulder pad. Balenciaga and Yves Saint Laurent pushed them to a new extreme. I'm not sure if this will translate well into everyday street wear but the bold and adventurous among you will brave it and look magnificent in the process!

Polka dots are the whimsical print of the season. The Chanel house signature white camellia bloom was strategically dotted

on black tweed blazers. Valentino pushed the polka dot look to its limit with oversized, shoulder padded blazers in black with huge white spots on them. Obviously excessively eye-catching but glamorous and wearable too.

My absolute favourite Fall/Winter trend is 'fun faux fur outerwear'. Gucci is calling these fun furs the 'Muppet Show look', and I'm completely with them on that. I want a Muppet Show wardrobe. How could anyone ever feel sad or down again wearing an outrageously bright faux fur?

With an adult daughter at home again, I am certain that we will accrue quite a few shocker furs!

Loose fitting trousers are a welcome wardrobe addition for anyone who is still somewhat wary of the return of the 'hard pants'. They are a far-from-sloppy look when paired with tailored separates. Gucci and Ralph Lauren have really 'run' with this casual but glam look.

Underwear as outerwear has been a trend for quite a few years, Lady Gaga has been credited with pioneering this look but I do think that we cannot overlook Madonna for re-inventing the Marilyn Monroe figure-hugging look well before that. It's all about showing off long legs, the more leg on show the better and Miu Miu and Jacquemus have completely run with this. Not for the faint-hearted but most definitely

a look for the young ones, they should brave it a few times at the very least.

Burberry is gracing us with floor length coats in spicy mustard. Vibrant yellow is not going anywhere yet with lots of Spanish sun yellow tailored suits about. You might wonder if these ultra bright suits will translate easily from the runway to our wardrobes but if you like yellow and can find your 'hue', then you should most definitely go for it.

Watch out for ruffled shoulders and flamboyant skirts in yellow too.

Alexander McQueen has taken the 'Goddess' look to a new height with shimmery sequins and extravagant party wear. It's the pinnacle of sexy looks, especially for the party season that we will be railroaded into at the end of December. Glitter is the physical manifestation of the phrases 'feel good' and 'look good'. Wear it, even if it's just a glittery eye-shadow and please don't give a rat's ass what anyone thinks. It always boils down to you, just you and how you feel about yourself, how you feel in yourself and where your head goes when you are all alone. Get used to spoiling yourself, it doesn't need to be a massive shopping trip, sometimes spoiling yourself is taking time out to just 'be'.

'You need me-time not because others don't deserve your attention but because you do.'





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## Update your wardrobe at the next Bandon Clothes Swap event

The affordability of 'fast fashion' has a devastating impact on the environment but learning about its effects and looking at alternatives is a step towards making a positive change. The Bandon Clothes Swap committee will hold its autumn clothes swap event in Bandon Town Hall on Saturday, September 23 from 11-1pm. This is a non-profit event that celebrates community, sustainability, connection, fashion and fun.

All donations are to cover costs of running the event with extra proceeds going to Cork Penny Dinners. In the past organisers have also donated warm winter clothing to the Street Café for the homeless,

and donate leftover clothing to local charity shops.

This event follows successful clothes swap events in the town hall since 2019. It is organised by a small committee of six who are committed to making sustainable change – one clothes swap at a time.

Clothes swaps are affordable community events where you can make new connections and friends to swap ideas with; try on new styles or discover creative ways to up-cycle your wardrobe. Swaps are held on a regular basis in Bandon so you can continually update your wardrobe while helping someone else to do the same. It's a win-win!

The committee has a

connection with Cork Clothes Swap and are happy to support anyone, with advice and encouragement, who is thinking of holding a clothes swap in their local area.

This event is for men, women and children (children must be supervised at all times). It's fun, free and good for you, your wallet and the planet. Bring up to 10 items of clean, good condition clothing, accessories or shoes (no undergarments, swimsuits, or socks please) and exchange them for something fabulously new to you.

For more information visit Bandon Clothes Swap on facebook.



## WEDDINGS #loveinwestcork



## Wines for your wedding

**Fionnuala Harkin** is a qualified wine educator with the Wines and Spirits Educational Trust. Her love of wine developed over her years of running a restaurant in Clonakilty, as well as writing on food and wine for West Cork People and Food and Wine magazine. She works for Wines Direct, an Irish family owned company who import wine from artisan producers all over the world. She also runs The Wine Shed near Timoleague, a quirky and unique space for gathering and enjoying great wines, chats and nibbles, while learning a bit about the wonderful world of wine.

One of the most romantic weddings I attended in the last few years, was of my friends who had been together for 40 years and had eventually decided to jump the broomstick. No meringue dresses, blue-velvet page boys or pastel bridesmaids, just a simple civil ceremony and, oh yes, lots of Champagne!

Ireland has seen weddings change in all sorts of ways over the years. The last few years of the unmentionable have made brides and grooms question and change plans settled on before they were forced to re-arrange, and many have opted for a pared-back version of the original.

advantage of each change in the law as an excuse for another day out!

My mother was married at 21, which was completely normal in 1960s Ireland. She had four children by 25, an age at which women nowadays are planning a few years travelling in Australia.

Ultimately, the big revolution is about choice. Forty years ago, weddings took a pretty predictable route: bride in white, groom in black, married in your parish church, wedding breakfast in a local hotel and the new Mr and Mrs headed off into the sunset before the party was over, a tail of tin cans rattling behind

Niellucio, a Corsican grape which retains its freshness in hot weather, and the local Cinsault.

*Wellanschitz Rose Frizzante, Austria €24*

Light pink bubbles from the Wellanschitz family's organically farmed vineyard.

*Château Haut Rian Bordeaux Blanc, France €15*

Pauline Lapierre is moving steadily towards organic production and her crisp Sauvignon Blanc based white is aromatic and refreshing.

*Château Haut Rian Selection Parcelaire, Bordeaux €18*

A blend of the traditional Bordeaux varieties Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, this is soft and approachable, without the high tannins often associated with Bordeaux.

*Antech Chardonnay, Limoux, France €15.25*

A stylish, crisp, unoaked Chardonnay from Francoise Antech, which is, like its maker, elegant and full of life.

*Preignes le Vieux Pinot Noir, Languedoc, France €17*

The freshness of Pinot Noir with a dash of Languedoc earthiness, ripe and versatile, great on its own or with all kinds of food.

*Antech Eugenie Cremant de Limoux, Methode Traditionelle, France €30.25*

An elegant Champagne-style sparkling wine from the original home of bubbles.

*Charpentier Brut Prestige Champagne, France €56*

When only Champagne will do! 'Grower Champagne' from Jean Marc Charpentier.

All wines available at winesdirect.ie or email fionnuala@winesdirect.ie or find me on Instagram @wineshedwestcork

them.

Our choice of wine has also expanded accordingly, and while 'beef or salmon' may still be popular menu items, you are also likely to be drinking your wine with Vietnamese Spring Rolls from a food truck, or a whole pig roasted on a spit.

Whatever the location, theme or budget, here are some wonderful wines to help celebrate what remains, through all the ages and changes, one of the most important and joyful of days.

*Le Vin a Boire Rosé, Languedoc, France €15.50 (on offer now at €13.95)*

Organic, fun, funky rosé from father and son Luc and Jean-Yves Lapeyre, made from



While the ancient Irish Brehon Laws allowed a hand-fasting ceremony as a legal marriage, after years of more formal church weddings, this is again a popular choice. Humanist, Interfaith and Ethical celebrants now marry couples on beaches, in forests and gardens. This can seem like a casual alternative, but the proliferation of wedding stylists curating the perfect look tells its own story.

My friend is getting married next year for the second time. It's a very different Ireland to the one she married in first time around. Her priorities for the day are understandably different from those of a young bride who felt like she didn't have much say in the organisation of her big day. Hugh and Joe have married each other twice, taking

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## A wedding venue that's timeless

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Eccles Hotel is now offering an exciting Winter Wedding Package, which includes a 25 per cent discount\* on all new weddings booked for November and December, 2023 and January, February and March 2024.

From small and intimate to a banquet for 250 guests, Eccles can make your wedding exactly the way you want it. At Eccles, everyone is dedicated to creating the perfect day for you.

Look forward to a red carpet welcome and a sparkling toast for the happy couple. Your wedding dinner and drinks receptions will be carefully prepared by award winning head chef Eddie Attwell with the best of West Cork local and seasonal produce.

With 59 rooms and suites, you can book out the whole hotel and party the night away. And for the happy couple, there's the newly refurbished Yeats' Suite with its own balcony overlooking Bantry Bay, a spacious living area and a generous bathroom that features a copper clad free standing bath.

From your first enquiry to when the final guest departs and everything in between, wedding coordinator Marie Dooley, is there to ensure that your special

day runs smoothly.

Glengarriff and the Ring of Beara is a place of total serenity, which means all the more time and space for you. With plenty of picturesque photo opportunities, you can capture stunning photos to treasure for years to come.

To arrange a showaround or chat about your individual wedding needs, contact Marie and the Weddings Team by email on [weddings@eccleshotel.com](mailto:weddings@eccleshotel.com) or call 027 63003.

## A destination wedding experience

Brittany and Steven Thompson, an event co-ordinator and IT professional from Florida in the US, got married in May of this year at Bantry House, with their reception held afterwards at the Eccles Hotel in Glengarriff. The couple, who have been together for five years, first fell for each other in Latin class in High School when they were just 17, dating for the remainder of High School and through College. They then went their separate ways for 20 years before reconnecting through mutual college friends in 2018. Britt and Steven share the details of their wedding journey with West Cork People.

**Tell us about the proposal?**

Britt: It was intimate and private. Steven proposed in our home. He got down on one knee and told me how much he loved me, what he wanted for our future and how grateful he was to have gotten a second chance. He was so moving and romantic, I was in tears in seconds. Then, after I accepted, we had a good laugh: When we first came back together in 2018 and he finally kissed me, I asked him his intentions. Steven told me that he was going to marry me, and I promptly returned him to his hotel! So, there was a cheeky moment after I accepted where he said: 'I told you I was going to marry you'.

**How did you choose your wedding venue?**

Steven: Britt had travelled to Ireland with a friend in 2019 and she fell in love with Ireland in general and West Cork in particular. When we decided we wanted to get married outside in a garden, her eyes lit up and she said 'I know just the place!' She was so excited, I couldn't say no to her.

Originally, we tried to secure Garinish Island, but it had just been named a National Heritage

site, so we looked around in the area and found Bantry House. Neither of us had ever been there in person, so it was a bit of a leap of faith, but in the end it was absolutely stunning and so perfect.

There was never any question about the reception location. The Eccles Hotel was perfect for us with its old world elegance and unique history. They were absolutely wonderful to work with and made our stay so special and our guests feel like we were all home away from home. Marie, the hotel wedding coordinator was absolutely amazing – she helped us every step of the way and went so far above and beyond. Highly, highly recommended for anyone who is planning a wedding!

**Did you have anything out-of-the-ordinary planned for the day?**

As it was a destination wedding, we really had more of a wedding week, and we really milked it for all it was worth! We took our guests to Garinish, hired in a storyteller for an evening by the fire with cocktails (Ray O'Sullivan – absolutely amazing) and explored Glengarriff with friends and family.

**What were the most enjoyable and most stressful parts of the wedding planning experience?**

The most enjoyable part was the people! We loved our vendors. We met so many wonderful people who continually surpassed our expectations and many have remained friends! The most stressful part was planning from Florida – between the time changes, the international calling/emailing, and booking almost everything sight unseen, there was a bit of worry that things might fall through the cracks. I had quite a bit of difficulty finding some of our vendors because they didn't have much of an online presence. Marie in the Eccles was incredible though, and she really helped to put us in touch with wonderful, reputable people who made our day so special.

The other difficulty I would note was trying to assist our guests in their logistics and deadlines and keeping track of flight arrivals, departures, airports, and accommodations.

**Did you both have the same amount of input into the planning?**

Yes. It was really pretty easy, we were on the same page about virtually everything.

**What was your favourite part of the day?**

Britt: The whole day was amazing, being with our family and friends in such a fairytale location, you can't top it! I will say, I really enjoyed the private moments with Steven after the wedding on the drive back to the Eccles. It was a moment to stop, relax and process everything

that just happened before jumping back into the festivities.

Steven: There was this moment when all of the guests and myself arrived at the Bantry House where I felt like I had been pulled out of reality. I remember seeing Brittany pop around the corner and it hit me, and I was so happy to be there at that moment. I was so excited for our lives together to begin and I couldn't believe both of our lives brought us to that moment. That was my favourite part of the day.

**Where did you go on honeymoon?**

We honeymooned in Italy before coming back to Ireland for some alone time before flying home.

**Hopes for the future?**

We hope to grow our family and come back to Ireland often!

**What advice or tips do you have for other couples about to tie the knot?**

Try to be patient and remember that everything is working together for your highest good. We were pretty devastated when Garinish fell through, but if I could go back and do it over, I wouldn't; Bantry House was even more spectacular.

Finally, savour every moment – the anticipation while planning and dreaming of the day ahead of time, and all the little moments with loved ones throughout the day itself. It flies by so quickly, so try to make a few moments of quiet time throughout the day to fix it in your memory.



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Known for its eclectic style and statement colourful pieces, Violette in Skibbereen also has an entire room upstairs dedicated to bringing accessorising to a whole new level and perfecting the final touch. Fun, quirky, bold, sombre, strong, sexy... whatever signal you're hoping to send with an ensemble, Up-

stairs at Violette will help you accessorise it with panache!

Hats and headpieces to turn heads, jewellery to imbue personality and scarves, faux fur shrugs and bags to complement any outfit... you won't find a better selection anywhere in West Cork. Whether it's a bridal party or

shopping for a day at the races, whatever the occasion, the aim at Upstairs at Violette is to help you look the part. Some of the well known brands carried by Violette include bags by Landa

and jewellery by Corona.

"We want to add a sense of fun and occasion to the shopping experience and a personal shopping service for the benefit of our customers," explains proprietor Sandie Gallagher.

Sandie has been in the fashion business a long time and sources a lot of her clothing from Paris, London and Italy; "I love unique, funky clothes and

have a passion for colour and textiles," she says.

The service is open to anyone, small or large parties, interested in accessorising an outfit and offers a private and comfortable room upstairs. With its high ceilings and calm, muted colours, the light-filled styling room is the perfect setting to peruse the assortment of accessories with the help of a

personal stylist in curating your look.

"This service is a homage really to our customers. We get such pleasure every time we help someone achieve the right look and they go home happy."

To experience this fantastic bespoke service at Upstairs at Violette call (028) 40935 or email [violetteskibb@gmail.com](mailto:violetteskibb@gmail.com). Find Violette on Facebook.



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## Artistry and Irish blooms

For designer and farmer-florist Flicky Howe, the joy and beauty that her flowers and foliage bring to a couple's special day is one of her favourite parts of the job. Specialising in weddings, Flicky grows using organic principles.

Around 80 percent of flowers sold in the western world are imported from Kenya, Columbia, Vietnam, and Ecuador, giving them a huge carbon footprint. Buying your flowers from an Irish organic grower equates to being better for both your health, the health of the local economy and for the environment.

Situated on a coastal hillside beside Howe Strand, Kilbrittain, Howe Hill Flowers works with the seasons, with each week bringing something new and exciting to the garden and the business. Seeds are continuously sown from February through to October to ensure a steady flow of Irish grown flowers. Hellebores appear at the beginning of the year just before the narcissi and other bulbs herald the arrival of spring. Before long the tunnels are blooming with hardy annuals sown in autumn and May brings the beautiful blooms of the peonies grown in Waterford fields. At this stage, Howe Hill is a riot



Designer Flicky Howe  
Pic: Kate Bean

flowers means she loves every minute of it. "I love handing a bride her bouquet on her wedding morning. I love styling the tables at weddings too! I love being in the studio with the girls, so much fun! I love sowing the seeds and seeing them pop up in the trays, I love harvesting the flowers. I love driving around in the van to deliver the flowers. I love arriving at Dunmore with the weekly order and setting everything up there every week," she shares enthusiastically.

This passion is reflected in the beauty of Flicky's work: Her design style has been described as "abundant and elegant country garden, with an often luxurious, and sometimes wild, bohemian peppering".

Taking direction from each client's personal requirements for their wedding, Flicky, working alongside her experienced studio assistants, formally-trained florist Alice McCan and artist-turned-florist, Natasha Pike, will consider the season and settings before making styling suggestions to enable a cohesive look reflective of each couple on their special day.

Although she's a trained textile designer, over the years Flicky has always found herself returning to nature and flowers. Howe Hill Flowers started in 2019 after she noticed a demand for Irish grown flowers while working in a retail floristry business. "We had none!" she explains. Inspired by the growing number of Irish farm-

of colour with roses, foxgloves, and irises the stars of the show. The Canterbury bells, lilies and the first of the sweet peas arrive in June and by July the garden and tunnel are awash with snapdragons, calendula, zinnias, cosmos, cornflowers, phlox, alstroemeria and nicotiana to name a few. In August there are dahlias and Japanese anemones, sunflowers and rudbeckia, and September brings asters and later-sown annual blooms.

Aside from growing, Flicky and the team at Howe Hill are always busy planning ahead for next year's growing season, as well as selling flowers and creating floral designs in the studio for weddings and events.

It's a business that requires a massive amount of time and energy but Flicky's passion for



Pic: Kate Bean



Pic: White Cat Studio

er-florists, Flicky began toying with the idea of getting into the flower growing business herself. Upon starting the business, she completed a number of training classes and workshops with some of the most inspiring and influential names in the floristry world, which she says really enhanced her design skills and floristry abilities.

While the main part of the business today is weddings, the Howe Hill Flower team also look after the flowers every

week at Dunmore House Hotel and The Old Head Golf Links. During the Irish growing season, March to late September, Howe Hill offers gift bouquets through the website, delivering them all along the coast between Kinsale and Clonakilty. During this time, they also bring buckets and buckets of homegrown market bunches to The Roughty Foodie in The English Market, Cork city and to Leafing Mercantile in Ballinspittle village.

While all of the market flower bunches are home grown, working to specific colour palettes and styles for weddings and events outside of the Irish growing season means that some flowers do also have to be sourced through the Dutch market, but these are all carefully chosen from fairtrade suppliers.

Howe Hill Flowers is fully booked for weddings in July and August 2024, however there are dates available before and after these months. Go to the calendar on the weddings page of the website ([www.howehillflowerfarm.com](http://www.howehillflowerfarm.com)) to check availability.

For more information email [hello@howehillflowerfarm.com](mailto:hello@howehillflowerfarm.com)



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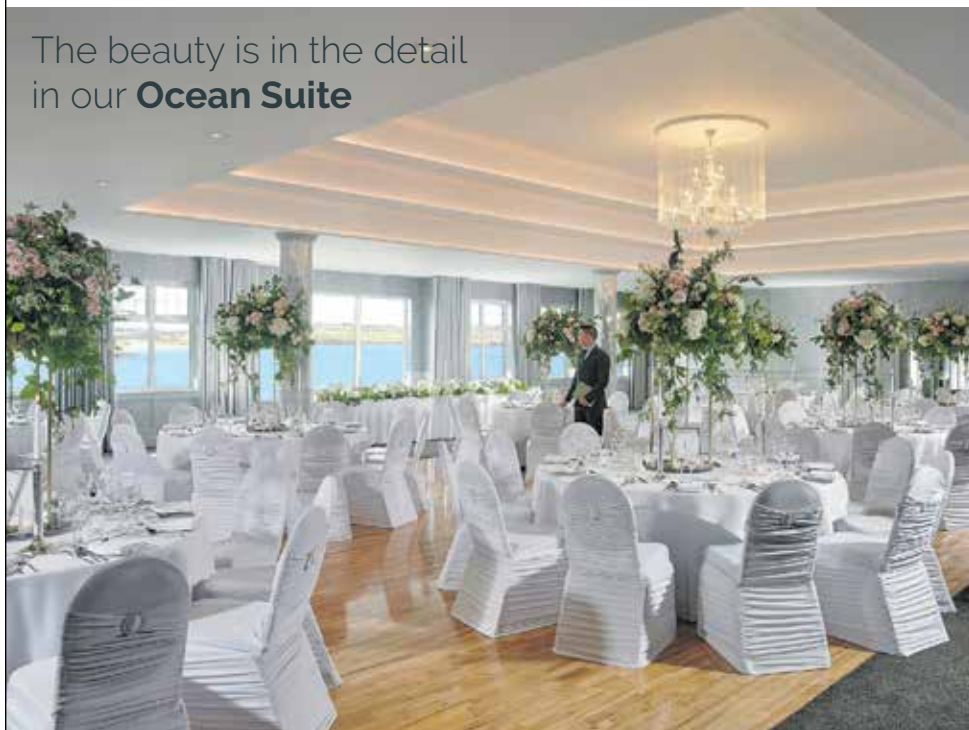
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*Hazel Healy*



With over 25 years of experience celebrating unforgettable weddings, the four-star Celtic Ross Hotel prides itself in planning and executing, not just the perfect wedding celebration, but 'your' perfect wedding celebration.

Under Executive Head Chef Brett Ladds they are delighted to launch their new wedding menu. This tailored menu for your day, combined with the team's love for local produce and passion for cooking, will be the perfect recipe for a truly memorable taste of some of that West Cork magic. Included in all wedding packages is a pre-wedding tasting and overnight stay: Wedding couples, on the occasion of their first wedding anniversary, are invited back to celebrate again with the Celtic Ross and enjoy another sumptuous dining experience.

Set against the tranquil Rosscarbery Estuary, with views out to the sea and Galley Head beyond, the Celtic Ross Hotel, with its unique blend of location, understated luxury, relaxed atmosphere and friendly yet professional service, offers an exceptional venue for your West Cork wedding.

As you dine as newly-weds, you will enjoy breathtaking views of Rosscarbery Bay and, just moments away from the hotel you can stroll hand-in-hand through the dunes on The Warren Strand. With soft sand underfoot and the Atlantic lapping gently at the shore, it offers a beautifully romantic backdrop for the perfect wedding photographs. The Celtic Ross is an approved Civil Ceremony Venue, so your ceremony can take place in the



Ardagh Suite, Tower Gallery and, weather-permitting, in the outdoor courtyard area. All locations offer stunning views of Rosscarbery Bay and, after the ceremony, couples have the option of having their reception in one of the hotel banqueting suites. Post-Covid, the hotel has experienced an increase in the number of newly-engaged couples enquiring about more intimate weddings including civil, humanist and, in particular, beach ceremonies. Beach weddings have become increasingly popular due to the wonderful surroundings of Rosscarbery and the hotel's extensive expertise in delivering a unique bespoke beach wedding day.

Paula and Mark are a couple who celebrated their special day at the Celtic Ross Hotel:

"From the first day when we came to view the hotel, the team at the Celtic Ross accommodated us fantastically – the staff truly drew us in with their personalities. Management and every member of staff were so friendly and helpful, and that continued throughout our experience with the Celtic Ross. "Our meetings ran smoothly, and changes we asked for due to Covid were no problem for the team. Our fabulous wedding coordinators, tailored the perfect wedding package to suit our needs. "Our family from abroad came and stayed in the hotel for a few days. They could not speak more highly of their stay. The location is so handy – and overlooking the water was the cherry on top! Just stunning! "The hotel catered for a large family meal the night before

our wedding, and the food that evening, as well as of course on the wedding day itself, was beautiful. So delicious! "We got beautiful wedding photographs on the bridge, with the hotel in the background, as well as photographs on the pier across the road. "We can't recommend the Celtic Ross enough, and such a huge thank you to Eva and her team who made sure our day ran on time and everyone was at ease and really enjoyed themselves. Thank you all."

Couples can contact the hotel directly for more information on getting married at the Celtic Ross Hotel. Did you know that included in all Email Wedding Coordinator Eva at [weddings@celticross.com](mailto:weddings@celticross.com) or phone (023) 8848722 or visit [www.celticross.com](http://www.celticross.com)



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# Sharing the stories of your special day

Event videographer Adam Fleming and his wife Wendy are the husband and wife team behind West Cork Weddings; specialising in wedding videography, crafting cinematic, timeless wedding films, bespoke to every couple they work with. The couple believe that a wedding is about more than just one day; it is the coming together of two people and two stories. Their films aim to share those stories as they capture the emotions and beauty of your special day.

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necklace with  
engraveable  
disc



Drawing from their own wedding experience, Adam and Wendy decided to side-step offering multiple packages with lots of different options per package as this is something they themselves found very overwhelming. So keeping it simple, West Cork Weddings offers just one package that Adam and Wendy feel includes everything that most couples are looking for!

"Having said that," says Adam "some couples want a little extra so we do offer different upgrades or add-ons that you can get if you want something that isn't included in our package; including extended videos or a quick turnaround (where we get your video in the post to you within five working days). Our most popular add-on is our 'Mini-series' which provides the couple with all of the footage

recorded on the day put into different episodes so that you can binge-watch your wedding!"

"We got married five years ago and we know all about the wedding planning and we aim to create the whole process, from initial contact to the presentation of your final wedding video, as straightforward as possible!" says Adam. "We also know how important all the elements of the day are and we pride ourselves on our attention to detail, both when filming and as we craft your wedding video!"

Adam's style of videography is very much documentary; staying in the background and capturing the raw beautiful moments of the day as it happens.

"As a videographer you are there for every part of the day, even the preparation, which the majority of your friends and family don't even see!" he says.



Adam and Wendy Fleming with their daughters.

Based in beautiful West Cork, Ireland, West Cork Weddings specialises in wedding videography. We craft cinematic, timeless wedding films bespoke to every couple we work with. We believe that your wedding is about more than just one day; it is the coming together of two people and two stories. Our films aim to share those stories as we capture the emotions and beauty of your special day.



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"These are intimate moments that I feel honoured to be able to capture for you! My aim is to ensure that you are as comfortable as possible and for you to forget that I am even there! We feel that it is these natural and authentic moments that we have the privilege to capture that set our videos apart from others! I am often told by couples that they hardly noticed me on the day and I take that as a compliment!"

Adam explains why videography is such an important part of a wedding day: "The sound of a dad's voice breaking as he sees his daughter for the first time in her wedding dress, the cheer of friends and family as a couple is announced as newly-weds, the laughter of a bridal party having the best day of their lives, these are all moments that have to be watched on video to truly feel like you are reliving it. Our couples tell us that every time they watch our videos they pick up on different details and it brings

back different memories. Sometimes you don't even realise how precious these memories are until months or years after the day!"

"Our own wedding video includes a very close friend speaking during our wedding ceremony just five years ago, who has sadly passed away since. Being able to listen to her voice and watch the video is so special to us and we want to be able to record these similar important moments for all our couples too!"

Email Adam and Wendy at [info@westcorkweddings.ie](mailto:info@westcorkweddings.ie). You can also check out their work on Insatgram or on their website: [westcorkweddings.ie](http://westcorkweddings.ie)

### Testimonials:

"We are thrilled that we chose Adam as our videographer for our wedding. He is very down to earth and professional. He was so discreet and unobtrusive on the day. We absolutely love our wedding video – Adam has such

a good eye, capturing so many lovely details and moments exactly how it happened. We didn't expect to like our video so much – Adam completely exceeded our expectations! We highly recommend West Cork Weddings!" **Marcus & Ellen**

"Adam was brilliant on the day of our wedding. He didn't make any fuss and let everything flow naturally. When we got our videos back from Adam we were blown away with the amazing work that he had done. I would highly recommend West Cork Weddings to anybody getting married." **Diarmuid & Sinead**

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## Feature AUTUMN WINTER WEDDINGS #loveinwestcork

## Making fun the priority

Seven years after they first met in Wild nightclub in Bantry, Sean and Síofra (nee O'Shea) Murphy tied the knot in The Maritime Hotel. Sean is originally from Bonane, Kenmare and works as a Chef in Bantry Hospital whilst Bantry native Síofra is a Recruitment Consultant in Morgan McKinley.

**Tell us about the proposal?**

It was supposed to be in London but Covid affected that plan so it happened in Muckross House in Killarney instead, in December 2021, surrounded by Christmas lights and decorations...it was just like a scene from the movie 'Love Actually'.

**Why did you choose The Maritime Hotel for your wedding?**

Síofra: Wedding co-ordinator Helen's instant response! We got engaged at the start of December and emailed a few hotels for quotes; I think it was December 30 because we said we'd get ahead of the Christmas Day and New Year engagements. While we appreciated the time of year, Helen was straight back within a few hours. But we went with The Maritime not just for that reason; the packages were

unbeatable price wise for all the little things that were included. We had been to weddings there and the food has always been great as it was on our wedding day, and the BBQ on day two was just as delicious, honestly people are still saying how great and ample the food was.

I think for us, more than anything, it was how easy and effortless Helen made the whole process. She kept on top of us in the sense of check-ins, suggesting what should be done and so on with a timeline, just a dream to work with.

I don't think we had any bridezilla requests but still nothing was a no and everything was a yes. The service was unbeatable, five-star.

**Did you have anything out-of-the-ordinary planned?**

Does a savoury cheesecake

from Fields in Skibbereen and an evening delivery of popcorn from Bantry cinema count? Oh and an entrance to The Maritime that included beer boys and a ball and chain!

**What were the most enjoyable and most stressful parts of your wedding planning experience?**

Most enjoyable was the menu tasting, we were treated like royalty that dinner service and had a lovely evening. We got plenty of food and it felt like the start of the celebrations because the menu was printed on the table like it would be on the big day.

Síofra: We both enjoyed our individual days of dress and suit shopping. I went to The White Ivy in Kenmare for the day with my bridal party, including both moms, and that day was special, the experience and service was amazing. Sean enjoyed a day in Skibbereen in Sean Murray's getting suits with his groomsmen.

Stressful? The little things at the end, mass booklets, table plans, but there was nothing too stressful.

**What was your favourite part of the day?**

Having family and friends celebrating our day with us. We kept saying 'all we want is a fun wedding' and the dance floor was full all night, thanks to The Little Creatures and DJ Kevin Healy-Rae, and we both honestly had the best time. We would do it all again in a heartbeat! You couldn't put a price on the weekend we had.

**Where did you go on honeymoon?**

Playa del Carmen in Mexico and also Nice in France.

**Have you any tips for other couples about to tie the knot?**

This is age-old advice but enjoy your day, it only happens once and it'll go by so quickly. The buildup and all the planning is a part of it too so enjoy every second of that. Don't let little things stress you out, what doesn't get done won't be noticed. And if we were ye, we'd choose The Maritime for the best and most stress-free experience. Best of luck and enjoy.



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## Feature AUTUMN WINTER WEDDINGS #loveinwestcork

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Set on 90 acres of mature parkland with panoramic views over Oysterhaven Bay, the luxury Kinsale Hotel and Spa offers couples the perfect location for their big day. Located in a peaceful and tranquil setting, the hotel boasts 70 beautifully appointed bedrooms, including two suites.

Discover a region renowned for its rugged coastline, beautiful harbour location and breathtaking surrounds. The winding enchanting woodland entrance will lead you to the hotel lobby where you and your guests will be greeted by a dedicated wedding team. The spectacular private grounds and unspoilt views overlooking Oysterhaven Bay ensure magical spots ideal for capturing wedding memories that will be treasured for a lifetime.

This wedding hotel in Kinsale specialises in catering for one wedding per day, ensuring

that it is committed to providing couples with the ideal setting for the most important day in their lives. A dedicated wedding coordinator will tailor make a package suited to individual taste, offering the ultimate in personal attention, service and exceptional value for your special day in tranquil surrounds. The hotel is also licensed to host civil ceremonies, which can be accommodated and tastefully decorated to suit requirements.

The Head Chef and his culinary team have designed a Wedding Menu Selector packed full of culinary delights. Using only the finest locally sourced seasonal ingredients; each dish is prepared with authenticity, passion and pride. Your Wedding Team and Head Chef will take you through the options to help you choose the perfect menu for your big day.

The stunning Rockpool Bar and Restaurant offers guests

the perfect venue for a relaxed morning breakfast, formal pre-wedding dinner or casual barbecue on the terrace for your day after celebrations.

The state-of-the-art leisure club is available to all hotel guests and the Luxury Spa is available on booking for all pre and post wedding needs. The beautifully appointed treatment rooms offer guests on-site makeup, nails, tan, massage and advanced Elemis facials to name but a few options.

The team at Kinsale Hotel and Spa are happy to cater for weddings of any size, from 40 to 200. The Rathmore Banqueting Suite is simply magnificent with unspoilt views over the bay and countryside making it the ideal wedding venue location for that special day.

For more information on weddings, visit: kinsalehotelandspa.ie or call 021 470 6000



## people Arts & Entertainment

# Free concert in Skibb for Culture Night

St. Barrahane's Church Festival of Music, in collaboration with the National String Quartet Foundation, welcomes ConTempo

Quartet for a delightful concert at Abbeystrewry Church, Skibbereen on Friday September 22, 8pm. Admission is free as a celebration of Culture Night.

ConTempo Quartet is a string quartet founded in Bucharest in 1995 and has been based in Ireland since 2003 as Galway Music Residency's Ensemble.

The quartet has performed almost 2000 concerts in 46 countries. Bogdan Sofei and Ingrid Nicola, violins will be joined by Andreea Banciu, viola and Adrian Mantu, cello. The programme will include music by Haydn, Rebecca Clarke, Jane O'Leary and also featuring Schubert's epic masterpiece, his posthumously published Quartet in G major. A concert not to be missed.

Further information: 086 2264797; www.barrahanemusical.ie

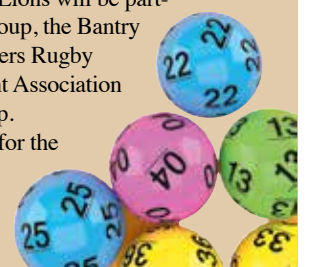


# Sunday Night Bingo is back in Bantry

The Bantry Bay Lions Club is resurrecting the Sunday Night Bingo in the Boys Club, Bantry on September 10. The doors open at 7pm and the games will start at 7:30pm sharp.

Bingo night was very popular before Covid 19 and it is hoped that it will be equally popular today. In order to adequately staff these game nights the Bantry Bay Lions will be partnering with the Kelp Campaign group, the Bantry Development Association, the Jesters Rugby Club, the Bantry Active Retirement Association and the RAWR animal rights group.

This is an exciting new venture for the Lions. Please tell your family and friends and come along to have some fun.





# Jon Gomm shares how Clonakilty Guitar Festival is “completely different to anything I’ve ever experienced”

Renowned for his finger-tapping and slapping virtuoso guitar style and soulful vocals, Jon Gomm uses a single acoustic guitar to create a multi-layered sound involving drum, bass and melodies, drawing on a range of influences from rock to flamenco. The English singer-songwriter and acoustic solo performer, best known for his song ‘Passionflower’ which attracted millions of views on YouTube and was voted sixth in the ‘50 Greatest Acoustic Songs Of All Time’ in Total Guitar will play Clonakilty Guitar Festival in September. Just home from a US tour, Jon chats to **West Cork People**.

Clonakilty won’t be a flying visit for the musician who says he’s looking forward to meeting up with his old friend George Lowden and catching some performances at the guitar festival.

“I’ve been once before and I’ve been desperate to go back ever since,” he shares. “I’ve played in a lot of guitar festivals around the world and Clonakilty Guitar Festival is unique; completely different to anything I’ve ever experienced. There’s no main venue, instead the town is just filled with the sound of guitars coming from a pub, a church, a hall... seemingly every corner. And

this isn’t about acoustic or fingerstyle or any genre or style. The performers come from all traditions; they’re united simply by the fact that they all do something beautiful or interesting or brilliant with the instrument.”

Known for his interactive style, Clonakilty can expect an emotive and memorable performance from Jon with favourites like ‘Passionflower’ mixed in with new material and even a few cover interpretations.

“I am working on new stuff at the moment but it’s top secret,” he laughs. “I’m not very good with secrets though, so I will probably test out a few

songs in Clonakilty!”

One of the world’s most gifted acoustic guitar players, the musician admits to feeling slightly intimidated whenever he plays in Ireland.

“The standard of musicians in Ireland is so high, it’s extraordinary, in fact it’s a little bit scary,” he says. “Everybody can play, everybody can sing and those who can do it well are just so good.”

“But Irish people don’t judge music by any kind of set standard that says you’re not good enough or technically proficient enough. There’s an incredible openness here, which is very special.”

“The only other country I’ve ever been to in the world where music is so embedded into the culture and there is so much access to live music is Cuba.”

Music has been part of Jon’s life for as far back as he can remember. He got his first instrument at the age of two, a ukulele – the story goes that he smashed this in frustration and it was replaced with a guitar – and was attending gigs with his dad, an editor and music reviewer in a local paper, from the age of eight. As he got older, Jon started writing reviews for the paper too.

“There were a lot of blues gigs,” he recalls. “No-one famous but I thought they were all superstars, they were my idols.”

He recalls going into school on a Monday morning and telling the kids about seeing the American blues guitarist and singer-songwriter Walter Trout play at the weekend.

“I thought I was so cool but they didn’t know who I was on about, they just thought I was a geek,” he laughs.

“Those blues guys taught me that you don’t have to be a pop star to play music as a job,” he shares.

Growing up, working his way through his dad’s enormous collection of vinyl, Jon was introduced to a broad range of music genres from classical to blues, country to rock. His

father was a big fan of The Shadows, an English instrumental rock group.

“I listened to instrumental guitar music from an early age and there is something special about it, when there’s no words and you have to invent your own meaning. It can just take your imagination anywhere.”

“I used to like turning off all the lights, especially at Christmas, as I’d just leave the tree lights on, put on an album and get lost in it, there were all these worlds to escape in.”

Accepted to study English at Oxford, Jon instead opted to take a gap year to go study at the London Guitar Institute.

“That gap year is still going,” he laughs.

He loves poetry, which is reflected in his lyrics, filled with metaphors and rich imagery.

“It’s important for me to be able to communicate in the right way through words. As a musician, all I want to do is make people feel something.”

A passionate advocate for mental health and neurodiversity, Jon shares how his ADHD has contributed to him embracing a wide range of genres.

“I get bored very easily,” he says. “If I see something that’s new to me, I just have to learn it... I couldn’t be a real classical guitarist, as it’s too confined and disciplined for me.”

People with ADHD experience heightened emotions, which Jon reckons is a positive for his performances. His gigs are known for being personal and emotive. If he does get anxious before a gig he deals with it by holding his breath, tensing and pushing hard up against a wall. “It helps to get rid of the adrenalin and makes you feel much better,” he shares.

For his last album ‘The Faintest Idea’ he listened to a lot of Chinese pop music, in particular Sa Dingding, a Chinese folk singer and songwriter of Mongolian heritage.

“Her music is incredibly beautiful and the production is really amazing, organic sounds using traditional Chinese instruments with a lot of electric mix.”

Jon’s also well known for his wit. While he’s incredibly open to all musical influences he admits to never really liking U2.

“I’ve always found them to be a bit grandiose,” he shares.

That is until he watched Bono perform the part of the lion in the animated film Sing 2 with his seven-year-old daughter Indigo! “My hair was

literally standing up with the power and emotion in his voice and I realised I’ve just been a snob all these years not liking them,” he says laughing.

Prior to Clonakilty, Jon is playing the Transylvania International Guitar Festival, which he’s very excited about.

“It’s a real fun one as it’s free and attracts a great mix of people...it’s still not as good as Clonakilty though!”

Jon Gomm plays DeBarras during the Clonakilty Guitar Festival on Sunday, September 24, 4.30pm. Tickets €20 from [debarra.ie](http://debarra.ie).

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## OUT & ABOUT



Daria (7) celebrated Ukrainian Independence Day on August 24 with a Clonakilty Icecream.

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## people Arts &amp; Entertainment



## 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.

The Drimoleague Singing Festival returns to various venues across the West Cork village this September to celebrate the human voice in all its forms. The festival will feature an array of events over four days to delight

## The singing harp of Aisling Urwin

the Drimoleague community and visitors. Singing sessions, singing and songwriting workshops, informal pop-up choirs, and even a singing competition are on the cards, and big names such as sean-nós singer Iarla Ó Lionáird (The Gloaming, Afro Celt Sound System), aboriginal Australian singer Jessie Lloyd, folk songwriter John Blek, and Jack L will complete the line-up. Lauren Guillery turns her attention to Kenmare harpist Aisling Urwin, who will support Susan O'Neill (also known as SON) at St Matthew's Church on the Saturday evening.

Originally from Bonane, a small village between Kenmare and Glengarriff, Aisling Urwin picked up the harp at the tender age of nine. She comes from a traditional Irish music background with both parents playing the mandolin and singing – her father's instrument of choice is the bouzouki and her mother's the bodhrán – so it's



no wonder Aisling is keeping the family tradition alive. When her parents asked her if she wanted to learn to play an instrument, she chose the harp after seeing someone play it on the Late Late Show on RTE. As there weren't any harp teachers nearby, the dedicated couple drove their daughter to Castleconnell in County Limerick once a fortnight so she could attend classes.

Aisling started playing in trad sessions from about age 12. Though she's had many great harp teachers over the years, her favourite has been the trad session itself. "I learned trad backing by listening to my dad on the bouzouki at sessions, listening out for chord progressions, and getting excited about all the chord possibilities for one melody. Trad backing is a type of improv," she clarifies. "You get to learn many new songs at sessions, some may have a different name or a different version. I love the stories behind tunes or the total mystery behind an unnamed one."

The harp has been a huge part of Aisling's life for already two decades. Though she played the guitar and piano when she was younger and learned the sitar as part of her degree in music at UCC, the harp remains her number one love because of its deep roots in the history, culture and folklore of Ireland. "There is an eternal magic to the instrument that can be felt as the wind blows through the strings, in the swell of a slow air and in the pulse of a polka," she says. Her instrument, which she affectionately calls her "baibín", is a lever harp as opposed to a pedal harp. The lever harp, also called the Celtic or folk harp, is smaller in size than the pedal harp, and has levers along the

top to allow raising the pitch of the strings as they are played. "People always underestimate how big a harp is," she laughs. "It's difficult to travel with it and it's pretty much always an issue every time I travel. My harp did get lost once, on a connecting flight. It turned up the next day and I managed to get it back ten minutes before our concert started."

The wildness of the Beara peninsula and majesty of the Iveragh are no doubt inspirations for Urwin, who feels deeply rooted there between mountains, woodlands, and sea.

"There is an eternal magic to the instrument that can be felt as the wind blows through the strings, in the swell of a slow air and in the pulse of a polka,"

The gentle strumming on the harp combined with her angelic melodies do wonders to remind us of the beauty of the land and the natural world, and through her music Aisling strives to challenge traditional views of what a harp should sound like, painting it in new colours and taking it into new sonic spaces.

Though still a young musician, the south-Kerry harpist already has an impressive collection of albums under her belt. Her very first album 'Awakening' was recorded by her musician neighbour Chris Liddle when Aisling was only 17. Her second album was done while in college and is a live recording with singer-song-

writer, fiddler, and composer Clare Sands entitled 'Live at Charlie's'. Fresh out of college, she recorded an album of Irish fusion music with saxophonist Andre Van Der Hoff called 'Resonance', and in 2019 she released 'The Dragonfly Jig', a collection of versions of some of her favourite trad and folk songs.

Aisling speaks fondly of her time spent in studio, which she really enjoys. "I love the feeling of a song coming to life, becoming immortalised in the form of a recording, I love the playfulness of creatively experimenting with sound. If I could spend every day in a studio, I would," she enthuses. Thankfully, her partner Seán O'Sullivan is a recording engineer at Tunnel Road Studios in Bonane, so she can freely record in her pyjamas!

Her good friend Siobhán Moore, with whom she performs as part of the duo Woven Kin is also a music producer. Together they recorded 'Hibernate' in 2020 during the pandemic lockdown. "It was partly recorded in Ireland, partly in the US," she explains. "We asked a few musicians we love to play on the album, so we had files coming to us from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Texas, California, New York, not to mention Bandon." A project very close to her heart, Aisling confesses that she really loves what they have created together. The album features Liam Ó Maonlaí (House of Flowers) and Leah Song (Rising Appalachia) among others. "We spent a lot of time sending things back and forth to each other, I was especially grateful for the internet that year and what it allowed us to achieve with an ocean between us."

Aisling first met Siobhán

Moore, who performs as the world music outfit Ajeet, at her own album launch at Crowley's Bar in Kenmare in 2018. The musician approached Aisling to record harp on her next Ajeet album, and a few days later invited her to join the band on tour. "Being able to travel the world playing music with Ajeet and the wonderful band has been such an opportunity, I am very grateful," Aisling confesses. "There are so many places I would've never seen otherwise, if it wasn't for music and meeting in the pub that night."

Apart from writing, performing, recording, and touring the world with Ajeet, Urwin teaches the harp online. "I noticed a trend of people coming to me wanting to learn to sing with the harp. When Covid hit, everything moved online so I decided to use the time I had to put an online course platform together." With The School of Harp running courses for beginners and more advanced players, Aisling admits to loving teaching and sharing the magic of the harp with others. "It's so satisfying to see the growth of a student, to see them grow in confidence and explore their own creativity."

Though she has an album in the works, she is particularly excited about a concert that will take place at the Ionad Cultúrtha in Ballyvourney on November 18 with fellow harper Niamh O'Brien as part of a Music Network 'Resonance' residency. "We're going to be composing new pieces and making contemporary arrangements of old Irish harp music. We're also going to be collaborating with visual artist Colm O'Neill and bringing in an element of place to the concert in an audiovisual format."

For the Drimoleague Singing festival this month, Aisling will be joined with her dear friend Andy Yelen, a guitarist from Sneem. "I've been playing with Andy for years and it's really wonderful to be able to make music with someone who feels like they can read your mind when you play. He has a tremendous ear and a really beautiful touch to his playing." No doubt the acoustics at St Matthew's Church will complement the duo's performance on September 23.

The Drimoleague Singing Festival takes place from September 21-24. Aisling Urwin will support Susan O'Neill at St Matthew's Church, Drimoleague on Saturday, September 23. More info at [www.drimoleaguesingingfestival.ie](http://www.drimoleaguesingingfestival.ie)

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## Sept West Cork Gig Listings

Compiled by Lauren Guillery

- Sept 1 Caleb Klauder and Reeb Willms / *Levi's Corner House*  
James Keegan / *DeBarra's Folk Club*
- Sept 2 Water Tower / *Levi's Corner House*
- Sept 7 John Spillane and the Band of Wrens / *DeBarra's*
- Sept 8 Clare Sands / *Connolly's of Leap*
- Sept 10 Dan Blakeslee / *DeBarra's Folk Club*  
Dogtail Soup Trio / *Levi's Corner House*
- Sept 16 Susan O'Neill / *Connolly's of Leap*  
The Altered Hours / *DeBarra's Folk Club*
- Sept 17 Aoife Nessa Frances / *DeBarra's Folk Club*
- Sept 20 Eoghan Ó Ceannabháin / *DeBarra's Folk Club*
- Sept 22 Iarla Ó Lionáird with Cormac McCarthy & Matthew Berrill / *Drimoleague Singing Festival*
- Sept 21 Gemma Hayes Trio / *DeBarra's Folk Club*
- Sept 23 John Blek / *Drimoleague Singing Festival*  
Susan O'Neill w/ support Aisling Urwin / *Drimoleague*
- Sept 24 Freddie White / *Drimoleague Singing Festival*  
Jack L / *Drimoleague Singing Festival*  
Jon Gomm / *DeBarra's Folk Club*  
Jessie Lloyd / *Drimoleague Singing Festival*  
Rónán Ó Snodaigh & Myles O'Reilly / *Connolly's of Leap*
- Sept 29 Danny Carroll + Laurie Shaw / *Levi's Corner House*



# Singing for all promised at Drimoleague Singing Festival weekend

With the sixth Drimoleague Singing Festival taking place from September 21 to 24, and including headline gigs from Jack L, Susan O'Neill and Iarla Ó Lionáird, the village is readying itself for the annual influx of visitors who come in search of the best singers in contemporary and folk music and the always lively open singing sessions and workshops.

The closing concert is sure to be an absolute treat with the baritone voice of Jack L (with full band) running through the hits of his 25-year career. Anyone who has been to a Jack L concert knows that you not only get the songs but the full theatricality of his legendary stage shows. Sunday night (September 24) in All Saints Church at 7.30pm is the place to be.

School children from the parish will be taking part in a fun sing-along with John Spillane drawing on his extensive experience recording 'Irish Songs We Learned At School' a few years ago.

On Thursday morning there will be a special song-sharing session in the Pod Páirc at 12 noon hosted by a new vocal group from West Cork called 'The Five'. Mary Callaghan, Tess Leak, Eithne O'Mahony, Simone O'Rourke and Susan McManamon explore together

the joy of great folk, traditional, contemporary and original songs using a capella harmonies. Following a short performance there will be an opportunity for all present to sing and share songs together in what is sure to be a lovely event. All are very much welcome.

Other highlights of the weekend include the pub-singing competition whose final will be judged by, amongst others, Iarla Ó Lionáird, the internationally-respected singer originally from Coolea. Iarla is also giving a concert on Friday night, September 22 with Cormac McCarthy on piano and Matthew Berrill on clarinet, where together they re-imagine classic songs in a new way. Iarla is the singer-in-residence at the festival this year and on Saturday morning in the village hall on Main Street he will give a free talk at 11am called 'Touchstones Of Song' and be interviewed by Pat Collins about the

singers and songs which have influenced him, illustrated by some rare audio recordings. It's sure to be a fascinating listen.

The lunchtime concert in Drimoleague Methodist Church is with legendary sisters Maighread and Triona Ní Dhomhnaill who will draw on their extensive back catalogue including from legendary groups Skara Brae and The Bothy Band to enthral us in an intimate, not-to-be-missed concert. Saturday afternoon is bookended by two Cork men, both singer-songwriters with unique voices and talents, who represent perhaps different eras but who are sure to entertain and engage. John Blek plays the Village Hall at 2.30pm while Freddie White plays Upstairs at The Drimoleague Inn at 5pm. On Saturday night Susan O'Neill will be the highlight following her runaway success over the last two years, supported by talented harper and singer Aisling Urwin.

In amongst all these concerts there are open singing sessions hosted by the likes of Elle Marie O'Dwyer, Vincent Crowley, Máire Ní Chéileachair and her brother Diarmaid and Thomas McCarthy making a welcome return to Drimoleague,

this time bringing with him Rosie McCarthy a young and up-and-coming talent based in Macroom. There will also be singing workshops from Elle Marie O'Dwyer and Micheál Marrinan.

Sunday morning has a special performance from Australian Aboriginal singer Jessie Lloyd giving a free concert in the village hall at 12.30pm. There will be a spoken word and song commemoration at the Famine plot in the Old Graveyard and an afternoon concert with Noriana Kennedy of The Whileaways at the Pod Páirc at the Top of the Rock.

Full details of all events are on [www.drimoleaguesinging-festival.ie](http://www.drimoleaguesinging-festival.ie) where tickets can also be purchased.



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](http://www.bluehousegalleryschull.com)

## Bandon author a 'New Voice' in children's books

Leona Forde, from Bandon, has been selected to present her debut book to international peers at this year's Children's Books Ireland International Conference in Dublin in September.

Her debut book, 'Milly McCarthy is a Complete Catastrophe', published by Gill Books year, follows the story of Milly McCarthy as she causes havoc on a school tour of Fota Wildlife Park.

Leona studied English and History at UCC and now teaches at Kinsale Community School. She wrote Milly McCarthy for her eldest daughter, who wanted a Wimpy Kid style story, set in Ireland. Leona also writes poetry, and her work has been published in the Cork Words anthology. Leona is currently working on the third book in the Milly series.

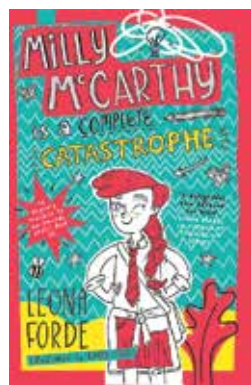
The New Voices slot spotlights debut authors and illustrators nominated by both Irish and international publishers,

creating books across a range of genres for young readers of all ages. Each nominee will present their debut work to the conference audience for five minutes.

Elaina Ryan, CEO of Children's Books Ireland, said: "The theme of this year's conference is 'Risk and Reward'. For our New Voices, presenting their debut work to fellow authors, illustrators, publishers and booklovers may seem a daunting brief, but the reward will absolutely outweigh the risk.

"It's a brave thing to put something you've created out into the world but Leona, and all our New Voices, can be assured, they will find only celebration and support from Children's Books Ireland and our audience!"

With support from the Arts Council of Ireland, the Children's Books Ireland International Conference, September 16-17, will be live-streamed on YouTube. For tickets visit eventbrite.



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# An autumn of cinematic splendour as Clonakilty Film Club returns

After a somewhat damp summer, Clonakilty Film Club marks a return to cosy nights indoors with a superb selection from the best that world cinema has to offer. Over the autumn 2023 season the club will show six films fortnightly at The Park Cinema to keep you entertained until early December. Recent seasons have included a surprise bonus film so keep your fingers crossed and eyes peeled for news on that.

As always, a committee member will share further insights in a brief introduction before each film but overall the committee has designed a programme of films that will make you look at, and think about, the world in a different way.

Opening the season on September 26 is the stunning, tender and utterly compelling ‘War Pony’. Gina Gammell and Riley Keough’s debut film follows the interlocking stories of two Lakota boys growing up on the Pine Ridge Reservation. Bill (Jojo Bapteste Whiting), at 23, just wants to make something of himself and is determined to hustle his way to a better life through odd jobs and get-rich-quick schemes.

12-year-old Matho (LaDainian Crazy Thunder) is desperate for approval from his young father. A series of impulsive decisions turns Matho’s life upside down, and he finds himself unequipped to deal with the harsh realities of the adult world. ‘War Pony’ is a tender portrait of two boys’ troubled passage into adulthood and a deserving winner of the top prize in the Cannes Film Festival’s ‘Un Certain Regard’.

Other films in the autumn programme are:

October 10: An innovative blend of pulpy action homages, playful comedy, and touching family drama, ‘Leonor Will Never Die’ is a wonderfully imaginative tribute to the art of filmmaking.

Leonor Reyes was once a groundbreaking figure in the Filipino film

industry during its ragtag action cinema glory days, but now she struggles with old age, mounting bills, and the untimely death of her son. While revisiting an unfinished script about a fearless protagonist trying to avenge his brother’s murder, Leonor is struck on the head by a falling television set and knocked into a coma. As she lies unconscious in the hospital, fantasy and reality begin to blur when Leonor finds herself awake inside her script, becoming the hero of her own story.

October 24: Starring an incredible Sydney Sweeney and using dialogue taken directly from the FBI’s transcript of the gruelling interrogation, ‘Reality’ is by turns nail-biting, darkly funny and surreal. Adapted from her 2019 stage play ‘Is This is a Room’, Tina Satter’s gripping directorial debut is a bold and inventive political thriller.

On a Saturday afternoon in June 2017, 25-year-old Reality Winner is confronted at her Georgia home by the FBI. A cryptic conversation begins, and Reality’s life quickly begins to unravel. All taking place in the vicinities of Reality’s car, garden and home, the stylistically minimalist filmmaking paired with the creative handling of redacted parts of the dialogue report, make it both playful and painfully tense, full of awkward humanity.

November 7: ‘Cairo Conspiracy’, the gripping and critically acclaimed new thriller from Tarik Saleh (The Nile Hilton Incident, The Contractor), follows Adam, a young man who is offered the ultimate privilege, to study at the Al-Azhar University in Cairo. Shortly after his arrival in the city, the university’s highest-ranking religious leader, the Grand Imam, suddenly dies and Adam becomes a pawn in a ruthless power struggle between Egypt’s religious and political elite. As he struggles to balance a range of competing interests that favour different leaders, he soon finds that he must fight for his very survival as the succession intensifies.

November 21: Shot on location in

Ireland, Andrew Legge’s debut ‘Lola’ is a clever time-travel odyssey seamlessly combining authentic World War II-era newsreels with fictional home videos to create a fascinating found footage sci-fi story.

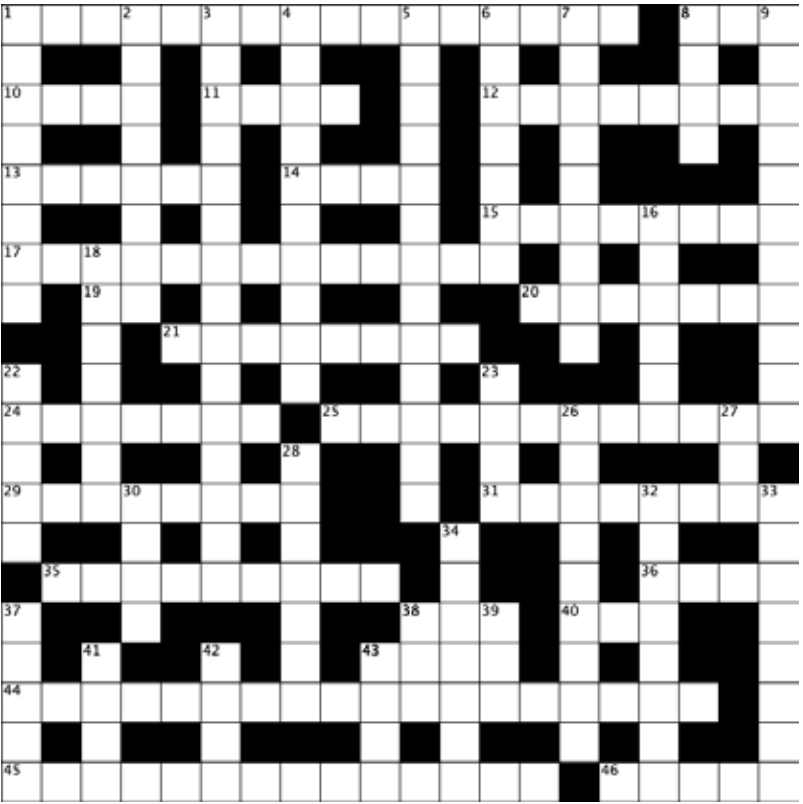
England, 1941, sisters, Martha (Stefanie Martini) and Thomasina (Emma Appleton) have created a machine, LOLA, that can intercept radio and TV broadcasts from the future. The mischievous pair develop a love for counterculture music and betting on horses. But with World War II escalating they realise the machine may hold the key to defeating the Nazis. In providing vital information to British intelligence, they will make a decisive intervention in the outcome of the war. As Thomasina becomes obsessed with LOLA’s potential as a weapon, the world-altering consequences of their actions take hold.

December 5: South Korean films always go down a treat at Clonakilty Film Club and so the committee is rounding out the Autumn programme with ‘Past Lives’, an authentically beautiful romantic debut feature from playwright Celine Song. Exploring ‘In Yun’, a Korean notion of connection between people – the string of fate which tangles together across different lifetimes, it subtly addresses the tension between a life longed for and the life lived.

Nora and Hae Sung, classmates at a primary school in Seoul, have their deep friendship ended abruptly when Nora’s family emigrates to Canada. Two decades later, they meet in New York and over one week address notions of chance and circumstance and the choices people make that create a life. With spellbinding performances from Greta Lee, Teo Yoo, and John Magaro this film brims with compassion for how complicated the human condition can be.

All welcome. Films start at 8.30pm. Doors open from 8.20pm. €10. Follow Clonakilty Film Club on Facebook for updates.

# In the news Crossword



### ACROSS

- 1 Late TV host who was a bit of a nosy parker (7,9)
- 8 Clinging seed pod (3)
- 10 Get your teeth into (4)
- 11 Bit of favourable publicity (4)
- 12 Gave a belly laugh (8)
- 13 Trendier or less relaxed (6)
- 14 Cologne component (4)
- 15 Genre (8)
- 17 Humiliation as member rants drunkenly (13)
- 19 Prefix for snare or large (2)
- 20 Pictorial novel (7)
- 21 Ruin game, revolting flower (8)
- 24 Blacken outside of your needle (7)
- 25 Dorothy hits Troon in search of gnasher specialist (12)
- 29 Nationality of Gustav Klimt (8)
- 31 Relationship of Nancy to Frank (8)
- 35 Storage site of radioactive water (9)
- 36 One of the common people (4)
- 38 A small pin (3)
- 40 “Wizard of Oz” character’s makeup? (3)
- 43 Don’t blow it! (4)
- 44 Species of whale that visited Bantry Bay last month (8,10)
- 45 Nordic sounding mass barge accommodation (5,9)
- 46 Where a phoenix is born (5)

### DOWN

- 1 Cram leek into this fish (8)
- 2 Maui is in which archipelago? (8)

- 3 Avian Antarcticans that failed to reproduce last year (7,8)
- 4 Irish star of upcoming Gladiator movie (4, 6)
- 5 Bone cleaner’s handy weapon (13)
- 6 Fail to care for (7)
- 7 Concerning the sense of smell (9)
- 8 Cooking receptacle (4)
- 9 Director of 4. Down (6,5)
- 16 Overshoot (2,4)
- 18 Country whose currency, rubles, is almost an anagram (7)
- 22 Letter between November and Papa in the NATO alphabet (5)
- 23 Buy one to lend the government a few bob (4)
- 26 Releasing mature eggs (9)
- 27 Woman who’ll take you to court? (3)
- 28 It makes antibodies out of neat gin (7)
- 30 Young’un (4)
- 32 Svengali’s forte, perhaps (8)
- 33 Perhaps now former Spanish football federation president Luis \_\_\_\_\_ (8)
- 34 Musical virtuoso (7)
- 37 The Weeknd’s genre, briefly (1,3,1)
- 38 Delay, with “off” (3)
- 39 Hair-styling aid (3)
- 41 Dull in appearance (4)
- 42 Alicia \_\_\_\_\_, performer of 37. down (4)
- 43 \_\_\_\_\_hero or \_\_\_\_\_song (4)

# Sudoku

The goal of Sudoku is to fill a 9x9 grid with numbers so that each row, column and 3x3 section contain all of the digits between 1 and 9

				5				
	9					4		
	2					8	9	
	3				4			
		1		9				5
			1	7			6	
	7		2			9	8	
		3			5	4		
		5		6				3

#225692

Difficulty: hard

				5				
								9
1	8	2		4		7		
							8	
				9	2		3	
				6			4	
	9	5		3				8
		7		5				1
	6		4		8			

#80626

Difficulty: moderate

Across: 1 Michael Parkinson; 8 bur; 10 chew; 11 plug; 12 guffawed; 13 edger; 14 musk; 15 catagory; 17 embarkment; 19 en; 20 graph; 21 geranium; 24 sym; 25 orthodontist; 29 Australia; 31 Fr; 32 Shogun; 33 pleb; 38 peg; 40 tin; 43 fuse; 44 Northern Bottlenose; 45 Bibby; 46 ashles; Down: 1 mackerel; 2 Howl; 3 emperor penguins; 4 Paul Mescal; 5 jungle duster; 6 neglect; 7 off; 8 bowl; 9 Ridley Scott; 10 go past; 18 Belarus; 22 Oscar; 23 bond; 26 oval; 27 Sue; 28 anti; 30 like; 32 hypnosis; 33 Rubiales; 34 Maestro; 37 R and B; 38 put; 39 gel; 41 a; 42 keys; 43 folk



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## Skibbereen's Still Mill is now home to Inanna Rare Books' Modern Art Department

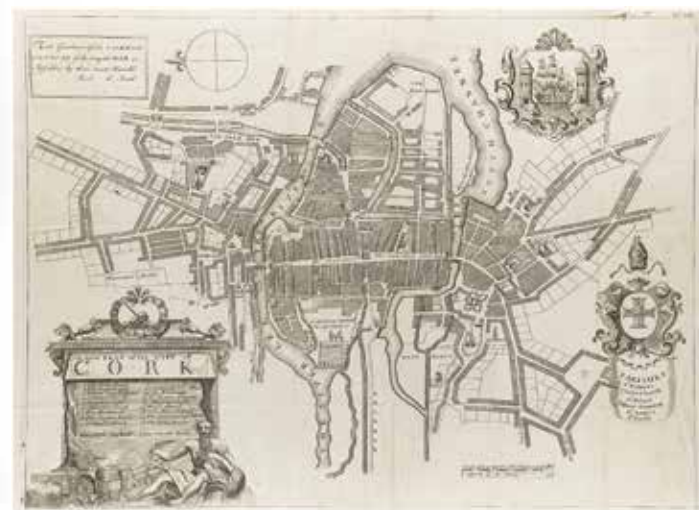
Inanna Rare Books, which just recently successfully hosted the second annual West Cork Rare Book Fair, is opening a new art department in one of the most beautiful historical buildings of West Cork, The Still Mill in Skibbereen.

This new venue will house thousands of art books on architecture, design, illustration, modern art and sculpture, as well as stocking rare maps and rare vinyl records with iconic sleeve-art.

Most importantly, and coinciding with the opening of the art department, Inanna will launch its second reprint of historical publications with a connection to County Cork, starting with its luxury reprint of one of the rarest publications in Irish topography: 'The Compleat Irish Traveller'. This book is rare because of the numerous illustrations which show some of the earliest maps of counties Cork, Kerry and Waterford. It also includes one of the earliest romantic engravings of Cork City featuring Shandon; as well as Kinsale and surroundings; Youghal and Dungarvan.

Inanna Rare Books Modern Art Department is open from Monday to Friday between 2pm and 6pm and Saturdays from 10am to 4pm at The Still Mill, Skibbereen P81 DY75.

Find more information on [www.inannamodern.com](http://www.inannamodern.com) and by calling 087 1025412.



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Tuesday September 26  
**WAR PONY**  
Dir: Gina Gammell, Riley Keough. USA



Tuesday October 10  
**LEONOR WILL NEVER DIE**  
Dir: Martika Ramirez Escobar  
Philippines



Tuesday October 24  
**REALITY**  
Dir: Tina Satter  
USA



Tuesday November 7  
**CAIRO CONSPIRACY**  
Dir: Tarik Saleh  
Turkey



Tuesday November 21  
**LOLA**  
Dir: Andrew Legge  
Ireland



Tuesday December 5  
**PAST LIVES**  
Dir: Celine Song  
South Korea





## 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

# September Sun Signs

This month really kicks off around September 4, as Venus ends her retrograde and Jupiter starts a retrograde, which will last until the end of the year. There is a strong focus on Virgo-style issues and Taurus gets a second chance too. Mercury is also retrograde as the month starts so there are a lot of reasons to take things slow and pace yourself during early September.

A Venus retrograde is less frequent than the other planets, happening only once in nearly two years. Over the last weeks since midsummer Venus has been in the retrograde zone. Now she is beginning to retrace her steps into late degrees of Leo until early October when she breaks new ground once more. This is the time to work on implementing the effects of the recent retrograde. The significance of this retrograde phase is to give us time to evaluate and reconsider the things we value, what we love and

what or who we want to include or share our lives with. The recent weeks may have given rise to relationship fractures or splits if the bonds were not strong enough or desires had changed over time. This phase may have made it clear that we really do want connection with others and we may have recognised some extra value we get from our relationships. This may also apply to other things we enjoy in life, our work or creativity may have been in the spotlight. Money exchange is a way of expressing value and this is another area that may have taken on extra significance recently. Venus travels ahead of the Sun once more, rising early in the morning sky. During September we can use this time of Venus emerging from beyond the light of the Sun to begin the process of acting on what may have changed. Start to implement the actions that reflect what you see as important and commit to your unique way of ex-

pressing care and love for yourself and the others in your life. Venus in Leo loves to show affection in dramatic ways and through hearty gestures. This is all about getting your own 'show on the road' and being seen to express your values with confidence. It is not a time to be cautious and hide behind the values of other people. Now we can be bold and courageously stand up for what we believe in.

Within a few hours of Venus turning to go forward, Jupiter turned backwards! Jupiter is the planet of expansion and new horizons. This planet represents the good things in life and gives us a boost of energy to have more of what we want and to do good things and become our best selves. Jupiter has been in Taurus since mid-May and puts the focus on physical matters and practical issues. With the retrograde phase, we get to reconsider and review what has been happening since then. There may be a need to look

at food production and the supply chain. Anything that gives us sustenance and provides support for our physical wellbeing are Taurus themes. There may be some hindrances or obstacles to making progress in these areas of your life now. The retrograde phase slows this development down providing an opportunity to really work out the details and take time to improve and refine your course of action.

With the current Mercury retrograde in its own sign of Virgo, there is a focus on making things fit together in some kind of order or logical sense and we may have to go over details more than once to get things to fall into place in a satisfactory way. This is a great time to get some tedious admin tasks completed or fine-tune any documents or proposals. Health and wellbeing routines can be put into action as there is more motivation to perfect the physical side of your life now. It will be after

the 'shadow phase' when mercury starts to make new ground before we really get to see results but September is the time to lay the groundwork.

The month ends with a twist that could involve some disruption or unusual events. The Full Moon in Aries on the 29th coincides with both Mercury and Venus connecting with the planet of change, Uranus. There may be some unexpected information coming to light, things may get said out of turn or to reveal some surprising truth. Whichever way this goes, and with Uranus, it is not going to be predictable, there will be a sense of relief or release of tension and this may allow events or situations to become unstuck in an ultimately beneficial way.

**September has a New Moon in 22 degrees Virgo on September 15 at 2.39am and a Full Moon in 6 degrees Aries on the 29th at 10.57am**



**Aries:** Doing your best work and taking pride in it are a focus for you now. You should be able to make some worthwhile career moves or at least secure your current position so that you don't have to worry about your financial future. This is a good time to examine

how you use your time and energy, with an eye to improving your efficiency and productivity. Watch out for health matters as you are concerned with your body now, and you may be inspired to begin a self-improvement program, create better habits, or begin a new diet or fitness plan.



**Taurus:** You're energised and inspired, creatively and emotionally approaching this New Moon time. You want to bring forth all that's deep within you. You express yourself more freely, playfully, and spontaneously and are more willing to take chances. Lady Luck is in

your corner so be sure to look for good deals. Social activities, travel and attending different cultural events will all lead to meeting people who can help further your goals. The dramatic and performing arts, sports and games, or other forms of self-expression and entertainment appeal strongly to you now. You can accomplish much if you set your mind to it.



**Gemini:** From the beginning of this month, you will have been enjoying the success that you worked hard to achieve. Don't be too quick to put your energy into new projects as you approach the New Moon, wait until the end of the month. All kinds of creative work

are favoured and you might find yourself more closely involved with children at this time. There is likely to be some conflict between your personal enjoyment and what others think you should be doing for kicks. Those things that need to be discussed and settled with the family can be dealt with in the next few weeks.



**Cancer:** Take a trip back into your past and you will find the answers you are looking for. Now it's time to make changes instead of doing a repeat performance. Taking time to talk with neighbours and folks you

cross paths with daily may result in more positive and smoother-running relationships generally. You'll want to fritter away your time on fun and social events over the New Moon, but this may not be at all bad, things have been serious enough for you to want to take a break now. This is a good time to participate in or contribute to any community events in your area.



**Leo:** Money, possessions, financial security, and practical matters are a focus for you now. You can make some very interesting professional or business moves this month. Be ready to put your money on the table in order to get ahead. If you have tended to be generous

or extravagant with your resources, you may begin to see the light at the end of the tunnel. At the least, it should become clear to you what your next steps should be regarding your finances. Your astute vision will enable you to correctly assess the right investment, job or any other money matter that arises after the New Moon phase.



**Virgo:** During this time you can make an impression on others by making a strong statement to the world about who you are. People recognise you and are likely to follow your lead, or at the least, they stay out of your way. You are likely to feel more confident and vital

now. However, you may be so preoccupied with yourself and your own desires that you unintentionally ignore other people and their needs. Include the ones you love in your plans and things will get progressively better. You should be able to strengthen the bond with someone who has been an influence in your life.



**Libra:** You'll be torn between what you want to do and what you have to do. Retreating from the world for a while and spending some quiet time alone to relax and rejuvenate appeals strongly to you now. You may feel like you are at a low ebb and as if nothing is happen-

ing or you may simply not want to be 'where the action is'. Don't overreact, overdo or over-indulge to compensate for things not going according to your plans. Sometimes it's best to do what you must, get it out of the way now. You'll get your turn to please yourself. Competitive ambitions and ego drives are on hold now.



**Scorpio:** Get involved in charity events or social action groups that interest you and you will make headway in many different areas of your life through the people you meet and the information you discover. You may be asked to take responsibility or even a leadership role

or to contribute and participate more fully than you have in the past. You will enjoy being part of a team or group effort now. Being part of a community or circle of friends and building your social network is important to you at this time. Benefits from past efforts come home to roost.



**Sagittarius:** Over the New Moon don't mix business with pleasure if you want to avoid trouble. Not everyone will be on your side over the next few weeks so you may want to choose your friends carefully and keep your personal thoughts and opinions to yourself. With

your career and reputation very important to you at this time, you can make significant gains regarding your ambitions. Recognition for your efforts and receiving credit for your accomplishments are likely now, but only if you've 'done your homework'. This is an excellent time to look for promotion or to engage the support of those in positions of authority.



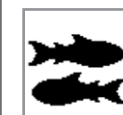
**Capricorn:** This is a time to lift yourself out of your usual mundane concerns in order to get a larger perspective on your life. Although it may all seem overwhelming for a while remember that as long as you keep plugging away you will make gains. You really

can get things up and running if you try. A chance to do things a little differently will make all the difference in the world. Don't slow down because someone can't keep up with you. You have to maintain the momentum. A teacher or mentor who appears on this New Moon may be particularly important to you later.



**Aquarius:** Don't push your luck now. Joint financial affairs and investments are likely to be an issue at this time, and it is a good time to clarify each person's expectations and to take care of any legal business, insurance, wills, and so on. On a personal level, there

is a desire to intensify the level of intimacy and honesty in your closest relationships and to clear away anything in yourself that is impeding that deeper union you seek. Any temptation to make abrupt decisions and changes could lead to additional problems that you can do without. Stick to what's clear and avoid taking on other people's responsibilities.



**Pisces:** Partnerships, marriage, and one-to-one relationships get your attention now. You'll be called upon to cooperate and perhaps to relinquish some of your own personal interests for the sake of harmony and mutual benefit. You may end up questioning yourself

as well as the motives of the people around you. Get to the bottom of things before it's too late. Once you have all the facts you will be in a much better position to make a decision. Don't let anyone pull you in a direction you don't want to go and do what's best for you but the emphasis is on 'we' rather than 'me'.

## ASTROLOGY

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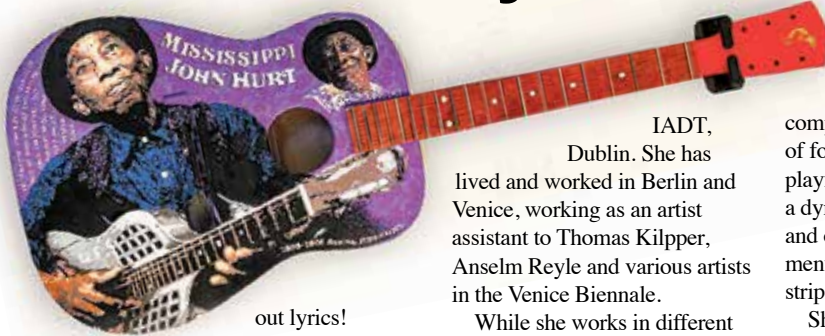
## 'Spectrum' at Gallery Asna

'Spectrum', a two-person exhibition of work by Jud Weidner and Claire O'Connor, will launch at Gallery Asna, Clonakilty Community Arts Centre on Saturday, September 9 at 5.30pm, running until Saturday, September 30.

Jud Weidner's working life began as a graphic designer in an advertising agency in Cork in 1980, the same year he married Marianne. In 1982 he started a design company, Acorn Graphics Ltd., specialising in brochure and packaging design; and was recognised with a National Enterprise Award in 1997. Jud moved to Bantry in 1989 with Marianne and the couple established three OSKA fashion stores between 2008 and 2021.

Diagnosed with Parkinson's in 2021, Jud retired from business and finally turned his part-time painting hobby into his 'job'.

The artist feels that the iconic guitar shape resonates with people. He always likes to include some text, hoping to add to the story being illustrated, while remaining sympathetic to the image. To Jud's eyes, a guitar looks a bit naked with-



out lyrics! Jud works exclusively in acrylic, preparing his initial images in Photoshop and Illustrator before transferring to a guitar which, old or new, has become his canvas. He sources his guitars mainly online; battered old acoustics, worn out electrics and the occasional discarded newbie.

"When I paint a musician associated with a particular guitar shape, for example Muddy Waters and his wine coloured Telecaster, I look at hundreds of photos of him, I listen to his songs, I try to understand his lyrics, try to create an image that is, for me, the essential Muddy Waters. Sometimes the work, as with Jimmy Page, is quite impressionistic or can turn out, as with BB King, more comic-book style. Each guitar takes as long as it takes... I'm not in any rush... and I am, unfortunately, a small bit physically challenged with Parkinson's so I make a good many mistakes; but mistakes are good, they often lead to something more interesting than the original concept."

Claire O'Connor is an Irish artist and designer with a BA in Visual Arts Practice and a BDES in Design Communications from

IADT, Dublin. She has lived and worked in Berlin and Venice, working as an artist assistant to Thomas Kilpper, Anselm Reyle and various artists in the Venice Biennale.

While she works in different mediums, Claire's passion is abstract painting and while studying Fine Art, she became very interested and influenced by three German painters, Albert Oehlen, Katarina Grosse and Charlene Von Heyl. She loves their use and sense of colour and the energy that they convey through their work.

Claire's work is intuitive in nature and she loves to

create visually dynamic paintings and visual compositions, which use a clash of form, colour and collage. Her playful Intuitive paintings use a dynamic interplay of organic and organised forms, complementary and contrasting colour, stripes and mark making.

She uses vivid colours, patterns, multiple layers and juxtaposed shapes, which create movement and a sense of positive energy creating vibrant visual labyrinths to explore. They are tactile and she layers and juxtaposes shapes, patterns, dripped and pulled paint to create movement and a sense of heightened positive energy. She has been working with resin recently and the addition of resin

to her work adds a vibrancy and a depth of intensity to the works, which helps to convey the heightened sense of energy that she is trying to communicate. Her aim is to create art and a brand that empowers us to be ourselves, uplifts and excites us and communicates the unseen.



## Over 200 free events across Cork County for Culture Night

From concert bands and orchestras, to forty foot dragon puppets and cabaret, this year's Culture Night in county Cork is set to have over 200 free events on Friday, September 22. Events will take place in arts organisations, community centres, pubs, libraries, museums and on the streets of County Cork's Culture Night hub towns Baile Mhúirne, Bandon, Bantry, Carrigaline, Charleville, Clonakilty, Cobh, Fermoy, Kinsale, Macroom, Mallow, Middleton, Mitchelstown, Passage West, Skibbereen, Watergrasshill, Youghal, as well as surrounding towns and villages and our islands.

The highlights this year include an outdoor screening of Dirty Dancing at Mallow Castle, a community street procession through Carrigaline, Leonard Cohen songs performed by a ten piece band in Mitchelstown. Cobh's Super-

natural Investigators will host late night ghost hunt in Cobh's Sirius Arts Centre while and a candlelit ghost tour will take place in Youghal. In Skibbereen you might hear some opera while getting your haircut as part of the Unexpected Culture trail featuring art in unusual places. There will welly throwing and hook a duck in Passage West for kids and grownups. Artists will deliver workshops in painting, forest floor study, repurposing china, quilting, and so much more.

The Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr Frank O'Flynn said, "Culture Night plays such an important role in our communities, connecting people with the incredible knowledge and talent of local cultural workers and with their own creativity and imagination. I greatly welcome the opportunity to join fellow Cork County residents in celebrating culture on our

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## Rosalin Blue launches album at An Sanctoir

Spoken word artist Rosalin Blue is releasing 'Like Day and Like Night', her first album of poetry set to music. Aimed at dancers and lovers of words, bilingual poet Rosalin, in collaboration with musician and producer Rik Appleby, has created 10 tracks of music around her poems; each piece is of a different musical genre, with soundscapes bringing the poems to life.

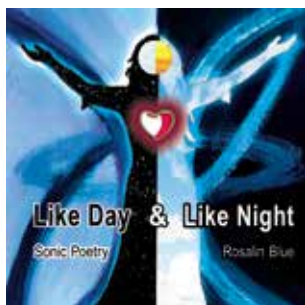
At the album launch, on Friday, September 22 at 8pm in An Sanctóir, Ballydehob, the duo will perform the album in its entirety. An event that will move listeners inside and out!

Currently, Rosalin is running a crowdfunding campaign to cover mastering and event costs. You can still help pre-finance the project by buying a

ticket for the launch, the album itself, or even prints of the illustrations from the album-booklet for bigger donations. Have a look for Rosalin Blue on GoFundMe.com.

Entry to the launch party is €10, the album is €15. This is a cash only event. GoFundMe Donors go free!

On the same date, the album will also be released for streaming.



### NEW TERM STARTS SEPT 18<sup>TH</sup>

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doorsteps together, safely. Let's make this Culture Night a One Night for All."

The programme is community led and coordinated by Cork County Council. It is an inclusive night with events for all. Culture Night is a national initiative by the Arts Council of

Ireland and is being delivered locally by Cork County Council. Further details on the programme can be found on [culturenight.ie](http://culturenight.ie) and [culturenightcorkcounty.ie](http://culturenightcorkcounty.ie).

For further information please contact [arts@corkcoco.ie](mailto:arts@corkcoco.ie)



## people Arts &amp; Entertainment

## Linen in West Cork

With one hundred per cent Irish grown linen about to be revived, **Sonia Caldwell** of Kilcoe Studios shares how linen and flax was once a very large business in West Cork.

Linen comes from the flax plant which grows very well in our climate. Like all textiles there is a considerable amount of processing

involved to get from the flax to the linen, involving words and techniques now somewhat lost from our language and way of life – like retting (rotting the flax to release the fibres from the stalks), scutching (loosening out the fibres), Tow fibres (coarser fibres), and showes, (brittle woody flax byproduct) used for fire lighting.

Clonakilty was a centre for the manufacture of linen and most people know the old linen hall to see as you drive past. In 1837 the linen industry, with its 400 looms, provided employ-

ment to 1,000 people and weekly sales in the region of £300. However, at its height the industry frequently brought in £1,000 per week (Lewis, 1837). Clonakilty's Linen Hall was erected by the Earl of Shannon to facilitate dealers in conducting their business. In the rest of Ireland, Ulster was the largest area in Ireland for linen production and, at one point nearly 50 per cent of the jobs in Ulster were related to this industry.

Rosscarbery and Skibbereen were also centres of linen production, and the latter was also known for its wool. Anne Plumptre observed on a visit to Skibbereen in 1815 that "The lands about produce a good deal of flax, and manufactories both of linen and woollen are carried on..."

The industry was supported by the then British government with subsidies given for the growing of flax. It all started to decline when cheaper flax was imported and the weaving and so on all continued with imported flax and then gradually cotton came in and prepared fibres and woven cloth.

Today 'Irish Linen' is still a brand that is sought after but there is only a small handful of linen weavers in Ireland.



To be called Irish linen, it only needs to be woven in Ireland. No flax is grown commercially in Ireland with the exception of Mallon linen who are growing a small amount mainly for heritage projects.

However a member of the family who run Mourne textiles is, in connection with Mallon linen in Northern Ireland, working to restore old processing equipment to once again use it in Ireland and they aim soon to have 100 per cent Irish grown linen again – Mallon linen say "Mallon land has seen flax before, it rose from the ground for different set of hands. It will still be welcomed by human

touch, picked and processed traditionally. Irish grown linen is not forgotten, it has just been silent in our fields."

Mallon Linen has also been successfully putting the retting water back into the fields for nutrients and hence avoiding the huge issue from the past of this water polluting rivers.

There was a brief revival of flax growing during the war and Drinagh Co-op (established in 1923) established a scutching mill in the 1940s and, as a co-op, operated the mill on a subsistence level, supporting the livelihoods of flax farmers during the war, supplying flax seed and scutching the flax for Clonakilty market.

Kathy Kirwan is an eco-artist living in West Cork and is growing a small amount of flax in CECAS in Leap. She is also doing research into the social history behind flax growing in West Cork and listening to people's stories. Kathy will bring her research to the final summer event at Kilcoe Studios the project of the 'Fibre of our Being'. Participants will learn more about the processing of linen and share stories and hear from those who remember and most importantly ask – can it be done again?

A 'Flax in West Cork Talk' with eco-artist Kathy Kirwan takes place on Sunday, September 10, from 2-5pm, afternoon tea included.

Please book by emailing [events@kilcoestudios.com](mailto:events@kilcoestudios.com) or calling 087 0667871. Contribution will be by donations on the day.

Sewing classes with Tamsin Blackburn will resume again this Autumn, teaching the important skills of dressmaking to make affordable clothes from quality sustainable Irish cloth. As well as making a finished item you will also gain skills to be able to carry on making at home.

Learn how to work with fabric, follow a pattern, use a sewing machine and lots more. Participants must be able to bring their own sewing machine which they will learn to use during the workshops.

'Making a shirt', suitable for all genders, takes place over five weeks on Wednesdays, from 6.30pm - 9pm. Starting Wednesday, September 20 At Kilcoe Studios in Ballydehob. Cost; €175. Book by emailing [events@kilcoestudios.com](mailto:events@kilcoestudios.com) or calling 087 0667871.

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## people Motoring

## Build Your Dreams – The biggest car brand you have never heard of



## CAR REVIEWS

Sean Creedon

"The biggest car brand you have never heard of." That's how Ciaran Allen, Sales Manager at Motor Distributors signed off his presentation at the launch of Chinese company BYD's first car to be sold in Ireland. BYD stands for 'Build Your Dreams' and their cars will be imported and distributed in

Ireland by MDL, who are also the Irish agents for Mercedes.

BYD's first model available here is the Atto 3. It came in a lovely shade of red and had the words 'build your dreams' written in the door of the boot, just under the rear window.

Basically BYD is a battery company that is now building cars, taking on rivals that frequently buy in batteries modules. Last year they overtook Tesla to become the largest manufacturer in the world of electric cars. Now it has the European market firmly in its sights.

At first glance it's a very neat and attractive motor. The front is very sleek and the rear is fairly normal except for with those famous three words inscribed. Inside the décor is really bright and refreshing with touches of grey and cream on the dash. The seats are much the same colour scheme and a touch of red stitching makes them even more attractive.

My test car had a sun-roof,

which would be an extra, and it really completed the bright look of the interior. Of course the sun has been shining recently, so it was a good time to slide over that sun-roof.

However, the item you will probably notice first when you sit in is the massive iPad on the dash. Well it's not really an iPad, but a 12.8-inch infotainment screen which works well. Inside all four doors you get three red strings to hold items secure. The strings reminded me of a guitar and I reckon if you had Christy Moore as a passenger he would be able to get a tune out of them.

Also on the dash are three unusual looking air conditioning vents. The best way I could describe them is that they are like a group of three mini cd players. There is also a A/C vent just behind the front seats for the back seat passengers, who are also well catered for with USB ports. That back seat has ample room for three well-built adults.



The boot is a decent size but as usual with electric cars, no spare wheel.

Overall a very enjoyable car to drive. My only slight criticism is that it was a bit slow to charge compared to other EV models I have driven. I don't

have a home charger, so maybe it would charge quicker at home. But on the road, it's a beauty.

Prices start at €37,128 and as usual the more goodies you want the higher the price. It's fitted with a 60kWh battery and the range is approx. 420km.

With MDL's support and expertise I expect that the BYD brand will become very well known in

the Irish car market.

BYD Ireland's sales network is already up and running, with its first showroom in the north side of Dublin on the Navan Road, followed by BYD South Dublin in Deansgrange and BYD Cork at Eastgate Business Park in Little Island. For more log on to: [www.bydauto.ie](http://www.bydauto.ie)

Also coming soon from BYD is a c-segment hatchback which will be called the Dolphin. It's due here this month (September).



## people Home &amp; Garden

## Autumn is a good time to start thinking about a greenhouse

Leading glasshouse supplier Peppermint Farm, based in West Cork, has been supplying freestanding greenhouses, lean-to's, conservatories and pavilions to customers nationwide and in the UK since 1999. 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 ideal for the challenging Irish weather conditions, with exceptional quality and service.

Lisa and Hendrik recently undertook an adventurous trip to the Shetland Islands in Scotland where they installed a 'Solar Porch Berlin' – a lean-to with curved sidewalls. This is already the second time Peppermint Farm installed this extraordinary lean-to on the islands and it

certainly deserves to be called the "most northerly Solar Porch Berlin world-wide"! In fact to highlight its extreme durability and quality, Lisa and Hendrik have now renamed it the 'Solar Porch Shetland'.

"Our Scottish customers have a dark, one-bedroom cottage that they use as their holiday home, located right beside the Uyea Sound Bay amid the wild North Sea," share Lisa and Hendrik. "They wanted to create a spacious and bright room that gives them the opportunity to enjoy their surrounding stunning nature by being outside, but still being protected from the difficult weather conditions on the island. They needed a product that could withstand the harsh easterly winds and rain, as the weather is very unpredictable there."

So what is so special about the Solar Porch Berlin? For a start, its 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. It offers excellent ventilation options so that overheating cannot take place and its users are still protected from wind and rain. This glass extension offers a bright addition to the rest of the house.

"Even in rain or stormy weather, people feel very comfortable and safe on the terrace thanks to the curved and stable aluminium construction as well as rubber sealing on the outside and inside. The aluminium frame construction is colour-coated and thus protected against the effects of the weather."

Large multiple sliding doors in one of the gables offer extensive free space to move around and give the impression of an open terrace roof.

With the Shetland climate comparable to Ireland, particularly when it comes to exposed coastal areas, this is an ideal product for the Irish market.

As the Autumn is a good time to start thinking about purchasing a greenhouse or garden



Hendrik, Lisa and their son installing a solar porch on the Shetland Islands.

room, with time needed to prepare the site and lead-times for Peppermint's products ranging from six to eight weeks, Lisa and Hendrik offer some advice to people in choosing the right product when looking at the many options available.

"Peppermint Farm can help with the decision-making process: we can call out to our customers and take a look at their site, give advice on sizes, staging, types of glazing, free-standing or lean-to, location, etc. The

first question that needs to be answered though is to determine how they would like to use their glasshouse – 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 wintertime 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!"

With Hendrik's expertise in landscaping and Lisa's background in event management and office administration, Peppermint Farm don't just provide glasshouse solutions for plants and people; if customers require help with their garden, the couple also integrate these glasshouses seamlessly into garden designs, offering turn-key solutions.

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## people Home &amp; Garden

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September is very much a month of harvest and equally preparation for Spring displays. Plan ahead too for autumn and early winter planting of trees, shrubs, shelter, hedging, fruit trees and bushes.

## Climate change and gardening

If you are already converted to the fulfilling pleasure of gardening, you will have noticed a change in weather patterns emerging.

## What to do?

Conserve water by saving it in water butts.

Conserve moisture on newly planted area by mulching with bark mulch or well-composted leaf mould, garden compost, farmyard or stable manure.

Ensure your choice of mulching material doesn't contain roots or seeds of problem weeds.

If you are in a windy area consider planting a good hedge or shelter belt. You need to consider hardiness, ultimate height and spread of your choice of plant. Choose varieties that don't have recurring disease problems. If planting a hedge or shelter belt near a neighbour, do liaise with them before you choose your shelter belt. Root spread is another factor – generally most choices will have a root spread pro rata with the height of the plant.

If you are in a coastal area choose a coastal tolerant hedge or shelter tree. Recommended choices include: Olearia, Fuchsia ricartonii, Whitethorn, Rosa rugosa.

A good shelter belt/hedge will slow the wind and allow you to grow a wider range of plants. It will define a boundary, absorb noise and provide privacy.

Drainage is another factor to consider when laying out a new garden. Constant water-logging, especially after prolonged rainfall, will result in fatality and can be a major contributor to root borne disease. Do get your drainage in order before you start planting.

Sunny, dry, well-drained banks are ideal for alpenes, thyme, rosemary and dwarf bulbs.

## Lawns

Mow less frequently and raise the height of the cut as the growth starts to slow into autumn. This will help the grass withstand the last of the warm, dry weather and also make it more resilient to being walked on as wet weather arrives.

Add grass clippings to the compost heap in thin layers. Too much all at once is likely to cause wet, poorly aerated conditions, resulting in smelly



## GARDENING

John Hosford  
The Weekend Garden Centre

slime rather than compost.

Apply an autumn lawn feed if your grass needs a boost-do this after scarifying and aerating but before applying a top dressing. Autumn feed is rich



in potassium and phosphorous to encourage hardiness and root growth. Don't feed with leftover summer feed, as this contains too much nitrogen, which would make the lawn more vulnerable to disease at this time of year. Start raking and spiking the lawn to get it into good shape for next year.

## New lawns

Prepare the ground for a new lawn by forking over, weeding, levelling and firming lightly. Allow the soil some time to settle so you have an even surface for sowing or laying turf. Sow a new lawn this month as the grass will have plenty of time to establish before the onset of winter.

*Essential before sowing a new Lawn:* Allow adequate access for a lawnmower and a digger if you ever have to do work in the vicinity.

Ensure all service pipes are deeply buried and marked indelibly and adequately. Cables should be buried at a safe depth.

## Roses

Start pruning climbing roses. Remove dead or diseased wood. Look for any new shoots especially those growing from the base of the plant for tying in. Remove very stems

## Perennials

Plant new perennials now as

the soil is moist and still warm enough to get the plants established before winter. Water well before and after planting.

Plant Delphiniums for their magnificent spires of blue and white majestic shades.

Hollyhocks are tall, elegant and inspiring and come in a wide variety of colours and can be single or double flowered.

Lupins are a great favourite for early summer colour – a great range of vibrant colours with the added bonus of a delightful fragrance.

Phlox provide late summer/early autumn colour. They like rich, deep moisture-retentive soil so appreciate a heavy mulch of organic material. They won't thrive where the competitive roots of large shrubs and trees are in the vicinity.

before flowering.

Get your Tulip bulbs now for planting in November/December. They come in a wide array of colours and heights. Choose dwarf varieties for containers and more exposed, windy areas. Some varieties also have the added bonus of attractive leaf variegations and markings. After purchase store in a cool, dry place, labelling carefully.

Choose the delightful dwarf Daffodils and Narcissi for early colour on banks, rockeries and containers. Choose a selection of varieties at different flowering times to ensure a succession of bloom and colour. The earliest variety is January Gold, which is often in flower before Christmas in West Cork. Other good varieties include Tete a Tete, Jack Snipe, February Gold.

Do include some of the delightful dwarf Spring bulbs in containers, rockeries or banks, such as dwarf Iris, Crocus, Tulips, Chinodoxa, Winter Aconites, Anemone blanda. If planting in containers, ensure there is adequate drainage. Probably more fatalities arise overwinter from bad drainage than cold, low temperatures.

## Continuing the colour

Most containers, window boxes, tubs and hanging baskets will be still in their full glory until late October. To ensure the continuity deadhead frequently and feed weekly with a liquid fertiliser. Watch out for slug and caterpillar infestations and deal with immediately if detected. Water frequently. Keep water off the flowers and foliage

## Vegetable garden

Sow a winter variety lettuce under the protection of a cloche, cold frame or greenhouse.

Plant garlic and autumn onion sets.

Plant out spring cabbage.

## Fruit garden

Harvest autumn raspberries and pick apples as they ripen. Watch for attack and damage by wasps or even a nimble fox!

Finish pruning of summer fruiting raspberries. Net ripening fruit against bird attacks and raids.

Finish planting new strawberries.

Plant container grown peaches and nectarines.

## Greenhouse

Water in the morning – this allows the greenhouse a chance to dry out before the evening – reducing the chances of diseases such as mildews and botrytis.

Ventilators should be closed at night, however do vent during the day on warm or sunny days.

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# NEW belgo vintage

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## Kinsale company offers a treasure trove of vintage furniture

A Belgian native living in Kinsale has just launched a business importing vintage furniture from France and Belgium for resale in Ireland. Set up by Christophe Gevaert, belgo vintage is an online shop specialising in pieces dating from the 1900s to 1970s that are distinctly 'French' in style: generous wooden dining tables, upholstered armchairs, linen cupboards and occasional tables.

Christophe Gevaert (pictured) moved to Kinsale 13 years ago with his Cork born wife and two children and warmed immediately to the sense of community he found in Kinsale. One thing he did miss about life in Belgium was browsing vintage furniture markets, or 'les brocantes' as they are called in his home country.

When he started to furnish his home in Kinsale, Christophe found it difficult to source the characterful, unique pieces he wanted. "I found it a little frustrating that the only options were mass-produced at the same, or higher prices," he shares.

Earlier this year – after 20 years working in a business development role in the translation industry – Christophe felt



ready for a change of direction in his career. Starting a business of his own

had always just been a dream but, with encouragement from friends and family, he decided to take the plunge and use his passion for working with wood and restoring furniture to start a company importing vintage furniture.

Christophe has found wonderful support within the Kinsale community: "I got great advice and guidance from Alan Clay-

ton, Adrian Wistreich and all the guest speakers they invited to talk to us as part of the Kinsale Start-up23 Enterprise Programme. Another huge source of support has been talking to established businesses in the same area – in particular, Clodagh of Granny's Bottom Drawer here in Kinsale and Michael of Salvagem in Cork city. They've been really generous with their time and advice."

While Christophe expected the logistics of transporting the furniture from his storage site

in Brussels to Kinsale to be challenging, Core Logistics in Innishannon has helped make the experience painless. "I'm actually finding the biggest challenge to be working by myself," shares Christophe. "Anyone who has ever met me knows that I love talking with people." Luckily, all of the pieces of furniture have a story to tell and the owners enjoy sharing the history behind each piece as much as the friendly furniture dealer enjoys hearing it.

To keep costs low at the outset, Christophe opted for an online shop. However he does have a vision of a bricks and mortar shop in the back of his mind. "Somewhere people can stumble upon and I can recreate



that feeling of browsing vintage markets for like-minded treasure hunters," he says.

Customers are delighted with the treasures they are finding as Oonagh M, from Cork, recently commented: "This is exactly the kind of table I've been searching for – the turned wood and brass coaster wheels are gorgeous. I found the whole process so easy and Christophe was great to deal with."

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# No reining in Reenascreena star of harness racing

Winning not one but two races in the Red John Memorial Festival in Lyre during August, Reenascreena man Jamie Hurley chats to **Matthew Hurley** as he moves up the ladder of West Cork harness racing.

The largest grass racing meeting in Ireland and the UK, the Red John is a massive event for those involved in the sport of harness racing and a great way to showcase the skill and horses involved. The event was set up in 2015 to pay tribute to the late 'Red' John O'Donovan from Leap, who was just 27-years-of-age when he passed away in January 2015.

It's a time of year loved by harness racing fanatics and players, including the Reenascreena man.

"Bill Donovan in America came up with money to sponsor the event, which is one that racers aim for every year; to get horses right for that weekend. It is the Cheltenham of harness racing," explains Hurley.

There were 20 races overall

across the Red John weekend with Jamie winning two of those, with horses 'Oakwood Maestro' (race one) and 'Foxfield Kendall' (race 11) charging him to victories.

"We didn't have a lot of horses in races compared to the last few years. We'd usually have seven or eight race horses that would be running every week. This year, we had a lot of fresh new horses so it was great to get two winners out of it," says Hurley.

"Oakwood Maestro' won at the Red John last year so he is after winning there twice. He did pick up an injury recently but he is a hardy horse. He'd turn up for you every day.

"It was only Foxfield Kendall's second start so she was new to the game. She doesn't know a whole lot about racing but she is very professional



about her job, winning easily. I had her brother at the Red John and he won two years in a row as well. The pressure is on her for next year."

The Reenascreena man's background revolves around horses. It's his hobby and his job; he works in a thoroughbred yard for the majority of a regular week.

He got into the sport after his father bought a horse a few years back "I just went racing. That was it when I was younger. I just got stuck into it from then on. When I was old enough, I started to get my own horses. It has gotten busier every year," he says.

While the two aforementioned horses have brought Hurley some major success in recent times, it's his first few horses that hold the memories.

One horse in particular stands out, mainly because it started a trend, winning races.

"We won an All Ireland final with 'Maitha Buchaill' a couple of years ago and he was probably my first big success. I was young. Winning with him dragged me into it which is why he was a standout."

A lot of people might wonder what the big difference between harness racing and regular horse racing is, for instance, Cheltenham or the Curragh?

According to Hurley, there is one clear distinction. "I think money is the big difference," he answers.

"We're not supported the same as them. If you went to the races, you'd see that harness racing is run very well and all the horses are looked

after. It is fairly hard for us to have less resources but I feel we're doing very well at what we're at. The money is getting better but it's just that we are trying to come up with it ourselves."

"Before Covid, a lot of people started to sponsor races and it was easier to get money in. It's very hard to get sponsorship since people stopped asking for it," he says.

Currently, there is planning permission to get an all-weather race track in Lyre.

The West Cork region hasn't had an all-weather track since Leap a few years back; a new one in Lyre could help the sport grow.

"For a training facility alone, it's massive because a lot of people in Cork have horses and it is hard to exercise

them," explains Hurley.

"There are bans on beaches meaning you have to have to be off them by a certain time. It is dangerous to practise in open spaces like that whereas on a track people are more inclined to get horses and you'll be guaranteed racing as well. We were guaranteed to have racing on the Saturday and Sunday (of the Red John Memorial), 10 races each day. We got heavy rain on the Friday though and the racing Saturday was cancelled so 20 races had to go on Sunday. If the all-weather track was there, you could have just raced away."

The Reenascreena community are behind Jamie and proud of their own sports star.

"You would see a lot of texts on Facebook wishing the best of luck or well done. I remember we were in England racing the weekend before the Red John. We had two-year-olds over there and one of them came second. My phone was hopping so much I couldn't text people back. It's massive that people follow it and you wouldn't think that they'd have an interest in the sport but it's becoming more popular now," he adds.

Hurley's plan for the remainder of the year is to head up to Annaghmore, Co. Armagh in Northern Ireland, the only place presently to have an all-weather track, to do some more racing training to end a memorable year.

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## Memorable victory for Dunmanway family's home-bred filly 'Gatsby's Girl' at Dublin Horse Show

The Walsh family from Dunmanway is celebrating an impressive triumph at the renowned Dublin Horse Show, as their exceptional bay filly, Gatsby's Girl, secured multiple titles, marking a remarkable journey for the West Cork-native filly.

Gatsby's Girl has made waves throughout the West Cork show circuit this year, demonstrating unparalleled consistency and grace in her performances. Her undeniable talent was on full display at the Dublin Horse Show, where she emerged victorious in the two-year-old filly class and secured the coveted Champion two-year-old crown.

The achievements of Gats-

by's Girl extend beyond these impressive titles. Her success story includes a recent triumph at the All Ireland two-year-old filly competition at Kildysart Show, which followed her equally remarkable win as the All Ireland yearling filly champion at Bridgetown last year. With these accomplishments, Gatsby's Girl has solidified her reputation as a rising star in the equestrian world.

Owned by John, Noelle, Brendan, and Claire Walsh, Gatsby's Girl is the embodiment of dedication, talent, and impeccable breeding. Her lineage includes her sire Darsi (TB) and dam Littlefield Lux (ISH), who is a descendant of Lux Z (HANN). These remarkable

bloodlines undoubtedly contribute to Gatsby's Girl's exceptional prowess in the arena.

Upon her victory, John Walsh, the proud owner, shared his elation and expressed gratitude for the unwavering support from the local community in West Cork and that of the Irish Shows Association, especially Dunmanway Agricultural Show, which the family are hugely involved in. He highlighted the tremendous effort and commitment that went into raising and training Gatsby's Girl, ensuring she reached the pinnacle of her potential.

The Walsh family's triumph at the Dublin Horse Show marks not only a personal achievement but also a testa-

ment to the excellence that can be achieved through dedicated breeding, training, and a deep

passion for the equestrian world.

For more information and to

witness the incredible journey of Gatsby's Girl, visit Dublin Horse Show facebook page.





# Clonakilty and Rosscarbery Warrior Taekwondo celebrate 25 years

In a celebration of dedication, perseverance, and community spirit, the Warrior Martial Arts Taekwondo clubs in Clonakilty and Rosscarbery are gearing up to proudly commemorate their 25th anniversary. Founded by local Taekwondo instructor Dan O'Mahony, these clubs have grown from humble beginnings to become the cornerstone of martial arts training in West Cork.

When local man, Dan O'Mahony, opened his first Taekwondo club in Rosscarbery in September 1998, and started coaching two weeks later in Clonakilty, he did not realise that he had set out on a journey that would inspire generations to come. From its modest inception, this venture has flourished into the embodiment of passion and perseverance. The success of these clubs went far beyond Dan's initial expectations, and within a couple of years, enquiries were coming in from neighbouring towns about the possibility of Dan opening more clubs. In time, collaborating with his wife Anne, son Barry, and Anne's niece Claire, (all Taekwondo Black Belts and instructors in their own right), Dan founded the Warrior Martial Arts Association. Today, this association boasts a network of clubs stretching from Ballydehob to Ballinhassig, and even more members have risen

through the ranks to join the coaching team.

What sets the Warrior Martial Arts clubs apart is their all-encompassing approach. These clubs stand as welcoming havens for individuals of every age group, embracing the diversity of participants from energetic four-year-olds to determined adults. This inclusive ethos nurtures a sense of community and mutual support, fostering an environment where all members can thrive. Over the past 25 years, the Warrior Martial Arts Association has evolved into a paragon of professionalism. Their calendar brims with engaging events that contribute to the development of their members. Inter-club tournaments spark healthy competition, while specialised courses in umpire training, instructor development, and First Aid training enrich the skill set of participants.

A pinnacle event in the association's annual agenda is the prestigious Black Belt promotion examination. Each year, a select few are put through a rigorous assessment, overseen by renowned Taekwondo Grandmaster, Clive Harrison. Grandmaster Harrison's participation, travelling from the UK especially for the event each year, underscores the respect and regard he holds for the Warrior Martial Arts Association.



As the anniversary celebrations approach, the Warrior Martial Arts Association stands as a living testament to the potential borne from dedication and determination.

The journey towards earning a Black Belt is a testament to dedication and hard work. Over five years of unwavering commitment in regular training, followed by an intensive year of advanced practice and a series of challenging preliminary exams, culminate in the highly anticipated Black Belt exam. This

year's examination was marked by a momentous achievement, with six members from various West Cork clubs attaining the esteemed 1st Degree Black Belt. Two exceptional members ascended even higher, achieving the rank of 2nd Degree Black Belt.

To commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Clonakilty and Rosscarbery Taekwondo

clubs, the Warrior Martial Arts Association will host a special tournament in the upcoming season for members of all Warrior Martial Arts clubs. As the anniversary celebrations approach, the Warrior Martial Arts Association stands as a living testament to the potential borne from dedication and determination. After two and a half decades of instilling in its

members the traditional Tenets of Taekwondo: Courtesy, Integrity, Perseverance, Self Control and Indomitable Spirit, its impact reverberates beyond the training halls, resonating across the West Cork region.

For more information about the Warrior Martial Arts clubs, visit [www.warrior.ie](http://www.warrior.ie)

## OUT & ABOUT IN WEST CORK



Kinsale Community School have procured picnic tables to help raise funds for Down Syndrome Cork. The tables were made by Adrian Normanton who has completed 9 Tour De Munsters to raise funds for charity. Pictured are Fergal McCarthy, Principal Kinsale Community College; Adrian Normanton; Deirdre Fitzgibbon and Emily Manning from Down Syndrome Cork and 1st Year pupil Grace Jackson. Picture: John Allen

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PRAYERS

**Call to/post to our offices – Old Town Hall, McCurtain Hill, Clonakilty with details of your prayer. Prayers: €10 each. Cash or Postal Order. No bank cheques please due to charges.**

**MIRACULOUS PRAYER**  
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. E.T.

**THANKSGIVING PRAYER**  
O, most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, Fruitful Vine, Splendor of Heaven. Blessed Mother of the Son of God, assist me in this my necessity. O, Star of the Sea, help me and show me herein you are my mother. O, Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to secure me in my necessity (make request). There are none that can withstand your power. O, Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee (say 3 times). Holy Mary, I place this cause in your hands (say 3 times). Thank you for your mercy towards me and mine. Amen. This prayer must be saidfor three days after which the favour will be granted and the prayer must be published. E.T.

**UNFAILING PRAYER TO ST ANTHONY**  
O’Holy St Anthony, greatest of saints, your love for God and charity for his creatures, made you worthy, when on Earth. To process miraculous powers . Encouraged by this thought I implore you to obtain for me ( request ).. O gentle and loving St Anthony, whose heart was ever full of human sympathy whisper my petition into the ears of the sweet infant Jesus, who loved to be folded in your arms, and the gratitude of my heart will ever be yours. Amen. E.T.

**MIRACULOUS PRAYER**  
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**A PRAYER FOR SUCCESS IN EXAMS**  
O Great St Joseph of Cupertino, who by your prayers, obtained from God that you should be asked at your exam the only proposition you knew, obtain from me that I may succeed in the exams for which I am

preparing. O Sacred Heart of Jesus I place all my trust in you. Amen P.D

**THANKSGIVING PRAYER**  
O, most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, Fruitful Vine, Splendor of Heaven. Blessed Mother of the Son of God, assist me in this my necessity. O, Star of the Sea, help me and show me herein you are my mother. O, Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to secure me in my necessity (make request). There are none that can withstand your power. O, Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee (say 3 times). Holy Mary, I place this cause in your hands (say 3 times). Thank you for your mercy towards me and mine. Amen. This prayer must be saidfor three days after which the favour will be granted and the prayer must be published. T.O’S & L.O’S

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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. K.O’C.

**MIRACULOUS PRAYER**  
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Sanctuary are looking for pony  
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as this will be a bad year for us  
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**SUNDAY SEPT 17<sup>TH</sup>**  
Bring your own table.  
Longest running Boot Sale in  
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Two school going so school pick  
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mattress, immaculate, €200, 028  
28292  
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Drimoleague on Saturday 23rd  
September from 11am to 5 pm.  
Huge selection of fashions.  
Furniture, beds, children's  
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If you require assistance  
to neuter your cats please  
see Rural Animal Welfare  
Resources (RAWR)  
Facebook Page. RAWR  
don't accept kittens/cats but  
will advertise them for you.  
If you have a dog that  
you can no longer care  
for please contact your  
local animal rescue  
centre so that they can be  
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**AL-ANON** provide support for  
families of alcoholics.  
Meetings in the West Cork area are:  
**Monday: Dunmanway** 8.30pm  
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**Thursday: Skibbereen** 8.30pm  
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**Friday: Bandon** 6.30pm Town Hall  
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(161). Diesel. Manual 122000  
Kms. Serviced by Ford dealer, 2  
owners. NCT Jan 2023. Phone  
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from Caseys Furniture for sale.  
€180. Call 086 1662886

**NATHAN CARTER** 2 tickets for  
sale at Cappaquinn Community  
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original price €50 for the two  
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5 FOOT KING SIZE Divan bed from Caseys Furniture with a brand new Odearest

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- 151 Toyota RAV 4 D4D Luna/Sol, only 75k miles, new tyres, fully serviced, NCT 09/25, Black, 1 owner €15,950
- 151 Toyota Auris 1.4 D4D Barcelona Red, 141k miles, NCT 05/25, Sol model, top spec €11,500
- 141 Toyota Auris 1.4 D4D Aura, light grey, 150k miles, NCT 05/24, alloys, fogs, A.C. genuine car €9,250
- 132 Toyota Corolla 1.3 petrol Luna (all extras) ash grey, NCT 01/24, clean, only 75k miles, well spec'd car, low mileage, full service history €11,500
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TOP QUALITY GOLD colour room carpet 14ft x 14ft excellent condition plus stairs carpet with underlay. Beat offer. Bandon Area. Tel 086 8246393

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HONDA MOTORBIKE, for sale after Sept 20th. 40,000km, including panniers, Givi back

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