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*Journey Breen and Vita Luna from Kinsale pictured at the Kinsale Halloween Lantern Parade
Picture. John Allen*

€2.6 million contract signed for initial phase of Cork to Kinsale Greenway

Cork County Council has announced a significant milestone in the development of the Cork to Kinsale Greenway with the signing of a €2.6 million contract for Phase One. Funded by Transport Infrastructure Ireland, the €2.6million contract offers a significant opportunity to develop a safe, scenic, off-road route that will connect communities between Cork and Kinsale with a convenient and enjoyable means of travel. It will also support broader West Cork greenway plans and will connect with developments such as the Cork City to Viaduct Greenway. Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Frank O'Flynn welcomed the commencement of the first stage of

the project, "The Cork to Kinsale Greenway further demonstrates our dedication to fostering sustainable transport solutions and enhancing the quality of life for our residents and visitors. On completion, the Greenway will provide a safe and easily accessible corridor for cyclists and pedestrians, while preserving the natural beauty and cultural heritage of the region." Arup have been appointed as technical advisors to oversee the initial design phases of the project from Phase One Concept and Feasibility to Phase Four Statutory Process. The preliminary phase of the project will go through various stages such as feasibility, route

option selection, public consultation and ultimately the statutory process before progressing to construction. Chief Executive of Cork County Council, Valerie O'Sullivan, added "In line with the Government's National Development Plan 2021-2030, Cork County Council is committed to developing our greenway infrastructure. This greenway forms part of a wider connectivity plan that will play a significant role in reducing car dependency and promoting a more sustainable, healthy livelihood for our residents. It will also bring substantial economic benefits to the region by boosting tourism, creating jobs, and promoting local businesses along the route."



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Song crosses all borders

Travellers have been part of Irish life for centuries, long before the Great Famine, although it's only in recent years that they have been formally recognised as a distinct ethnic group within the Irish state. Traditionally nomadic, working and trading and camping in barrel top wagons alongside the road, an important part of Traveller heritage would have always been the carrying of songs and stories from town to town. In fact Travellers were central to the development of traditional Irish music with their distinctive styles of singing and instrument playing. While our society has made it difficult for Travellers to maintain many of their nomadic traditions, a fierce pride remains in the Irish Traveller community around their identity and heritage, which as well as placing huge emphasis on values and traditions like extended family and horse ownership, also includes singing and storytelling. For one young Traveller girl from Macroom, Rosie McCarthy, (15), combining her Traveller heritage and love of singing, has created a really special talent says **Mary O'Brien**.

Singing in the old sean-nós style, a rarity in itself, especially in one so young, commands attention, but the soulful quality of Rosie McCarthy's voice, so emotive and powerful, can't help but still a room.

The young singer and actor from West Cork is already gaining recognition and respect in folk circles nationally, re-

cently performing in the Triskel Arts Centre Cork, the Misleor festival in Galway and the Dri-moleague Singing Festival.

Rosie has featured as an extra in Carmel Winters' film 'Float Like a Butterfly' and an episode of 'Young Offenders' and on the set of the Graham Norton series 'Holding'. She was also part of the award-winning film 'Wheel of Dreams' alongside filmmaker

Toma McCullim and a group of Traveller girls from West Cork.

Irish folk musician Clare Sands first heard Rosie singing in the early hours of a morning on Long Strand beach between Clonakilty and Rosscarbery after a video shoot for her song 'Awe na Mná' (Praise the Women). She says she is "excited to follow Rosie's wonderful journey that lies ahead."



Aspiring singer Rosie McCarthy at home in Macroom.



L-R: Ray O'Neill, Niamh Moloney, Olivia Hanafin, Con O'Neill



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"Her voice struck me to my core," shares Clare "and I was transcended to a place where only the deepest soulful music exists." Clare has since spent some time mentoring the young singer, recording two songs with her, 'A Tinker's Lullaby' and 'Siúil a Rún', and she recently invited Rosie to join her up on stage at Connolly's of Leap, where the Macroom singer's stirring delivery of the love song 'Siúil A Rún' moved the audience to tears.

"Clare told me not to be afraid or nervous. She said 'we need more singers like you'," shares Rosie shyly.

Another musician who has taken Rosie under his wing is well-known and respected traditional Irish singer Thomas McCarthy. Thomas and Rosie performed together at the Dri-moleague Singing Festival in September. An engaging storyteller and musician, Thomas is passionate about preserving the Traveller culture and heritage and is passing on songs to Rosie from his 1200-strong collection. He's currently working on 'Sweet Iniscarra' with her, or as some will know it by the title 'Exiles Return'.

"It's really refreshing to see a young person with such a keen



Traditional Irish singer Thomas McCarthy.

interest in the old songs," says Thomas "and I find it amazing that she sings in Irish as well as English.

"The way that Rosie delivers a song, with all her heart, is lovely to hear. It comes so naturally to her."

"It's part of life for us, passed on and down by people around us," shares Rosie's mum Heather.

Rosie grew up singing around a campfire with her extended family. She has also been taking part in her local scoraíocht since she was very young. "I think I was six or seven when I first

took the microphone in hand," she shares.

While she's a big fan of American Country, Rosie says when she sings herself "the traditional Irish style is just what comes out!"

Now with almost 30 songs in her repertoire, it's the words of 'A Tinker's Lullaby' by Pecker Dunne that holds a special place in Rosie's heart, as it's a poignant reminder of the struggles of her ancestors: '...Ever since you were a baby / Cradle in your mother's shawl / The site they said they didn't want you / And now you have no home at all...'

"It makes me very sad to think of my grandparents being moved on from place to place," says Rosie. "But I love telling the stories and the feeling I get from singing them."

Spirituality and horses are also important to her. Every Sunday Rosie visits her local well with family to remember those who have passed on and start the week feeling cleansed by the life-giving water, so important in the history of Travellers who depended on water springs up and down the country for their survival when on the road.

Rosie's dad, Martin, buys and sells and trains horses for the jaunting cars in Killarney and Rosie loves helping out with the animals, getting them ready for the fairs.

She doesn't own a phone and isn't on Snapchat so she has time. "I'm not bothered," she says smiling.

It doesn't appear to hold her back. She's just home from a trip to Achill Island with her school and is looking forward to going to Barcelona in the Spring. She hopes to travel more in the future.

"She is always so happy, she loves life and is a real people magnet," shares mum Heather. Both Martin and Heather are very supportive of their daughter's singing ambitions.

"Rosie's parents are giving her the chance to go out in the world and carve something for herself, which is brilliant," says Thomas. "It's so important she keeps at it."

Thomas has been working with the Irish Traditional Music Archive for the past year, collecting and recording people singing the traditional songs of Ireland.

He finds it sad that so many people sing these songs without knowing their origins. "It's important for future generations to know where our songs came from," he says "I'm recording the families who created these songs, singing them, and speaking about their background."

While some older Travellers may not be able to read or write, they are reputed for their extraordinary memories. "Most people who live in houses might know the name of their great grandfather. You'll find traveller families who can't read or write but can go back generations," says Thomas.

"The Travelling community held on to the songs and carried them on when the people in



Rosie McCarthy performing at The Triskel Art Centre.
Pic Clare Keogh

houses forgot them.

"A lot of people sing songs, even the academics, and they make assumptions about the history of these songs. Much of the time they'd be incorrect," he says. "The entire country sings 'Patsy McCann', a song that was recorded in the sixties by a very famous sean nós singer, but little do most people know that it's actually a travelling song."

"It's also a Cork song," he emphasises "not a Galway song." It's a song about distant cousins of mine and their great-great grandmother."

These were "secret" songs in the Travelling community, sang only at family occasions, "but some got out," shares Thomas.

Like the song that's known as Sean McNamara by John Riley, about a settled man who goes looking for a wife at a Traveller camp. According to Thomas it's really about a man called Paddy McNerney. "He changed the name so he wouldn't get in trouble with the family!"

Originally from Birr in Co Offaly, Thomas' family moved

to London when he was ten. He learnt most of his songs from his mother, Mary McCarthy. "She was a fine singer and sang every day, in every room of the house," shares Thomas. In the summertime, Thomas' grandfather Johnny McCarthy, a well-known seanchaí, would take them off in the wagon to Co Clare and Galway to visit people who played music and sang the old songs. "This tradition is called 'cur darekin'," says Thomas "and my grandfather was always welcome and loved anywhere he went, for people who knew him as a kind and decent man."

Thomas' music career started at the folk song club at Cecil Sharp House in Camden Town, London, where his powerful Irish Traveller style of singing and collection of rare songs captivated his audience. He has since been singing in clubs and at festivals throughout the UK and Ireland, as well as in Europe and the US. Now living between Dublin and London, he is a passionate activist on behalf of the Irish Traveller community.

"Once you learn about other people it doesn't make them so strange," he says sagely.

Thomas is currently working on a project involving songs from the famine period; and on a documentary about Travelling singers, which Rosie is also involved in. He is currently organising a concert involving travelling women, where Rosie will join the Keenan sisters from Co Clare and Trisha Reilly from Athlone, at the Triskel Arts Centre in Cork in December.

Thomas and Rosie's next appearance together will be in Belltable, Limerick on November 4 (tickets available from limetretheatre.ie).

During the 'Wheel of Dreams' documentary Rosie had the opportunity to meet Senator Eileen Flynn and her words struck a chord with the young Traveller girl.

"If you can see it, you can be it," is what she said to us."








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Building doors through life's challenges

Bere islander Gerald Orpen, 86, spent his working life at sea until the recession hit Ireland in the 1980s and he packed his bag and headed to New York to find work on a construction site. While the island was a wonderful place to raise a family, it wasn't an easy place to earn a living, and the father of seven, married to Mary, tells **Mary O'Brien** he only wishes he'd travelled stateside sooner.

One of 16 children, including triplets, Gerald Orpen was born on Bere Island. He is one of three siblings surviving today: His brother (88) lives across the bay in Castletownbere and his sister (90) is in a Carmelite monastery in London.

"There was a step," as Gerald puts it, in the Orpen family. His father, John, a British army man, married twice; meeting Gerald's mother, Hannah, from Hungry Hill, after his first wife died in childbirth.

"He was an army man more than anything else," shares Gerald "and not much of a farmer.

Growing up we were lucky to have a spoon to share between three of us."

Gerald can recall getting up very early before school to go out picking periwinkles, which were sold to local buyers for export, and to set rabbit traps. There was no running water or toilet in the house so the children would each take turns bringing a bucket of water in from the well. The home had four cows for milking and the family grew their own vegetables. Every morning one of the children would milk a cow while another would put a pot of potatoes on to boil for

breakfast, which would then be mashed with the milk.

He recalls how they used to drag the shopping up to the house in a fish box. "You'd attach a rope to the box and around your waist and pull it on the rough road up to the house."

For fun they kicked around a ball made out of a stocking packed with straw. "You'd see Spanish fishermen in Castletown doing the same," says Gerald. A treat was a big packet of broken biscuits bought for a schilling from Mrs McCarthy in Castletownbere.

Gerald was 14 when he started fishing with his brother



in Castletownbere. While there were plenty of fish in the sea at the time, there was very little money to be made in the industry. "We had no ice to pack the fish in, so oftentimes they'd go off before you had a chance to sell them," he shares. He spent eight months fishing, day and night, before saving up enough to travel to Dublin. Here he met a Captain Knight on the North Wall in Dublin Port, who got him a job as a Deckhand Uncertified (DHU) on a cattle boat, supplying the growing live trade to Britain from the Dublin Cattle Market. Each week thousands of cattle were driven on foot by drovers through the city and on to boats in the North Wall before being shipped over to Birkenhead in Liverpool. "It was terrible hard work," says Gerald, who recalls how the drovers, mostly ex-army men at the time, wouldn't travel at all with them if the weather was bad. "You'd have six big bullocks in each pen and if one of them went down the others would stand on top of him," he shares. "The butchers waiting on the pier in Liverpool would get the fallen ones for little or nothing."

After cutting his teeth on the cattle boats, Gerald was sent off to Dún Laoghaire by Captain Knight to get his lifeboat ticket (certificate of proficiency).

It was also around this time that he met a lovely lass from

"I brought her down to Glengarriff and over to Garnish island in a small punt with paddles and I said that's the way 'twill be now on Bere island...Don't jump out!"

Kilkenny. Mary, 20, had been taken out of school by her mother when she was 14 and sent up to Dublin to work, looking after the children of a family who were running a bed and breakfast. Mary loved music and she loved to dance and spent her time off at weekends following the showbands, which is how she met Gerald. "They were great times," says Mary, who recalls arranging to meet her parents under Nelson Pillar's or Cleary's Clock when they came up to Dublin for the GAA matches.

"There wasn't much courting that time, only ask her straight out," shares Gerald. "Yes no flowers or dinner," laughs Mary.

Mary had never been on a boat or an island before meeting her sweetheart! "I brought her down to Glengarriff and over to Garnish island in a small punt with paddles and I said that's the way 'twill be now on Bere island," says Gerald. "Don't jump out!"

After a small wedding in Kilkenny and a honeymoon split between Dublin and Glengarriff, Gerald brought Mary back to Bere Island to meet his parents.

Her clearest memory is of seeing donkeys everywhere when they landed on the shore. "There must have been at least 20 of them."

"Luckily I'm not the type to get excited," she says drolly.

Strong and useful, these beasts of burden were used on the island for everything from ploughing to carrying things like turf, seaweed and groceries.

Captain Knight had advised Gerald to find work on a deepwater ship for 12 months or so in order to get his AB (Able Seaman) certification, so while Mary remained at home on Bere island to look after his parents, John and Hannah, next stop Liverpool for her seafaring husband, where he signed on to a Cunard Line, 40,000 ton, ship, which carried motor car parts to Australia and on its return brought back cargo like mutton, beef, peas and wool to London. "Each trip took eight or nine months to make the 16,000 mile crossing," he shares. "I loved it as the food was plentiful. We used to get a grapefruit every morning before breakfast."

Back on Bere island, Mary was kept busy keeping the house and the small farm going. "It was lonely at first but once



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A younger Gerald and Mary Orpen with their children on Bere Island.

the children started coming along, I settled in and the island became home," she shares, "and Gerald's parents were always very good to me.

"I'm still here after 63 years," she smiles.

After a couple of years on the Cunard, Gerald got a job with the Commissioners of Irish Lights, where he remained for the next ten years.

While it was dangerous work for the 26 pounds a week earnings, it was regular. "We were travelling to lighthouses up and down the coast with building materials," says Gerald. "Only for our coxswain, Patsy Sullivan-Seer from Bere island, we'd have been lost several times over up against the cliffs." The four men inside the boat would often be a mix of white and grey from head to foot when the bags of lime and cement hoisted on the sling burst over their heads.

With his contract with the Irish Lights at an end, when the recession hit in the eighties, Gerald, now in his forties, decided to follow his three older children over to the States to search for employment. "I had a family and needed to put food on the table so I didn't see any other choice," he says. He found a basement apartment in Queens and a job on a construction site, spending the next 17 years travelling back and forth between the US and Ireland.

"I was working seven days a week and would get home for a few weeks around Thanksgiving," he shares. One year he put a new roof on the house while he was back on the island.

He always tried to get some fishing in while home. On one occasion he caught a load of mackerel, gutting, cleaning and vacuum-packing the fish and taking it back over to New York in his hand luggage to divide out between neighbours and friends. "It was just starting to

smell as we arrived into Kennedy airport," he laughs.

When Gerald and Mary's daughter who lived in New York gave birth to quads, Mary travelled over to join her husband and help out, staying for 11 months. She has been over and back many times since and still loves to travel, with a particular fondness for Paris, where she spent some time wandering the narrow cobbled streets when visiting another daughter. A passionate soccer and GAA fan – "You don't grow up in Kilkenny without learning how to hold a hurley," – she's a staunch Chelsea supporter since her first trip to London.

While it took a heart attack to eventually slow Gerald

working, he's still very active today. You'll pass him busy scything grass and he grew his own veg up until last year, only stopping because it was too much produce for just himself and Mary.

The couple are close to their seven children and 13 grandchildren, who they are very proud of; they all visit them regularly on the island.

Opera or country, or whatever genre happens to be on the radio, can usually be heard in the kitchen, as Mary gets the dinner on...she still loves music.

"We enjoy taking things easy now," she shares. "We have our health and we don't want for anything. Hopefully we'll get another bit out of life!"



Mary Orpen's clearest memory of first landing on Bere Island is seeing donkeys everywhere.

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An eye for an eye leaves us all blind



On October 7, Hamas launched an attack on Israel that killed at least 1,400 people, injured some 3,300 and took more than 200 hostages. Amnesty has called on Hamas and other armed groups to release all the hostages and stop firing indiscriminate rockets. There can be no justification for the deliberate killing of civilians under any circumstances.

The Israeli response has been the continued bombardment of the Gaza strip, killing over 4,000 people, mostly civilians, and approximately 12,500 have been injured with over 1000 bodies still trapped beneath the rubble. (by the time this is printed the numbers of dead, missing and injured will have risen). That there can be no justification for the deliberate killing of

civilians applies to Israel also.

Many people, whilst condemning absolutely the horror that Hamas inflicted on Israelis, also condemn the bombing of thousands of innocents in Gaza and the attacks that are taking place on Palestinians in the West Bank, and the illegal (in international law) settlements by Israel that have forced many Palestinians from their land.

Of course there were demonstrations, calling for the end to the bombardment and supporting the rights of Palestinians. But, as Esther Major, Amnesty's Deputy Director for Research in Europe said "The devastating consequences of Israel's bombing and illegal blockade of Gaza are understandably compelling many people in Europe to protest for the rights of Palestinians... Yet in many countries the authorities are unlawfully restricting the right to protest. Measures range from those targeting certain chants,

Palestinian flags and signs, to subjecting protesters to police brutality and arrest. In some cases protests have been banned altogether."

Germany banned the vast majority of protests, France wanted to impose a blanket ban on all demonstrations in support of Palestinians but was told by its courts it could not, and in the UK there were concerns that letters sent by Government ministers were attempting to influence police chiefs, or would be used by schools and college leaders as pretexts to unduly restrict freedom of expression or association. Amnesty has called on all politicians to be responsible in their use of language and avoid using divisive rhetoric.

The right to peacefully protest is a basic right. To punish a whole people for the actions of a few has surely to be wrong.

And an eye for an eye leaves us all blind.



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Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the November issue of West Cork People,

With the latest missile strike on a refugee camp in Gaza, the horror just keeps unfolding, as more atrocities are dealt on innocent, vulnerable Palestinian civilians. Watching helplessly, we wonder what will it take for the carnage to stop, for humanity to prevail in Gaza?

Inside this issue, Kieran looks at how free speech and political expression has been shackled over this conflict, with debate, discourse and disagreement shockingly shut down in countries that are very close to home, like the UK and Germany.

Our own MEP Grace O'Sullivan calls for a total shift in the EU's approach to the violence in Gaza and for West Cork to do what it can to reach out to Palestine in its time of need.

With wars raging across the globe, it's difficult to draw our attention back to climate change, but we have seen the effects of it recently close to home, with the severe flooding that heavier rain has dealt to towns like Middleton. One year after the inaugural Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss, Irish children, like our own Fiach O'Donoghue, (11) from Courtmacsherry, are doing what they can to make a difference. Fiach is one of a group of young people, whose call for action on biodiversity loss has been heeded by the government.

For individuals like West Cork's Bridget Sheeran it was becoming a grandmother that spurred her into action in the interests of the next generation. Twice a week, Bridget goes to various towns or cities where she plays the fiddle and puts up her boards calling for climate action. She chats to Moze Jacobs about taking her message to the streets.

Cork County Council is currently seeking public engagement on the draft of its new five-year Climate Action Plan, which details how Cork County Council will work with its communities to advocate for change, as well as with national government and state agencies to deliver climate action. The draft Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 is open for public consultation until Monday, November 27, 2023.

Small villages too are playing their part, with Ballydehob community collaborating to develop the 'Ballydehob Biodiversity Action Plan'. A Community Information and Consultation event for the Plan will take place on Saturday November 11, from 2pm in Ballydehob Community Hall.

In the second part of his article on energy efficient home heating, this month Xavier Dubuisson shares news that a new low interest loan will be made available early next year by the government, making investing in deep energy retrofits more accessible for more homeowners.

Entertainment columnist Lauren Guillery chats with Brian Dillon AKA 'The Line' about his new album 'Red Blood Cells and Righteousness' and I enjoy meeting with aspiring young singer Rosie McCarthy and respected traditional Irish singer Thomas McCarthy, who share their interest in Traveller heritage and keeping it alive through song.

Thanks to everyone who took the time to nominate their favourite West Cork business in our birthday competition last month. It was great to see so many deserving businesses getting recognition and all the lovely comments. Well done to everyone but there could only be one winner. Congratulations to Vivienne and Una of Vogue Hair and Beauty in Clonakilty, who have won a year of free advertising with us in 2024. Thanks to Finbarr O'Shea of Bantry Credit Union for taking the pressure off us and picking the winner (random selection). Congratulations also to Yvonne Duggan who won the €200 voucher to spend in West Cork.

Halloween is just behind us but we already have our Christmas hats on here! The next issue is our last before Christmas, so give us a call early in the month if you want to get something in.

I hope you enjoy the read,

Mary

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 of westcorkpeople



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Aifreann Gaeilge at Castletown Kenneigh, 10am

Followed by wreath laying ceremony

Soláistí & tráthnóna cheoil at 3.30pm

Tá fáilte roimh chách

The annual Kilmichael ambush commemoration will be held on Sunday November 26, 1.30pm, at the monument. The decisive Kilmichael engagement between the West Cork IRA flying column and British forces happened on the twenty-eighth day of November 1920. The victory of the flying column at Kilmichael was a turning point in the war for independence and was a forerunner to other notable

victories by the IRA column at Crossbarry and Roscarbery which eventually led to negotiations between Sinn Féin and the British in the Summer of 1921.

The guest speaker this year is Éamon Ó Cuív Fianna Fáil TD. 'Is é an aoi-chainteoir I mbliana ná Éamon Ó Cuív TD. Is garmhac do Éamon de Valera eisean agus tá sé ina Theachta Dála do Gaillimh Thiar ó 1992 agus bhí sé ina aire rialtais roinnt uaireanta freisin ó shin.

Tá cur chun cinn na Gaeilge agus an Ghaeltacht ar cheann des na rudaí is tábhachtaí dó. Unlike many in Leinster house he has played a constructive and positive role in articulating the republican nationalist narrative in attempting to resolve the northern conflict over the years.

At Castletown Kenneigh earlier on the same day, there will be an 'Aifreann Gaeilge' at 10am and this will be followed by a ceremony at the adjacent

graveyard where the three volunteers Mícheál MacCharthaigh, Séamas Ó Súilleabháin and Pádraig Ó Déisigh, who fell at Kilmichael are laid to rest, agus Diarmuid Ó Mathúna 'freisin a fuair bás cúpla mhí ina dhiaidh Luíocháin Chilmhichl'.

Following the main commemoration there will be a function or 'tráthnóna cheoil' at 3.30pm. 'Beidh fáilte roimh chách'.

Delay in social welfare increase for disabled and carers sparks outcry

The recent budget announcement for 2024 brought little relief for Disabled individuals and Carers, with a meager increase in social welfare. However, the frustration intensifies as this slight reprieve is set to take effect only in January, while tax changes came into force immediately after the budget. Disabled individuals and carers are left grappling with the immediate impact of increased taxes and the increased cost of living without the corresponding relief in income.

The delay in implementing

the social welfare increase has stirred outcry by some among the Disabled community, emphasising the urgent need for financial support. Many Disabled individuals are already living on the edge, barely surviving with existing resources.

Evie Nevin, a dedicated advocate for vulnerable communities, expressed concern over the delayed implementation, stating, "The delay in providing much-needed financial relief to Disabled individuals and Carers is disheartening. They cannot afford to wait, especially consid-

ering the immediate impact of increased taxes and the rising cost of living. It's a critical issue that demands swift attention."

The situation is exacerbated by the fact that Disabled people are facing additional financial challenges, with a €400 one-time payment due at the end of November.

"While this payment may provide a brief respite, it is a temporary fix that leaves individuals back at square one after covering essential bills".

Nevin highlighted the pressing need for more substantial and

immediate support, saying, "A one-time payment in November may offer temporary relief, but Disabled individuals require ongoing financial support to sustain their livelihoods. We must address this issue promptly to ensure that vulnerable members of our community do not face unnecessary hardship."

As the year-end approaches, Evie, and many Disabled individuals like her, call for urgent reconsideration and acceleration of the implementation of the social welfare increase, providing much-needed stability and support.

Clon Access Group welcomes Asna St. works

The Clonakilty Access Group has welcomed the announcement that Asna Street footpaths in Clonakilty are to be revamped.

For years, this has been a 'no go' area for anyone with any mobility issues and totally impractical for wheelchair users due to the narrow footpaths and unsuitable surfaces. The group hopes that the new footpaths will comply with best practice and universal design in terms of

width and gradient with proper and safe ramped areas for crossing and with practical and safe surfaces for walkers.

And now that plants are dormant, they also issued a public appeal to householders who have hedges overgrowing onto footpaths, to cut them back to ensure public safety and comfort for pedestrians but also the disabled and visually impaired who pass by.

Evie Nevin

Local Area Representative
Clonakilty-Skibbereen-Dunmanway

"Your voice, your advocate, your West Cork."

I'm thrilled to introduce myself as your dedicated Local Area Representative for the Skibbereen Local Electoral Area; to be your voice, advocate for your concerns, and work tirelessly to make our community an even better place to live.

What I Bring to the Table:

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- ✓ Commitment to addressing local issues
- ✓ Accessibility and approachability
- ✓ Proven track record of community involvement

Your Concerns Matter:

Whether it's improving local amenities, addressing housing issues, or advocating for affordable climate action, your concerns are my top priority. If there is anything you wish to highlight or bring to my attention, don't hesitate to contact me.

Evie Nevin

evienevin.westcork@gmail.com 0834290752

DENIS BARRY COMMEMORATION WEEKEND

18TH & 19TH NOVEMBER 2023

Marking the centenary of the death of soldier, patriot and sportsman Denis Barry from Riverstick, who died on Hunger Strike in the Curragh Military Hospital in November 1923.

SAT 18 NOV	REMEMBERING DENIS BARRY, 1883-1923 Presentation by JJ Hurley 7pm, Riverstick Community Hall
SUN 19 NOV	COMMEMORATION CEREMONY Unveiling of Denis Barry Info Board, Oration by Dr Gabriel Doherty Noon, Riverstick Village
SUN 19 NOV	BLACKROCK V BALLYMARTLE Commemoration Hurling Match 1:30pm, Riverstick GAA pitch

Remembering Denis Barry

Although the Irish Civil War ended in May 1923, Republican prisoners remained in jails across the country. To protest against their interment without trial, many IRA prisoners went on hunger strike in the autumn of 1923. **Pauline Murphy** has researched one of their number, Staff Officer of the IRA Cork No.1 Brigade Denis 'Denny' Barry, also known as Donnacha de Barra, who died on November 20, 1923.

Denis Barry was born into a farming family at Cullen, Riverstick, Co. Cork in 1883. A keen sportsman, young Denis played with Ballymartle GAA club before joining Blackrock National Hurling Club in 1903 when he moved to Cork city to work in the garment trade. He won four county titles in a row with the famed 'rockies' of the early 1910s and the Croke Cup with the Cork hurling team. Barry also played Gaelic Football with the Lees club, a city team nicknamed 'Collars and Cuffs' due to the large number of drapers and tailors who played for the side!

In Cork city Barry lodged with his sister at 25 Barrack Street whilst working as a draper's assistant with O'Sullivan & Howard. He was active in the trade union movement

from 1907 when he became a union official for the Irish Drapers Assistants Benefit and Protective Association. In 1912 he joined Na Fianna Éireann and the Ancient Order of Hibernians, and was also active in the Gaelic League.

Denis Barry was a founder member of the Cork branch of Sinn Féin and in 1913 he helped to form the Cork branch of the Irish Volunteers, which was later known as the Irish Republican Army. His brothers, Batt and Michael, were also members.

In 1915 Barry relocated to Kilkenny to take up employment with Monster House drapery and continued his Republican activity in the 'marble city'.

Irish Volunteers in Kilkenny, including Barry, were ready for action on Easter weekend 1916 but their orders were cancelled.

In the aftermath of The Rising, the British authorities cracked down on Republican activists and, even though he did not play a part in the Easter week insurrection, Barry was arrested by the RIC at his place of work on May 3 and sent to Frongoch Prison Camp in Wales.

On his release Barry resumed his activities with the Republican movement and in 1917 served as an election agent for Sinn Féin candidate W.T. Cosgrave in the Kilkenny by-election, which Cosgrave won.

Barry returned to Cork in 1918, where he was appointed to the staff of the Cork No.1 Brigade as an intelligence officer and during the War of Independence he served as O/C of the Irish Republican Police in Cork.

In October, 1920, when Sinn Féin Cork City Lord Mayor Terence MacSwiney died on hunger strike in Brixton prison, Barry was included in the IRA party who travelled to England to escort the Lord Mayor's remains home.

During the 'Burning of Cork' in December 1920, Barry and his Republican police force attempted to prevent looting and he was almost killed in the process.

Barry opposed the 1921 Anglo Irish Treaty and fought

with the anti-treaty IRA in the ensuing Civil War. He was transferred to Wexford at the outbreak of the war where he was appointed to the divisional staff of the IRA's 3rd Eastern Brigade.

He was arrested by Free State troops in October 1922 at Courtown Harbour and sent to Newbridge Internment Camp in Kildare where conditions were notoriously dire; rodents infested the camp, prisoners suffered from lice, bedding was inadequate and heating non-existent. In these conditions many prisoners became ill.

IRA prisoners interned across the country announced a mass hunger strike on October 17, which Barry joined in the Newbridge camp.

By November 12, a telegram had reached the Barry family home in Riverstick informing them that Denis' health had seriously declined. His brother Batt immediately travelled to Kildare where, upon arrival at the Newbridge prison camp, he was shown to a dirty, cold hut where four hunger strikers lay on stretchers; among them was Denis Barry, conscious but very weak and unable to speak.

Batt requested that his brother be moved to a hospital and on November 19 Barry was moved



to the Curragh Military Hospital, where he died the following morning, after 34 days of hunger striking. He was 40-years-old.

Denis Barry was buried by the Free State authorities at a site near the glasshouse military prison. His family were denied his remains but were allowed to visit the grave to recite the rosary; the Barry family had to take legal action before they were finally granted his body. Following the exhumation, Denis Barry lay-in-state at Newbridge Town Hall before returning to his native Cork.

As a supporter of the Free State, Bishop of Cork Daniel

Cohalan was staunchly opposed to the anti-treaty IRA and had gone so far as to excommunicate members in Cork. He therefore objected to a religious funeral for Denis Barry. As the hunger striker's body could not enter a church, it instead lay-in-state at Cork Sinn Féin's headquarters at 54 Grand Parade and from there was taken in a large funeral procession to St Finbarr's Cemetery.

The cortège took six hours to reach St Finbarr's Cemetery. Among the many representations were members of the Cork GAA County Board, Ballymartle Hurling Club, Blackrock Hurling Club, Lees Football club, Na Fianna Éireann, Cumann na mBan and an array of trade unions. In place of a priest was Sinn Féin TD David Kent, brother of 1916 martyr Thomas Kent. Annie MacSwiney, sister of Terence, recited the rosary while Maire MacSwiney delivered an oration.

Denis Barry was buried in a prominent position in the cemetery's Republican plot, next to Terence MacSwiney and Tomas MacCurtain.

See opposite page for details of commemorative events in Riverstick.



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Ikea founder Ingvar Kamprad and his Nazi past



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.

We all know the familiar yellow and blue branding of the Swedish brand IKEA and that it sells low-cost furniture, as well as other household items. A less well-known fact might be that Ikea products are given names, not numbers, because its founder was dyslexic and had difficulty with numbers: A founder who, until he died in

2018, remained unable to shake his fascist past.

Ikea founder Ingvar Kamprad was the person who brought the concept of DIY furniture building into our homes. Ikea was already a successful business when, on a promotional photoshoot one day, the photographer complained to Ingvar about having a lack of storage space for his equipment. He quick-thinkingly removed the legs of his stool and packed it away in his case. Notoriously thrifty, Ingvar realised that he could use this method to cut shipping costs, so he stole the idea, and flatpack build-it-yourself furniture was created.

Ingvar's German father and grandmother were both confirmed Nazi's and he himself was a member of the most extreme Nazi Party that existed in Sweden. He was also lifelong friends with Per Engdahl, one of the most prominent fascists in the world post WW2. On coming to light, these facts plagued the Ikea founder in his later years, threatening the success of his company.

Ingvar's father, Feodor, was the son of German immigrants. His mother, Berta, was Swedish. Ingvar grew up on the farm



IKEA founder Ingvar Kamprad (right) shakes hands with Hans Ax, IKEA's first store manager, in 1965.

that his father inherited from his parents, in Elmtaryd, in the parish of Agunnaryd, Sweden. In 1943, aged 17, before going to the School of Commerce in Gothenburg, Ingvar set up his own mail order business selling

imported pens. He called it IKEA: I for Ingvar, K for Kamprad, E for Elmtaryd and A for Agunnaryd. In 1948, he began to advertise items of furniture designed to appeal principally to farmers and the rural poor in his mail order brochure, 'Ikea News'. The first lines, all at unprecedentedly low prices, included an armless nursing chair called Ruth, a coffee table, a sofa bed and a chandelier, all made by local manufacturers in Almhult and sold at the lowest possible price. All Ikea pieces were given names, as Ingvar, who was dyslexic, had difficulty with numbers.

The same year Ingvar set up Ikea, he also became member number 4,014 of Swedish Socialist Unity, the country's leading far-right party during the war. Apparently, Sweden's general security service kept him under surveillance for at least eight months, confiscating and reading his correspondence. These files became readily available posthumously upon Ingvar's death. His file was titled 'Memorandum concerning: Nazi' and it was stamped 'secret' in red letters. It was this membership that would plague Ingvar for the rest of his life despite many efforts to conceal the information.

In November 1942, Ingvar wrote that he had recruited "quite a few comrades" to the party and missed no opportunity to work for the movement. The memorandum about his correspondence reached the Sixth Division of the Stockholm police on July 6, 1943. Ingvar was an active member of the Svensk Socialistisk Samling, Sweden's Nazi party. Six

days later, Ingvar sent an application to the county administrative office in Vaxjo to register his new company, Ikea.

It is known that Ingvar's involvement in Per Engdahl's fascist organisation, the New Swedish Movement, continued after the end of the war. He invited comrades from the movement to his home in Elmtaryd and was regarded as their benefactor. There are letters where he is asked to donate or thanked for the latest contribution. Ingvar also acted as publisher for one of fascist leader Per Engdahl's books. The two had become close friends and called each other 'BB': best brother. Engdahl was invited to Ingvar's wedding in 1951. During the first two years after the war, Per Engdahl received refugees, hid them from their persecutors, and helped transport them to safety — Nazi refugees, that is. By 1945, Engdahl had created a network for Europe's shattered Nazi and fascist movements, as he was afraid the ideas would die with them. His underground network interlinked Oswald Mosley's blackshirts, Belgian Flams Bloc, Dutch Nazis, French fascists, Germans who were still loyal to Hitler, Swiss hardcore Nazis, remnants of the Hungarian Arrow Cross movement, the Italian MSI, who propagated Benito Mussolini's ideas, as well as Danish and Norwegian Nazis. Ingvar regularly attended meetings with pro-Nazi extremist groups, maintaining a long-running friendship with Per Engdahl and, according to some accounts, was an active member of the Swedish version of the Hitler Youth.

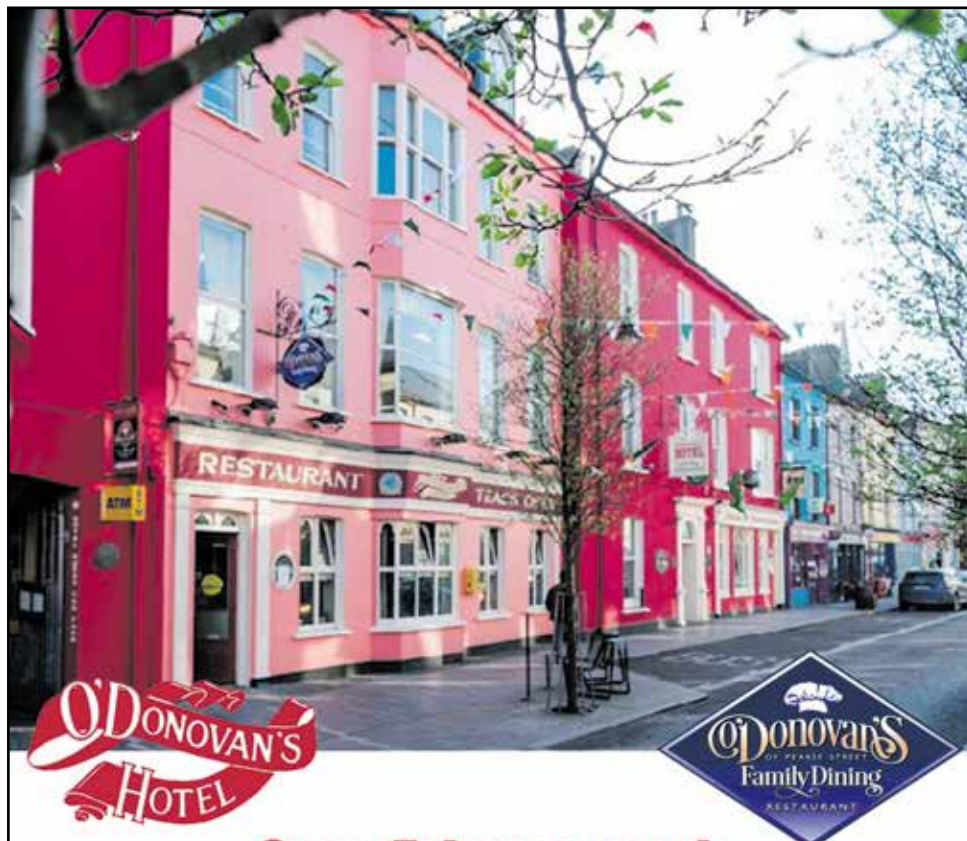
By the time he was in his mid-20s Ingvar had quietly abandoned his fascist activism to focus on his business, which eventually grew into the multi-billion dollar furniture empire that it is today. His earlier Nazi sympathies weren't exposed until the 1990s, when a Swedish newspaper named 'Expressen' published evidence of his role in the fascist movement. Further revelations came to light in a 2011 book by journalist Elisabeth Asbrink that discussed his relationship with Otto Ullmann, an Austrian Jew, refugee who had worked on his parent's farm. Paradoxically, Otto and Ingvar became lifelong friends. However, at no point did Otto know of his friend's Nazi sympathies or his membership of Sweden's Nazi party. On numerous occasions, the Swedish billionaire admitted how he was once involved in the movement and apologised: He blamed his activities on youthful "stupidity", calling

them his "greatest mistake." But his past dogged him until the end of his life. Some detractors accused him of trying to conceal the uglier aspects of his affiliations. Among them was Asbrink, whose book offered evidence that Swedish law enforcement had identified Kamprad as a Nazi. Asbrink told the Telegraph in 2011, "He said in 1998 that he would get everything up on the table and that there would be nothing hidden. Why then didn't he tell us that he was a member of the worst Nazi party, and that the police found it serious enough to create a file on him?" A question Ingvar never answered.

Expressen's articles caused a public relations nightmare for Ikea. Some Jewish groups called for boycotts of the company, although the efforts had little effect on its business. In response, Ingvar wrote an apology letter to the company's 25,000 employees, saying he had severed ties with fascists by the 1950s and called the period "part of my life which I bitterly regret." He wrote that he was influenced by his grandmother, who hailed from the Sudetenland, the ethnically-German region of the former Czechoslovakia that was annexed to Hitler's Germany in the run-up to World War II. However, he refused to condemn his friend and wrote that Per Engdahl was a great man, and I'll maintain that as long as I live."

Ingvar admitted his past involvement with Nazism in a book about his life and asked for forgiveness for his "stupidity". He also admitted to Swedish media that he had attended meetings of Nazi groups between 1945 and 1948. In a statement, the American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors and Their Descendants demanded that an inquiry be opened into Kamprad's past. "Holocaust survivors are shocked at the reports of the depths of Kamprad's Nazi involvement, which he previously had dismissed as mere 'teenage confusion'," it said. "It is time for Kamprad to come clean. Swedish intelligence files describe his recruitment of others to the fascist movement and his involvement with it well after World War II. This can hardly be characterised as youthful confusion."

When Ingvar Kamprad died on January 27, 2018, his Nazi skeletons in the closet went with him to his grave. Today there are 462 Ikea stores in 59 countries all over the world.



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West Cork woman takes her message on climate change to the streets

What spurs people into action? For Bridget Sheeran, finds **Moze Jacobs**, it was a wonderful moment: becoming a grandmother.

Bridget Sheeran is no stranger to the phenomenon of birth and the processes that surround it. For over 30 years, she was a midwife (with an MSc in Midwifery from Trinity College). What's more, she founded the Community Midwives Association in Ireland (recognised by Dáil Éireann as a group representing the interests of Midwives practising outside hospitals and supporting women's choice in maternity care services). A feisty Irishwoman, born in the UK into a large family, one parent from Northern Ireland, another from the South, she now lives near Baltimore and is teaching the Alexander Technique. She has four adult sons, however it took the arrival of her first grandchild – and thereby, a new generation – to prompt Bridget to proactively engage with the issue of climate change, arguably, one of the major challenges of our time.

An article in the Irish Times in August headed, 'We shouldn't wait for catastrophic weather events to act' brought it sharply into focus. It contained a graph showing that the percentage of people worried or very worried about climate change in the world, apparently was at its lowest in Ireland. "I found that really hard to believe," says Bridget. "I felt like Ireland could set an example. We really could. We're a green country. Why don't we show it? Plus I personally know so many people who are very concerned about the state of the world, biodiversity, the environment. Somehow, that information hit me really hard. I thought, Oh my gosh, I've just become a grandmother. I need to do something about this."

Bridget decided to do something that any individual could do; creating lightweight sandwich boards that fit over her shoulders. One shows the aforementioned graph. Another

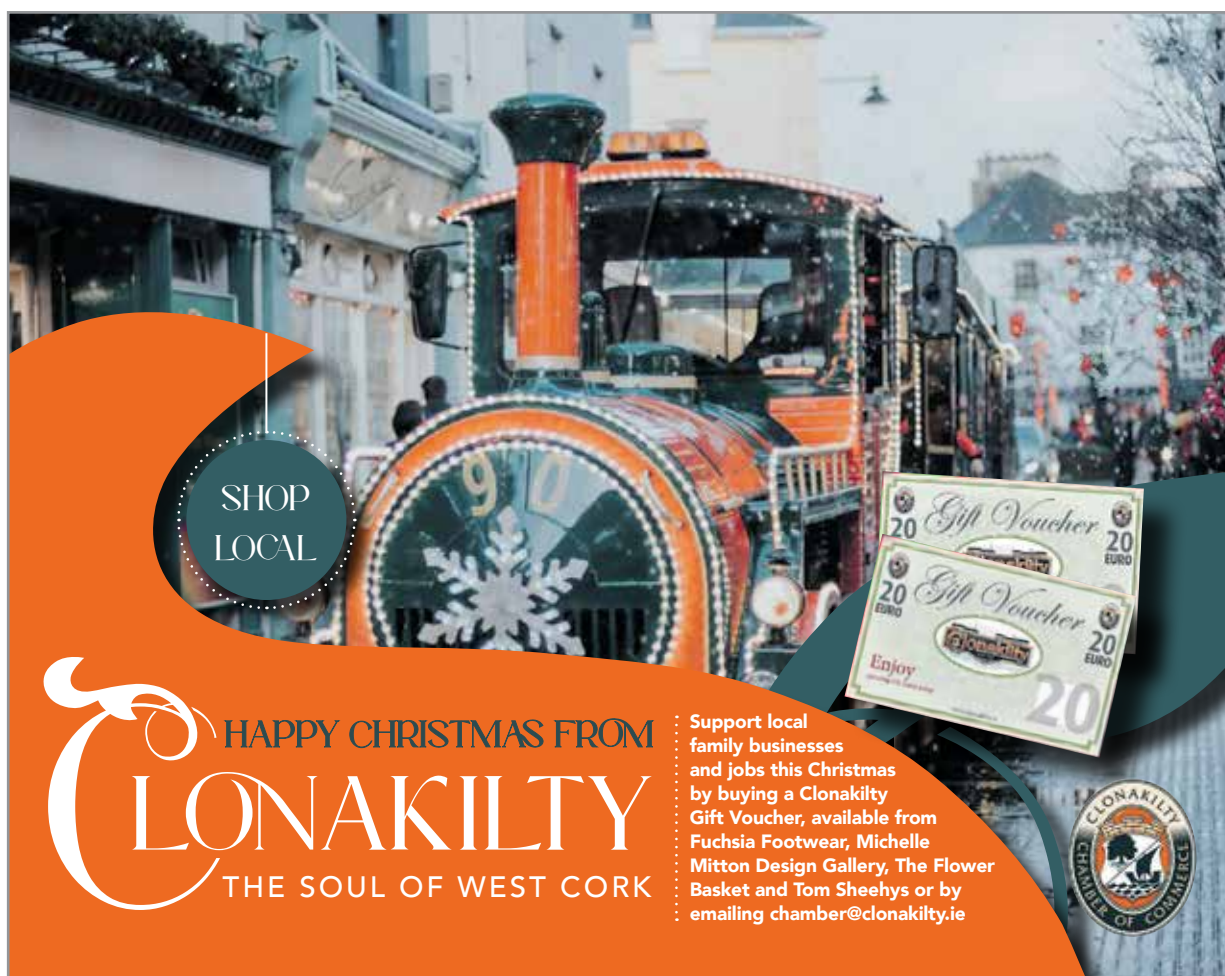
says, 'Ireland's Call, Climate Action Now'. Perhaps the most pivotal one displays the following message: 'Urgent! Climate Concerns, Call TDs' with the Dublin phone numbers of the three West Cork TDs (Holly Cairns, Christopher O'Sullivan, Michael Collins) printed underneath.

It is Bridget's intention to persuade as many people as possible to contact their TDs and express their concern about a lack of action around climate change.

"Let's bombard our TDs with our concerns. If you email the local representatives or call them, they will have to record it. Even if they themselves have different opinions, it is important to let them know that yes, their constituents feel that carbon emissions really need to be reduced. People often think, oh, someone else will do it. Or they believe that nobody is interested in their opinion, especially politicians. But in reality, we've all got a say. And we should use it. Our children's and grandchildren's future depends on it and that of all the babies in the womb right now. It depends on us. I'm passionate about it. That's why I'm doing what I'm doing."

Twice a week, she goes to various towns or cities where she puts up her boards and starts playing the fiddle. Initially, she had the idea of a soapbox.

"It came up many times in Baltimore because people want to debate, talk about issues, find somebody in their community who thinks similarly and who they might be able to work with. But it never materialised. And as I had been studying the fiddle during Covid – I'm still learning of course but can carry a tune – I decided to go non-verbal. I can be a bit forceful when I speak, and I talk an awful lot, which can put people off. Whereas they'll warm to music."



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CLONAKILTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Bridget takes her message to Skibbereen. Pic: Marie-Laure Haas

When Bridget first came up with the plan and started to discuss it, she encountered quite a few negative reactions. "I've been told that won't work, it will be useless, I really shouldn't be doing it. But then when I do go out into the streets, people come up to me and tell me about their frustrations that not enough is happening. Some nearly cry and thank me. What for? I'm just playing the fiddle! I've had lorry drivers stopping, opening their windows and saying something positive. Old ladies are trying to give me money and I'll say, 'No, I'm not collecting money, I just want you to read this.' And I've had children clapping me and teenagers giving the thumbs up. Tourists want to have a look at the Irish Times picture to see what the percentage of concern is in their country and they're really surprised that it's higher than in Ireland."

A bit of a trailblazer in many respects, Bridget knows full well that going public in this way, "is not for everybody".

"But there are so many other things you can do," she says passionately. "Plant a native

tree. Or a bush. The most important thing is to set an intention. As a nurse and midwife, I've seen many young girls and older women find their inner resources when they hadn't been aware of them at all. Maybe even had no notion of having a baby. And then people change. I've seen it. Dads as well by the way. Really, it only takes nine months to completely transform and adapt to a new era in your life. It's just beautiful what humans can do when they decide to work together as a larger unit. A family. We've already got all types of connections, certainly here in West Cork. When you just show a bit of kindness, you'll be amazed how people will support you. I believe in humanity. Which is another reason why I know we can turn things around."

To find out more about contacting your TDs go to www.oireachtas.ie

Bridget would encourage likeminded people to join her endeavours to put climate change (concerns) centre-stage.

To find out more you can email bridgetsheeranmidwife@gmail.com



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FACT & FOLKLORE

Eugene Daly

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

If you missed Part I of Eugene Daly's fascinating article on Mother Ireland (printed in the May issue) you will find it online at westcorkpeople.ie.

'*Aisling*' (meaning 'dream, vision') is a type of Irish poem written in the 18th and early nineteenth centuries, based upon a forlorn hope that Ireland, having been destroyed in the wars of the 17th and 18th centuries, could be restored to its old power by aid from Spain or France. Their hopes were pinned especially on the return of the Stuart kings. In an '*aisling*', the poet tells of a vision of a '*spéirbhean*' (literally sky-woman – a beautiful maiden) who personifies Ireland and bewails her sorry state. The poet asks

Mother Ireland (Part II)

her name and she announces that she is Ireland, bereft of her spouse. The poem usually ends with the prophecy that a rightful Stuart monarch will take the throne.

The greatest writers of the '*aisling*' were two Kerry poets, Aogán Ó Rathaille and Eoghan Rua Ó Súilleabhain. Ó Rathaille (c1675-1729) was born in the 'Sliabh Luachra' district of Kerry. His poems, '*Mac an Cheannai*' (the merchant's son) and '*Gile na Gile*' (brightness of brightness) are his best known '*aisling*' poems. This is part of the first verse of '*Gile na Gile*' with English translation: '*Gile na gile do chonnarc ar slí i n-uaigneas, Criotail an chriostail a goimruisc rinn-uaine, Binneas an bhinnis a friotal nár chríon-ghruama, Deirge is finne do fionnadh n-sgríos-ghruanaibh.*' (The brightness of the bright met me on my path so lonely The crystal of all crystals were her flashing dark-blue eyes Melodious more than music was her spoken language And glorious were her cheeks of a brilliant crimson hue.)

The '*spéirbhean*' of the '*aisling*' poets is beautiful in every way, in every feature. 'Her hair is golden, gentle-tressed and flows in wreathed layers to the ground. Her eye-brow is like a single stroke of the pen. In her cheeks the flashing of red berries contends with the whiteness of a gentle lily. Her eyes are death-dealing stars; they have laid a hundred heroes in weakness. Her conversation is cultured, keen and gentle. Her teeth are white. Her throat and brow are as white as the foam on a wild lake. Her breasts are sharp, rounded and inviolate.' (Daniel Corkery in *The Hidden Ireland*).

The other great '*aisling*' poet was Eoghan Rua Ó Súilleabháin – '*Eoghan an Bhéil Bhinn*'

(Eoghan of the sweet mouth) who was also from 'Sliabh Luachra'. He was the archetypal roistering poet, amorous, hard-drinking, and generous-hearted. He was a '*spailpín*' (wandering labourer), a schoolmaster, a '*réice*' (rake), writer of the sweetest lyrics and a classical scholar. His life passed like a meteor, irrepressible, daring, loving, and wild. His best known '*aisling*' is '*Ceo Draíochta*' (Magic Mist) '*Ceo draíochta i gcoim oíche do sheol mé Trí thíorthaibh mar óinmhid ar strae, Gan príomhcharaid díograis im chóngar 's mé i gcríochaibh tar m'eolas i gcéin.*' (Through the deep night a magic mist led me Like a simpleton roaming the land, No friends of my bosom beside me An outcast in places unknown.)

From the earliest time down to the present day, Irish storytellers describe a spirit folk who live alongside human beings, but who are normally concealed from us. There are the '*aos sídhe*' (pronounced 'shee'), the people of the hills or mounds, known also as '*slua sídhe*' (fairy folk) or '*daoine maithe*' (the good people) and in English as fairies. These folk have been seen from ancient times as dwelling in forts ('*liosanna*'), in caves, on hills, on faraway islands or beneath the waters of the sea or lakes. These mythical beings were originally known as the '*Tuatha Dé Danann*', which means literally 'people of the goddess Danu'. When defeated by the Milesians they were banished underground. They are the gods of ancient pagan Ireland, now much reduced in power, having been demoted to what we call fairies.

The fairies, the army of the hidden goddesses, though with much less influence, are persistently working for the neglected values of the feminine, submerged firstly by the Iron Age warrior patriarchy of the Milesian Celts (typified by male heroes such as Cuchulainn and Fionn Mac Cumhail). This was replaced by male-dominated Christianity and today by modern materialism. They symbolise an endangered (some would say broken) vital relationship – the cohesion of Culture in Nature and the sense of the Sacred Whole, which acknowledges the sacredness of the earth and all of its creatures, human and animal. The goddesses and deities of the '*Tuatha Dé*

Danann' found allies in the 'fil' (poets who were collectively known as the '*aes dana*', people of the arts, servants of the chief goddess Danu)

The barely audible tales of the goddesses have taken on a new relevance in today's world. They have something to say about the timeless sense of belonging on earth. Having dismissed Danu and the other female deities, we now bewail the lack of balance in nature, which, for centuries, she represented. She stands for the sacramental marriage of the elements and sweeps people into nature's holy wheelings, which nurtures life and gives meaning to sun and '*sídhe*', river, field and ocean, flame and breeze, art and science, means and ends. New technology has defeated the gentler ways. Mass communication and instant entertainment have obliterated customs and beliefs long held. More and more we have divorced ourselves from the natural world. Everything has become a commodity, saleable, buyable.

Unique among Celtic countries are Ireland's many personifications and characterisations, practically all female. Two early modern names for Ireland are '*Cáit Ní Dhuibhir*' and '*Róisín Dubh*' (Dark Rosaleen). '*Róisín Dubh*' dates from a 17th century poem of that title by Eoghan Rua Mac an Bháird (Owen Roe McWard). James Clarence Mangan's translation, '*Dark Rosaleen*' (1847) is more widely known than the original. The poem depicts a lovely maiden in distress who mourns the demise of the Gaelic chieftains and her hope of salvation by the Jacobites (The Stuarts). These are the opening lines: 'O, my Dark Rosaleen, Do not sigh, do not weep! The priests are on the ocean green They march along the deep.'

The '*Cailleach Béara*' appears, reincarnated in '*An tSeanbhean Bhocht*', as an emblem of the United Irishmen and their Rising in 1798, and frequently used since then. The song has been described as the 'Marseillaise of Ireland', 'The Shan Van Vocht' (The Seanbhean Bhocht). It is an amalgam of several versions of a ballad, associated with the United Irishmen's Rising of 1798 (particularly Wolfe Tone's attempt to land French soldiers at Bantry Bay in December, 1796). The '*Seanbhean Bhocht*' has stood ever since for Ireland at her most sorrowful. Ireland is also known as '*An*



Droimeann Donn Dúilis'. A weakened Ireland as reflected in '*An tSeanbhean Bhocht*' could still be nurturing, (the faithful brown cow), another poetic name for Ireland.

Both archaeology and pseudo-history (myth) agree that cows have been of paramount social importance in Ireland for a very long time since the fourth millennium B.C. The necessity for milk for nourishment and sustenance caused a quasi-mystical power to be often associated with cattle. The goddess '*Fliodhais*', patron of cattle had a very large herd. The most prized beast among her herd was a wonderful white cow called the '*Maol*' (hornless one), and one milking of this '*Maol Fliodhaise*' would be full nourishment for 300 men and their families. The '*Glas Ghaoibheann*', literally 'the grey of Goibhniu', was a famous cow in Irish folklore. Owned by '*Goibhniu*' ('*gabha*' in modern Irish), the Celtic god of smithcraft, one story tells of how she filled with milk every pail put under her. Her inexhaustible supply of milk symbolises prosperity. The type of cow most sought after by the farmers of ancient Ireland was a '*droimfhinn*' ('*droimeann*' – white-backed), a dark coloured animal with a streak of white on its back.

Other female figures are powerful and commanding, like '*Granuaile*' ('*Gráinne Mhaol Uí Mháille*', Grace O'Malley) the 16th century Mayo coastal chieftain and pirate. '*Granuaile*' has become a personification of Ireland. Although she is an historical figure, a swashbuckling, daring woman, who went to visit Queen Elizabeth I, she is as much a creature of myth and folklore as of historical fact. The 19th century Munster poet, '*Séán Clárach Mac Domhnaill*', was the first to use her name as a metaphor for Ireland. Her name

was used as a type for Ireland in her long struggle for freedom, and she has now become a feminist icon.

I have already indicated how our modern technological and consumer society is threatening our respect for and our connection to the world of nature. The destruction of our environment, in the name of so-called progress, has coincided with a collective sense of alienation from our surroundings. Every day in our rationalised insanity, we further the destruction and desecration of the earth. We have polluted our seas and rivers, poisoned the land, driven animals and birds to extinction, or near extinction, destroyed our hedgerows.

Perhaps the single most attractive element of Celtic wisdom – the wisdom of a people whose chief deities were nurturing females – was its link with nature. The sense of nature as divine or holy is hardly unique to the Celts. Native American wisdom is clear in its respect for Mother Nature and its insistence that a balanced life means working in harmony with the environment. Today there is less respect for our mother earth. Too often it is looked on as a resource, something to plunder and rape for wealth. Rarely is a sense of nature as divine, as sacred, as valuable in itself, seriously considered. In ancient Ireland a king did not assume the right to manage the land, or exploit or utilise its resources. Rather he married the land, in the person of a sovereign goddess.

For centuries, the old ways and the old world endured. In a conflict as profound in its effect, as when the Milesians drove the '*Tuatha Dé Danann*' to their underground places, so too the new technology has defeated the gentler ways. Old customs and beliefs long held have been obliterated and I fear that we are all the poorer for that.

Sinn Féin

Michael McCARTHY

Your Sinn Féin 2024
Local Election candidate
- Skibbereen West Cork LEA

I look forward to working with the people of Clonakilty, Skibbereen and Dunmanway, and surrounding areas.

089 9805511
michaelmccarthysinnfein@gmail.com

New Kinsale Connect route 228 to Cork welcomed by users



The new Kinsale Connect route 228 bus service began regular runs to the city via CUH and UCC on October 14. Pictured at the bus stop in Kinsale was Christopher O'Sullivan TD talking to local bus users eager for the new service. Pic. John Allen

Life and death over 8,500 years in Ireland explored in new book

A new book, 'Death in Irish prehistory', explores life and death over 8,500 years through analysis of archaeological findings and illustrations combined with fictional vignettes and poetry.

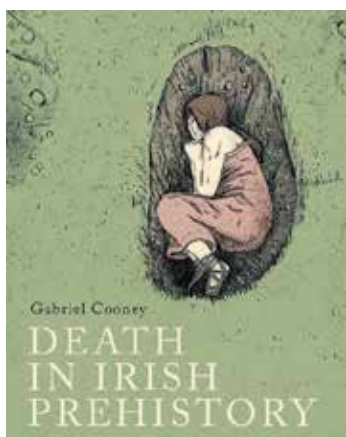
Written by Gabriel Cooney and illustrated by Conor McHale, this book explores the richness of the mortuary record that we have for Irish prehistory (8000 BC to AD 500) as a highlight of the archaeological record for that long period of time. Because we are dealing with how people coped with death, this rich and diverse record of mortuary practice is also relevant to understanding how we deal with death today, which is just as central a social issue as it always was.

Gabriel Cooney is emeritus professor of Celtic Archaeology, School of Archaeology, University College Dublin. He is a member of the Royal Irish Academy and has served on the Council of the RIA. Gabriel's research interests focus on the Neolithic period, particularly the use of stone, and on mortuary practices in prehistory.

Conor McHale is an archaeologist/illustrator living in Dublin.

Cork extracts

There are wedge tombs where the focus seems to have been on the post-mortem treatment of a particular individual. In the large and impressive wedge tomb at Labbacallee, Co. Cork, the chamber was divided



into a small, inner cist-like compartment and a larger outer chamber. With the exception of her skull, the partially-articulated, inhumed remains of a woman were found in the inner compartment, with burnt animal bone and a bone pin. It would appear that, after excarnation, her partially decomposed body — with bones still partially articulated — was placed there. One of the woman's bones was dated from between 2456 BC to 2138 BC.

This woman's treatment after death involved a number of stages, including the removal of her skull when her body had decomposed and the eventual

placement of the rest of her bones in the sealed back compartment of the tomb. The contrast between the treatment of the cranium and the rest of the body is striking. The cranium may have been in circulation and used by the living between its removal from her body and its placement in the tomb.

Who were the dead people placed in wedge tombs, and on what basis were they selected by their kin and social group to be treated in this way? William O'Brien's excavations of the Altar and Toomore tombs on the Mizen Peninsula demonstrate the different histories of sites and their local meaning and context.

He also discusses the implications of the regional distribution pattern — loose clusters of wedge tombs concentrated in areas with the best settlement potential. O'Brien suggests we see wedge tombs as sacred places, constructed to contain the remains of individuals who, through their achievements in life, gained recognition in death as founding figures for their communities and lineages. The clusters may reflect how families were linked at a local level, over time providing opportunities for the creation and re working of identities, shared and contested by family-based groups

Death in Irish prehistory by Gabriel Cooney, illustrated by Conor McHale. Published in hardback by Royal Irish Academy, €30.



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Understanding how the Israeli conflict has become a war about the freedom of speech



HISTORY & POLITICS

Kieran Doyle

The great Chinese philosopher Confucius in his teachings wrote, 'He who seeks revenge, digs two graves'. With Confucius' advice being issued over two and a half millennia ago, one would think humanity would have learned how to interact and live side by side. The abhorrent killing of innocent Israeli citizens by the Palestinian terrorist group Hamas, has prompted abhorrent killing of innocent Palestinians, by the State of Israel. Many graves have been dug and many more will surely follow.

I had intended to look at the history of these two people but the shocking attack on free speech and political expression has led me to lean towards exploring the ripple effects this war is having globally. Whatever we can say about the good, bad and ugly of our own state, our media has been largely free to express a myriad of opinions and our mainstream outlets are free to broadcast a spectrum of ideas. Local papers like our own 'West Cork People' have given voice to many positions and this is, thankfully, part of our cultural strength, something that we should not take for granted and should be willing to defend at all costs.

We all know that one of the oldest adages associated with war is 'truth is the first casualty'. Whose truth? Free speech does not mean owning the truth but rather allowing debate, discourse and disagreement. People will make up their minds about any conflict based on anything from their own value systems to their religion, to their upbringings. In spite of that, it is a shared basic tenant of ALL humanity that we defend our right to live peaceably, and place the protection of vulnerable people, especially children, as an unshakable foundation of our humanity. That's a principle that transcends all cultures, sides and societies. Well, that's what I thought.

This latest episode began on October 7 with Hamas' deadly attack on Israeli citizens, killing 1,400 people and kidnapping over 200 people. It was condemned universally and rightly so. Israel then declared its right to defend itself. That is the right of any state. Here is where things changed quickly. The state of Israel began to bomb the Gaza strip, a tiny slither of land that is only twenty-five miles long and approximately five wide. Two million people live there, making it one of the most densely populated areas of the world. What makes it worse is they are fenced in and, since 2005, have been subject to a land and sea blockade by Israel and Egypt. In the interests of balance we have to remember that, while both of the aforementioned countries feared the movement of Hamas and weapons permeating its borders, this blanket application of border walls and blockades has had a devastating effect on millions of non-Hamas Palestinians inside Gaza. Their freedom to travel, work and access goods has been curtailed for years behind this eastern Iron Curtain. They are an island, cut off from their West Bank Palestinian brethren. Within a few days of the attacks, the state of Israel declared that it was going to target the northern part of Gaza and told the million-plus citizens that call it home to move south, along a clustered and highly damaged road network. They were given twenty-four hours. Imagine a million trying to drive on the M50 in one go! Impossible.

The retaliation was swift. Gaza came under bombardment. Israel state claimed it was targeting Hamas strongholds. It didn't seem to matter that most who were dying were civilians. It's no secret that, akin to the Vietcong, Hamas has a network of tunnels under Gaza that are impervious to the bombs. In Vietnam, when the Americans carpet-bombed the jungles they didn't manage to lay a finger on their enemy, while at the same time they destroyed village life. An Irish Palestinian man speaking on Irish radio this week, reiterated this, telling the audience that Hamas are untouched underground while the ordinary people suffer. Israel cut off water and electricity, inflicting a blanket, medieval-type siege on the world's biggest open-air prison. Humanitarian corridors were closed and only now, a minuscule number of trucks are allowed entry (twenty



Pro-Palestinian
Demonstration in
Kreuzberg, Germany

a day, compared to the six-hundred that usually are needed to supply the businesses, hospitals and everyday shops).

We then started hearing the word 'disproportionate'. Many who were disgusted by the murder of innocent Israelis, were soon questioning the 'disproportionate' response of the state of Israel which was beginning to unleash death on civilian women, men and children. There are rules to war. When

into account the suffering of the Palestinian civilians caught in the middle. President O'Higgins condemned Hamas but also wanted innocent civilians to be protected in Gaza. He went on to add that any action 'must be in accordance with international law, humanitarian needs and respect for the decisions of the United Nations. And that actions by Israel could lead to a huge humanitarian crisis' (which has inevitably happened

Antonio Guterres UN Secretary General, has been called on by Israeli officials to resign after he dared to say what everyone understands, that 'The Hamas attack was linked to fifty-six years of suffocating occupation'. The brother of Hayim Katsman, a victim of the Hamas murders, spoke out against Israeli retaliation. He said his brother was a peace activist who indeed had done some charity work with Palestinians. At his eulogy, he said his brother would not want Israel to respond like they have. It made headlines across the globe except in Israel whose papers would not run the story. 'Group think' is another form of censorship. The erosion of free speech is everywhere.

Closer to home, Paddy Cosgrave, Trinity graduate and founder of the Web Summit that brings together global tech companies, condemned Hamas for their murders. He also said, 'I also believe that, in defending itself, Israel should adhere to international law and the Geneva Conventions – i.e. not commit war crimes. This belief applies equally to any state in any war. No country should breach these laws, even if atrocities were committed against it.' Israel business and influential tech companies rallied against his free speech and circled the wagons around the only messaging in town – Israel is right. Cosgrave has been forced to resign. It's not all politicians, presidents and business gurus that get affected. A young Dublin woman, who posted on a private WhatsApp group that she believed that Israel was now behaving like a 'terrorist state' because of the 'indiscriminate bombing', was fired from her job at Wix, a software company that is Israeli owned. It's like something from Big Brother, as

The attack on free speech and expression has alarmingly escalated. The UK Home Secretary, Suella Braverman, told her senior police officers to clamp down on anti-Semitic behaviour that might arise in the UK, but it's worrying that waving Palestinian flags and chanting for the freedom of Arabs could also be a criminal offence. It is right to have laws to protect people, but shouldn't it be for all people?

you fight your enemy, by the laws of international community and the laws of humanity, you must not target and kill the innocent, the civilians, the children. With frightening speed, the conversation was being shut down by Israeli diplomats, politicians and those who have business ties to that country. It seemed their rallying cry – that their people have a right to defend themselves, and that the murder of their people was wrong – is only to be applied one way. The President of the European Commission, Ursula Von Der Leyen, supported Israel but did not use her powerful position to remind it that it must be respectful of international law. Our Taoiseach criticised her and said it was 'not balanced' because it didn't take

and is worsening by Israel's refusal to allow adequate aid in). The Israeli state machine began to turn its cogs. Our president was accused by the Israeli ambassador to Ireland of spreading 'misinformation' and using 'inflammatory language'. It's like something out of a Cold War movie.

The attack on free speech and expression has alarmingly escalated. The UK Home Secretary, Suella Braverman, told her senior police officers to clamp down on anti-Semitic behaviour that might arise in the UK, but it's worrying that waving Palestinian flags and chanting for the freedom of Arabs could also be a criminal offence. It is right to have laws to protect people, but shouldn't it be for all people? This is dangerous territory.

the tentacles of Israeli suppression of free speech, has come to our shores.

Geopolitically, Israel has been protected by the vested interests of the USA and the UK who sought allies in a zone that was hostile to their world view. Germany has been a huge supporter to Israel (militarily giving them access to billions of dollars of weaponry at little or no cost) mainly to assuage their own war guilt at their former government's (the Nazi regime) looting and stealing of Jewish property and capital. Note, they never offered a Jewish homeland within their own borders, instead supporting one in some distant land, far away from their shores. The language used by Israel state has sought to subliminally garner support from its political allies. Israeli politicians referred to it as 'Israelis' 9/11', a hallowed American date. Their politicians hyperbolically called it the worst attacks on the Jews since the Holocaust, but already 6,000 Palestinians have died, four times more than the Israelis since October 7.

I could have written about the fact that Palestine wasn't a deserted land when the international community sold the world a lie, 'A land without people, for a people without a land'. I could have discussed the 'Balfour Declaration' of 1917, when the colonial British decided that this part of the world would be ideal for 'the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people'. I could have given an account of the two states in 1948; how after the Arab nations (who were the aggressors), attacked Israel because they saw that 700,000 of their people would be in Israel-controlled areas, the after-effect was that Palestinian land shrunk further and was never reinstated. Subsequently many of those Palestinians were forcefully driven out of the new state of Israel. I could have told you how after another war in 1967, Israel (who this time was the aggressor), took more land belonging to Palestine and the 'international city of Jerusalem'. I could have told you that further Israeli expansions and settlements in the West Bank, like the plantations of Ulster, have further weakened Palestinian claims for their own state. Instead I ask you to examine the history for yourself and make up your own mind. That is why we must protect free speech and allow all sides to have a voice, not shut it down.



GROUNDLED

MEP Grace O'Sullivan

MEP Grace O'Sullivan calls for a total shift in the EU's approach to the violence in Gaza.

Few conflicts beyond European shores have the ability to grip international attention quite like the regular explosions of violence in Israel and Palestine. The most recent events even more so following the horrific attacks by Hamas and the ensuing Israeli bombing campaign against largely defenceless Gazans.

As the airstrikes continue unabated, Palestinians in Ireland are now struggling to get through the days, knowing that at any moment they could receive devastating news from their families trapped

in Gaza. We have heard from young Gazans like Habib Al Ostaz who lives and studies in Cork. Habib only gets about two minutes a day to hear from his family due to power cuts and disabled internet within Gaza. In my office, we happened to be in the process of preparing a photo exhibition on the relationship between Gazans and the sea, when the bloodshed suddenly shook the world like an earthquake. At least one of the photographers I had contacted has since been killed in the bombing. Many of the others don't know if they will be next, as the airstrikes continue indiscriminately in what is one of the most densely populated places on earth.

As an MEP, it has been hard to hear these testimonies and reconcile them with the complete lack of leadership and action from the European Union and its institutions. I have strongly criticised President of the Commission Ursula von der Leyen for her one-sided and unconditional support for Israel, even as

that country openly admits to committing war crimes like cutting off water and food supplies to civilians. Meanwhile, towns which I recently visited in the West Bank have seen violence against them skyrocket, as Israeli settlers are emboldened by their ultra-nationalist government to go out and seize Palestinian land by any means necessary.

We must mourn with the Israeli victims of Hamas terrorism without succumbing to the cries for blood for blood. The EU's role should be one of peacemaker and mediator, instead I have been saddened to see its leaders instead have stood by in tacit approval of the heavy handed response from Israel's far-right government.

While the UN is rarely cited for its effectiveness in crises, the institution has steadfastly supported Palestinians in Gaza throughout decades of siege. The UN agency UNRWA provides schools, hospitals and immediate aid to Gazans, funded by countries like Ireland. I was glad



MEP Grace O'Sullivan at the Israeli border wall built around Palestine's West Bank

to support an increase in Irish funding to UNRWA by some €13 million in the immediate aftermath of the airstrike campaign on Gaza's civilian areas. In direct contrast to the EU, the UN's leader Antonio

Guterres instead has led calls for an immediate ceasefire and an end to the vicious attacks that have killed over 5,000 people – more than 10 times the number of people killed in Hamas' violence.

The EU should be echoing this call loud and clear.

Irish towns and communities meanwhile have a role to play. Earlier this year I called for a massive campaign of twinning with Palestinian towns in a show of solidarity that could build close relations between our communities and bring lasting benefits too. Tralee has twinned with the village of Beit Sahour, the small town outside Bethlehem where it is said the birth of Jesus was announced to local shepherds. Waterford City meanwhile has started the process of twinning with Palestine's economic capital Ramallah. There are many opportunities for West Cork to join this twinning campaign. Just this summer, local artist Pat Fraser held an exhibition in Baltimore to raise funds for Palestinian causes. Perhaps this could be a good starting point for towns like Baltimore and Skibbereen to reach out to Palestine in its time of need?

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New legislation regarding duty of care important for small business owners and landowners

On July 5 last The Courts and Civil Law Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023 came into operation, which includes the new provisions governing the duty of care under the Occupiers' Liability Act 1995. This is particularly important for small business owners in the area of sports, recreation and education, as well as landowners generally says **Solicitor Niall Geaney**.

The new legislation aims to provide a balance between the rights of occupiers of land and the duty of care owed to visitors, trespassers and recreational users as well as making it simpler for occupiers to limit their liability.

Extent of Duty of Care: Visitors

Under section 3 of the old legislation, an occupier must take such care as is reasonable in all the circumstances not to injure a visitor, this is known as the "common duty of care".

Section 40 of the new legis-

lation now requires a Court to consider the following criteria when deciding if the occupier has a liability:

1. the probability of an accident occurring;
2. the severity of the injury which might occur;
3. the cost and practicability of eliminating the risk; and
4. the social utility of the activity which gave rise to the risk of injury.

The key change is that an occupier does not owe a duty of care to visitors or recreational users who voluntarily consent to and are able to understand



the risks. Notably, consent to the risk does not require proof of communication with the occupier. It can be implied from words/conduct.

Additionally the Courts had previously stated that where a person enters onto a premises and commits an offence, the occupier would not be liable for a breach of the common duty of care, unless the Court determined otherwise "in the interests of justice". However, the discretion of the Court to consider "the interests of

justice" has now been removed and instead, the occupier shall not be liable unless in "exceptional circumstances", having regard to matters such as the nature of the offence, the extent of the recklessness on the part of the occupier or the fact the person was not a trespasser.

The purpose of this change is to limit the circumstances in which a Court can impose liability on an occupier where a person has entered onto premises to commit an offence.

Reckless disregard: Recreational Users and Trespassers

The duty of care now owed to recreational users or trespassers under the new legislation is not to intentionally or recklessly injure them. This is a higher standard of care than under the old provision and provides occupiers with more protection. Occupiers have a duty not to act with reckless disregard for recreational users or trespassers.

Previously, an occupier acted with reckless disregard where they knew or had reasonable grounds for believing that a danger existed on the premises. Under the new legislation, an occupier is only deemed to have acted with reckless disregard where they knew or were reckless as to whether that danger exists.

Voluntary Assumption of Risk

Under section 5 of the old legislation a written agreement was needed to limit or relieve an occupier from liability.

Section 42 of the new legislation now states that an occupier will not be found liable where a visitor or recreational user has willingly accepted a risk when entering onto their premises. This is similar to the defence of 'Volenti non fit iniuria' which is an old legal concept, which states that if someone willingly places themselves in a position where harm might result, know-

ing that some degree of harm might result, they are not able to bring a claim against the other party in tort or delict. 'Volenti' applies only to the risk which a reasonable person would consider them as having assumed by their actions; for example a boxer consents to being hit, a person walking a golf course agrees to the risk of injury, a skier agrees that a black slope is only for experienced skiers etc. This should mean that a visitor or recreational user now assumes the risk involved in such an activity which should help protect landowners and venue organisers.

This is extremely important for sports venues, children's playgrounds, activity centres and so on and hopefully will bring down the insurance costs for business to operate profitably.

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Over 200 women unite to celebrate National Women's Enterprise Day in Clonakilly

More than 200 women came together recently to celebrate National Women's Enterprise Day in Dunmore House, Clonakilly. The event, which was hosted by Cork County Council's Local Enterprise Office Cork North and West, is one of Ireland's largest celebrations of female entrepreneurship and saw women from various business backgrounds come together for a full day programme with a blend of inspiration, motivation, education, and entertainment.

Celebrating its 17th year, National Women's Enterprise Day addresses real-life issues affecting women in business, recognising that while daily business operations are crucial for success, so too are a healthy work life balance, family, and mental wellbeing. Cork-based MC Amy Jane Keating, Host and Creator of the 'Go Do You' podcast was the host and facilitator of the event and energised the audience during a motivating networking session focused on the event's theme, 'Empowering Business Together'.

Successful entrepreneur

Patricia Kane, Sustainability Strategist, Founder of Reuzi.ie and Sustainability Chief Officer at Pragmatica was a Guest Speaker and spoke about The Power of One in making change, taking responsibility for sustainable practices in business.

Keynote Speaker, Laura Dowling, aka The Fabulous Pharmacist and Founder of fabÜ Wellness, shared the story of her leap into entrepreneurship and the importance of prioritising health and wellbeing for women in their busy daily lives.

In attendance at the event, Deputy Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr Deirdre Kelly said, "This annual event serves as a vital platform, encouraging women in business to come together, share their achievements, and ignite inspiration in others. It's a community where success stories are told, dreams are nurtured, and paths are illuminated, and Cork County Council is proud to facilitate such important events."

Addressing attendees at the event, Sharon Corcoran, Director of Services, Economic

Development, Enterprise and Tourism, Cork County Council said, "National Women's Enterprise Day empowers women in business by addressing the holistic needs of entrepreneurs, recognising that success goes far beyond the balance sheet. Empowering and celebrating female entrepreneurs is not just a one-time effort but a continuous commitment. This commitment has seen vast changes in the landscape of female entrepreneurship, with an increase of over 400 per cent in the number of female founders being supported through Enterprise Ireland's high potential Start-Ups fund since 2011. This progress is a testament to the unwavering determination of female entrepreneurs and to the supports made available to them along the way, particularly the personal supports and advice offered by our Local Enterprise Offices."

National Women's Enterprise Day is led by the 31 Local Enterprise Offices nationwide, and funded by the Government of Ireland, in partnership with Enterprise Ireland and Local Authorities.



Local Enterprise Office NWED Committee Ciara McGee, Lisa Finn, Deputy Mayor, Cork County, Cllr. Deirdre Kelly, Ita Madden, Jamie Cuthbert, Alison Walsh and Fiona Leahy
Photo Joleen Cronin

Emergency fund needed to deal with flooding damage: O'Sullivan

Cork South West Deputy Christopher O'Sullivan will push for emergency funds to be made available to Cork County Council to deal with the fallout of the recent severe weather on roads in Cork South West.

"In August 2020, €5million was made available to West Cork after severe damage. We need a similar response," Deputy O'Sullivan said.

"With more rain and wind forecast unfortunately our regional and local roads are only going to deteriorate further."

Deputy O'Sullivan urged people to report damaged roads caused by flooding to help repairers get a fuller picture of the flood damage.

"Remember to report damaged roads to the local area engineer," he said.

Contact for local area engineers:

Bantry: 027 50058 or bantryroadsoperations@corkcoco.ie
Castletownbere: 027 70017 or castletownbereroadsoperations@corkcoco.ie
Schull: 028 28128 or schullroadsoperations@corkcoco.ie
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Dunmanway: 023 8845209 or dunmanwayroadsoperations@corkcoco.ie
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Stay connected this Christmas



If you are struggling at home or at work with broadband, WiFi or mobile phone service, a West Cork based company promises to solve all

your connectivity issues. Openout offers a bespoke service, tailored to the user's needs, that will overcome any connectivity problems in rural or urban areas. The company services both residential and commercial clients.

Peter Walsh, Sales Director at Openout, says, "There really is no need to suffer on with poor or unreliable broadband service. For much of rural Ireland fibre broadband is still two to three years away so many of our customers are turning to the SpaceX's 'Starlink' service for their broadband.

"Starlink is a low orbit satellite broadband offering and is delivering 150mbps download/30mbps upload no matter what your location. At €65 per month it is now very affordable and SpaceX offers great options on the equipment, with rental from €15 pm and refurbished deals from €225. Plus there's

no minimum contract. At Openout we offer a very reasonable installation service to ensure your 'dishy' is secure and that you're getting the maximum benefit from the your Starlink."

Peter goes on to explain how many of his clients are now getting WiFi Mesh systems installed so that every room in the house gets good WiFi, essential when every home has multiple devices and users and streaming is the norm for entertainment.

"With so many of us now work remotely, we also ensure that your home office has the best connectivity solutions," he says. "Some of our clients have separate offices set up in garden pods, outbuildings and garages so we offer solutions to overcome multiple location requirements.

"This is also true for farms where broadband connectivity is becoming more important as farming methods change.



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Many farms now have solar, feeding and CCTV systems that are all linked into apps and can be monitored remotely. But you need good coverage for that." Openout also installs mobile

phone signal boosters systems, so you never miss a call or text. The company uses only Irish manufactured boosters that are ComReg compliant and come with a two year warranty.

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Clune urges return of abducted children after visit to Ukraine

Deirdre Clune MEP (Ireland South) has urged the unconditional release of detainees, in particular abducted Ukrainian children who were taken by Russian forces, following her visit to Ukraine this week.

The Fine Gael MEP was the only Irish Member of the European Parliament's first delegation to visit Chernihiv and Yahidne in northern Ukraine.

Clune and her MEP colleagues belonging to the Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights visited the region, 150km north of Kiev, to listen to personal testimonies from victims of Russian atrocities on October 22-23.

Upon her return, MEP Clune said, "I am genuinely inspired by the bravery and commitment of the Ukrainian people. They are engaged in a harrowing war of attrition with Russia, while at the same time looking forward towards a European future.

"It is only when you step foot inside Ukraine that you get real sense of an active war being on our doorstep," MEP Clune added.

MEP Clune stressed the European Parliament's firm support to Ukraine's quest

for seeking justice, upholding human rights and consolidating its judicial system.

"Ukraine can count on the EU's full support. Europe stands ready to take a leading role in the international reconstruction efforts to help rebuild a resilient and democratic Ukraine."

"Since the start of Russia's war of aggression, the EU and its Member States have provided around €53 billion in support for Ukraine," MEP Clune noted.

Earlier this month, the European Parliament also voted to approve the setup of a new 'Facility' to support Ukraine's recovery, reconstruction, and modernisation. The Facility will also contribute to good governance, consolidating democracy and human rights, including a rights-based childcare system.

MEP Clune underlined her commitment to work towards effective mechanisms to bridge the existing accountability gaps, including for Russia's crime of aggression through an international tribunal, as well as the urgency to address the situation of civilian detainees, missing persons and abducted children.

OUT & ABOUT IN WEST CORK



West Cork Campus Awards 2023: Back from left: Elizabeth Sexton (Teacher), Erika Francklin, Claire McCarthy, Trina Croston (Nutrition, Health & Wellness Graduates), Vladimir Petrovic (Psychology & Social Studies graduate), Emma Lupton (Teacher). Front from left: Johanne Herlihy (Coordinator – Psychology), Mary O'Donoghue (Coordinator – Nutrition, Health & Wellness), Majella O'Neill Collins (Special Guest), Megan Horgan (Psychology & Social Studies graduate)



Back from left: Emma Lupton (Teacher), Grace O'Shea, Olesia Hubar, Siobhán O'Brien, Vladyslava Halkina, Finola O'Donovan (Medical Administration Graduates), Judy Sexton (Coordinator Business), Aisling Gallagher (Medical Administration graduate) Front from left: Helen Ryan (Principal), Lisa O'Driscoll, Pauline Murphy (Business Administration graduates), Majella O'Neill Collins (Special Guest), Adrian McCarthy (Business Administration graduate)

FARMING

Wet weather proves challenging for farmers

FARMING
IN WEST CORK

Tommy Moyles

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

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The clocks may have gone back an hour but in a lot of West Cork farmyards it feels like they've jumped forward by a month. Not just locally, but across the country, livestock have been housed earlier than usual because of the weather – the ground is saturated.

For most of October two thirds of cattle were housed. I'd expect the like of that from maybe late October or the middle of November but never

this early. The monthly bale count will be starting a little earlier than usual in order to make sure there will be enough fodder stocks to get through to next spring. I've never usually had an issue with it, but it's not something I take for granted either. Silage that was baled wet, tends to have a lower dry matter content so, while you think you may have enough bales in stock, cattle will need to eat more in order to get their dry matter content. What goes in must come out, so slurry levels will have to be watched too. With stock in earlier, there's a chance tanks could come under pressure too. There's no shortage of stuff to keep you on your toes when you're involved in farming.

With two days to go in October, the weather station on Sherkin had recorded 179mm; that put the total for the period from July to now at 573mm. That means that the rain that fell in the last four months is almost half the longterm average rain fall figures recorded in our local weather station. To think there were people looking for a drop of rain back in June. It's been relentless!

Just like March and April, everyone is hoping for a spell of dry weather but it just keeps raining. I'm sure I wasn't the only one that kept looking at the weather apps searching for a dry week. Unlike early in the year there is less chance of ground drying out either. Daylight is shortening so the opportunity for the sun to dry out ground



The stock bulls on Tommy Moyles farm have set their differences aside after their initial introduction.

isn't there in the same way it is in April and May. It can be mentally draining but there's no controlling the weather and perhaps we're lucky that is the case. Can you imagine how impossible it would be to please everyone if we did?

For now, I've accepted that the effective grazing season is over. It's been a grazing season where you had to pull out almost all the tricks to manage the wet conditions and some that you generally wouldn't consider. At its close, cattle were put in smaller groups or let run over a larger area than usual just to get covers graze and keep damage to ground at a minimum.

I've found having too much of a grass-cover in winter can

be a liability, as salt blown in by the wind flattens and burns the grass, leaving you with nothing. While it has been wet, temperatures have remained in the low teens and higher on occasion meaning grass has continued to grow to set the farm up right for next years grazing, a portion of that will have to be grazed off.

Stock bulls

In some paddocks there is far too much grass to leave it over the winter so when we do get a settled dry spell, the plan is to leave out a small group of cows in both yards, just to get things under control. I had planned on keeping the stock bulls out this winter too.

In preparation for this, the

pair had their introductions lately. It was a gradual process. The week of TB testing they were in the shed and got to know each other vocally from across the feed passage. Thankfully the TB test was clear, so the 'getting to know you' process continued outdoors. They were put in paddocks close to each other for a while before being let in together. Initially they surprised me, as they just stood there for 20 minutes sizing each other up but not being too bothered. I was proven wrong and for the next few hours they were belting each other around a field. The next day was when we had almost three inches of rain and the pair of heroes were tucked into the ditch at opposite

corners of the field. The following morning, they had put their differences aside and were grazing peacefully alongside each other.

It's been a few years since I had a pair of older bulls together but it was a regular part of the winter routine here. If there's one bigger than the other, the decision of 'who is boss' is settled quickly, but in this scenario, the two weigh about one ton each. A lot can go wrong when mixing senior bulls so that's why it was better to take my time introducing them. For the next few months they will be on a mini tour of the farm cleaning up paddocks and hopefully the peace will continue.

Irish project to map soil DNA could help prevent disease and improve food security

Irish scientists are on a quest to unlock the secrets of our soils by developing a better understanding of trillions of tiny microbes (the microbiome) that hold the key to better human health and greater food security, while also contributing to the environmental sustainability of Irish agriculture.

Researchers at the VistaMilk SFI Research Centre in Fermoy, in association with researchers in Wexford and Galway, are in the early stages of analysing samples of Irish pasture with the aim of identifying the genetic characteristics of microbes, how they interact with their environment, how they cycle nutrients and help plants grow, and how they develop and transmit anti-microbial resistance (a factor in as many as 700,000 deaths a year

globally).

In a first-of-its-kind effort on a national basis, Irish scientists are broadening their focus on soil microbiome – rather than the far better-known human or animal microbiome. This ground-breaking project employs metagenomics, which allows scientists to study all the tiny life forms in the soil at once and provide a more complete picture.

It can be described as the world's largest jigsaw puzzle, with elements of microbial genetic makeup being categorised and matches sought by machine-learning programmes, aiming to provide a detailed look at the soil's genetic make-up across Ireland – and ultimately develop a quick system to assess soil health.

Rose Edwin, the PhD student

leading the research, believes that an understanding of the soil microbiome is as important as the understandings of food, human and animal microbiomes, but with far greater implications for human health than previously thought, as well as food security, and environmental sustainability.

"Similar to other microbiomes, there are microbes – bacteria, fungi, archaea, protozoa, and viruses – that perform specific tasks and identifying them and their presence in soils is of major importance," Rose said.

"Microbes have symbiotic relationships with plants, playing a pivotal role not only in their growth, but also in their ability to resist disease and withstand drought conditions. The metagenomic jigsaw – where we've sliced and diced the genetic

material in a sample and are now using terabytes of computer processing power to put it all back together – is key to this, with the goal being to develop a testing system that can identify the beneficial microbes in any soil sample we receive."

Rose concluded: "We're also working on identifying anti-microbial resistance (AMR) in the soil microbiome, where through billions of years of evolution, microbes have developed resistance to antibiotics or other drugs. Soils are the source of many of the antibiotics we use clinically and a natural reservoir of AMR but AMR can also be transmitted to the soil, and potentially into the food chain, through human activity.

"The ability to address AMR would prevent large numbers of

"Microbes have symbiotic relationships with plants, playing a pivotal role not only in their growth, but also in their ability to resist disease and withstand drought conditions."

avoidable deaths and would save billions in medical care costs. A report by the World Bank Group notes that a high-case AMR scenario may cause low-income countries to lose more than five per cent of GDP and force more than 28 million people into poverty by 2050."

Beyond human health, plant growth and soil health – all of which are central to the sustainability of Ireland's dairy industry – the soil microbiome also holds the key to how much of society's carbon emissions can be sequestered by the land. Currently it is believed that carbon sequestration in Ireland

could be underestimated and an understanding of how microbes work with plants to sequester carbon could be one of the keys to unlocking this puzzle.

"We already know that white clover works with Rhizobium bacteria to fix nitrogen in the soil, reducing the need for chemical fertilisers and thereby helping reduce agricultural emissions," Rose said. "Identifying the genetic makeup of the microbes that interact with plant species to cycle carbon would greatly advance our understanding of how to encourage the carbon sequestration process."

FARMING

Happy pigs on Dundeady free range farm

If you're travelling along the Wild Atlantic Way, in the vicinity of the Galley Head lighthouse and Long Strand at Castlefreke, you may have noticed the appearance of a small herd of pigs in recent years. Shane Kenneally and his family started breeding pigs on the small holding they have at Dundeady three years ago. They now have 20 pigs in total, which consist of two breeds: Kune Kune (pronounced Cooney Cooney) which originated in New Zealand – Kune Kune in Maori means 'fat and round' – and Oxford Sandy and Blacks, larger than the Kune Kunes and a breed that was almost extinct but has seen a rejuvenation in recent times, as Shane explains to **Tommy Moyles**.

“We were renting nearby in Dirk and we bought this house and an acre around it four years ago. I had kept some hens before and I was always interested in getting some pigs, so I went about developing the area to get it ready for them. I got two pigs and we started breeding from there,” explains Shane.

“Having pigs is very regulated; before we got them, we had to have housing and water inspected by the department and get a herd number. There's a bit of paper work around movements too and they all have to be notified. Recently we filled out the pig census which is done every year.”

The friendly Kune Kune breed is more of a pet pig. “They're a popular breed in the UK but they take longer for pork, up to 15 months, whereas Oxford Sandy and Black could take eight months. They're scarce here but also produce a different type of pork to most pigs,” says Shane.

The Kenneally's originally had two gilts and a boar on hire but ended up buying a two-year-old sow as well and keeping a boar from that litter, which they registered and bred with the original gilts.

They purchased the Sandy and Blacks in order to have a continuous supply of pork. “You can see how much bigger they are,” says Shane. “We have piglets at 12 weeks and the Oxford Sandy and Blacks are almost three times bigger.”

All the Kenneally's pigs are kept outdoors to give them a good high welfare life.

“We have access to another acre-and-a-half and another half-acre close by too, so we'll be able to rotate the pigs around the different spots,” shares Shane. “I'm always looking out for places. I know of some people who use pigs for clearing agro-forestry plots too so I'd be open to that. We can let the pigs in to clear it and it's good for both pigs and the forest.”

Shane will be reseeded plots the pigs have been in with a



Shane with his wife Amy and children Sean (6) and Hope (4) with some of their Kune Kune pigs. Photo: Andy Gibson.

special pig rooting seed mix. These are available in the UK but since Brexit are difficult to import, so a mix will be specially made up by Fruit Hill Farm (fruithillfarm.com) that will contain a mix of turnips and long rooting grasses.

By Shane's own admission, having pigs has been a learning experience. Pigs are inquisitive by nature and, as he has discovered, they are quick to spot a weakness in fencing if one appears.

“Initially we had timber ranch fencing and sheep wire, which was grand at the start, but they eventually started to find their way through it and break out. We changed to an

electric fence and that's good for the most part but you still have to make sure they don't get out. It's all a learning experience and being members of the Irish Pig Society and the British Kune Kune pig society has helped.”

What initially started out as a small interest has evolved into selling meat direct to consumers and restaurants.

“This year we started selling pork on a smaller scale to see what it's like and there's good demand. Our butchers do all the cuts, curing and packaging, so all we have to do is store it. The box weighs 6kg and sells for €75 and contains a variety of cuts including plain and black

pepper sausages, roast pork joint, rashers, ham and loin and collar chops.

Originally, we only sold from home but there are a few local restaurants use it too. The Mountain House, Camus Farm and Dunmore House are in for next year.

In 2024, we'll be ramping things up a bit and we'll have a farm shop open one night a week next year. Long term, I'd like to see it available to buy in shops. That would be a goal anyway.”

For further information check out the Instagram page Dundeady.purebred.kunekunes.



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ENVIRONMENT : Making a difference

In defence of the octopus



THE ANIMAL WORLD

Dr. Jeremy A. Dorman

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

Once received a postcard from a friend in Greece which showed a fisherman bashing an octopus against a pier wall. Jane Grigson wrote, in her excellent *'Fish Cookery'*, that fishermen in the Mediterranean insist an octopus has to be beaten 99 times before it is fit for the pot. I knew a man who tenderised the poor animals by driving his car over them. Octopuses are tough, but they are also the most advanced of the invertebrates; their brain-to-body mass ratio is between that of reptiles and birds. Their intelligence has been compared to that of a cat. Such an animal should be admired and respected, not tortured.

I mention this because the Spanish company Nueva Pescanova is planning to start farming octopuses in the Canary Islands. This is not good news. Octopuses are territorial, anti-social creatures, spending most of their lives hiding alone in rocky crevices. They are recognised as "sentient beings" in the UK Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act 2022. They won't like being imprisoned in crowded tanks. And the method of execution will be immersion in freezing water.

Nueva Pescanova claims their octopus farm will be humane, and will help wild populations that are being over-exploited. But I doubt that – fishermen will keep catching the wild ones (5,000 tonnes are caught annually in the north-west Spanish fishery alone) and as the farmed octopuses will be cheaper and more widely available, more people will want to eat them. The octopuses will be fed on fish, perhaps by-catch, but certainly fish that would have been food for some other wild animal.

Octopuses belong to the Phylum Mollusca, which consists



of seven classes; four of these – the solenogasters, monoplacophorans, chitons and tusk shells – you are unlikely to be aware of. The other three groups are the Bivalvia – cockles, mussels, scallops and oysters; the Gastropoda, which include slugs, snails, limpets and periwinkles; and the Cephalopoda, literally "head-feet" – the squids, cuttlefish and octopuses (octopi is grammatically incorrect – the word comes from Greek, not Latin).

Thanks to their hard shells, molluscs have left an extensive fossil record. Cephalopods probably evolved from a limpet-like creature in the Cambrian Period (540 - 485 million years ago). The shell became taller and taller and the muscular foot turned into muscular arms, so the creature's lifestyle changed from creeping, with the shell protecting it dorsally, to swimming, with the shell horizontal and arms outstretched. In many groups, the shell became spirally coiled. The best known of the fossil cephalopods are the ammonites, which resembled giant flat snails with many arms; they died out at the end of the Cretaceous Period, along with the dinosaurs. Another group with a coiled shell, the nautiloids, also dates back to the

Cambrian, but one family, with about six species, including the beautiful pearly nautilus, survives to this day.

In the other living cephalopods, the shells are internal, greatly reduced or absent altogether. The shell of the cuttlefish, which have ten arms, is the familiar chalky "cuttlebone" often washed up on the shore. In the squids, also with ten arms, the shell is reduced to what looks like a thin, feather-shaped piece of plastic that only a chef or a scientist would ever see. The eight-armed octopuses have no shells at all, except for some deep sea forms, and the strange argonaut, the female of which builds a beautiful structure for brooding her eggs.

There are about 330 species of octopus, ranging in size from the giant Pacific octopus, which can have an arm span of six metres, to the star-sucker pygmy octopus, which grows to no more than two and a half centimetres. Octopuses are found in every ocean and in many different habitats, from tidal pools and coral reefs down to depths of more than 2,000 metres. The octopus most often caught in Ireland is the lesser octopus, *Eledone cirrhosa*, recognised by having just one row of suckers on its arms. Fur-



Sex, like everything else about these animals, is strange and endearing: the male has a specially developed arm called the hectocotylus, which he uses, after a display of colour change or arm waving, to actually hand a package of sperm to his partner, placing it inside her mantle cavity, where fertilisation takes place. Sadly, he then dies.

ther south is the larger *Octopus vulgaris* – the one the Spanish are going to farm – which has two rows of suckers.

Octopuses have blue blood and three hearts – a main one and a pump for each of the gills. They don't, as is often said, have nine brains, but they do have ganglia (nerve centres) in each arm, so they can use their arms without any instructions

from the brain. If an arm is bitten off, it can be regenerated. They move by crawling, or, when speed is required, they can swim backwards by jet propulsion, squirting water out of their funnels. Their eyes are well developed, the structure not dissimilar to ours. Having no skeleton, they can squeeze into tiny spaces, and they are masters of camouflage – changing shape, colour and even the texture of their skin to evade detection. They can use shells, stones and seaweed to make hiding places.

Octopuses have sharp beaks, resembling those of parrots, situated in the centre of the ring of tentacles, and all possess poison glands for killing their prey, though only the four species of blue-ringed octopuses, found in the Indo-Pacific region, are deadly to humans.

Sex, like everything else about these animals, is strange and endearing: the male has a specially developed arm called the hectocotylus, which he uses, after a display of colour change or arm waving, to actually hand a package of sperm to his partner, placing it inside her mantle cavity, where fertilisation takes place. Sadly, he then dies. She lays her eggs – up to 400,000 in the case of the giant Pacific octopus – in her rocky den, and guards, oxygenates and cleans them until they hatch. This can take several months depending on the species, but all that time, the mother octopus doesn't eat, and she too eventually dies. The delightfully cute baby octopuses, most of which won't reach adulthood, never know their parents, so never learn anything from them; if they did, imagine what octopuses could achieve.

Most octopuses live only one or two years, though the giant Pacific species can live for five. Egg brooding and self-starvation which lead to this early death are controlled by hormones produced

in the optic glands, situated near the brain. Experimental removal of these glands results in an octopus eating again, and living longer.

Octopuses can rob lobster pots of bait and lobsters; they often get captured because they think the lobster pot is a good home. In the Mediterranean, fishermen used ceramic pots which the octopuses happily crawl into. They are caught by anglers accidentally – once hauled aboard, they turn red in anger, then, if left on deck, will match the colour of the boat. When released, they swim off in a cloud of ink.

In captivity, octopuses have been known to escape from their tanks, travel across floors and into other tanks containing crabs or fish, and after a good feast, return to their own tanks. They can open screw-top jars and solve puzzles; one was able to cause short circuits by climbing out of his tank and squirting water at the overhead lamp. They have short and long-term memories and can recognise individual people. And who could forget Paul, the German octopus oracle? He correctly predicted the results of the World Cup in 2010, before dying in his tank, aged two and a half. A clairvoyant octopus in Japan was equally successful in the 2018 World Cup, but afterwards, he was eaten. (Their success was, of course, pure chance).

Octopus as food was not, until recently, especially popular in Ireland, but then I remember a time when there was hardly a local market for edible crabs, let alone octopuses. We don't need to eat octopuses, but I fear that inexpensive farmed octopus will, like farmed salmon, turn a luxury into a commonplace food item, while adding to the environmental problems inherent in the aquaculture industry, and inflicting yet more suffering on one of our most charming and intelligent fellow creatures.

To those still planning to create their own *pulpo a la gallega*, or perhaps *htapothi krasato*, and so remind themselves of sunny holidays in Spain or Greece, I suggest watching Craig Foster's wonderful film *'My Octopus Teacher'*. If you have any heart at all, you will never eat octopus again.

DO CHONTAE DO GHUTH

Tá tionchar ag an Athrú Aeráide ar an timpeallacht mórthimpeall orainn ar bhealaí a rachaidh i bhfeidhm ar ár saolta go léir, ach le chéile is féidir linn difríocht a dhéanamh.

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ENVIRONMENT : Making a difference

Heating your home (part II)



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.

So by now, as the nights draw in, I can see the fires are lit and we can no longer rely on wrapping up with blankets and jumpers to keep warm. This month, I'll talk a bit more about heat pumps and other forms of heating. Firstly, I'd like to share from my family's own retrofit journey.

I moved to West Cork with my young family in 2001 and, like many blow-ins, had the dream of an idyllic life in the countryside. Having fallen for the charms of an old farmhouse near Clonakilty, I had taken on my own experiment in retrofitting – a fairly typical West Cork home, but not without its challenges. The original house, which dates from the 1930s was built from stone and rubble, quite typical to the area and there had been an extension using cavity wall construction added to the rear and the side. So, we had a mix of old and new and started with insulating the attics as much as we could. We also installed a solar water heating system around 2003 that is still working steadily; and then we added two efficient and clean wood stoves.

When we moved in, there was a big oil-fired Stanley range in the kitchen at the

gable end of the house. This was one of the first things to go because it was very inefficient and noisy and sometimes smelly, and replaced it with a more efficient oil boiler located in the adjacent shed. The added benefit was to free up the gable wall of the house which is south facing, and allowed us to install large fully glazed french doors letting in light and heat from the sun. This switch together with the solar water heating system and the wood stoves resulted in significant savings on our oil bills.

Ten years ago, we had the opportunity to participate in an early pilot of the deep energy retrofit programme with funding from SEAI. As part of the project, we pumped the cavity walls of the extension and replaced a few windows and doors. We also sealed the fabric of the house as much as possible which, together with our advanced ventilation system, meant we reduced heat losses associated with draughts while maintaining good indoor air quality.

The big jump came with the installation of an air source heat pump system with modern heating controls, the replacement of some of our old radiators, and a modest solar photovoltaic system. All together, this retrofit journey brought our house's BER rating to an A3. In time, we will finish upgrading the house by externally insulating it and replacing the older windows when they come to the end of their lifetime, probably within the next five years. More solar photovoltaic is also on the cards as this will help charge our new electric car.

So what is a heat pump and how does it work?

A heat pump works like a fridge in reverse, it's powered by electricity and it extracts heat from the atmosphere and then converts it into heat to heat your home and produce hot water. There are a few different types of heat pumps – air-to-water, air-to-air and ground source heat pump being the most common. In Ireland, most heat pumps being installed are air-to-water. The unit on the outside looks like an air conditioning unit.

Most heat pump systems have integrated heating controls, helping you to programme the heating to tie in with your need for hot water and heating of your home.



An air-to-water heat pump looks like an air conditioning unit and works like a fridge in reverse.

We heat our hot water at night time, when electricity costs are a lot cheaper. Heat pumps work best at creating heat at a low temperature and the best strategy is to set the controls to keep the house at a good temperature throughout the heating season. In new homes, heat pumps work very well with underfloor heating systems. In retrofits, you may need to replace some of your radiators with ones that work at a low temperature e.g. aluminum radiators that are extra large.

Also, importantly, if you want to install a heat pump, your home needs first to be adequately insulated. If you were to install a heat pump into a house with single glazing and low level of insulation, the heat pump would have to work extra hard and would mean you'd be wasting money by paying very high electricity bills. So

before you install a heat pump, and as a condition for a grant worth up to €6,500 through SEAI for installing one, you will need to do a technical assessment. This is completed by a technical advisor registered with SEAI and they will let you know if you need to look at insulation or other measures first.

A list of technical advisors is available on the SEAI website alongside all information about grants. We are putting together a list of West Cork contractors which will be available to homeowners through the Cheris project.

New low interest retrofit loans are on the way:

Last week, we received news that a new low interest loan will be made available early next year to help homeowners to finance retrofits. These

loans will be at a low interest rate (details have not yet been released) and will be government-backed through the SBCI. Together with the grants available from the SEAI, these low cost loans will make investing in deep energy retrofits more accessible for more homeowners. The application process, we are told, will be kept simple so as not to put people off applying. We will keep you informed as more details are released early next year.



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 have now completed their training course to deliver a home energy upgrade information service using a new digital toolkit. The service will be piloted this month through a series of online and in person clinics to help individuals who are searching for advice on how to get started on their home energy upgrade journey.



It is really important if burning timber that it is well seasoned and that you use an efficient stove.

OUT & ABOUT IN WEST CORK



West Cork Campus Awards 2023: Back from left: Mary O'Donoghue (Coordinator - Nutrition, Health & Wellness), Johanne Herlihy (Coordinator - Psychology), Con Barnett (Healthcare graduate), Frank O'Neill, Una O'Donovan, Luke O'Donovan (Horticulture graduates)

Front from left: Máire O'Sullivan (Coordinator of the West Cork Campus), Margaret Cronin (Healthcare Teacher), Majella O'Neill Collins (Special Guest), Michael Burke (Coordinator - Horticulture)

ENVIRONMENT : Making a difference

Public asked to share their views on Climate Action Plan for Cork County

Cork County Council is seeking public engagement on the draft of its new five-year Climate Action Plan. The ambitious plan shows how the Council can work to influence, facilitate and coordinate the climate actions of communities and stakeholders. It also details how the Council will take direct climate action, to meet national targets, in respect of its own activities and assets.

The draft Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 is open for public consultation until Monday, November 27, 2023. The plan details how Cork County Council will work with its communities to advocate for change as well as with national government and state agencies to deliver climate action. It contains defined goals, objectives and actions across the themes of community, biodiversity, natural environment, heritage, land use, economy, transportation, built environment and waste.

The plan also sets out the actions that Cork County Council will take across its own services

to meet national emissions targets and to mitigate against the impacts of climate change. This includes the Strategic Environmental Assessment report (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment Natura Impact report (AA).

The priorities include:

- Cork County Council reducing its direct carbon emissions by 51 per cent by 2030
- Cork County Council increasing its energy efficiency by 50 per cent by 2030
- Establishing Macroom as Cork County's first Decarbonising Zone – a testbed for what is possible for decarbonisation and climate action at a local and community level
- Assisting in the delivery of the climate neutrality objective at local and community levels
- Seeking funding for the plan from internal, external and private sources including the EU and energy performance contracts with third party contractors.

The Mayor of the County of



Cork, Cllr Frank O'Flynn said, "Climate change is one of the most critical, long-term global challenges of our time and its effects are already impacting Cork County. Storm Babet is a clear example of this, we saw a month's worth of rainfall in 24 hours causing unprecedented flooding and damage to homes, businesses and

roads. We have already seen sea levels in the Cork Harbour area rise by 40 cm since 1842, average rainfall increase and record-breaking summer temperatures. Heatwaves, droughts, flooding and coastal erosion are expected to occur more frequently into the future because of climate change. It is essential that we all work together to minimise the impact and to safeguard the future of generations to come. I'm encouraging individuals, communities and businesses to engage with this plan and to have their voices heard."

Chief Executive of Cork County Council, Valerie O'Sullivan added, "Cork County Council has a role both as a community leader, in setting an example by adopting our own policies and plans to affect climate change, as well as encouraging and influencing others. As a local authority, we are already well positioned at the forefront of climate action, playing a significant role in delivering adaptation and mitigation measures at local and community levels. This Climate

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Action Plan builds on what has already been achieved and offers an opportunity to bring together critical stakeholders across communities and all sectors setting out a vision for a climate neutral future."

Cork County Council will track and monitor progress to deliver on the climate objectives throughout the lifetime of the plan. The Council will also prepare an Annual Implementation programme which will detail the specific projects to be undertaken whilst taking any new national developments into account.

The draft Cork County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 is currently available to view with submissions accepted until 4pm Monday, November 27. Submission must be made online by visiting www.corkcoco.ie.

The public consultation forms part of the second stage of the plan. The third stage will take the submissions into account before the finalised Climate Action Plan is adopted by Council in January. Cork County Council is required by statute to adopt the plan before February 24, 2024.

I'm continuing to lead on the European Parliament's work to protect our oceans and waterways, to restore nature and to reduce the amount of plastic and packaging waste that is created.

As a lifelong peace activist, I am working hard to ensure that the EU is a leader in human rights and peace building worldwide.

Please contact me and my team if there is anything we can do for you.

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ENVIRONMENT : Making a difference

Brent Goose – a winter visitor



This month, committee member and National Parks and Wildlife Ranger, **Dave Rees** writes about one of our winter visitors, the Brent Goose.

One of the true sounds of the winter for me is the sound of a flock of Brent Geese quietly grazing on the edge of one of our estuaries. Their gentle 'prut, prut' seems to me like a sound of contentment. In recent years they have become a more frequent sight in West Cork, as their distribution seems to be expanding south and west. Small wintering flocks have become established at Courtmacsherry and Timoleague. They will be a more familiar sight to people that live a little further east and are well known around Cork Harbour. This is nothing though compared to the numbers of Brent Geese that are found in Dublin, which can lay claim to being the Brent Goose capital of the world. Dublin Bay holds more than 7,000 Brent Geese each winter, but it is the sight of many of these birds flying in from the bay to feed and roost on the many playing fields in the city that can captivate

Dubliners.

Three separate sub-species of Brent Goose are known to occur. In Ireland we mainly see the pale-bellied Brent Goose. These breed mainly in Arctic Canada, northern Greenland and Spitzbergen. They travel to Ireland, northern Scotland and Denmark for the winter. Further east, the dark-bellied version is far more common. These birds breed in Arctic Russia and winter in Britain and western Europe. The third sub-specie, the Black Brant, can be found along the western coast of USA. Although the pale-bellied sub-species is the one we commonly see, a few individuals of the two other sub-species are usually found in Ireland each winter.

The Irish wintering population has seen an increase in numbers over the years with over 40,000 birds over-wintering here. That said, in recent years there has been a slight decline, but numbers may fluctuate depending on how successful a breeding season the birds have had, and whether the number of juvenile birds increases the winter population. The birds usually arrive in Ireland during October. They will gather at Strangford Lough when they first arrive, before dispersing to other sites around the country. Big numbers can be found at Strangford Lough, Lough Foyle, Dublin Bay, the Wexford Slob and Castlemaine Harbour. The birds tend to stay in family groups, with the juveniles identifiable by the white edges around the feathers on their backs and the lack of a thin white neck collar that the adults

have. The family group generally stays together throughout the winter while they find favoured feeding areas. The birds can sometimes become aggressive towards others if they come too close to their feeding area.

There are a number of current projects studying Brent Geese and how they use sites around the Irish coast. This has led to some birds being caught and fitted with colour rings on their legs. The colour rings are a unique combination that can identify individual birds. The Irish Brent Goose Research Group has a website (www.irishbrentgoose.com) where you can find out more about the projects as well as reporting any sightings of colour ringed birds that you come across.

So, when you're out for a walk over the winter around any of our estuaries, keep an eye (and ear) out for Brent Geese, and you may also be able to contribute to our knowledge of the birds if you spot some colour rings.

Branch News

Upcoming events being held by the Branch are:

Sunday, November 12
Rosscarbery

Wednesday, November 22
Talk 'Fair Seas' by Rosalind Skillen of BirdWatch Ireland

Visit our website 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@bird-watchirelandwestcork.ie.



Brent Goose with colour ring. All pics: Nicholas Mitchell



Brent Geese coming in

For more information about the Branch, contact Fiona O'Neill at secretary@bird-watchirelandwestcork.ie.
FB @BirdWatchIrelandWestCork
Twitter @BWWestCork

Timoleague NS picks up regional award at Tidy Towns for Educational Garden

Timoleague NS received the Regional Award for 'Best School in the South West and Mid West' in the Tidy Towns Awards 2023. The school has a proud history of school garden and biodiversity projects and has delivered a food growing project each Spring for the past 11 years called 'Learn at School, Grow at Home'.

The school secured extra land to develop a Biodiversity Garden, which is now known as Timoleague Educational Garden. What was once a piece of wasteland skirting the estuary is slowly being regenerated into a buzzing insect habitat.

Principal Norma Harte says, "The aim of this project is to de-

velop an educational space for adults and children, and more importantly to build a community social hub.

"The Timoleague Educational Garden is a project, which provides a hands-on learning experience to children and adults about sustainable gardening practices and basic food-growing skills. Studies have shown that gardening is transformative for people's mental and physical health so this project will have a positive impact on the locality and enhance the biodiversity of the area for future generations.

"It was an honour to have our work this area acknowledged."

Proud gardeners Paddy Hayes and Colm O'Sullivan from Senior Infants, Timoleague N.S in the school's Educational Garden.



ENVIRONMENT : Making a difference

Opportunity for a new Greenway in Clonakilty

Cork South West Deputy Christopher O'Sullivan will push for a new greenway in Clonakilty, stretching from the rear of the Clonakilty Park Hotel to Springmount stud.

Known as 'The Watery Boreen', this ancient road has been overgrown for years. Recent efforts by Irish Water have revitalised the path.

"The groundwork has been completed and now all that's needed is a tarred surface to transform this vision into a reality for cyclists and walkers alike," Deputy O'Sullivan said.

"It offers a lovely countryside walk and cycle and provides a unique perspective on the beauty of Clonakilty.

"Through water mains replacement, we cleared the way, installed drainage pipes,

and added a layer of gravel and hardcore. The process also uncovered stunning old stone walls, adding to the charm of the route.

The project is now in the hands of the new management at Cork County Council. Deputy O'Sullivan said he will present this initiative as one of the first under their guidance.

"I am dedicated to enhancing accessibility and recreational, environmentally friendly offerings in West Cork," Deputy O'Sullivan said.

In addition to this project, Deputy O'Sullivan remains committed to advocating for the Clonakilty to Inchydoney walkway.

"I will also continue my push for that badly needed footpath to Ring village," he said.



Green Party representative calls for the Gearagh to be made a national park

Harriet Burgess, who is standing for election to Cork County Council, for the Macroom LEA, in 2024, has called for the Gearagh to be made a national park.

Harriet welcomed Minister Eamon Ryan and his team to the Gearagh, a nature reserve located outside Macroom, on Friday October 20, 2023, as part of the Green Party Convention, which took place in the Clayton Hotel in Cork City.

Speaking at the Convention, Harriet stated:

"Protecting biodiversity in the Lee Valley is another ex-

ample of why we need a green voice at the table in our local politics."

"The Gearagh is an incredible nature reserve, located just outside Macroom town, which has not been adequately promoted or protected to date. Kevin Corcoran, a local ecologist, and expert on the Gearagh has called for the area to be made a national park, which I fully support."

"The Gearagh is unique as it is one of three inland river deltas in the world. Recently, diverse species have been spotted here that are extremely rare to see in Ireland – the



Harriet Burgess and Eamon Ryan at the Gearagh

bittern and the penduline tit, for example."

"I was delighted to welcome Minister Ryan to the area and to open dialogue on the potential of the area, focusing on tourism in particular. I know that my home area has

so much potential as a tourist destination – if elected I will ensure we have adequate greenways and footpaths so that tourists can explore the unique biodiversity of the Lee Valley, whilst ensuring no damage is done to nature."

Clochán Uisce: Listen to the rivers

Samhain is upon us and this year's theme for the Samhain parade in Clonakilty is 'Listen to the land speak'. Samhain is the time when the veil between the living world and spirit world is intertwined and the connection to the otherworld and the mystical beings that inhabit it is at its strongest. This year's parade will have a river theme and many colourful fish and river creatures are sure to be seen.

Our rivers are steeped in the stories of the gods and mystical

creatures and were seen as a conduit to the otherworld. In fact a great deal of our rivers are named after the gods of the Tuatha Dé Danann (The people of the goddess Danu). The River Danube, which is the second longest river in Europe, is said to be named after Danu and her people gave names to Irish rivers such as the river Erne named after the goddess Eiru and our local river Bandon known as Ban-Dea, the goddess river. The river Shannon and the river Boyne both take their

names from goddesses too, for it was Sionainn who brought about the creation of the great river Shannon, as it was Bóann who brought about the creation of the magical river Boyne.

Both women sought divine inspiration or mystical enlightenment from the wells of knowledge to better the lives of their people and both gave their lives to the water, as it rose up from deep within the otherworld and caused a giant wave that formed the rivers as we know them today. The rivers

brought the new and prosperous life that they were seeking for their people and the magical hazelnuts that grew at the wells turned the headwaters crimson and were eaten by the salmon, which dispersed this wisdom far along the river system. It is said the characteristic spots on a salmon's back and its crimson underbelly were as a result of eating the magical hazelnuts.

Hazel trees and apple trees were sacred in our ancient culture and were often planted at the headwaters of rivers.

Christopher O'Sullivan TD

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

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Games associated with Samhain such as apple bobbing, circling an apple on a string hung from a doorway whilst trying to take a bite and the roasting of hazelnuts over a fire and betting which will pop from its husk first, all have their origins in our

reverence of trees and rivers and the link to the spirit world. Samhain marks the start of winter when the natural world quietsens a little.

If we take time to listen to the land speak who knows what stories can be heard!

ENVIRONMENT : Making a difference

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Mapping a greener tomorrow for Ballydehob

Cork Nature Network, in partnership with Community Foundation Ireland, is pleased to announce a Community Information and Consultation event for the development of the Ballydehob Biodiversity Action Plan on Saturday November 11, from 2pm in Ballydehob Community Hall.

A biodiversity action plan is a strategic document that outlines specific actions and measures to protect, conserve, and enhance the natural environment and its diverse species. It serves as a roadmap for the conservation and sustainable management of ecosystems, ensuring their long-term survival and the well-being of the communities that rely on them.

Acknowledging the significance of community participation and dedication in shaping these plans and executing nature-related initiatives, Cork Nature Network has arranged an inclusive event, open to all. This aims to offer residents, local groups, and various stakeholders the opportunity to contribute their knowledge, ideas, and concerns.

The event will include presentations from Cork Nature Network and the Local Authority Waters Programme as well as a facilitated open forum discussion to harvest views and ideas from the community. Attendees will have the chance to learn about the current state of biodiversity, understand the challenges it faces, and actively partic-

ipate in shaping the future direction of conservation efforts.

The project is led by Cork Nature Network, a non-profit organisation dedicated to the protection and restoration of our natural heritage. Community Foundation Ireland, a philanthropic organisation committed to supporting positive change in local communities, has provided funding for this initiative.

"We are aware of the great work being done by a wide range of different groups in Ballydehob and believe that involving the whole community in collaboration to develop the Ballydehob Biodiversity Action Plan is crucial for its success," said Tara O'Donoghue, project manager with Cork Nature Network. "By harnessing the collective knowledge and passion of local residents, we can create a plan that truly reflects the needs and priorities of the community, with actions that can be feasibly implemented over the coming years, ensuring a sustainable future for Ballydehob's unique biodiversity."

All members of the community are invited to attend the Community Information and Consultation Day and contribute to the development of the Ballydehob Biodiversity Action Plan. Together, we can make a positive impact on our environment and secure a vibrant and diverse natural heritage for future generations.

Launch of biodiversity activity book as young voices heard

Fiach O Donoghue, (11), from Courtmacsherry, is one of a group of young people, whose call for action on biodiversity loss has been heeded by the government.

One year after the inaugural Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss, where a group of children and teenagers, aged between seven and sixteen, made recommendations to the government on tackling the biodiversity crisis in Ireland, the group met again recently with Minister of State Michael Noonan to discuss the progress. The minister has committed to establishing a new youth forum on biodiversity and including the voice of young people in decisions on biodiversity.

Fiach, a student at Gurraneasig National School in Kilbrittain, says his favourite key message from the recommendations that the young people made to government is the one he came up with: 'All decisions must take biodiversity into account'. He would like to see biodiversity education made mandatory for all young people. "Children can't connect with something they don't know about; if kids have more chances to learn about nature and the biodiversity crisis they will want to protect our environment and consider nature when making choices and decisions."

The aspiring marine biologist feels very passionately that children should have a say in their own future.

"It will be our lives that will be affected the most and just because we're younger doesn't mean we can't come up with intelligent ideas and make good decisions," he says. "It's not just about biodiversity though, I think kids should be listened to on many other topics. I think we were actually listened to by the government because at the end of the assembly Minister Malcolm Noonan came to listen to our calls to actions and at the reunion this month he came to give us an update on what had been done in the last year and one of those things is creating a

youth biodiversity forum, and everybody was happy to hear that."

One of the calls to action in the young people's report to government was to have biodiversity education resources designed by young people and this led to the TRYBE project (Teaching Resources for Youth-informed Biodiversity Education). A team of young people from the assembly, including Fiach, worked together over the last few months to help the adult team from MaREI in UCC design education on biodiversity resources.

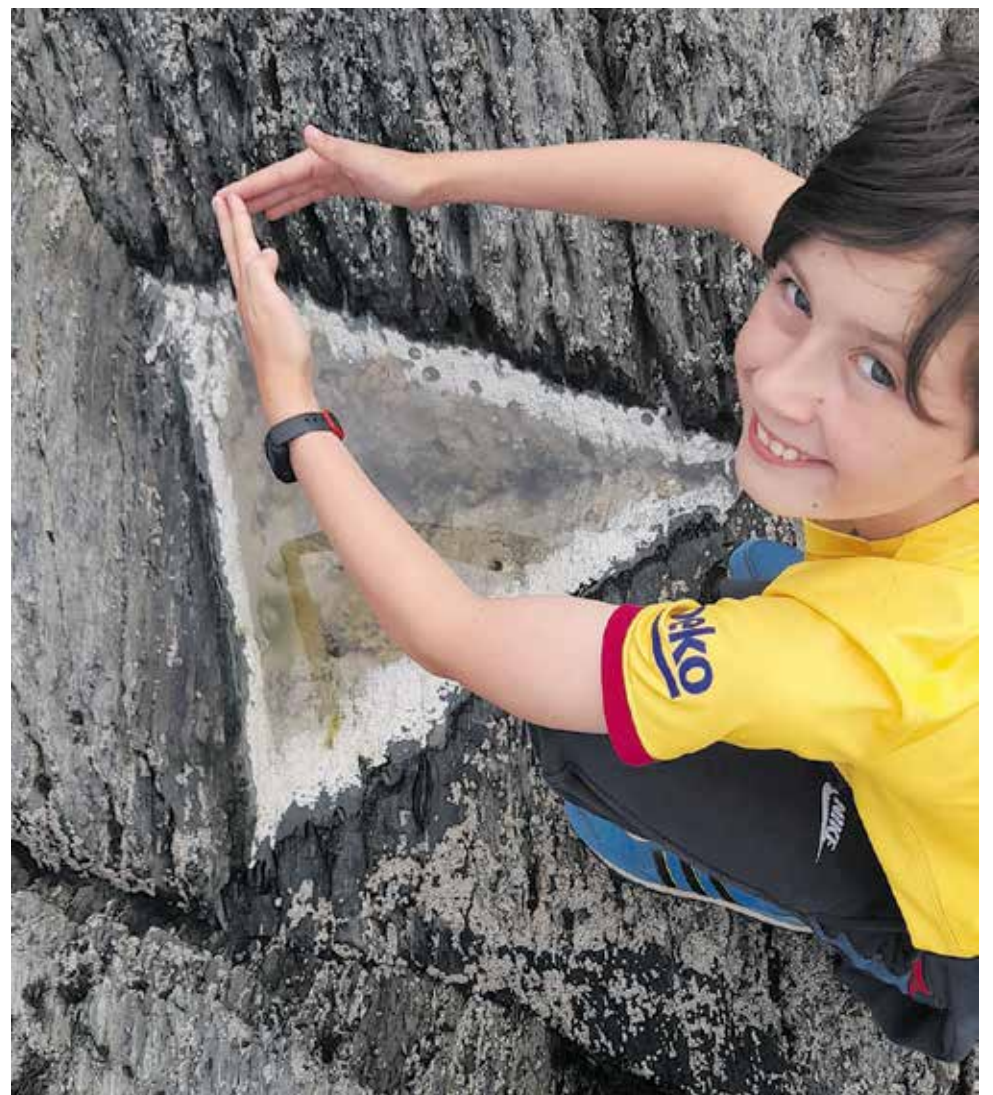
The resulting biodiversity activity book, which highlights a combination of activities and ways to connect with nature, will be launched during Science Week in November. It's suitable for older national school children.

Fiach, who has always loved nature, is a member of the Irish Whale and Dolphin group and a

Young Marine Biologists member. "I did seal rescue training with my mum and sometimes help out with rescuing pups that need to go to Seal Rescue Ireland." Last year he was on the Green Schools Committee. He also loves playing GAA and Kuk sool won.

Fiach would like to see "more young people get involved in decision-making and for governments to work harder and do what is needed to protect biodiversity and our future."

When he grows up, he wants to live in a world where nature is always considered in decisions and where people treat earth like a member of the family – a hope that was a key message from the assembly.



FOOD, HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

Long-serving foster carers honoured with a mayoral reception

Deputy Lord Mayor of Cork City Cllr. Colette Finn and Deputy Mayor of Cork County Cllr. Jack White played host to over 200 foster carers who have given years of their lives to help children and young people, and invited them to Rochestown Park Hotel for lunch on October 19. The large crowd were entertained by magician Ger Kearney, while The Loungeman created a wonderful atmosphere.

The event was to recognise that fostering is key to ensuring that children who need alternative care are cared for in a safe, secure and loving home environment.

Tusla's fostering service relies on families and individuals in our community who are willing to share their homes and lives with children and young people whose parents are unable to care for them, and to work with a range of professionals to support the children in their care.

The lunch was held to thank foster carers across Cork city and county for the invaluable care they provide on a daily basis to support children and young people, but also to provide them with the opportunity to meet and connect with other carers and to feel proud of what they do.

Currently, there are 450 families who foster in Cork.

A gallery of quotes, reflections and poems about fostering and care experiences was displayed on the day and each household was presented with a teapot from Newbridge Silverware as a token of appreciation.

Devina Seward, Social Worker Team Leader, Tusla Fostering Unit, and organiser of the event, paid tribute to foster carers, "Foster carers do such incredible work on a daily basis.

"It was great to see so many foster carers here at the Rochestown Park Hotel. The lunch was just our small way of saying thank you to them for the continued support they give to many children and young people in Cork.

"Many foster carers spoke about the positive impact fostering has had on them and their own children. Fostering can be an incredibly rewarding experience. Anyone considering fostering a child or young person, can contact Tusla to find out more, or join one of our online information sessions."

Tusla is holding two online information sessions in November for anyone interested in becoming a foster carer. To register or to find out more information about fostering, visit fostering.ie, call freephone 1800 226 771 or email tusla.fostering@tusla.ie.



(l-r) Donal and Sally Daly from Skibbereen received a certificate for their more than 20 years of fostering service. They are pictured with Susanne Pelican Kelly, Principal Social Worker, and Kieran Campbell, Child Care Manager at Tusla. Pic: Magda Lukas.



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TUSLA
An Ghníomhaireacht um
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Child and Family Agency

Musical coffee mornings for creative carers

Composer and musician Justin Grounds will be offering a series of weekly coffee mornings for carers this November at the Community Arts Centre in Clonakilty.

The sessions will be an informal and relaxed opportunity to connect with other carers in the community and explore ways to bring music and creativity into our daily lives with those we care for. Discussing and sharing music choices, finding out how to make playlists and share them with loved ones, exploring rhythms and melodies, and even the chance to try out some simple musical instruments.



Justin Grounds

Free of charge for carers. Wednesdays in November, 10.30am-12pm at upstairs at the Community Arts Centre, Asna Sq, Clonakilty.

FOOD, HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

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A FLAVOUR OF WEST CORK RECIPE

Karen Austin

It's without a doubt that we are in the soup and stew season. So much rain! We came home from Spain – 24 days without wearing a raincoat – which was glorious, and back to the rain and it's hardly been off since. It didn't take long to put the socks, boots and jeans on and reorientate to winter mode.

To avoid talking about the weather and the terrible state of the world we're going to talk lentils. The fast food of the legume world and perfect for this time of the year.

Lentils are a great source of plant based protein and fibre, full of phytochemicals which protect us against chronic diseases and inflammation. They make a slow burn, sate your appetite for longer and don't cause sugar spikes

Lentils have been around for along time. These edible legumes originated in Asia and North Africa. They grow in pods – two lentils in each of the pods when I tried growing them – and a cousin of peas. Growing lentils in Ireland can be successful, up to a point. I grew an experimental patch of beluga lentils but the yield was not great – apart from the aforementioned two lentils in each pod, it was difficult to dry them and shucking them took hours. We harvested enough velvety fresh lentils for one dinner which was satisfying and delicious,

but I certainly wouldn't make a career out of it. Fortunately they are very affordable and a kilo goes a long way.

The beauty of cooking lentils is that you don't have to think ahead. There's no need to soak them, they can be cooked directly from dry and only take between ten and twenty five minutes depending which lentil you are using.

Lentils come in various colours and varieties – yellow, red, green, brown, beluga, Puy and each has it's own best use.

Red lentils are great for soups and dals, perfect for family members that say they don't like them as they actually disappear into an attractive orangey soup.

Brown, Puy, beluga and green hold their shape to varying degrees.

The brown and green lentils turn up a lot in Greek and middle eastern recipes and yellow lentils are used to make dals, fava and pease pudding. Puy and beluga are prized for their pertness and popular in salads as they can tossed with other ingredients without losing their definition.

This month's recipe uses green lentils and comes from the Lebanon. It's a comforting combo of gently spiced lentils and pasta which could be lunch or dinner. I couldn't resist adding roasted pumpkin to the original recipe which you could leave out but it adds another layer of flavour and improves the colour scheme which is a good thing as we eat with our eyes as well as our bellies!

Rishta – Lebanese Lentil and Pasta Soup with Pumpkin

Ingredients:

- 300g pumpkin or butternut
- 150g green lentils
- 1 large onion

- 75mls olive oil
- 800mls vegetable stock
- 100g broken ribbon pasta, ie pappardelle or tagliatelle
- 2-3 cloves garlic
- 1 tsp salt
- 25g butter
- A good handful chopped fresh coriander
- 3tsp ground coriander
- 1 tsp ground cumin

Method:

Put the lentils into a pot and cover with 450mls water. Bring to the boil, reduce the heat, cover then simmer for 15-20 minutes or until they are tender. Drain the lentils.

Pre heat the oven 180°C.

Peel and dice the pumpkin or butternut squash into 1-2cm cubes. Toss with a little olive oil and salt then roast on a tray for 15-20 minutes or until tender. Put aside.

Peel and chop the onion. Heat a medium-large saucepan, add enough olive oil to cover the bottom and the chopped onions. As soon as the onions are sizzling away reduce the heat and cook for five minutes or until the onions are translucent. Add the lentils to the onions, mix well, cook for a minute or two then stir in the stock. When the pot comes to the boil add the pasta and

some salt. Check the cooking time for the pasta and time accordingly. Usually around six minutes.

Peel and chop the garlic. Melt the butter in a small pan then stir in the garlic. Cook it gently for a minute then stir in the ground coriander, chopped coriander (save a little for garnish) and the ground cumin, cook gently for a couple of minutes then take off the heat. When the pasta is cooked stir in the spice mix and the roasted pumpkin. Check the seasoning and serve.

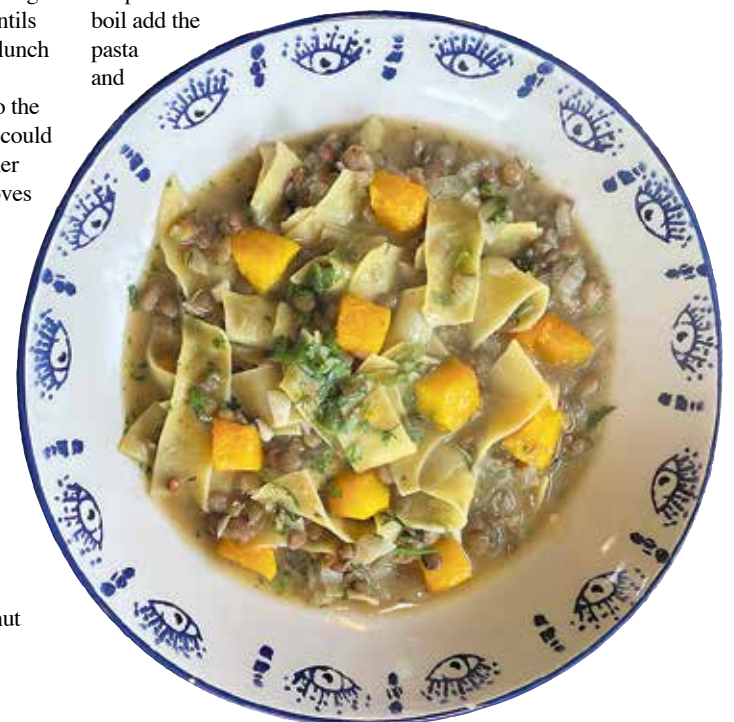
This soup thickens as it stands so you might need to thin it a little with some more vegetable stock or water.

NB: if you want to make this vegan just swap out the butter for olive oil.

The cooking classes are fully booked at the moment but if you would like to go on the mailing list please let me know.

Happy November!
Karen

Lettercollum Kitchen Project,
Timoleague
info@lettercollum.ie
www.lettercollum.ie
0238846251



Strategic collaboration between Teagasc and SETU to enhance the growing malting and brewing and distilling sector in Ireland

Ireland's South-East is Ireland's principal area for the production of grain for the drinks sector, is also home to a national cluster of breweries, distilleries and malt houses as well to the country's only 'ab initio' honours degree programme in Brewing and Distilling.

Teagasc and South East Technological University (SETU), signed off on an exciting new strategic collaboration this week to create a national brewing and distilling innovation hub in the region. Building on existing expertise, the two organisations will work closely together, through the new National Cen-

tre for Brewing and Distilling (NCBD) based in Oak Park in Carlow, on a range of initiatives including enhanced industry engagement, collaborative research, education, training and community engagement. It is anticipated that the partnership will create significant and co-ordinated efforts to support the

continued sustainable growth of the malting, brewing and distilling sector in Ireland with targeted 'through-to-impact' research and industry supports and will grow educational opportunities and interdisciplinary research activity in this sector.

Continued on next page...

FOOD, HEALTH & LIFESTYLE



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New Irish cookbook to launch at Glenilen in November

Renowned cook and baker Cherie Denham will launch her new book 'The Irish Bakery' at Glenilen Farm, Drimoleague on Thursday, November 23 at 7.30pm.



Ireland's remarkable culinary heritage is brought together through over 80 recipes within 352 pages, including both traditional bakes and new ideas for the contemporary home cook. This richly illustrated volume is an indispensable resource for beginner bakers, expert cooks and lovers of Irish culture alike. The book contains a host of tips and tricks to help you get the best from

your bakes.

The evening will be hosted by publisher and photographer Andrew Montgomery, with tastings, tea and coffee served. Reserve your space by emailing info@glenilefarm.com or What'sApp 086 2388846.

The evening is free to attend and all donations collected on the night will be given to Marymount Hospice.




Strategic collaboration in distilling sector... *cont'd from previous page*

The NCBD will be a domestic centre of excellence for brewing and distilling with facilities and staff for the development and protection of these industries. Currently in the first phase of development, the focus is on the operation of facilities for testing raw materials for malting and the production of bespoke batches of specialised malts for the craft beer sector or for test batches

for the larger distilling companies. Plans for the second phase are underway, which includes securing additional funds for the requisite equipment to support a full suite of facilities to support pilot scale brewing and distillation research, as required by industry. This will enable the industry to create opportunities to address their current challenges, train and upskill their staff, while also allowing

the adaption of technology to enhance consumer demands, competitiveness and sustainability. In addition to targeted research projects, funded via public/commercial funds, the ambition of the NCBD is to support the education, training, research and innovation within the drinks industry encompassing all stages and stakeholders from education, agronomy, production to finished product.



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According to Ms. Lisa Ryan, NCBD manager, "This collaboration makes perfect sense since both SETU and the National Centre for Brewing and Distilling (NCBD) at Teagasc have a shared goal of enhancing and developing the next generation of Maltster's, Brewers and Dis-

tillers to support these industries who have created such exciting career opportunities in Ireland. The NCBD; SETU partnership will support hands on training through the NCBD giving the graduates a distinct advantage when entering the marketplace'.

For more information on the

NCBD, contact Lisa Ryan at the National Centre for Brewing and Distilling and to learn more about the SETU honours degree in Brewing and Distilling, visit the programme page on the SETU website www.itcarlow.ie.

FOOD, HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

Pushing the boundaries of baking

When Lettercollum Kitchen Project retired at the end of last year, Clonakilty mourned the loss of its healthy gourmet go-to. The space sat empty for a spell and tummies rumbled and grumbled but then the arrival of spring brought hope of a new artisan bakery and deli moving in. After months of anticipation, the scent of freshly made sourdough loaves drew in the crowds, as Pike Deli finally opened its doors. Eight months on and its hearty sandwiches on homemade focaccia bread, healthy salads, and selection of devilishly moreish pastries have become part of the fabric of Clonakilty life. It's been a longterm dream, now realised, for couple Ryan Hoy and Ann Marie Menzies, who are looking forward to their first Christmas season together in their busy deli and bakery that embraces sustainable practices.

Ryan Hoy honed his skills in the kitchen working his way from Cafe Paradiso in Cork, through restaurants in Berlin and London, and back to Ireland to a position as head chef at the Bakestone Cafe in Carrigtwohill. After stints in a number of bakeries and a Riot Rye course in Cloughjordan, an obsession with sourdough gradually bloomed, and with it, the determination to open an eatery with partner Ann Marie, serving up tasty sandwiches on his own homemade breads.

Ann Marie, a student of Art at Limerick, ended up down a foodie path, spending over ten years working with Toonsbridge Dairy and The Real Olive Company and becoming an expert in the art of cheese and charcuterie. She is the creative behind the classy aesthetic at Pike Deli and heads up front of house, as well as looking after personnel and administration.

Just before the pandemic, the couple, who now have a five-year-old daughter, bought a house on a two-and-a-half acre site in Drinagh, where they hope to eventually grow enough produce to supply their business. They are passionate about supporting small local producers, such as Camus

Farm, Kaizen Permaculture, Toonsbridge and Olives West Cork, and embracing sustainable practices such as the closed-loop economic model in which no waste, or as little as possible, is generated. "We have a compost space at home for any small amount of waste we do generate," says Ryan. It's an exciting journey that we're very much at the beginning of."



Both Ryan and Ann Marie were involved in the renovation of the space that now houses Pike Deli, from the beautiful woodwork and hand-poured concrete countertop to the classy green and gold colour scheme. They opened up the kitchen to make room for the sourdough, which takes 48

hours to ferment.

At the heart of operations at Pike Deli is the flour, which is used to create the distinctive tangy and crunchy sourdough, yeasted focaccia flat bread and flaky light pastries. Ryan uses two types: Wildfarmed flour, made from wheat, grown using the polyculture method of farming, the practice of planting several kinds of crop species on the same piece of land and at the same time. "It increases biodiversity for regenerative outcomes and gives the flour a very distinctive flavour," explains Ryan. Wildfarmed encourages farmers to grow without using pesticides, herbicides or fungicides. The other brand Ryan uses is Shipton Mill, a UK company that is also working to promote biodiversity. "We're trying out a few Irish brands as well so will see how that goes," he says.

Served on the delicious focaccia bread, a firm favourite now on the menu is the Korean slow-cooked brisket sandwich with housemade kimchi, toasted sesame seeds, cucumber and carrots. "It's super fermenty and salty, mouth-watering, very popular" shares Ryan.

Close behind it is the fre-range chicken with tarragon



Ryan Hoy (left) and Ann Marie Menzies (front) with some of the team at Pike Deli



mayo roast fennel and mixed leaves sandwich.

If you prefer no meat, try the buffalo mozzarella tapenade, roast red peppers, roast onions and mixed leaves sandwich.

Savoury pastries change regularly and currently include a Crown Prince squash paired with Toonsbridge feta and hot honey, dukkah and pickled chilli offering or a Cashel blue cheese and leek option. There is also a tasty free range pork sausage roll made with Caherbeg free range pork.

There are always two salads on the go and a selection of tasty breads to take home to try out your own sandwich creations on.

Those with a sweet tooth have been reveling in the selection of treats, from the sticky maple pecan bun and pain aux raisins to the luxurious Portuguese custard tarts or the croissant cups with mouthwatering fillings like ginger, custard, poached pear and oat crumble; cardamom cream and date puree with sesame and cashew; or poached quince custard and



hazelnut.

The offering at Pike Deli changes with the season, so coming into Christmas we have boozy quince mince pies and chestnut and brussel sprout concoctions to look forward to. The classic turkey and stuffing sandwich might even feature, but of course with a Pike Deli twist!

Soup has just been added to the menu with a vegan and carnivore offering in the form of a bone broth and miso broth, both packed full of tasty and nutritious goodness. For anyone looking for soakage after a Saturday night, Pike Deli will be open from 10am on Sunday, serving up hangover cures like

Ryan's tasty egg and sausage ciabatta. Pike Deli serves Stone Valley coffee and Galvin's farm milk.

"The support from the local community since we have opened has been overwhelming," shares Ann Marie.

"We also have a fantastic team so we're very lucky."

Ryan's righthand woman in the kitchen, Edie, who sat her Leaving Certificate this year, is now leaving them to continue her training in Japan.

"I'm very sad to see her go but also very excited for her. She's an amazing chef," says Ryan. The team has just welcomed Gideon into the kitchen, and Simon, who also works at Camus Farm, is there part-time so Ryan, who's in the kitchen every morning by 4am, is not short of help.

Managing the work-life balance with a five-year-old daughter has possibly been the greatest challenge. "It's been intense," share the couple "but we're into a steady rhythm now. It's good. We're a good team!"

"This has been our dream for over ten years, so now that we made it here, we want to do it as well as we can."

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FOOD, HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

Halloween and its customs

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

Halloween, frequently seen as the herald of winter, is a fascinating merger of Celtic, Roman, and Christian practices, resulting in a complex tapestry of Irish history. This festival represents a unique liminal zone where many beliefs and practices collide, standing, as it does at the juncture between autumn and winter, symbolising not only the change of seasons but the movement of vibrant growth and harvest to senescence

and dormancy. It's a moment when the line between the living and the dead is perceived to be thin, creating a sense of a liminal space, a space that is neither here nor there, that is betwixt and between, like the centre of a crossroads.

On Halloween night, people dress up in costumes that often conceal their genuine identities. This transformative act blurs the distinction between self and other, strengthening the idea of a liminal state. Trick-or-treating entails crossing thresholds between houses, representing a figurative movement between two areas and so expressing the nature of life being betwixt and between this world and another one. From the famous jack-o'-lanterns to other divination games, Halloween has a rich tapestry of mythology and superstitions. Many of these customs entail rituals that are only performed during this time period, emphasising the holiday's liminal aspect.

This time of year, is also characterised by festivities that honour the dead around the world. These festivals serve the twin aim of honouring and remembering people who have passed away, as well as offering an opportunity for festivity and joy. For example, the 'Día de los Muertos', or Day of the Dead, observed in Mexico and Mexican communities worldwide, entails the construction of 'ofrendas' (altars) to honour lost loved ones. Obon is a Buddhist practise in Japan that involves families visiting

graves, burning lanterns, and engaging in 'Bon Odori', a traditional dance. Meanwhile, 'Undas', or 'Araw ng mga Patay', is a Filipino practice in which relatives visit their loved ones' graves, clean and repair tombstones, and offer prayers and flowers. These various practices all serve as poignant reminders that death is an ever-present component of life, emphasising the inevitable end while emphasising the regeneration of life.

One may look at a lot of these festivities at Halloween, especially the hiding of one's true identity behind a mask as a way of avoiding the proximity of death, yet in Ireland, many of our funeral traditions celebrate death as being part of life and not something to be hidden behind a mask.

The wake is one of the most characteristic Irish funeral customs. This is a time for reminiscing and telling stories about the deceased's life. The open coffin not only allows for a final farewell, but also emphasises that death is a natural part of life.

Another old custom is to stop the clock when someone dies, symbolising the stoppage of their heartbeat and alerting others to the presence of death in the house. It was usual to set the coffin on chairs before transferring it to the hearse when a person was waked in the house. These chairs were not put back upright until after the funeral.

The route to the cemetery was typically long and wind-

ing, following an east-to-west path, an homage to ancient Celtic beliefs in which nature played an important role.

This direction, known as "a deiseal," represents the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth by mimicking the passage of the sun. Similarly, the coffin is carried to the grave in a sunwise direction, from east to west, serving as a sad reminder that everyone goes through the journey from birth to death.

Other traditions related with Halloween include visiting graveyards to pay tribute to the deceased. All of these traditions emphasise the journey from summer to winter and from life to death.

In terms of health, these traditions incorporate the concepts of death and dying into the fabric of life, removing the façade of endless youth, vitality, and vigour. This Halloween, let us reflect on Ireland's numerous customs and recognise how they promote our overall well-being in our understanding of life.

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OUT & ABOUT IN WEST CORK



Carol, Richard and Peter Barrett of Dunmore House Hotel accepting the 'Memorable Experience' Award at the Georgina Campbell Irish Food & Hospitality Awards 2023, held in Bord Bia Dublin. October 2023

Pic: Paul Sherwood

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FOOD, HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

Urru reaches the first 20 years in its remarkable food journey

Urru Culinary Store Bandon celebrates 20 years this year. The woman behind Bandon's beloved food emporium, Ruth Healy, chats to **Mary O'Brien** about the highlights and challenges in reaching this milestone, her foodie roots and how the combination of a good idea, hard graft, luck and optimism have paid off to create a successful holistic culinary offering that has stood the test of time.

After two years of careful planning, Ruth Healy started her business in 2003, naming it Urru, a blend of the words 'urban' and 'rural' with the intention of capturing the essence of a market town like Bandon where producers and consumers converge. It also alludes to the universally important nature of local food production and food consumption and the interdependence between the two. Since then Urru has embraced that vision evolving into a social shopping and cafe experience that supports and encourages sustainable behaviours. Urru is much more than a shopping experience however, having become a much-loved stalwart, through

good times and hard, in its local community. "I always wanted people to leave feeling they got more out of a visit than just their bag of shopping," shares Ruth.

Testament to this is that Urru's very first customer in 2003 still shops there every week. Ruth still remembers what that customer bought on her very first day. "An electronic peppermill with a light. It still works." She laughs: "Her husband could never figure out why you'd need a light on a peppermill and would comment on it every time he used the mill."

Even when they're gone, customers remain an important part of the Urru story. "No one teaches you in college that customers die. They continue to

be a part of our memory bank," says Ruth. "I had a customer who was an utter lady. I loved her company and, in latter years, I had the weekly honour of getting down on my knees to re-tie her velcro shoes after she came out of the chiropodist. It was so both feet would feel the same!"

This focus on people stands behind as well as in front of the counter. Urru has always operated with a small and highly productive team. Ruth works side-by-side with her niece Nicola, whose sunny disposition is so warmly welcoming to everyone who steps over the threshold. "Nicola is the star and real boss," shares Ruth. Nicola's brother Iarlaith is also an important part of the team. "Both chilled and skilled," according to Ruth. "We have had some really beautiful people work with us."

"Nicola is the star and real boss," shares Ruth. Nicola's brother Iarlaith is also an important part of the team. "Both chilled and skilled," according to Ruth. "We have had some really beautiful people work with us."

The shopkeeper feels very fortunate with the people who have come her way – landlords; supportive writers and media; customers and staff who's words of wisdom she thinks about on a daily basis; family and friends who were busy painting walls this time twenty years ago; and other industry colleagues around the country who often adopt an 'open source



The Urru team – Ruth, Nicola and Iarlaith



ing' attitude to being supportive.

Behind it all, there's that same passion that Ruth started with all those years ago. She staunchly declares that she still enjoys making sandwiches even on approaching the 200,000 mark! While admitting to possibly having rose-tinted glasses about the lifestyle that would accompany a shopkeeper's role, Ruth says her guilty secret is that "I love playing shop; even when there might be no one else there!"

These "playing-shop" moments bring her back to working in her granddad's shop in the Mardyke, as a young teenager; where the seeds of a shopkeeper

were first sown. "My sisters and I ate it into the ground when he wasn't around," she laughs. A few years later she went on to become manager of her school shop.

Ruth's passion for food also goes back to her childhood and family dinners around the table, which took place every evening at six o'clock. "In the mornings before school my mum made us scones and squeezed oranges for everyone. She has no memory of that."

Ruth can remember, as a child, feeling deprived at times for not being allowed 'packaged-food' "I remember my dad dropping warm queen cakes

into school to us and then swapping them with other people for crisps."

But good food won out and she also recalls waited in anticipation for the leftovers the day after her mother would have 'the girls' over. "The most abiding memory is the apple tartlets – thin buttery pastry cases with stewed apple, whipped cream and chocolate flake sprinkled on top. Three per person."

Learning to cook was a necessary adventure in the Healy household. "Coming from a big family, the 'biggies' were involved in food preparation for the 'smallies'," shares Ruth.

It was however, when she

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FOOD, HEALTH & LIFESTYLE



moved out of the family home in Waterfall that the importance of food really made an impression on the young Ruth, when the world of shopping, dining out and eating in other people's houses became part of the fabric of her life.

After studying Marketing and Japanese at DCU and UCC, she worked at Proctor & Gamble in the UK in a very customer-focused role for a number of years, before eventually following her heart and enrolling in a professional cookery course at Ballymaloe Cookery School back in Cork. It was here that she learnt about artisan foods and where her shopkeeper vision really started to take shape.

Ruth opened Urru in 2003 on the cusp of the Celtic Tiger. "I thought that was the normal trading environment," she says. In 2006 she opened a second shop in Mallow with her brother, pre-empting the recession and closing it in 2008. After the recession came floods, flood relief works, drainage works and more recently Covid, the cost of living crisis and climate change effects. Ruth says she realised about halfway through that list that this was normality. "There will always be something. Recognising that doesn't make it easy but it certainly takes a lot of the stress out of it," she says. That glass half full attitude meant that when Covid started in 2020, Ruth was more grateful that the roadworks outside her door had ceased the previous week, than concerned about lockdown!

Spanning 20 years there is of course lots of laughter too. "In the context of the recent floods around Cork, I remember the morning after the flood in Bandon in 2009, while chaos reigned, a customer stepped

over someone who was mopping up the floor and asked if we could give her some smoked salmon. It was urgent!" shares Ruth laughing.

"I truly believe that one person's euro is the same value as the next person's euro but it is a bonus when people make you laugh or come in with tales of adventures and achievements. I'll save those stories for the book!" she says.

"I truly believe that one person's euro is the same value as the next person's euro but it is a bonus when people make you laugh or come in with tales of adventures and achievements. I'll save those stories for the book!" she says.

Today, Urru's #thegoodfoodnews board has become as much a part of the Urru experience as the shopping. "It started as daily good news during the recession to keep ourselves and our customers cheered up; eventually it morphed into random daily good food based news," explains Ruth.

Throughout it all, the essence of Urru is still relevant: A shopping experience that tends to be more than the sum of its parts – the space; the stock; the café. "The basic concept of making good local food accessible and desirable and encouraging people to choose and use it in their kitchens still stands," says Ruth passionately "while presenting it in a social café space where

people essentially sample the products that are on the shelves, while surrounded by a holistic culinary offering. This acts as motivation to shop and is a commercial necessity in a town setting where footfall is calmer than in more urban settings."

The shop reflects the trends in the wider market too: Sustainable behaviours are now critical; with more ready-to-use foods in shopping baskets and social media and online shopping now basic operations. Sadly fewer people today are cooking their own food but for those who do cook and appreciate the value of good food, it's establishments like Urru that provide the ingredients.

Urru's recipe to success? "Being customer-driven while also setting your business parameters to give yourself a sustainable business," shares Ruth. "Trying to be all things to all people is a fool's errand. And graft."

Sadly, Ruth sees the loss of basic kitchen skills, home cooking culture (and smells) and control over what we are consuming all shaping family life and wellbeing in the future. She also foresees a recalibration of the terms of engagement happening in local retail and hospitality. "The next generation of proprietors will be a lot braver in setting their opening hours and defining what they are prepared to do or not do. The owner-managed food industry is labour-intensive so automation and technical solutions are going to prevail, even in the most local of places, for example self-serve tills or even no tills, or even people coming in after work to prepare their own food on site." While we may end up losing the more personalised shopping experience; on a positive note, Ruth believes that sustainable behaviours such as packaging, waste and water reduction are slowly normalising.

Whatever happens, no doubt come another 20 years, Ruth will still be conjuring up grand plans on a daily basis. Energy drives opportunity rather than the other way around in her book and it's this same energy which drives her to grow better, not bigger: She completed a postgrad in Irish Food Culture at UCC a few years ago.

"I am mildly concerned that I still think about what I might do when I grow up," she says smiling. "On the other hand, after slogging away for twenty years, I wouldn't view any future business failure as a disaster – more a next step. Hypothetically speaking!"

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OUT & ABOUT IN WEST CORK



Karen Garvin from Kinsale at the Kinsale Halloween Lantern Parade. Pic. John Allen

FOOD, HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

Herbal teas for holistic wellness



HEALTH

Hannah Dare
Organico Bantry



Chamomile Tea:

Beyond Relaxation

Chamomile tea isn't just a pre-bedtime calming ritual; it contains flavonoids that act as antioxidants, supporting heart health, the immune system, and potentially aiding in reducing anxiety and inflammation. My favourite Chamomile Tea is an Organic tea bag from Salus Haus, it's by far the best flavour. You can make two or even three cups from each tea bag – just leave it in the cup and top up with hot water.

Lemon Verbena – both uplifting and calming

Lemon Verbena grows in Mediterranean countries and is prized for its health benefits as well as its delicious taste. I'm using leaves I dried this summer, and when they run out I'll buy a bag of Sonnentor's loose leaves as I'm really enjoying selecting four to five leaves and making tea (taking a break from teabags!). I find Lemon Verbena calming and uplifting at the same time, and I often combine it with chamomile in the evening.

Relaxation and Balance: Valerian Tea

Valerian, often known as Herbal Valium, is ideal for relaxation, aiding in sleep, easing period pain, and reducing anxiety. Its combination with fennel seeds is also recommended for managing hot flashes during menopause.

Let me know what your favourite brew is! And as you savour your next cup, remember that it's not just a beverage but a gentle remedy, supporting your body's natural balance and vitality, so choose the best quality tea you can, and try to introduce some variety to make the most of all the herbal benefits. All the teas mentioned above will be found in your local healthfood shop, and if possible try to buy organic to avoid unnecessary chemicals in your cuppa.

November News in Organico – we are getting ready for Christmas here in Organico and we are offering 10 per cent off nearly everything online for 24 hours at the end of the month – to know when that is and to get the code, make sure you are on our Newsletter List.

How do you take your tea? In Ireland, the love for a comforting cup of tea runs deep in our culture. Yet, beyond our favourite milky brew, there lies a world of super-healthy herbal alternatives. These herbal infusions offer not just warmth but a range of health benefits, aiding detoxification, boosting metabolism, and offering digestive support. And as the cooler months of autumn and winter settle in, a healing cup of herbal tea can nudge your body toward good health gently and naturally.

Enjoying a cup of tea can be part of your self-care ritual – taking time to choose which tea you want, making it mindfully, and drinking it mindfully. It can be a quiet moment of peace on a hectic day.

Personally, I've swapped my first cup of the day from black to green tea – I've tried a few different options to find one I like, as I'm not a fan of very bitter green teas. There are very distinct differences, so it's worth experimenting. I love the Sencha Green Tea by Clearspring, and the Qi Green is also nice. I've found that by not having a milky tea first thing in the morning, I actually enjoy a variety of different teas throughout the day.

I have black tea in the afternoon (my favourite is the Clipper Earl Grey), but once I get home, I have either Rooibos (also called Redbush, this is the staple tea in many African countries and I love it with and without milk) Chamomile or Lemon Verbena.

Weight Management: Green Tea's Metabolic Boost

While no tea alone causes weight loss, green tea's compounds, specifically catechins, can enhance the metabolic

rate, aiding in calorie burning and fat utilisation. Green tea is high in polyphenols, which are a key part of a healthy diet, and it provides a welcome gentle caffeine boost. Additionally, green tea offers oral health benefits – it's good for gum health.

Rooibos/Redbush – an alternative to builder's tea

Rooibos or red bush is a tisane traditionally made by fermenting the leaves of the flowering shrub, 'Aspalathus linearis'. It is naturally caffeine-free and does not act as a stimulant, great for those avoiding common effects of caffeine, and it means you can drink it at night without being kept awake. Also, some people find tea upsets their stomach and Rooibos won't do that. It's a source of polyphenols and comes in various flavours including Earl Grey and Vanilla.

Ginger Tea's Multifaceted Health Benefits

Ginger tea is renowned for curbing nausea and aiding digestion, while also having anti-inflammatory properties and potential immune-boosting effects. Its antioxidants and trace minerals contribute to overall health and wellness. You can buy ginger tea bags or you can make an infusion of the fresh root.

Turmeric Tea for longevity

Turmeric is THE most studied spice of all time, and it's widely recognised that consuming approx a quarter teaspoon of the powder every day is very beneficial for a multitude of reasons. You can add turmeric powder to porridge, pop it in curries or in tea. If you like ginger tea, as mentioned

above, try combining it with turmeric, which again is available as a fresh root as well as in tea bag form.

Peppermint Tea for Digestive Health

A cup of peppermint tea helps alleviate abdominal discomfort by relaxing muscles in the gastrointestinal tract, bile duct, and gallbladder. It's a natural solution for temporary indigestion. Peppermint tea is also very cooling on a hot day (hence it's widely drunk in hot countries such as Morocco). You can use fresh peppermint or dried, but do always choose organic as non-organic peppermint is a heavily sprayed crop.

Cleansing Teas for Detox and Hydration

Golden Rod and Knotgrass Tea, commonly referred to in Organico as 'Kidney' Tea, combines herbs like goldenrod, birch leaves, knotgrass, horsetail, and wild pansy. While not a treatment for severe kidney problems, this tea's cleansing properties can aid in reducing UTIs and supporting kidney health by flushing out toxins if drunk on a daily basis. It comes in bags and we generally suggest making a pot and drinking it spread throughout the day.

Dandelion and Nettle: Combating Water Retention

Dandelion tea, loaded with potassium and magnesium, may help reduce bloating and water retention, particularly beneficial during premenstrual times. Nettle tea offers a range of benefits from aiding anaemia, high blood pressure, and reducing allergies to potentially supporting fertility.

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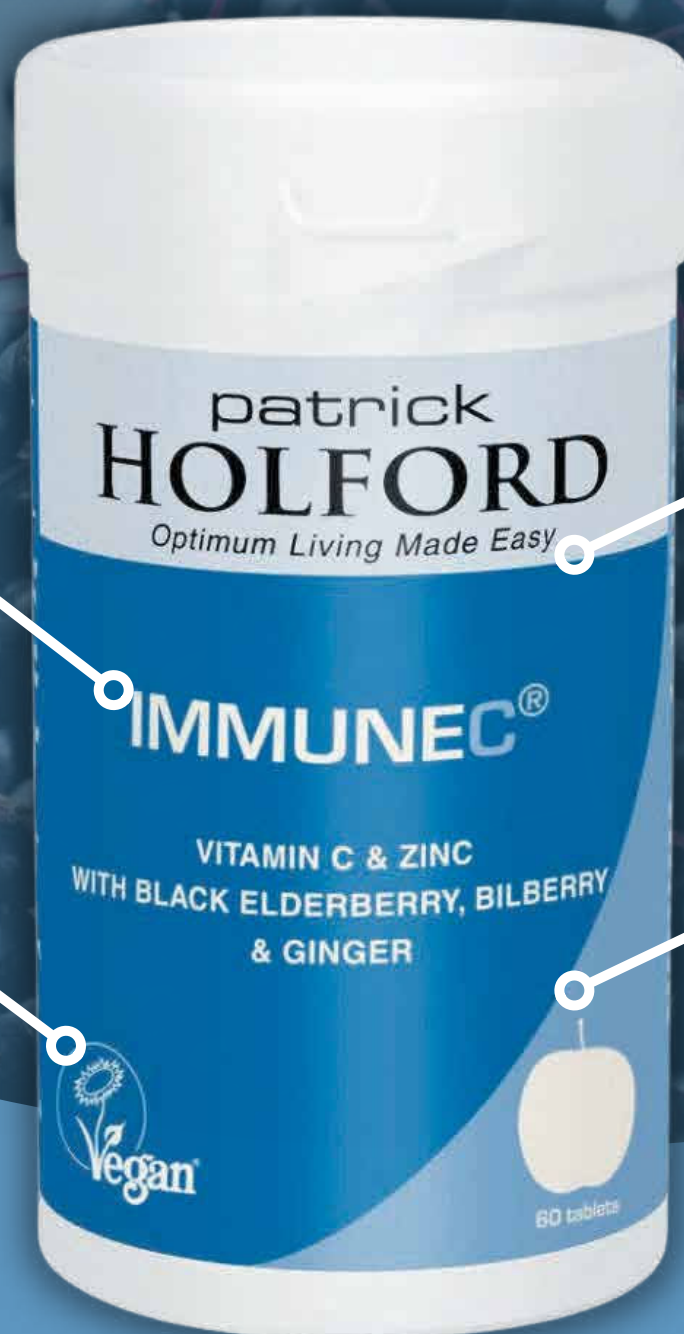
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FOOD, HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

Time to 'FeelGood'

For the past two years FeelGood Health and Fitness has been offering a variety of fitness classes to suit different fitness levels and abilities in Clonakilty.

Now, as Lorna O'Regan's fitness classes grow in popularity, she is bringing her energy and

experience to new locations to meet the growing demand!

Lorna combines her strength and conditioning and yoga qualifications in all her classes for a fun and enjoyable workout.

Circuits are a mixture of cardio and strength in a 40-minute workout. "This is very inclusive

to all fitness abilities as the intensity is controlled by each individual and the weights vary to suit each individual's fitness journey," says Lorna.

Senior fitness is a mixture of chair-based exercises and standing exercises. This class works on strength, mobility and balance. The main goal in this class is to prolong independence and reduce risk of falls. "This class is very sociable and

a great way to stay connected."

All Lorna's classes operate on a six-week block and the new blocks commence on November 6. Six-week blocks are attractively priced at €50. Booking essential as places are limited.

You can follow Lorna on her Instagram and social media pages @feelgoodhealthandfitness1

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Engaging with your dog



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.

Throughout my life I've been a watcher. It comes naturally because I'm fascinated by the interactions of people and animals. As a dog trainer, this ability to read a dog's signals has been invaluable. And I try to teach it in some measure to clients. Once you are watching your dog's signals and interacting with him, you can learn so much.

Stay connected: There are so many distractions in life these days that it's hard to be tuned in to your dog all of the time. However, if you are taking your dog for a walk, playing with him or just sitting down beside him, why not make a point of concentrating solely on him? It needn't be for too long but we all know and appreciate the importance of 'quality time' with each other. Our dogs love our undivided attention too. And you'd be surprised how much you learn about your dog during this time. First and foremost, I would advocate ditching the

mobile phone during that period so you can really concentrate.

Observe: When you get your puppy or older dog, it's important to find out what sort of character you have. You observe his interactions with you, other people, other dogs, everyday instances such as the postman arriving and leaving, and so on. You can begin to get a picture of his true character. You also learn what are his negative triggers and what stimulates him.

Watching his different reactions, you soon learn to read his signals. Here's an example. One of my previous Boxers, Nutmeg, was friendly but aloof. In other words, she didn't approach visitors or strange dogs until she'd sussed them. Sometimes, she would go up and give a measured acceptance of their presence. Other times, she would remain at a distance and watch proceedings. She was an extremely good judge of character!

My young Boxer, Saffron, is the total opposite. She's particularly nosy and wants to meet and greet everyone. In other words, she has little discretion. Partly, it's due to her youth but it's also merely that she's gregarious.

Whereas Nutmeg wouldn't dream of going off with anyone, Saffron would unfortunately follow any Tom, Dick or Harry!

I learnt their different characters just by reading their signals. Nutmeg would sit or stand at a distance and you could almost see her brain ticking over as she read each situation. Saffron just jumps in with excitement and sometimes it's difficult to connect with her because her brain isn't engaged!

But the object of the exercise is to get to know your dog inside out.

Teach your dog to focus on you. When I'm training a dog



for a client, I show them what they can expect from their dog. And the first thing I ask is for the dog to focus on me while I teach him basic obedience.

Most times it's easy to teach the dog to make eye contact and reward him with a treat. Occasionally, a dog has a difficulty with this. That could be because he's come from a background of abuse and it was safer to keep his eyes on the ground.

Sometimes, a dog is just naturally shy and needs gentle encouragement.

But, most of the time a dog is eager to do as you ask, especially when a treat and praise follow immediately after.

Teach your dog to use his brain: A thinking dog learns all the basic obedience commands generally with ease. He's grounded and a willing pupil. If you 'stay connected' with him in the training even for a short spell of just five minutes, make the session enjoyable and literally rewarding, you will be teaching your dog basic life skills.

Play games. Most dogs seem to be born with a sense of fun. If

you play with your dog, not only are you engaging his brain, and giving him some form of exercise, it is a great way of bonding with him.

I often suggest to clients that instead of just mindlessly throwing a ball for their dog, they teach him to wait patiently while the ball is hidden. Then they encourage him to find it. They stay with him while he looks and help him, if needed. Their dog will enjoy the thrill of the search and then the ultimate success when he finds it. One simple game teaches him the stay command and self control, to use his brain and his nose, and the joy of finding it all by himself but with their input and encouragement.

As I said, we have many draws on our attention every day but devoting time with your dog for special activities: walking, playing, training, being in the moment with him will deepen that special relationship between you and your canine companion.



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FOOD, HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

What next after a pre-diabetic diagnosis?



Michelle Ryan first qualified as a nutritionist with the College of Naturopathic Medicine (CNM) in 2011, and recently returned to study, achieving a diploma in Coaching Mental Health and Wellbeing. Michelle explains the reasons for changing to a healthier lifestyle following a pre-diabetic diagnosis.

- **Increased hunger:** Experiencing intense hunger or cravings, particularly for sugary or high-carbohydrate foods.
- **Weight changes:** Unexplained weight gain or difficulty in losing weight.
- **Blurred vision:** Experiencing blurry vision or changes in eyesight.
- **Slow wound healing:** Cuts, bruises, or sores taking longer than usual to heal.
- **Digestion:** bloating, foods not digesting correctly with aches and pains
- **Sugar cravings:** consistently, constantly wanting sugar during day
- **Low energy:** waking in mornings tired and feeling exhausted during day

If you tick any of the above, then maybe now is the time to change towards a healthier way of life. It is also good to know that research evidence now suggests a link between pre-diabetes and our gut health. This is because our gut microbiota, which is the community of microorganisms in our digestive tract, plays a role in various aspects of our health, including metabolism and blood sugar regulation. Imbalances in the gut microbiota, known as dysbiosis or inflammation in the gut, have been associated with insulin resistance, blood sugar imbalance, and are continuously being researched.

Getting the gut right can be a key ingredient to balance and manage long term health. In working towards a healthy gut, eating right is always important, including for diagnosed pre-diabetes and for our overall health management for long term health strategies. If pre-diabetes is taken seriously, type two diabetes can often be prevented or delayed. Being active and taking control can be first steps, like losing weight if you're overweight and eating healthy food, which can make a huge difference to inside health and outside feeling good.

Start by creating healthier habits to significantly improve your overall wellbeing and help you manage the pre in being diagnosed a pre-diabetic!

Here are a few suggestions to get kick start you on a healthier path:

- **Balanced diet:** Focus on consuming a variety of nutritious foods, including whole grains, lean proteins, fruits, vegetables, and healthy fats. Limit your intake of sugary, processed foods and alcohol.
- **Portion size:** Be mindful of your portion sizes to avoid overeating, reduce your plate size. Use smaller plates and pay attention to your body's hunger and fullness cues.
- **Regular exercise:** Engage in physical activity for at least three times per week to challenge yourself. Choose activities you enjoy, such as walking, jogging, swimming, or cycling.
- **Weight management:** If you're overweight, losing even a small amount of weight can have a positive impact on your blood sugar levels. Aim for gradual, sustainable weight loss about one to two pounds a week through a combination of healthy eating and regular exercise.
- **Stay hydrated:** Drink plenty of water throughout the day to support overall health and maintain optimal hydration.
- **Stress management:** Stress can affect blood sugar levels even more these days, so finding healthy ways to manage stress is very important. Consider activities like meditation, deep breathing exercises, yoga, or engaging in hobbies you enjoy.

The good news is that you can change the way you look and feel. The commitment is the work this takes. The nutritional approach treats the whole person with unique needs, and involves feeding and eating the right foods for you, and nurturing your entire being – simple but effective tools to improve the way you feel whilst supporting your health progress, and make any necessary adjustments. It's crucial to develop a personalised plan and support that suits your needs.

It's important to note that some individuals with pre-diabetes may not experience any

noticeable symptoms, and may not know they have a condition. Going for regular check-ups and blood tests are crucial for detecting pre-diabetes or any other abnormalities in blood levels.

Take control of your lifestyle, and increase your chances of living a longer life and feeling healthier by increasing your energy, losing weight, reducing stress and increasing overall wellness by balancing your blood sugar and getting back on track. Taking on any new change of diet can be challenging, even more so when it's unclear, with no guidance on what to eat and where to buy it. I support my clients with an easy-to-follow plan and workaround foods to achieve long-term success.

Try the tips above out for yourself this month and see if any of your symptoms improve. If you have been struggling with blood sugar imbalance, just told you have pre-diabetic symptoms, are suffering with digestive problems for a while, consider booking in for a consultation call. I can help you understand what might be going on in your health and take greater steps towards a resolution.

Michelle promises that everybody can achieve better health: "Make the right choices for your body, wellbeing, the results can be life changing."

Call Michelle on 087 6704930 to enquire about a consultation, an intolerance test, and if it's the right option for you. Visit www.bwellhive.ie

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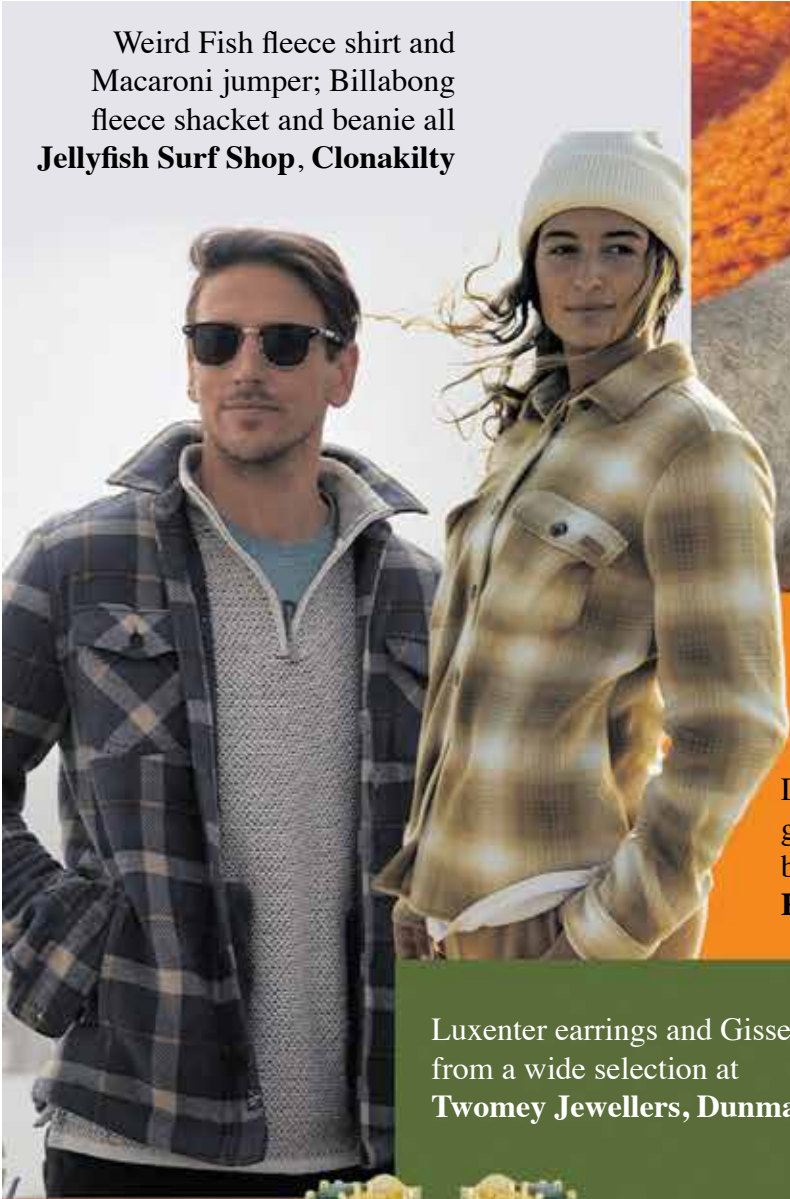
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Oui red leopard jumper and Naya dress both Options Boutique, Clonakilty



Summum coat and fringed blouse both SuSu, Clonakilty



West Cork mix & match from these unique shops



Firkail organic hemp and cotton blend hoody, Ruby Robin Boutique locket and Sawframed Jewellery sterling silver necklace all from **Forest & Flock, Bantry**



Day Et bag and Humility Italian 100% wool sweater, both from **Pebbles, Schull**



Brakeburn top and Soruka bag, both from **Designs, Skibbereen**



Mucros Weavers scarf, The Messy Brunette earrings and Louise Knits Hats beanie all from **Green Dot, Clonakilty**



White Stuff knit and Wild Pony asymmetric dress both **Gooseberry, Clonakilty**



Boots and loafers by Spanish brand Wonders at **Batemans, Clonakilty & Bandon**



Dress and top both from **CiCi, Clonakilty**

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FOOD, HEALTH & LIFESTYLE



Amanda Roe
Acupuncture and
Clinical Hypnotherapist

Supporting IVF with acupuncture

es conceiving naturally.

This amazing technology stimulates the ovaries with injectable hormones to develop and mature multiple eggs follicles in both ovaries. Then the eggs that are sufficient in size are collected and fertilised with sperm In vitro, meaning that it happens outside the body and in a lab.

Successfully fertilised eggs known as embryo's are typically cultured for three to five days and then one or more embryo can either be frozen for future use or immediately transferred to the uterus with the hope that it will develop into a baby.

Although a wonderful treatment that others hope to many; IVF can be stressful and invasive and, depending on many factors, success rates can vary significantly.

If your desire is to use your own eggs, the first thing to consider is age, as women under 35 years have a 54.5 per cent chance of having a baby per egg retrieval, and this rate decreases from 26.7 per cent under 40 years to 4.2 per cent by 43 years. However, if you are in your 40s, it is worth knowing that IVF success rates using donor eggs are not dependant on your age and can

be as high as 51 per cent when the donor egg is from a donor younger than 35 years.

Acupuncture has been used to treat infertility for thousands of years in China and research has shown that it also improves the success rate of IVF and has many benefits

Whether you plan to use your own, or donor egg, the psychological stress can be high: Acupuncture promotes relaxation and relieves stress which is very beneficial when going through treatments.

For women, acupuncture regulates the menstrual cycle, corrects ovulation dysfunction, treats pain and improves blood circulation to the ovaries and uterus.

For men, age is less of a factor and, in Chinese medicine, it has been shown to improve the quality, quantity and motility of sperm.

There are key times during the IVF process that acupuncture is of most benefit – these are:

- In the lead up to sperm collection
- In the lead up to the IVF cycle
- Immediately before and after embryo transfer and
- During the two-week wait post transfer.



Women are born with all the eggs they will ever have, whilst men produce new sperm all the time with the stages of development taking about nine weeks from start to finish. If you already have a sperm test and would like to improve your results, it is possible to improve sperm quality, quantity and motility significantly in three months.

Eggs are recruited and matured in follicles with it taking approximately 85 days from recruitment to ovulation so, whilst there is a genetic component to egg quality, the environment that the eggs are recruited and matured in prior to IVF egg collection also matters, and at least three months of acupuncture and Chinese herbs will optimise egg quality prior to egg retrieval.

A 25-minute acupuncture

treatment right before and right after embryo transfer is called a 'pre and post transfer treatment' and has been shown to significantly increase the chance of a successful pregnancy; and gentle acupuncture treatments for stress and relaxation during the two-week wait are helpful for reducing anxiety that is often elevated at this time.

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

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'Arts and Chats' project announced to tackle social isolation

Cork County Council's 'Arts and Chats' is a new initiative that will offer people dealing with social isolation the chance to discover new hobbies and meet new

people.

Social isolation can often be particularly apparent in rural areas and can impact older age groups, people with chronic health issues, mental health

difficulties and psychological needs, carers, single parents, immigrants, and minority ethnic groups. Social prescribing recognises that health is heavily determined by social factors

such as poverty, isolation and loneliness. Through the use of social prescribing, healthcare professionals and others refer people to a range of local non-clinical services to help improve a person's wellbeing.

Supported by Creative Ireland, the 'Arts and Chats' project will see Cork County Council work with four established networks in the county to build connections between the social prescribing networks, the libraries, and creative facilitators living and working throughout the county.

Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Frank O'Flynn said of the initiative, "It is important to us, in a county of this size with a large rural area, to maintain a close-knit sense of community. Creativity has many mental health benefits. From singing in a choir to crocheting a blanket, we are delighted to offer people experiencing social isolation an

opportunity to get out and meet people all while being creative."

Through Uillinn: West Cork Arts Centre, Cork County Council's Library and Arts Service will establish a panel of facilitators that will receive training in social prescribing. The training will draw on experiences from other counties to give people a broad knowledge of what social prescribing is and how they can support their networks.

'Arts and Chats' will offer a series of workshops for the social prescribing networks through the Council's library branches. The participants will take part in a creative activity, from printmaking and drawing to ukelele playing or singing. The workshops are designed to be social, with a cup of tea and a chat being an important element of each meeting.

Dr. Sheelagh Broderick, Senior Health Promotion at Cork

Kerry Community Healthcare, Health Service Executive said, "This is a great opportunity for people who have been isolated to get out and get creative in their own local communities. The service is being provided free and support is available for those who have difficulty with access. Get in touch with your Social Prescribing Link Worker at Family Resource Centres in Dunmanway, Adrigole, Mallow, Middleton and Ballincollig."

With the support of Creative Ireland, Cork County Council together with the National Family Resource Centre Mental Health project and Cork Kerry Community Healthcare Health Promotion & Improvement Department, will deliver the 'Arts and Chats' Social Prescribing Project from December of this year. For further details contact arts@corkcoco.ie

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Clonakilty occupational therapist wins Ann Beckett award for her sensory-inclusive hair salon

Emma Connolly was recently announced as the winner of the Ann Beckett Award for her sensory-inclusive hair salon in Clonakilty, 'Flourish and Be'.

The Ann Beckett award is an acknowledgement of therapists who, through their work, demonstrate the core principles of occupational therapy in practice.

Emma's service is one of a kind in Ireland, where clients and their families are fully supported by an occupational therapist throughout the whole process of the hair cutting experience. The project fo-

cuses on empowering clients and their families to engage in a meaningful self-care occupation, in a friendly and supporting environment.

The hair salon came to fruition following many years of Emma working with families with neurodivergent family members, and the constant reference to how difficult they found it to engage in activities of daily living, in particular haircutting.

As a result of this need, Emma set-up the bespoke occupational therapy-led hair-dressing salon. This hair salon has been developed with the

Person-Environment-Occupation model and the principals of universal design as the core values of the business.

The salon 'Flourish and Be' is totally integrated in the commercial area in town for any, and all to access. It is a beautiful example of inclusiveness and respectfully tailoring the environment to meet the diversity of need. Emma's passion for enabling each person to flourish in their performance of this necessary self-maintenance task shines through all aspects of the process and outcome of the hair cutting challenge.

Flourish & Be.

12 Pearse Street, Clonakilty

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To book visit **www.flourishandbe.booksy.com**



Emma Connolly
Occupational
Therapist

Emma is delighted to announce that a new

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Through her expertise in activity analysis
and environmental adaptations, Emma has
devised a **training programme specifically
tailored to the hair industry.**

Email **flourishandbe12@gmail.com**
to find out more.


OUT & ABOUT



Lucia Connor from Kinsale and Daniel Boddington from Courtmacsherry pictured enjoying the Mad Hatters Taste of Kinsale in October. Pictures. John Allen

FOOD, HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

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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.

This has been a difficult piece for me to write: On the one hand, it seems like too much with the intensity of pervasive and collective grief the world has been witnessing, particularly in the past month, but at the same time it feels inauthentic not to share. A year ago, I joined a group of about fifty people from around the world to spend five days at Auschwitz and Auschwitz-Birkenau, located in Oswiecim, a city about 70 miles west of Krakow in Poland. We stayed in close proximity to the land at a retreat centre for dialogue but spent the bulk of our days and some evenings at the former concentration camps. Our intention was "to bear witness to the oneness in diversity in a place that became a mythic symbol of humanity's tendency to intolerance" (from Zen Peacemakers, the group that organised this event and has been doing so for 28 years).

The experience had been calling to me for more than a decade after a likeminded friend told me about his own journey on one of their first such events. I felt like there were countless reasons for me to attend but I'll share two: I have ancestry in Poland that little is known about and have deep respect for the Zen Peacemakers, having attended their other 'bearing witness' events while living in the US. These included one in Black Hills in South Dakota listening to the testimonies of the First Nations Lakota, as well as the city streets of San Diego, California where several nights were spent outdoors and among people living with homelessness. I trusted that our group would be greatly held and skilfully facilitated once again.

War in Israel and Palestine,

Coming together in the darkest moments

ancestral trauma, history continues to repeat itself. There are few words other than to offer my experience from bearing witness last year. Although I spend my life in spaces and conversations involving death, I feel ill-equipped to say more – let alone digest the news today. Yet I know it is essential to not look away, to grieve and to rest. Similarly, one year ago, nothing could have prepared me for Auschwitz and Auschwitz-Birkenau. As I write these words, there is a realisation that I'm still processing – or perhaps reprocessing – my time there given the events of the moment.

The first day at Auschwitz, the smaller of the two camps, I recall thinking it reminded me of a film set somehow. But by day two at Auschwitz-Birkenau, my process shifted. The scale of the place is something to behold and I tried to digest the capital letters on the plaque greeting our group as we prepared to enter: "There is no other place on the earth where more Jews, Poles, Gypsies perished as a result of criminal methods in such a limited time and in such a limited space. The ground of Auschwitz and Birkenau camps constitute the biggest cemetery in the world and a place of genocide."

During our days there we walked the land, listened and shared in talking circles. We offered prayers, chanted the names of the dead, held silence and participated in interfaith ceremonies. These were not easy, yet they were beautiful processes lasting sometimes for hours. Other moments like sitting in the barracks at night, standing for an extended period of time in the women and children's barracks or walking through the remnants of a gas chamber were something else. But through it all, the support was impeccable, and I'll not forget the local guides at the camps (known today as memorial/museums) many who have worked there for decades re-telling the stories; the horrors of the land with astounding care. There are some things I can't yet seem to write about but here are a few other musings from those days.

Another aspect that moved me deeply was the realisation of the number of visitors that return to these places; often again and again to seek healing – including survivors and their descendants. I found this astounding and it led me to conclude that everyone who can make the journey there should do so.

I remember being surprised to find moments of beauty there too. The amber leaves slowly twirled in the unseasonably warm breeze before they touched ground. A single deer raced across the open landscape at great speed while a herd, unscathed by wire fencing, moved near to us, seemingly without hesitation. A floral bouquet placed on the door of an original train car that would have brought people to the camp to become prisoners, to be killed, or both. We learned of the cruelty (more than I'd fathomed) and, as a teacher I admire, recently wrote of these times, "grieve the reality that humans can be so inhuman" (-Frank Ostaseski)

I'm none the wiser after this pilgrimage of sorts. Yet in spite of the heaviness and powerlessness that I/we feel in the moment, I still believe in the power of coming together. The rawness and richness of those days cannot be erased nor do I feel that our collective intention has been totally lost. In the year gone by, I've been reading survivor's stories. Also finding refuge in grieving, learning, healing, sharing in spaces that nourish my soul and others.

To learn more or to connect with Melissa, email her at starsbeyondourskin@gmail.com or visit www.starsbeyondourskin.com. She also welcomes your questions or ideas for future columns.

*"As you think of others far away,
think of yourself (say: If only I
were a candle in the dark)"*

Mahmoud Darwish

Kinsale and District Lions Club Annual Christmas Toy Appeal

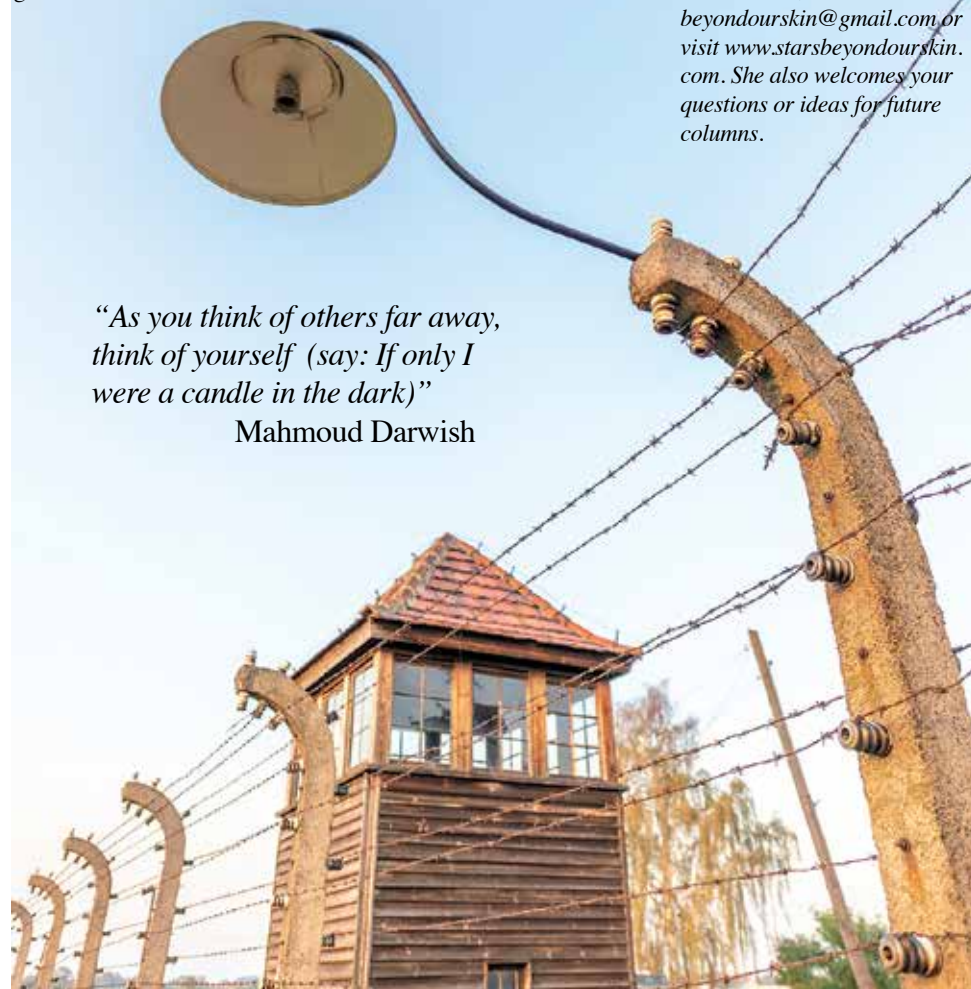


Following on from their successful Budget Breakfast Briefing, Kinsale Lions Club have started planning their next annual event which is always so well supported. The annual Christmas Toy Appeal, which is growing year on year, helps sick children in hospital at Christmas time.

The drop off point is Fitzgerald & Partners Accountants in Kinsale town centre who are

supporting the appeal, along with An Gardaí, HSE, defence forces, army band, and Santa of course.

Kinsale Lions Club volunteers would like to thank everyone for the huge generosity and support of both businesses and community for their appeal. Please contact a lion for more information of how you can help or call 021 4774500.



FOOD, HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

Diamonds are forever at Linda's of Kinsale

Linda's of Kinsale is a family-run jewellers that carefully curates collections of the best vintage and contemporary diamond jewellery. They also specialise in graded certified diamonds, rare coloured stones, old gold and signed designer pieces. Laura Jane Walsh shares how the business was born from her parent's passion for antiques and jewellery and how, in the 1970s, people would travel from far and wide to visit Castle Antiques in Killavullen, North Cork.

Laura Jane and her siblings grew up in the castle where the business started and their involvement from the very beginning kindled a love for antique jewellery in all of them. "My job when I was a little girl was to unlock all the antique showrooms in the mornings and lock them evenings," she shares. "Each large wooden Georgian door had a different key. I knew every key for every door."

Laura Jane also fondly remembers making toasted sandwiches and tea while the jewellery dealers sat smoking and examining diamonds at the table in the family's large chaotic kitchen.

"From a young age I helped my mother with antique jewel-

lery. I adored the huge, coloured stones like ruby or aquamarine. I was creative and appreciated the work and care that goes into making antique jewellery. Each vintage item is like a work of art. Hidden details delight and each piece is different."

Many years later, when Laura Jane's father died, the family moved the business to the historic seaside town of Kinsale.

"Our clients are mostly Irish," she shares. "They come from every walk of life, from plumbers to Formula One drivers to nurses."

"Engagement and wedding rings are our biggest sellers, but vintage gold chains and bracelets are always popular. We see engagements, anniversaries, deaths, and birthdays. The circle of life."

According to Laura Jane, Irish men are very generous and spend more on an engagement ring than their European counterparts! "By a long shot," she adds smiling.

Like any small business, they of course face challenges. "Trying to hold your own against large corporations and branded goods is a challenge. And as costs rise, this gets difficult to do," says Laura Jane. The other challenge is the increase in buying online. But this also brings challenges for consumers. "If



Laura Jane and Linda Walsh.

you buy extremely good jewellery online, there is no come back if you have problems later," emphasises the jeweller, whose advice is to buy the very best for your money. "If you buy good jewellery, it will hold its value," she shares.

"I do love what I do. Fine jewellery fascinates me."

Every shoebox counts in Christmas appeal

Team Hope Shoebox Week runs this year from November 4 until November 10 and to get involved you'll find plenty of inspiration on gifts to include, or not, in your shoebox, how to donate and where to drop off your shoebox at www.teamhope.ie. You can also drop your shoebox off at any Dealz store nationwide but please make sure to include €5 in each shoebox.

In Skibbereen, Christmas Shoebox organiser Sally Daly is appealing for donations of items and would be particularly grateful for donations of toys. These must be clean (not necessarily new) and must fit into a shoebox.

When building your shoebox, think about the 4 W's :

WRITE - something to write with. For example, colouring pencils, pens, copy books

WASH - something to wash with. For example, a bar of soap and a face cloth



WEAR - something to wear. For example, a hat & scarf, socks, gloves

WOW - something fun or a

novelty. For example, a toy or treat

If finding an empty shoebox is proving tricky, Team Hope partner and drop off point Dealz will be selling flatpack shoeboxes in packs of three in their stores nationwide.

There are so many benefits to the Team Hope Christmas Shoebox Appeal. It is so important for the child who receives it, both for the joy the physical gifts bring and for them to know that people are thinking about them. There are also benefits for the child that donates.

Dr. Malie Coyne, a clinical psychologist who specialises in working with children and families said, "Study after study has shown that volunteering improves our mental health. Being kind and showing altruism for others boosts serotonin, which is the neurotransmitter responsible for feelings of satisfaction and well-being, a

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phenomenon also known as a "helper's high". It reduces stress, strengthens the immune system and increases happiness.

In a world which can often feel topsy-turvy for children, involving your child in creating a shoebox empowers them to

make a real and tangible difference in another child's life."

Sally Daly can be contacted at 087 6854489.

FOOD, HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Protection against domestic violence in Ireland

Domestic violence is the use of physical or emotional force or threat of physical force, including sexual violence, in an intimate relationship. As well as physical violence, domestic violence can also involve:

- Emotional abuse
- The destruction of property
- Controlling behaviour such as isolation from friends, family and other potential sources of support
- Threats to others including children
- Stalking
- Control over access to money, personal items, food, transportation and communication

The offence of coercive control of a spouse, civil partner or intimate partner also came into force under the Domestic Violence Act 2018. Coercive

control is a pattern of intimidation, humiliation and controlling behaviour that causes fear of violence or serious distress that has a substantial impact on the victim's day-to-day activities.

Under domestic violence legislation, the main kinds of protection available through the Courts are safety orders and barring orders.

What is a safety order?

A safety order is an instruction from the court which stops the person accused of abusive behaviour (the respondent) from committing further violence or threats of violence. The respondent does not have to leave the home. If the person is not living with you, the safety order prohibits (bans) them from watching or being near your home and following or communicating (including electronically)

with you or a dependent person such as a child. A safety order can last up to five years.

People in an intimate relationship are also able to apply for a safety order. Previously, couples had to cohabit (live together) to be able to get a safety order, but this is no longer the case. The following people can apply for a safety order:

- Spouses and civil partners
- Parents with a child in common
- Partners in an intimate relationship including cohabitants (a couple living together) and dating partners (a couple not living together)
- Parents of an abusive child if that child is over 18
- People residing with the respondent in a non-contractual relationship, such as two relatives living together
- Former partners are also able to apply, for example, a former spouse or cohabitant.



the Gardaí can request that the Courts Service arrange a special out-of-hours sitting of the District Court for someone looking for an interim barring order, protection order or emergency barring order.

A safety order or barring order can be renewed by applying for a further order before the previous one expires.

There is a list of factors that the court can consider when deciding on an application for a domestic violence order (safety, protection or barring order). This list includes:

- History of violence by the respondent towards the applicant or any dependent person
- Increase in severity or frequency of violence towards the applicant or their children
- Exposure of children to violence inflicted by the respondent on the applicant or other child
- History of animal cruelty
- Substance abuse (including alcohol), by the respondent, the applicant or a dependent person
- The age and state of health (including pregnancy) of the applicant or any dependent person

What supports are available for women experiencing domestic violence in West Cork? West Cork Beacon (formerly West Cork Women Against Violence Project) offers free and confidential listening, information and support services for women experiencing domestic violence. Their office is based in Bantry and the telephone number is 1800 203 136

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 or log on to www.citizensinformation.ie

made at the same time.

What is an emergency barring order?

An emergency barring order requires the person accused of violent or abusive behaviour to leave the home, and prohibits them from entering the home. This is an immediate order where there is reasonable grounds to believe there is an immediate risk of significant harm to you or a dependent person.

Unlike an interim barring order, the applicant does not have to satisfy the property test to be able to get an emergency barring order. This means the person applying for the order does not need to own, co-own or have their name on the lease of the property. An emergency barring order can last for a maximum of 8 working days. It prohibits the same behaviours as a barring order.

When the eight-day time limit ends, you may have to wait for one month to apply for another. In exceptional circumstances, a judge can waive or ignore this one-month wait time.

How do you apply for a safety or barring order?

To get a safety or barring order you must attend a District Court hearing. While you are waiting for the court to hear your application, the court can give you an immediate order.

In an emergency situation,

with you or a dependent person

A barring order can last up to three years.

The following people can apply for a barring order:

- Spouses and civil partners
- Cohabitants (a couple living together) who live in an intimate relationship (the applicant must satisfy the property test, that is, they must have an equal or greater interest in the property than the respondent)
- Parents when the abuser is a non-dependent child

What is an interim barring order?

Between the time of making an application for a barring order and the court's determination (decision), there may be reasonable grounds for believing that the safety and welfare of you or of a dependent person is at risk. If so, the court can grant a protection order (see above) or an interim barring order. An interim barring order is a temporary, immediate short-term order. It can last for a maximum of 8 working days. It requires the person accused of violent or abusive behaviour to leave the home where there is an immediate risk of significant harm to you or a dependent person (and a protection order would not give sufficient protection).

You can apply for an interim barring order while you wait for the court to hear your full application for a full barring order. Both applications can be

What is a protection order?

Between the time of making an application for a safety order (or barring order) and the court's determination (decision), there may be reasonable grounds for believing that the safety and welfare of you or of a dependent person is at risk. If so, the court can grant a protection order to prohibit (ban) the person accused of the abusive behaviour from:

- Using or threatening to use violence
- If the person is not living with you, watching or being near your home
- Following or communicating with you or a dependent person

A protection order is temporary and only effective until the court hearing for the application for a safety order (or barring order). It is sometimes called a 'temporary safety order' because it gives the same protection as a safety order but for a shorter time period.

What is a barring order?

A barring order requires the person accused of abusive behaviour to leave the home and prohibits (bans) the person from entering the home. The order also prohibits the person from:

- Further violence or threats of violence
- Watching or being near your home, or
- Following or communicating (including electronically)



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FOOD, HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

Cultivate joyful moments every day



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.

When we live our days primarily on autopilot, we are not paying attention, so it is hard to feel or remember anything fully, far less appreciate moments of joy. The practice of mindfulness meditation builds a strong foundation of mental presence which can make it easier to notice our feelings, responses, and reactions towards internal and external stimuli. November is the perfect time to focus on what brings a smile to our faces and what brings joy to our ordinary, but very precious, everyday lives. We know that this can be a challenging enough month at the best of times, which is even more reason to deliberately cultivate joy in our lives.

There are so many reasons to feel a bit sluggish or under-motivated, like Covid, war, weather warnings, finances, you name it. Yet equally there are many moments of joy, delight and pure gratitude that can help to bring back a bit of balance, if we have the presence of mind to notice them. It takes practice. I believe in building and repeating small consistent habits or rituals for staying well and taking a step-by-step, moment-by-moment approach to everything in life. When we pay attention and are present in our lives, we can really tap into those moments that induce feelings of contentment, happiness, and joy. And for some of us, writing things down is a way of embedding those moments of happiness or contentment and reminding us of what makes us so happy.

What habits or rituals resource you and fill up your tank at this time of year? Aside from mindfulness meditation and decluttering, I mentioned a few

daily rituals last month that, not only sustain me, but bring me great joy, like movement/dance and journaling, both hugely supportive and in sync with aspiring to living a mindful life. I love to write, and reflective practice is part of my life and work. I was also a great reader at a very young age and I still love being read or sung to. Often it is the things we loved to do as children that still bring us solace, comfort, and delight when we return to them as adults. I started a journal when I was about 11 and kept a journal on and off over the years, coming back to it as a consistent daily practice around 2014. I would miss it greatly now if I didn't pause to write my reflections on the day.

On a very basic level, a journal is a record of the happenings of daily life, which, of course, is a purposeful endeavour in itself. But on a deeper level, it can help us to reflect on our lives and take stock. I journal for personal and professional reasons. We can learn more about ourselves and how we relate to others, we meet our joys as well as our sorrows on the page and can develop ideas, learn life lessons, notice repetitive themes or patterns, process emotions and life events and much more. My personal journals are private, but I have been also writing a monthly mindfulness column

for the West Cork People for almost four years, and when I read through a stack of these articles earlier this year, I felt they formed a record of, not only my reflections on the application of mindfulness to life at particular junctures, but sometimes a collective aspect of a shared West Cork life, through the seasons of each year.

So, an idea was born, and I decided to combine a few of my favourite things, including being read to, meditation, journaling, reflecting and from four years of these monthly written pieces in the West Cork People, chose a selection of 12 articles, each corresponding to a month of the year. I then made a series of audio recordings on Cape Clear, which will be soon be available for purchase on my website. In the audios, I read excerpts from the articles aloud, combining the reading with some guided meditations and questions to ponder with space to write whatever is unfolding for you. The readings are organic, imperfect, spontaneous at times and may be listened to purely for relaxation and contemplation, mindful reflection or as an aid to meditation, reflective journaling, or indeed any kind of writing. In the New Year I hope to run workshops to coincide with the monthly mindful themes and reflective questions. Keep an eye on my Facebook

page or my website if any of this might interest you. I will be uploading more information in the coming weeks, inspired by this quote by John O Donohue "I would love to live like a river flows, carried by the surprise of its own unfolding."

Reconnect and Re-engage free mindfulness programme 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 this programme might be for you, it is run in conjunction with CECAS and supported by the REACH fund 2023.

Weekly drop-in compassion-based mindfulness practice sessions continue at CECAS, Myross Wood Leap on Tuesday mornings through-out November (7, 14, 21 and 28) 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

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FOOD, HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

Inside Premenstrual Syndrome



WOMEN'S HEALTH

Dr Paula Stanley
drstanley@westcorkpeople.ie

As a GP of almost 30 years with a special interest in Women's Health, Dr Paula Stanley has managed a lot of patients with PMS. This month she gives some insight into the condition and why it's so important that it's recognised and treated.

Myth Busting

Premenstrual syndrome or PMS is very much a real condition. For many years even the medical profession was sceptical and some regarded PMS as a behavioural issue: something women used as an excuse for grumpy behaviour.

PMS does not occur because of any hormone imbalance, excess or deficiency. PMS is not linked with any fertility issues. There is no blood test for PMS, it is a clinical diagnosis made following a detailed medical consultation with the patient. PMDD or Premenstrual Dysmorphic disorder is not the same as PMS but is the most severe form of PMS.

Prevalence

Peak prevalence of severe PMS is in the 35 to 45 year age group. Studies have shown that 24 per cent or almost one in four women suffer from moderate PMS. Severe PMS affects five to eight per cent of the general population but can be as high as 23 per cent of women in the Perimenopause. A survey by The International Association for Premenstrual Disorders, IAPMD, published on World Suicide Day 2021 showed that 86 per cent of women with PMDD considered suicide and 30 per cent reported at least one attempt in their lifetime. Both PMS and PMDD are more likely in women who have suffered previous emotional or physical abuse.

Types and Definition

PMS is in fact made up of a few different syndromes and can be divided into: Core Premenstrual disorders and Variants.

Core Premenstrual Disorders occur in women with normal or ovulatory menstrual cycles.

PMDD or Premenstrual dysphoric disorder is the most severe form of Core Premenstrual disorder. A required diagnostic criteria for PMDD is that symptoms affect a woman's ability to function, interfering with her life at work, at home and socially. Another diagnostic marker for PMDD is that it is not related to or exaggerated by any other medical conditions.

Variant Premenstrual Disorders is the term used to describe PMS symptoms that occur in a non ovulatory setting such as:

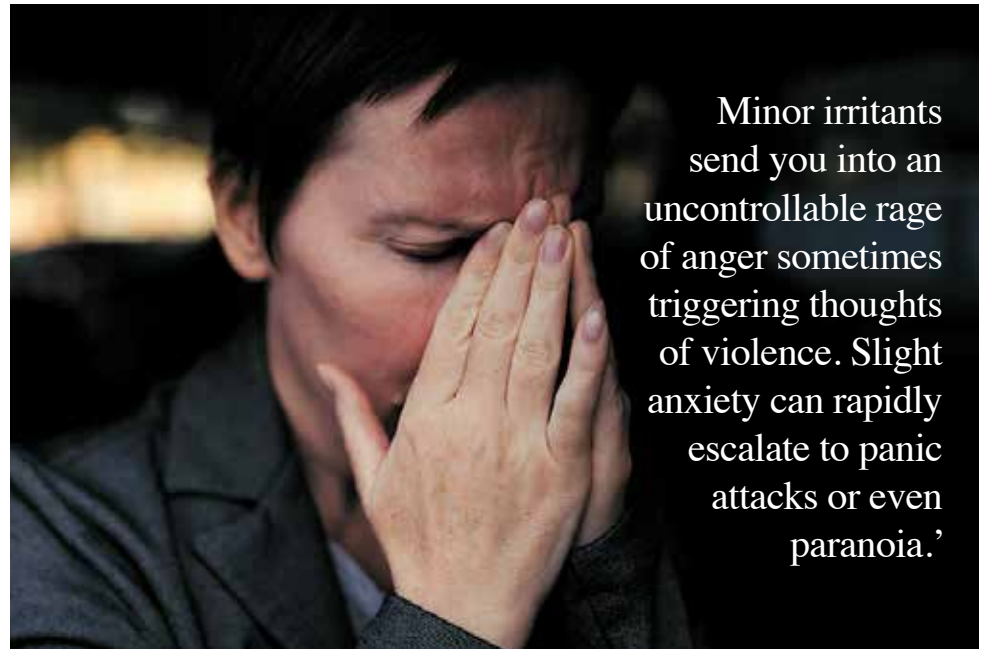
- as a side effects of a progestogen medication, either in contraceptive or HRT medication.
- in the Perimenopause when many cycles are non ovulatory and hormone levels can fluctuate wildly.
- PMS without menstruation such as when a woman has had a hysterectomy.

Symptoms

Physical symptoms are abdominal bloating, appetite changes, insomnia or excessive sleeping, sore, swollen and tender breasts and headaches. Headaches can be normal headaches or migraines. Some might get a change in their bowels, often diarrhoea and some experience hot flushes.

Psychological symptoms are varied and during the 25 years I ran a Women's Health Clinic in my London practice, I found the following to be a good way of explaining these to a patient or more importantly to a partner or friend who might attend with them and has never experienced PMS: 'the emotions you experience are extreme versions of normal emotions that come on extremely rapidly and at times will be completely out of your control: something on the TV that is a little sad will have you sobbing uncontrollably for an hour and you might even have suicidal thoughts. Minor irritants send you into an uncontrollable rage of anger sometimes triggering thoughts of violence. Slight anxiety can rapidly escalate to panic attacks or even paranoia.'

Women often describe these feelings as overwhelming and what is important for those around the woman to realise is that in the moment these emotions can be impossible to control. It can be quite frightening and I have had patients come to me terrified that they are developing bipolar or some other form of severe mental



Minor irritants send you into an uncontrollable rage of anger sometimes triggering thoughts of violence. Slight anxiety can rapidly escalate to panic attacks or even paranoia.'

illness.

What is happening?

A woman with a four-week cycle usually ovulates about 14 days after the first day of her period. The two weeks after ovulation is called the luteal phase of her cycle and this is when PMS symptoms are experienced. Importantly for diagnosis, there is complete resolution of all symptoms with onset of menstruation.

During the luteal phase of a woman's cycle, her oestrogen is falling and her progesterone is rising. It is thought that it is the woman's response to her own normal hormone fluctuations at that time that causes the symptoms.

In particular, it is thought that the upsurge in progesterone is an important factor. Proof that PMS is related to the ovarian activity of ovulation is the fact that it does not occur before puberty, during pregnancy or after the menopause.

As is the case for a lot of Women's Health conditions, not a lot of time or money has been put into research for PMS, unlike the millions invested into developing viagra. PMS falls in the gap between gynaecology and psychiatry and neither camp seems hugely keen to research it. What also complicates the design of any studies is the huge placebo effect of any therapy on PMS symptoms.

It is thought there is genetic predisposition and some sort of increased sensitivity to what are normal hormonal fluctuations in sufferers. A really interesting publication in 2007 in Biological Psychiatry revealed the existence of a sex hormone sensitive gene complex. This is a game changer because it established that women with PMDD have an intrinsic

difference in their molecular apparatus for response to sex hormones and not just, as many medics had previously thought, an emotional behaviour problem that they should be able to control. There has also been a link shown between postnatal depression, PMS and depression in the menopause.

Diagnosis

There is no lab or blood test for PMS. First and foremost, I need to listen to my patient, take a detailed history, go through all her symptoms and in particular whether the symptoms go away when her period starts. To diagnose PMS, it is recommended a patient fill out a symptoms diary for at least two cycles, emphasising that this be done after her PMS phase has passed, ie after her period starts. I have found that most of the time the patient herself gives me her diagnosis when telling me: "and then once my period starts, I am normal again, doctor!"

If onset of a woman's period does not resolve all her symptoms, I need to consider alternative diagnoses such as bipolar affective disorder. It is important to add that women can have both a mental illness and PMS and in this situation they should also be under the care of a mental health team.

What I am able to do is reassure the woman sitting in front of me, who feels desperately guilty for biting the head off her husband/kids/work colleagues three days a month for years and is convinced that there is something intrinsically wrong with her. She lives in fear of that time in the month coming around again and it affects her whole life. Most upsettingly, PMS is something everyone feels is alright to make jokes about which, believe me, does

not help.

I am able to tell her 'there is nothing wrong with you emotionally or psychiatrically. Your physical and emotional symptoms are real and valid and represent a diagnosis of PMS. That PMS is a condition almost one in four women suffer from and is caused by increased sensitivity to your own normal hormone fluctuations after ovulation and not because you are a horrible cow...and that it is possible to get rid of it.'

Treatment

Lifestyle changes are important, as excess caffeine or alcohol can worsen PMS symptoms. Regular exercise also helps. Some vitamins have been shown to help such as Vitamin B6 but not in doses exceeding 50mg per day. No evidence of benefit has been shown for zinc or magnesium supplements. Oil of evening primrose, active ingredient gamma-linolenic acid, is helpful for bothersome breast symptoms in PMS but not for other symptoms. There is some evidence that other vitamins and supplements might help such as calcium, isoflavones (soya derivatives), Agnus Cactus and St John's Wort hypericum). However, St John's wort interacts with many medications, in particular the contraceptive pill.

Because PMS symptoms are caused by hormone changes triggered by ovulation, it can be treated by switching off the normal cycle. This is best achieved by taking the combined oral contraceptive pill or COC, which contain two hormones, oestrogen and a progestogen. COC switches off ovulation, preventing the upsurge in progesterone in the luteal phase. Some older progestogens such as norethisterone and levonorgestrel are a



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FOOD, HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

I'm an OAP and I love it!

A
WEST CORK
LIFE

Tina Pisco

I am not one of those people who looked forward to being older. In fact, I've lived most of my life as if getting older was never going to happen to me. I was born at about the same time as the invention of the teenager. Before the mid-50s teenagers and youth culture didn't really exist. Which is why so many pictures of young adults in the early 60s look older than the same people pictured ten years later in the 70s. The advent of teenagers, and teenage culture emerged thanks to a mix of education, economics, and technology. The post-war baby boom of the 50s and 60s gave rise to a large population of young people (hence the term Boomer) and the creation, and

marketing, of youth culture.

"Don't trust anyone over 30" warned John Lennon. The Who sang "I hope I die before I get old". When I was growing up hippies and rockers embraced youth as their mantra. "My Generation" was literally my generation. Now those hippies, rockers, and me are old and – let me tell you – it's a bit of a surprise. Not that we couldn't have seen it coming. Overall, the population of Europe has been aging for decades thanks to longer life spans coupled with a decreasing birth rate. When I arrived in Ireland back in 1992, the median age was 28.4. By 2025 it will be 40.1 – still relatively young by European standards, but not exactly spring chicken age anymore. Today almost two thirds of the Irish population are of working age, with more than one in seven aged 65 or over, an increase of 112,500 on 2016. In fact, the over 65s is only age group to increase its population share.

I used to make jokes about OAPs with the best of them. But then I got my very own Free Travel Pass and pension, and I am totally 'delira'! The thing is that I never expected to get one. I have rarely worked as an employee. I've been a freelancer all my life with an erratic career in journalism, writing and teaching. In my defence,

any mention of retirement went straight over my head. Like the grasshopper, I never planned for the future. I owe my good fortune to my accountant who several years ago suggested that I start contributing and avail of the offer to add to the inconsistent PRSI that I had accumulated over the years. I did it, but I was dubious. Even after my local welfare office sent me the forms, I didn't really think I'd qualify. I take this opportunity to thank both parties for looking out for me. I still can't believe it. To have a specific sum coming in every Friday is like winning the lotto. I feel like a sinner absolved and I am truly grateful.

Not to mention some of the other benefits that OAPs can avail of. I recently noticed that a nearby shopping centre has reserved parking for older customers. I am discovering that many tickets to events and museums offer discounts for seniors.

Best of all is the Free Travel Pass. Taking public transportation rather than driving has always been a goal of mine. However, in many cases the choice was moot, as it was cheaper to drive. Now I can hop on a bus or train for free. What a wonderful gift, with a real bonus for the planet. If only we could have more buses, I'd

never use my car.

Full disclosure: I don't have a mortgage. My partner, who is far more sensible and considerably younger than me, is still employed. I am fully aware that for many, the State pension is not enough to live on. I also understand that retirement at 66-years-old is a stretch for those working in physically demanding jobs. I'll still have to take on some freelance work, but the security the pension has afforded me is a new and wonderful chapter in my life which has always been a case of financial feast or famine. This sudden security has had a subtle effect on me. The constant drive to get gigs has decreased, along with the low-level anxiety that made it hard to plan ahead (and which kept me awake in the middle of the night). The small, but steady security of a pension has made me more at ease with slowing down. I've even signed up for a weekly art class. And this month I'll be on a bus to Dublin twice – for free!

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Inside Premenstrual Syndrome... *cont'd from previous page*

little testosterone-like chemically and can actually cause PMS-type symptoms as a side effect. It is therefore recommended we avoid using COCs that contain these when treating PMS. COCs containing the progestogen drospirenone such as Yasmin, Eloine and Cilest are recommended first line for PMS. It is recommended to use COC without a break to avoid pill withdrawal PMS symptoms. Where oestrogen containing pill is contraindicated such as in a woman who gets migraine with aura or who has a history of DVT or leg clot, a progestogen-only contraceptive can have the same effect of switching off ovulation, although not as reliably as COC.

SSRI, serotonin reuptake inhibitors, are non-hormonal medications licensed to treat PMS. You might know SSRIs as the Prozac group of medicines. Studies have shown that taking SSRI either continuously or just for the two weeks of the luteal phase is equally effective. SSRI can be used along with

COC. In my clinical practice, I often start SSRI straight away while waiting for the COC to work, then stop it later when the patient feels her symptoms are much better.

The Mirena or hormone-containing coil also has a place in managing PMS.

Where COC fails to improve symptoms, I do suggest Mirena coil. By itself this can help but importantly having a Mirena coil in place allows me to safely prescribe oestrogen therapy on top as a patch or gel, as this will improve PMS symptoms by suppressing ovulation.

Where the above treatments fails, referral to a gynaecologist specialising in PMS may be indicated.

Moving forward

What is needed is increased awareness of PMS both by patients and by the medical profession. I did not receive any PMS training in medical school, during my six month hospital obstetrics and gynaecology rotation or during my GP training

scheme but had to seek it out. As a member of the British Menopause Society, I have been able to access further and specialist level learning on PMS.

As I have said in previous articles here, I strongly believe that women's health needs are best met in the primary care setting by her GP. As GPs, we are the ones who see women from menarche to menopause: from her first period to her last and beyond. If a woman has a mixture of physical and emotional symptoms as described above, that seem to come and go, she should go and see her GP.

With the recent further expansion of the GP Visit card, hopefully more women will be encouraged to book an appointment for issues they previously thought too insignificant to bother the GP with or not worth the €60 fee.

The following websites on PMS may be useful: www.iapmd.org/toolkit and www.pms.org.uk

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FOOD, HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

Winter skin

As the temperatures drop and winter takes hold, many of us find ourselves facing a common seasonal challenge – winter skin. The cold, dry air can wreak havoc on our skin, leaving it dry, flaky, and in need of some extra care. Colder temperatures, steaming hot showers, central heating and the general lack of moisture can all play havoc with our skin but fear not, there are a few things we can be doing to ensure a hydrated,

glowing complexion.

• **Gentle Cleansing:** Avoid using harsh, drying cleansers that can strip your skin of its natural oils. Choose a gentle, hydrating cleanser to clean your face. As a rule of thumb, if your skin feels tight after washing it is likely that the cleanser you are using has disrupted your skin barrier. Skin should feel calm and hydrated after washing.

• **Adapt your Skincare Routine:** Develop an awareness and



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understanding of your own skin and how it responds to different environments and products and make simple changes to help skin adapt for a change in environment. Perhaps a richer, more emollient moisturiser is needed to lock in moisture and create a protective barrier against the harsh winter elements.

• **Book in for a facial treatment:** Winter skin is often dull, so restore skin glow and have a skin resurfacing treatment which will help to slough off dead skin, revealing a brighter complexion, keeping your skin clean, clear, and hydrated while maximising your everyday skincare regime too.

• **Limit Hot Showers:** Hot showers can be tempting in the winter, but they can further dry out your skin. Opt for lukewarm water instead and try to keep your shower time to a minimum.

• **SPF is Year-Round:** Don't forget to apply sunscreen, even in the winter. UV rays can still damage your skin in cold weather, so apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen with at least SPF30 every day.

Bloom & Co Multi Vitamin Skin Mist

The latest addition to the family from Bloom & Co, Multi-Vitamin Skin Mist delivers a burst of nourishing hydration for the skin and amplifies your skincare routine. It does four jobs in one – hydrates your skin by locking in the moisture, protects your skin from environmental stressors such as pollution and UV exposure, helps calm redness and sensitivity and prepares skin for your skincare products that follow. It's formulated with soothing Aloe Vera, Avocado, Raspberry Fruit Extract, and Vitamin E, all working to nourish the skin creating a natural protective barrier, €22, available online from www.bloombb.ie and Bloom & Co stockists nationwide.

REN Evercalm Barrier Support Body Balm

Delivering instant and long-term relief from head to toe, REN Evercalm Barrier Support Body Balm is designed to target key



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.

areas of sensitivity (think dry patches, chafing, post-shave etc). This luxurious, buttery balm is powered by the brand's unique barrier support complex, a unique trio of natural oils (sunflower, apricot kernel, and sweet almond), rich in omega 3, 6 and 9 and ceramides to help restore and strengthen the skin barrier, while the antioxidant-rich formula supports your body's microbiome. The result? Healthy-looking and comfortable-feeling skin, €40 available online from www.reniskincare.ie and REN stockists nationwide.

Dermalogica Liquid Peelfoliant

Daily peel with a potent blend of acids and enzymes smooths the appearance of fine lines while helping to visibly minimise pores and even skin tone. This professional-grade at-home peel has a blend of 30% acids and enzymes (Glycolic, Lactic, Salicylic, Phytic and Tranexamic acids plus Gluconolactone and fermented Pomegranate Enzyme) that work at different layers of skin's surface to thoroughly exfoliate, help unclog pores and reveal smoother, brighter skin. A lipid-rich blend with upcycled

Cranberry Extract promotes long-lasting hydration, €74, available online from www.dermalogica.ie and Dermalogica stockists nationwide.

Clarins Beauty Flash Fresh Ampoule

A seven-day facial radiance treatment, highly concentrated in vitamin C to help revive the skin's radiance and even out the complexion. This treatment in ampoule form combines a 15 per cent concentrated vitamin C complex and a serum enriched with superfruits acerola extract, rich in Vitamin C to brighten dark spots and rose-myrtle, which helps oxygenate the skin to revive dullness. The two formulas only mix-on application thanks to the Clarins fresh-mix bottle. Day after day, the complexion becomes more even, radiant, and luminous. Its creamy yet lightweight formula offers ultimate comfort. Use for seven, 14 or 21 days for increasingly radiant results, €42, available online from www.clarins.ie and Clarins stockists nationwide.

Neutrogena Hydro Boost Range

Say hello to the new improved, hydration heroes from much-loved Neutrogena. Designed to deliver intense, long-lasting moisture, Neutrogena have upgraded the skin care technology across four of its favourite moisturisers- Hydro Boost Water Gel Moisturiser, Hydro Boost Gel Cream Moisturiser, Hydro Boost Night Cream and Hydro Boost Eye Cream – to deliver supercharged formulas with even more hydrating ingredients found naturally in the skin. Proven to hydrate for up to 72 hours, they are further boosted with amino acids which are known to help build and strengthen the skin barrier and reinforce the skin elasticity. Lightweight, with a non-greasy texture, making them suitable for all skin types, from €13.49, available from Neutrogena stockists nationwide.

Emma Hardie Exfoliating Brightening Tonic

Get your glow back with the

new Emma Hardie Exfoliating Brightening Tonic. A natural and gentle daily exfoliator treatment that smooths, brightens, and evens the skin's tone and texture as well as improving skin clarity an increasing elasticity. Natural pomegranate enzymes are gently yet effective exfoliators that work to enhance cellular renewal, creating a smooth and even texture. Aloe Vera soothes and hydrates the skin, while Sytenol A (also known as Bakuchiol) stimulates collagen. Apply after cleansing and wipe over the face neck and décolleté, and follow with your usual serums and moisturisers, €34 available from www.emmahardie.com and Emma Hardie stockists nationwide.

Annutri Glow It Facial Oil

Glow It Facial Oil is a luxurious infusion of 12 deeply rejuvenating and restorative natural oils - think rice bran oil, melon seed oil, argan oil, chia seed oil to name but a few, meticulously crafted and skilfully blended, this decadent oil drenches your skin with deep hydration, nourishment and vitality, revitalising and renewing your complexion for a natural lit-from-within radiance. The citrusy notes of bergamot and sweet orange awaken your senses while infusing your skin with a burst of vitamin C, while frankincense renowned for its healthy ageing benefits works to firm the skin and diminish the appearance of fine lines, and lastly juniper's invigorating aroma lifts and detoxifies, leaving your skin feeling rejuvenated and revived, €40, available online from www.annutri.com and Annutri stockists nationwide.

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FOOD, HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

Reconsider your password choices and ditch 'roykeane'

Data from the Cyber Skills project at MTU has revealed that popular sports clubs, renowned radio personalities, and beloved TV programmes are among the most common passwords amongst internet users, making them prime targets for cyber-criminals.

Utilising the HavelBeenPwned website, which houses over 613 million passwords from hacked accounts, a study was conducted to assess the vulnerability of certain passwords. By inputting names of prominent Irish celebrities, sports teams, and cultural content, the results were interesting. These seemingly unique choices were, in actuality, widespread and easily guessable by hackers. For example, 'roykeane' was hacked 2,962 times.

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)'s Digital Identity Guidelines emphasises the importance of secure password practices, advising organisations to block subscribers from using



passwords that have previously appeared in a data breach. This recommendation underscores the significance of selecting passwords that have not been compromised in past cyber incidents.

Dr. Hazel Murray from Cyber Skills commented "What many consider a strong password, referencing cultural touchpoints, is in fact easily deciphered by cybercriminals. There's a common misconception that if a password contains personal information or interests that it will be strong. Good passwords are

multiple words strung together and avoid easily recognisable phrases."

Dr Murray added "Glenroe finished over 20 years ago on TV yet it's been used nearly 90 times in the hacked password database."

Richard Browne from the National Cyber Security Centre advises "Use strong long diverse passwords, the longer the password the more difficult it is to break. If you go to ten characters or more it gets very difficult to break it."

Maritime Hotel wins Munster's 'Coastal Escape of the Year'

West Cork is known for its stunning, rugged coastline and now too for having Munster's 'Coastal Escape of the Year'.

The Maritime Hotel received the accolade for Munster's 'Coastal Escape of the Year' at the recent Irish Hotel Awards. The gala ceremony took place at the Radisson Blu Hotel and Spa in Sligo and was attended by hospitality teams from all over Ireland.

General Manager, Noel O'Donovan said "Our location in Bantry, the heart of West Cork, is exceptional and so too is the service we provide for our guests. To be recognised and applauded for this at the Hotel Awards is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our team"

Shane Smith Managing Director of NI Media, organisers of the Irish Hotel Awards said:

"The Irish Hotel Awards is now recognised as a benchmark of quality for properties in Ireland. All our members have been rigorously inspected by a team of researchers who are dedicated to promoting and



Maritime Hotel General Manager, Noel O'Donovan accepting the award at the Irish Hotel Awards.

developing the industry. Our members have been assessed and judged at the highest standards and the quality out there is simply magnificent."

The Maritime's sister hotel, The Gleneagle was also honoured on the night picking up

the Munster and national award for 'Family Friendly Hotel' and their Revenue Manager, Ann McCann winning Munster's 'Revenue Manager of the Year'.

For more information visit www.maritime.ie

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Clonakilty's Grasshopper hops over to Spiller's Lane

It's been a busy few months for West Cork's favourite children's clothing store, as proprietor Barbro Fahre readies her new store just in time for the busy run-up to Christmas. Grasshopper Clothing, which brings the best of Scandinavian fashion to West Cork, has relocated to a bigger, brighter space within the vibrant Spiller's Lane community in Clonakilty.

Carrying brands like Molo, Katvig, Joha, Lasticot and Smafolk and local brand Cake & Elf to name a few, Grasshopper draws customers from all over Ireland and even delivers packages across the Atlantic.

With our changing climate looking like it's going to bring much wetter winters to Ireland, Grasshopper's quality range of outdoor weather-proof clothing has never been so popular.

"One thing that's really great about Norway is that it's so outdoors...kids are encouraged to go outside from an early age,"

says Barbro. "That's what I am trying to do through my clothes – I want people here to do the same and understand that there is no such thing as bad weather when you're dressed right."

For Barbro, it's all about the customers, which is probably why so many return again and again.

"I love what I do and the quality of the clothes...it's

fun stuff to sell...but it's my customers who keep me going," she says. "I am so very thankful for all the local support I've received in the shop over the past 14 years."

There is huge job satisfaction. "While I don't make the clothes, I've become a personal shopper for so many of my customers. I know their sizes and tastes and I think of them when I'm putting

in my orders," says Barbro.

All of Grasshopper's clothes, except the raingear, are organic and the raingear brands she carries, Mikk-line and Molo, both use recycled plastic for their raingear, denim and fleeces.

Grasshopper Clothing, Spiller's Lane, Clonakilty. Email: grasshopperclon@gmail.com



E-games in DNA



THE DNA OF WEST CORK PEOPLE

Mark Grace

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

As mentioned in previous articles, I am not a fan of the E word, 'ethnicity', as it tends to be used negatively in socio-political contexts and often applied to highlight racial differences. This is despite DNA showing conclusively that we are all of the same human family. The term 'DNA origins' is preferable.

'Ethnicity' on consumer DNA test sites is often the reason people test, but unless you have a particularly exotic mix (for example, parents from entirely different geographical origins) it won't be very enlightening and not necessarily accurate. It is still early days in the science and things change as more data

becomes available. Ancestry announced new updates for September 2023 and you might expect them annually.

It can be hard to explain the detailed results. As companies do not provide the sources they use to define ethnicity (protecting their own databases) it does not help those of us trying to understand. For example, I remain stuck with my 21 per cent 'Scottish' origins despite having a fully DNA- and paper-proven tree back to the end of the C18th. No obvious sign of any Scots amongst them, therefore it must be from an earlier time. I can't say I know what 'Scottish' actually means, as historically, the country now known as Scotland was divided between various British tribes, as well as Nordic peoples.

You have to put the headline number into context as Ancestry themselves indicates that 21 per cent really means four to 25 per cent. So, it could be very close to zero. My current Irish five per cent ranges between zero and 10 per cent. I have one 2x great grandparent with 100 per cent Irish origins, which is about six per cent of my paper ancestry, so five per cent doesn't seem too far out. You could say there are lies, damned lies, statistics, and then ethnicity.

Results between companies vary because they have their own proprietary databases and algorithms. My wife's 98 per cent Munster DNA origins is

effectively 100 per cent, and the two per cent 'Welsh' on her maternal side (range 0-6 per cent) from Beara is unexplained in recorded history; although there are Welsh surnames present there in the C19th. Her current DNA origins are shown on the map, very focused on SW Munster.

Despite the uncertainties, there are E-games you can play on your own. For example, despite the 98 per cent Munster tag, you can find other attributable clusters of DNA segments in the data. DIY ethnicity.

I find this easiest on MyHeritage since tester's origins are easier to find and most people allow their results to be displayed on a chromosome browser, so you have the precise segments involved. For matches with extensive trees, you can also see those matches with a long-established lineage in their home countries. It was through this method that I was able to trace my own Irish roots to County Mayo, independently and more accurately than Ancestry currently does.

My wife does not have an 'ethnicity' assigned to Nordic countries however it is clear she has some ancient connections there. As with most of us who have defined Nordic roots, you can pick up the precise segments that relate to deep ancestry in Norway, Sweden, and Finland. She has a cluster of segments that are deep Nor-

wegian (earlier than 1700's), for want of a better term. Also, she matches many Greenlanders which points back to some early (Viking) colonisation of that land. This is 'ethnicity' I can believe in.

If you have DNA tested and interested in your origins you are probably using DNA Painter, which is a free application allowing you to plot up and colour code your matches. This is an excellent tool for highlighting and categorising segments to common ancestors or shared origins and playing your E-games.

DNA Kits for Christmas

If DNA testing interests you, you may be considering buying consumer DNA kits as Christmas gifts or may receive one as a gift. It can be fun as well as having a serious side. Which one to buy is probably the most frequent question. You probably fall into one of these two categories.

If you are buying for fun, then you should not be spending too much money. If you are thinking of starting a family project of your own then MyHeritage is probably the way to go. They have kits on almost permanent sale at half the price of other testing companies. As MyHeritage provides the chromosome browser to view your results graphically, it is also an easier way to learn about which pieces of DNA you share

with family members, more distant cousins, and learn about DNA matching in general. If you become a serious hobbyist for genetic genealogy, then you may graduate to doing further testing with other companies.

For those with a serious interest or reason for doing a DNA test, then a different purchasing strategy is recommended. It is more expensive but provides the data coverage you will need to do your research. Due to the number of family trees available and being the world's largest database, I would start by testing with Ancestry. Once you have your results, you can download your file and upload to most other DNA testing company websites (including GEDmatch, which accepts all companies data) either for free or for a small payment to activate their matching services. As Ancestry does not accept uploads from others, you have to do it this way around.

If you were unsuccessful in answering your research questions, then you may also have to test with the world's second largest, 23andMe. 23andMe is the other company that does not accept uploads of other test data. If you test with both, then share your data across all other reputable databases, you will have maximum coverage and be connected to almost every tester. If you are more interested in "traits" than family, then you can start with 23andMe

first, and then test with Ancestry for family.

Good luck with all your testing endeavours!

Questions that can be answered as part of future articles can be emailed to DNAmatchingprojects@gmail.com or follow the West Cork DNA projects on Facebook 'My Irish Genealogy & DNA'.



FOOD, HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

Vaping: Hooking in our children

New research examining the habits and perceptions of children and young people in relation to vaping indicates that across all age groups there is a link between a 'cool' identity and vaping use. It also reveals the perceived social standing that vaping allows some young people to feel among their peers, facilitating a sense of social cohesion.

'What's the Panic with Vaping?' research was commissioned by Foróige Sligo, in

partnership with the North West Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force (NWRDATF) and Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB (MSLETB), to understand the impact that vaping products have on children and young people in Ireland through listening to their direct experiences of vaping.

'What's the Panic with Vaping?' research was conducted within a range of contexts including youth groups, post primary schools and young people's own individual perspec-

tives, resulting in almost 1,000 stakeholders participating.

Young people consulted as part of the study felt that the marketing of vapes is inherently youth-orientated and directly targets them, with a "toy-like" attraction and inventiveness of products in terms of flavour, colour, and personalisation.

Other insights revealed by children and young people in Sligo and Leitrim, included:

10-12-year-olds said that vapes are openly and prominently displayed at convenient local access points such as local shops and/or through their own social groups.

Thirty-six per cent of young people between the age of 13-16-years said that they currently vape and that they had never smoked previously.

"I know that I have an addiction... I just don't think about it, I know it's going to be hard to get off them..." admitted Anna, age 17.

Josephine Lally, Community Works Social Researcher, commented "While many studies have amassed substantial medical and scientific evidence of the adverse impacts of vaping, the

findings of this research present a stark reminder that listening to children and young people's experiences needs to be included in future actions in addressing the issue of vaping."

One of key recommendations arising from the research was the need for consistent public health messaging and a direct 'campaign' to inform children, young people, their families, educators and youth support sectors about vaping to counteract a dearth of clear information.

Anne Marie Regan, Area Manager Foróige, stated "The stories shared by children and young people show that this is a complex and significant issue for our young population not just in Counties Sligo and Leitrim but also nationally. Hearing directly from young people is critical in developing local and national responses to vaping. We hope that Government, local government and other agencies will hear the message coming from this research and will act to address the recommendations quickly. We can't wait for an even greater health and addiction crisis amongst children and young people to emerge."



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TUE

HIIT CIRCUITS

10.00am – 11.00am

AQUACISE

11.00am – 11.45am

CORK CITY BALLET

(Alan 087 7851225)*

3.30pm – 7.30pm

SPINNING

6.30pm – 7.30pm

STEP

8.00pm – 8.45pm

WED

SPINNING

7.00am – 8.00am

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10.00am – 11.00am

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5.30pm – 6.30pm

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(Flavie 087 6548138)*
6.45pm – 7.45pm

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STEP

9.00am – 9.45am

AQUACISE

10.00am – 10.45am

SPINNING

6.30pm – 7.30pm

AERIAL YOGA

(Barbara 083 0733060)*

AERIAL YOGA

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8.15pm – 9.15pm

FRI

SPINNING

7.00am – 8.00am

CIRCUIT

10.00am – 11.00am

ZUMBA GOLD

(Flavie 087 6548138)*

10.30am – 11.30am

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4.30pm – 5.30pm

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Award-winning Belfast artist 'ferna' kicks off tour in Ballydehob

North-Coast born, Indie-pop musician Hannah McPhillimy, best known as 'ferna' has been making waves in the thriving Belfast music scene over the last 12 months. After winning 'Single of the Year' at the NI Music Prize for her first official release 'Wasting', she performed alongside Saint Sister, JC Stewart and Foy Vance before releasing her debut album 'understudy' to rave reviews. Awarded four stars by The Irish Times for "10 songs that blend indie sensibilities, confident pop music and tender folksiness", she is now embarking on her first ever Irish tour, starting with Levi's Corner House in Ballydehob.

Ferna plays Levi's Cornerhouse on Saturday, November 4 with Molly O'Mahony and Sasha Samara.

Molly O'Mahony has spent the last decade making music with art-folk band Mongoose, but more recently has poured



Ferna

her efforts into her solo project and released her critically acclaimed debut album 'The House of David' last year. "Stunning, impressive and evocative..." Alexandra Anderson, Hotpress

Joining O'Mahony and ferna on the night, will be another award-winning Northern Irish artist Sasha Samara. Described by the Belfast Telegraph as 'a pop contender', Antrim-born



Molly O'Mahony

Sasha Samara released her debut E.P. 'Why Am I Still Here I Never Learn' earlier this year. The lead single 'Sobering Up' was selected as Tracy Clifford's Track of the Week on RTÉ 2FM, while her soaring vocal delivery and endearing honesty have won her fans up and down the country.

Tickets for this show (€20 plus booking fee) are available at leviscornerhouse.com.

Cork International Film Festival launches county-wide 2023 programme

Cork International Film Festival (CIFF) has launched the programme for the 68th edition of the Festival. The expanded 2023 event will screen the best in Irish and international film across Cork city and county from Thursday, November 9 to Sunday, November 26. The Opening Night Gala is the Irish premiere of Yorgos Lanthimos' award-winning 'Poor Things'.

Highlights in the packed 2023 programme, featuring over 200 films, include the International Gala and Irish premiere of acclaimed 'All Of Us Strangers', starring Andrew Scott and Paul Mescal, and written and directed by CIFF alumnus Andrew Haigh; the World premiere of 'So This Is Christmas', from award-winning Irish filmmaker Ken Wardrop; the Irish premiere of 'Eileen', directed by William Oldroyd and starring Anne Hathaway and Thomasin McKenzie; and the Irish premiere of the highly anticipated Cannes Jury Prize winner, 'Fallen Leaves', from renowned filmmaker Aki Kaurismäki.

Highly anticipated documentary, 'One Night in Millstreet', directed by two-time Best Sports Doc IFTA winner Andrew Gallimore and produced by Morgan Bushe and Peter Murnaghan, will bring the Cork audience a reminder of an extraordinary and spectacular event that took place over the St. Patrick's weekend of 1995, a world championship boxing match deep in the countryside of County Cork. One Night in Millstreet not only relives the titanic contest that took place in the Green Glens Arena, but also marks the trajectory of the two competitors. The preening, self-regarding, and mentally formidable Super Middleweight Champion, Chris Eubank, and the hungry challenger from Cabra, Steve Collins. The film is in competition for the inaugural 'CIFF Best New Irish Feature Award, proudly supported by the Irish Examiner'. Courtesy of Wildcard Distribution, Fastnet Films and Proposition Films.

Cork International Film Festival is delighted to have teamed up with six Cork city- and county-wide venues for 'Super Cine Saturday' on November 25. The Reel Picture Ballinacolly and Blackpool; Cinemax

Bantry; Gate Cinemas Midleton and Mallow; and Regal Cinema Youghal will exclusively show a 'Taste of CIFF' with three specially selected feature films from the 68th Festival programme, including 'Fallen Leaves', 'One Night in Millstreet', and family film 'Robot Dreams'.

The Festival will also showcase premieres from acclaimed Irish filmmakers Paul Duane (All You Need Is Death), Alan Gilson (The Days Of Trees) and Paul Mercier (Prospect House), all of which are in competition for the CIFF Best New Irish Feature award, alongside So This Is Christmas and the previously announced world premiere and Irish Gala One Night in Millstreet. The CIFF Best New Irish Feature Award is proudly supported by the Irish Examiner. The award jury will be chaired by Oscar-winning film producer, education luminary and CIFF Patron, Lord David Puttnam: with the

winner announced on Sunday, November 19.

CIFF Patron, Lord David Puttnam, said "Cinema can transport us to other worlds, spark new conversations, and inspire action and change, and film festivals are uniquely special places that bring us together to experience the extraordinary and the ordinary, collectively. The 68th edition is bursting with films that encourage us to reimagine the world, to discover and share new experiences. I am extremely proud to represent Cork International Film Festival as its Patron and I warmly encourage you to explore this year's wonderfully exciting programme."

The 68th Cork International Film Festival will run from Thursday, November 9 to Sunday, November 26, 2023. For more information and to view the full programme, and to stay up to date with the latest news and programme announcements, visit corkfilmfest.org.

OUT & ABOUT IN WEST CORK



As always there was fierce shtyle to be seen at Ballydehob Jazz Festival. Pic: Richard Breathnach

Bandon Art Group launches 2024 Calendar in aid of VdP

Bandon Art Group is launching the group's 2024 Calendar at a coffee morning in The Perfect Cup, Howard's Court, Bandon, on Friday November 3 at 10am. The coffee morning and proceeds from sales of the calendars are in aid of St Vincent de Paul. All original paintings from the calendar will be exhibited upstairs in the cafe, along with some other works, and will hang there until Christmas. The Art Group is very grateful to Margaret from The Perfect Cup for her generous support.

Crafting at Bandon Library

The Bandon Library Tuesday Craft Group will exhibit some of their work at the Bandon Library during the month of November. A wide variety of projects are crafted by the group using different mediums and techniques such as patchwork, crochet, cross stitch and silk painting to name a few.

The group meet on Tuesday mornings 10-12am, every week when the library is open. Readers are invited to join the group for a coffee and a chat and, if you'd like to do what they do, to stay.



'One Night in Millstreet' remembers the 1995 fight between preening, self-regarding, and mentally formidable Super Middleweight Champion, Chris Eubank, and the hungry challenger from Cabra, Steve Collins.



Highlights include the International Gala and Irish premiere of acclaimed 'All Of Us Strangers', starring Andrew Scott and Paul Mescal, and written and directed by CIFF alumnus Andrew Haigh.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Feature film shot in Eyeries to screen at Cork International Film Festival

Directed and written by renowned filmmaker Max Le Cain, the feature film 'Solitaire', which was filmed in an old house in Eyeries village, will screen at the Cork International Film Festival on Thursday November 16.

Maximilian Le Cain who is from Beara, is one of Ireland's most acclaimed experimental filmmakers and has made seven feature films and over one hundred short films. He is the 2023 UCC Arts Council Film Artist in Residence and a key member of the Experimental Film Society, a group that has played a pivotal role in developing Irish experimental cinema.

'Solitaire' is an unsettling ghost story that explores family, home, identity, and gender as unfixed parasitic entities that propagate themselves through bodies and buildings. The film which is wordless, takes a visually poetic approach to its story that is deeply mysterious and emotional in its reimagining



Maximilian Le Cain

of universal themes.

'Solitaire' stars Natasha Bourke and Aisling O'Connell and their roles in the film were created through a collaborative part improvised working method, which Maximilian Le Cain

has refined from over two decades of filmmaking. The sound in the film was created by Cork based composer Karen Power whose work spans compositions for orchestras, to sound for film to sound installations.

Le Cain grew up in the Beara Peninsula and his work is often inspired by the atmosphere and the grandeur of the region. 'Solitaire' was filmed in Eyeries and Maximilian Le Cain's short film 'Daughter of the Sun' is Le Cain's imagining of the legend of the Hag of Beara (Cailleach Beara).

In addition to making films, Maximilian Le Cain promotes experimental film through programming, writing and education. He organises Phantoscope at Triskel Christchurch Cinema and co-organises CineSalon at the Guest House Project, both events which showcase experimental films and filmmaking in Cork.

Solitaire will screen on November 16 at 8.30pm in the Triskel Arts Centre. Maximilian Le Cain will participate in a UCC Film Artist in Residence 'In Conversation' following the screening. See www.corkfilm-fest.org.

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Open day and craft sale at Clonakilty's Irish Wheelchair Centre

Service users and staff at the Irish Wheelchair Association have been kept busy the past few months creating Christmas crafts to have on sale at their open day on Wednesday, November 22 at the IWA Centre in Clonakilty.

"We began with a pottery class where potter facilitator Catherine Ryan brought service users into the Christmas spirit in mid-summer. The class began hand making Christmas angels

and Christmas tree decorations," shares Sinéad Burke, IWA Service Support Officer.

Since then, the Creative Crew group have made beautiful handmade pieces to have for sale on the day.

"These pieces are all made with love and patience, and would make ideal presents for teachers at a very reasonable price or, as something different for a family member or friend to get that 'something different'

this Christmas," says Sinéad.

This will be a one-off sale with all money raised going directly towards the services that the IWA provide at the Clonakilty IWA Community Centre.

The Clonakilty Voices singing group will be opening the day, which runs from 1.30pm to 3.30pm.

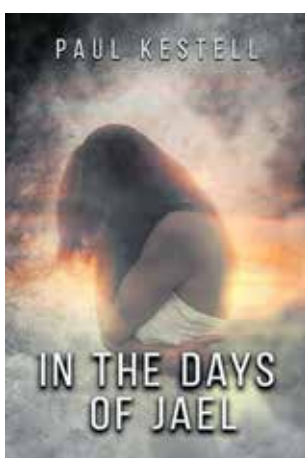
For further information contact Sinéad on 087-2217943.

A powerful write that reads like a thriller

Baltimore author, Paul Kestell, has released his novella 'In the days of Jael'. Already after receiving great reviews, the book is available throughout the national library network, with both Cork City, and County Library network stocking the title.

'In the days of Jael' is a work of independent modern Irish fiction exploring the thoughts of dying woman at the end of the Covid pandemic, as she retires to an isolated cottage to finish her first book of fiction. Having contracted Covid, and with advanced cancer, her mind blurs, she is lost within a

labyrinth of fact and fiction, all intertwined. The book journeys from Cork to Mayo to Dublin



and back to Cork again with Kestell bringing readers on a journey that is, as ordinary, as it is devastating.

Paul will be signing copies of 'In the days of Jael' (€12) and his other books in the newsagents of Field's SuperValu in Skibbereen on Saturday, November 4, all day.

'In the days of Jael' is available on Amazon and instore in Eason's, Patrick St and Mahon Point stores.

It's also available on Eason's online, with free delivery nationwide, at just €13.99.

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ASTROLOGY

Kate Arbon

Kate Arbon is an astrologer, writer and spiritual teacher. Living in West Cork for over 20 years she gives personal consultations locally and internationally using traditional natal and Horary astrology.
email: astro@katearbon
www.katearbon.com

November Sun Signs

As a contentious October closes to give way to November the energy surrounding the recent Lunar Eclipse in Taurus carries on into this month and beyond. Mercury joined with Mars on October 29 bringing words of war, news of conflicts and a call to action. There is a real sense of stress, trigger points and culminations, as we begin November. Many existing patterns in the human consciousness are brought out into the open and this is the time to take a different perspective and be open to new possibilities. More strongly than at other times in the past, it is now apparent that we cannot continue down the old paths without repeating the same time-worn scenarios. We cannot be blind to reality and we cannot expect the choices required now to be made on our behalf without feeling very disempowered later. November is a month with many difficult energy clashes. Maintaining personal and spiritual equilibrium is essential now. Keeping a clear mind and an open heart is the way forward.

Our first major planet move is on November 4, as Saturn ends its

twenty-week retrograde in Pisces. This planet of restrictions and obstacles in a watery sign can bring issues with the flow of water and emotions. Either too much or not enough can be problematic. Over the next two years, we may learn how the management of both the physical element and our personal expression has a huge and sometimes catastrophic impact when not directed appropriately.

The week from November 11 to 18 is a high-energy phase and a time when any clashes within individual and collective desires can come to a peak. There is potential for rapid change and unusual reactions along with some new possibilities that are now being revealed. This is a period when making your personal choice is especially powerful and far-reaching. Root your actions in what is deeply true for you and what will stand the test of time. Basing your position on temporary trends or popular themes is no longer comfortable and maybe not even possible now.

The combined energies of Mars, Sun and Uranus hold potential for a breakthrough, in the way that

dynamite can blast through rock to create new roadways, this has the ability to form an alternative route and remove what seemed like insurmountable obstructions. The New Moon on November 13 adds to the tension that pre-empt the shifts and changes required. It can mark the start of a theme that will be intense over the following two weeks up to Full Moon.

We also have the influence of Neptune during this week so this can add confusion and a lack of clarity. Be cautious of the information you receive and double-check its validity before you act or react to something. There may be a deliberate attempt to stir up emotions to get a response by obscuring the facts or details.

Another planetary dynamic mid-month also has a potential timeline of around two years into the future. Mars the planet of activation and confrontation completes its solar cycle every two years. On November 18, Mars joining with the Sun occurs in Scorpio, the first time since 1991. Mars is especially powerful and expressive in its own sign and the energy of this combination can

trigger a 'hotspot' in a cycle of desire for dominance. The energies are all 'fired up' and we can expect some volatile and decisive moves from anyone who wants to claim their position now. Scorpio adds a twist and can reveal the deeper underlying agenda in a situation. It has no tolerance for betrayal or disloyalty. These two 'hot heads' can create a flash point in the area of life represented by Scorpio in your own birth chart.

Repercussions from the recent clash of a feisty and martial Mars with the control and power elements of Pluto on October 9 have been playing out over the last few weeks. We get a bit more of this story unfolding around November 22 when these planets connect again. This time there is a more supportive energy which can bring the underlying causes to our attention so we can deal with them instead of simply striking out without due consideration. There can be a hard-hitting force felt when the obstructive authority and restraint of Saturn is once again challenged by a Mars that wants to push forward on its

personal warpath.

Mars moves into optimistic and far-sighted Sagittarius on November 24. This time there may be boundaries set and rules implemented whilst alternative and fair options are proposed. This leads us up to the Full Moon in Gemini on the 27th, which sparks the notion to consider multiple sides to a situation rather than the polarised attitudes from the past. Extra effort is required to gain mental clarity and avoid emotional reactivity. This can be the beginning of a phase where we open up options and put forward new proposals that take us into a new era. We are now aware of circumstances, beliefs and attitudes that were not questioned fully until recently when they were brought to a head and became critical issues. It may be some time before the effects are fully recognised, but now is the time, and the opportunity to think differently and make new choices.

November has a New Moon in 21 degrees Scorpio on November 13 at 9.27am and a Full Moon in five degrees Gemini on November 27 at 9.16am.



Aries: This New Moon might be a challenging period. You may feel unusually anxious and worried about all manner of things. You're likely to focus on the negative side of a situation at the expense of the positive just because things aren't going exactly as you planned.

This slow progress may not be as productive as you would like but it gives you time to consider what is truly worth keeping and what you can dispense with. It's a great opportunity to smooth out what doesn't flow well in your life in preparation for a more profitable phase after the next Full Moon.



Taurus: Make this New Moon an opportunity to focus on any relationship issues. Personal and professional partnerships need your attention now. Interesting and stimulating people may come into your life and you'll want to find time for intimate encounters or shared

experiences. You are aware of how much you have to give but you won't be appreciated by just sitting still with that knowledge. You have the most freedom when you can live within a healthy balance of give and take. If you invest in your connections now then you can put your best foot forward with confidence later in the month.



Gemini: This New Moon phase you'll want to focus your attention on the practical demands of life. Some responsibilities and obligations, once accepted, will benefit you in due course. Feeling you must do more than you really need to can create some stress but any

self improvement effort pays rewards. This is the time to kick old habits and break up unproductive routines. Once you've completed the tasks, you'll be able to stand back and take pride in your accomplishments. You can take time out to review and reintegrate yourself fully later in the month.



Cancer: During this New Moon phase your creative powers are at a peak. You want to have fun and taking chances might pay off. Don't take yourself too seriously and you will reap the rewards. Whatever you do make sure you give plenty of room to express your originality.

Get yourself noticed. You may be surprised at what you come up with by just playing around with ideas or projects. Your romantic feelings are more intense now and children may take an important role in your life. You'll reap rewards and enjoy the support of friends during the Full Moon phase.



Leo: Home and family matters take over your life during this New Moon. Concentrate your energy into whatever gives you a sense of security and well being. You've given all you can to worldly affairs for a while and now you may feel like staying home and replenishing yourself. Sticking with familiar surroundings and intimate company gives you the freedom to nurture what's really important. This is a

good time to complete unfinished projects and don't try to get started on anything new just yet. Expect a new phase of fulfilment to emerge in your career or public life after the Full Moon.



Virgo: You may find yourself called on by neighbours or asked to get involved with community ventures during this New Moon phase. A lot of energy may be used up in trivial or lighthearted conversation. Going deep isn't for you right now and feeling restless could

be a problem if you don't find activities that stimulate your mind. Catch up with friends or to do some creative writing. News and information is flowing your way. Seek out alternatives to what you already know. There are more opportunities to expand your horizons during the next few weeks.



Libra: This New Moon phase finds you concerned with your material and financial security. Sudden purchases or fear of spending might be a problem now depending on how you feel about the state of your resources. This is a good time to consider if you are making the best

of your natural skills and abilities. You might be underestimating yourself or not yet utilising all the tools in your bag for your greater benefit. Actual money isn't the only source of wealth and you may find you have abundance in another form. Later in the month you may also benefit from others who have made the best of their own resources.



Scorpio: During this month's New Moon phase your need for self-expression and communicating your personal vitality are priority. Getting a glimpse of your unique personality in action gives you a better sense of who you are. You'll want to put your own style or individuality on everything you do. You are especially sensitive to what, or who, is around you and your mood doesn't make for sharing. Relationships are a two way flow but now you want to the lead role and put yourself first. You can take time to have more equal one to one encounters after the Full Moon.



Sagittarius: Your inclination is to shun any attention and keep pretty much to yourself during this New Moon phase. You can be very productive throughout this period by just quietly working away in the background. Taking time out to relax, daydream or meditate regenerates the spirit and brings you closer to your creativity. Reconnecting with your inner world is important for your sense of equilibrium. Valuable insights and breakthroughs are possible. Once refreshed you will have time and energy to focus on the practical details of life once more.



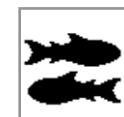
Capricorn: This New Moon highlights your position within your community. You can see that what you have to offer is appreciated by those concerned and this is a time of enjoying the rewards of your past contributions.

You've wanted more creativity and time to enjoy life so this is a good time to crank up your social life and meet people; the benefits will soon follow. The phrase "what you put in is what you get out" is the key. This feel good phase will give you the required energy to use your creative skills and have some serious fun later in the month.



Aquarius: Vocational concerns and your reputation are in focus during this New Moon. If you're not already striking out to fulfil your ambitions then now is the time to make plans for your future. Getting yourself some recognition for what you do well is of importance

now. Self acknowledgment only takes you so far so seek out some approval from those you respect. If you want to launch your career or go a step further then this is the time to be building upwards. It may seem like constant hard work now but the Full Moon phase will bring a much needed chance to relax and enjoy your home life.



Pisces: You're looking for adventure and feel you've had enough of routine daily responsibilities. You want freedom to explore new ground or invite new experiences into your life. During this New Moon the bigger picture and broader issues occupy your thoughts. Use

the time to make plans and dream up some alternatives. Don't just limit yourself only to what seems possible from here. Opportunities will come your way so be prepared to open your mind to new ideas and lifestyles. You'll likely find your attention and energy go into taking care of all the details later this month.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Local People, Local Wisdom: Marguerite McQuaid, Bandon



Aoise Tutty Jackson

In this photo series West Cork photographer Aoise Tutty Jackson uses her informal and fresh style to connect with, and share the wisdom of, people in our community. www.aoisetuttyjackson.com email aoise@92circles.com or call 086 3465373.

Marguerite McQuaid set up Creative Bandon in 2016, alongside Zoe Tennyson, and is fiercely committed to strengthening community and supporting artists through their work.

Although she grew up in Glasgow to two Irish parents, Marguerite spent a lot of time in the family home in Ross-inver, Co Leitrim during her

younger years. She was heavily influenced by her midwife grandmother who had a strong sense of justice and was a wonderful storyteller. Leitrim was always her spiritual home. Since 2000, she has been living in Bandon, moving here during a big life transition: She gave up her work in the charity sector and began to tune into food and more natural ways of living.

"My mother had a difficult time during the troubles in Scotland, she was shamed for being Irish in her workplace. I got a strong sense of justice from my mum and my grandmother – they had a real sense of integrity. My mother had to swallow that hurt, and I took that on. When things are wrong, it's up to each and every one of us to challenge them. There's often this attitude 'Let's not make trouble' but sometimes things need to be said.

"I feel as though I've been very lucky to arrive in Bandon, it gave me a new lease on life. I've had so many great opportunities and met so many people of like minds.

"I love foraging, and



honouring the way the earth expresses itself in every season. I think it's important to take our lead from Mother Earth – we wouldn't be in half the trouble we were in if we just nurtured the Earth, cared for her instead of trying to control her.

Halloween has always been quite special for me because it is a real marker that you need to start pulling in your energy and

reflecting on things. Being led by the seasons is so important – like eating wild garlic in the Spring when we need to cleanse our blood. We're all part of a great cycle that never ends and that's a wonderful gift.

Manchán Magan says the Irish bible is written in the landscape and it's up to us to pay attention and decipher it. We really need green spaces, we

need nature. It's medicine. I've been part of a group rediscovering two ancient pre-Christian twin wells in Bandon's Town Park – a Lady's well and a Brigid's well. They would have had great veneration for water. Wells were seen as portals to the next world.

With Creative Bandon we've been working hard to promote an inclusive Bandon – it's real-

ly important for older people. We did an intergenerational project between older people and transition year students and what was incredible was how much they had in common. It was getting out in nature that helped them to see this. I don't think there's anything more important than looking after community, and artists provide a great way of doing this. I feel they should be centre place in terms of offering solutions, so we work hard to support them.

"I think it's really sad that what we value as a society is what pays well, but that's not what counts. Caring for people, our older people and young people is really what matters isn't it?

"It's important to try and think about where others are coming from. It's really easy to just reduce things to 'us' and 'them' but it's just 'Us' really. If one suffers, we all suffer.

"If I was passing on advice to the next generation I'd tell them 'You're meant to be here – you are needed, you have a part to play.'"

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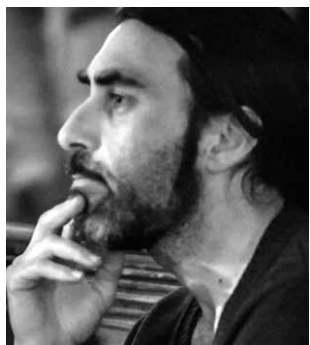
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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Space Age Bronze: the Platonic compositions of Don Cronin



THE SHAPE OF THINGS

James Waller

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

A slender line rises, like the bow of a double bass, up the tall sleek body of an object which, though reminiscent of a musical instrument, otherwise defies description. The material looks like beautifully shaped and polished timber, but it is in fact bronze. This is a sculpture titled 'Trammelled,' by Don Cronin, part of an exhibition of recent work, titled 'Aculeate Compositions' which showed in Gallery Asna, Clonakilty throughout October.

Like 'Trammelled,' the five works in 'Aculeate Composi-

tions' defy expectations and assumptions. References to machine parts and instruments are sublimated into compositions which hover ever so softly beyond our comprehension: what looks like wood turns out to be bronze or fibre glass; what reminds one momentarily of an automotive chassis morphs and slips into something we can't describe.

Cronin's work is fresh, unusual and engineered to perfection. It leaves one mystified by a combination of its compelling unity and its stubborn non-referentiality. As associative beings we instinctively seek to associate

one thing with another; if we hear an unfamiliar word we automatically reach for a word we know that sounds most like it. Confronted by Cronin's polished monuments to modernity we are suspended in unfamiliar space; the few forms we fleetingly recognise are, in the end, of little help in understanding the broader language.

The broader language is what I would call Platonic abstraction. It is concerned with composition itself; Platonically removed from both the highs and lows of expressionism and the clever conceit of conceptualism, Cronin engages in the pure mystery of arrangement,

bonding ever diverse materials and elements with a mastery rarely equaled. As the mystery of arrangement is the crux of Cronin's art we would do well to reflect on what composition is and its place in art practice.

Some years ago I came up with the following formula: Composition is the Source, Vibration is the Spirit, and Illusion is the Dream. Extrapolating this further: The source of all power is composition, the spirit of all expression is vibration, and the dream of all reality is illusion. Without composition there is no art; it is the mysterious essence of art, its' ground and being.

Something composed well, but with low vibration or expression, and no illusory form can still be compelling as art (think of Piet Mondrian). Something with a higher level of expression or vibration, but poorly composed, falls apart and is quickly forgotten; well composed, however, it becomes immortal (think of Jackson Pollock in painting, or on a more subtle level, Alexander Calder in sculpture). A skilful illusion, well composed, but with low vibration or expression, will endure (think of Canaletto); if it is poorly composed, however, it will also be forgotten.

Artistic expression can be subtle, of course, and materials also have their own energetic qualities; this is where Don Cronin's work straddles both composition and vibration; in doing so, however, it remains Platonic; that is, no emotional expression comes into play.

Artistic expression can be subtle, of course, and materials also have their own energetic qualities; this is where Don Cronin's work straddles both composition and vibration; in doing so, however, it remains Platonic; that is, no emotional expression comes into play. Such a level of austere removal can be alienating, but also liberating; it is a realm of mysterious play where the most poetic combinations of form and material can breathe their own non-verbal meaning.

Such is the case with my personal favourite from this show, which gives the exhibition its name: 'Aculeate Composition.' It is a comparatively small piece, made of segments of wood, sandblasted into skeletal ribs of wood fibre, held in a composition of steel. The combination of natural material and its attendant fragility with the strength of steel and its promise of space-age endurance, give this work a wonderful poignancy. It points to the poetic subtlety of Cronin's practice, and to the (paradoxically) emotive potential of materials in themselves.

According to the Merriam Webster dictionary 'aculeate' is an adjective "relating to or being hymenopterans (such as bees, ants and wasps) of a division (Aculeata) typically having the ovipositor modified into a stinger." In 'Aculeate Composition' sharp points ascend like violin bows (like in the work, 'Trammelled'), and the stance of the sculpture on its plinth reads like a conductor of an orchestra in mid-flight. That is just my association, of course. The 'stinger' in Cronin's forms, when evident, is a lightning rod, a line of ascendancy providing slender movement and a sense of speed as a counter-point to the solid mass it arises from. In this sense each sculpture seeks flight, even as it is earth-bound.

Cronin's work is a lyrical argument for composition as the basis of art and a powerful riposte to the hollow pickings of conceptualism which hubristically claim the intellectual ground. For there is, I believe, nothing more intellectually sophisticated than the mystery of arrangement itself; how it unlocks a sense of the eternal within us, how it connects us beyond our conscious understanding.



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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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Artist Fiachra Crowley's striking ceramic pieces are beautiful in their simplicity. Working primarily in ceramic, Fiachra makes functional stoneware pieces, as well as contemporary artworks, which are finished in box frames. He strives to make pieces which have the ability to fit into a simple modern environment, adding an element of intrigue and interest with their striking visual qualities. He also creates lino prints focusing on notable landmarks in Kenmare, such as The Suspension Bridge and The Three Men statues, located near the bridge.



A combination of blind faith, organic growth, and luck eventually led the artist to open a studio and shop on Henry Street in Kenmare, where he now works surrounded by a vibrant creative community... a gold and silversmith, photographer, interior designer, design studio, and photographer are all within a stone's throw.

Fiachra initially studied Art, Craft, and Design before going on to develop his style and find his creative voice. After working from his home studio for a period, in October 2019 he made the bold move of registering as self-employed and began setting up the business.

"I knew from the very start that I wanted my brand to be one of quality," he shares. "I couldn't expect a consumer to spend their hard-earned money on a product that didn't feel special and from a brand that looked the part. With that, I began work with Eamonn O'Sullivan of Anchor Studios here in Kenmare, creating the quality brand image I strived for.

The summer of 2020 however was the real eye-opener for the young artist: Helen Joyce from Cleo Gallery in Kenmare approached him, wanting to sell his work. "Knowing that someone had such an opinion of my work to want to sell it was crazy," says Fiachra.

With newfound confidence, when the opportunity arose to open a pop-up shop on Henry Street in Kenmare, the talented artist hesitantly decided to go for it.

"I could never have anticipated the reaction: With the immense outpouring of local support, I struggled to keep the shop from looking bare."

Such a positive experience prompted him to open permanently the following year. "It really felt like I was straddling the line between bravery and stupidity... I knew nothing about running a retail business, but I was going to learn on the job and give it my best shot. Thankfully this ended up being the best decision I could have made."

Fiachra's work has since attracted serious attention and he now supplies a number of local businesses including Brook Lane Hotel, Park Hotel, Sheen Falls Hotel, Lagom Restaurant, The Happy Pig B&B, as well as Ballynahinch Castle Hotel in Galway.

From the beautiful landscape, a fitting backdrop to his work, to the vibrant community in Kenmare, Fiachra says he can't imagine living or

working anywhere other than his hometown. "There is such a sense of community support in Kenmare: People are always willing to lend a hand to others in need."

Fiachra is currently working on a major project that has been on the go since December of 2021. While he's dying to share more information, it has to remain under wraps for

now! "It's something that I still can't really entirely believe to be real, surreal is the only word that comes to mind, and it will make it to the list of career highlights very soon."

If you don't make it to Kenmare before Christmas, for beautiful unique gifts from as little as €14, you can visit Fiachra's shop online at www.fiachracrowley.com.



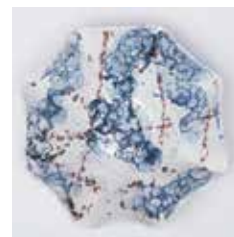
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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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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.

Brian Dillon AKA ‘The Line’ is set to perform at Connolly’s of Leap on November 19 to promote the release of his brand new album ‘Red Blood Cells and Righteousness’ – a collaborative project with various Irish musicians. Lauren Guillery meets with the Tipperary musician to find out how the album came about.

A classically-trained pianist, Brian Dillon pursued a Music and Arts degree at Maynooth University followed by a Masters in Sound Art at Queen’s University Belfast, and now teaches audio production at the British and Irish Modern Music Institute (BIMM) Dublin. No stranger to the Irish music scene, Dillon is part of the five-piece experimental electronic outfit ‘Mellybrains?’ and plays keyboards in Talos’s live shows. A sound artist and designer, Dillon has composed for dance and theatre shows and is an integral part of the Dublin Laptop Orchestra – a collective of musicians that presents

site-specific performances to art galleries where it brings ‘theatricality and physical presence into electronic music performance’. Brian also produces records, having worked on the debut album for contemporary folk harpist BRÍDÍN last year, and currently putting the final touches to Loah’s debut album.

In February 2020, Brian released his own album ‘Matter’ under moniker ‘The Line’, and though there were plans afoot for gigs, the untimely world pandemic put a stop to everything the musician had in the works. “It was a project close to my heart and my first solo release, and I felt like I didn’t get enough out of it.” And so ‘Anti-Matter’ was re-released the following year accompanied with beautiful greyscale artwork in the form of an A3-size ‘album map’ and an A5 booklet or ‘listening guide’. Brian explains that he wanted to explore an alternative way of engaging with music. “I really find the passive engagement that streaming encourages people to have with music has a lot of downsides. Releasing some kind of engaging object with the album forces you to connect with it, so you’re not scrolling on Instagram with your headphones on.”

The collaborative project for the upcoming release ‘Red Blood Cells and Righteousness’ isn’t as straightforward as one would expect. Originally, Brian had composed a 35-40 minute sound art piece entitled ‘White Blood Cells’ inspired by Irish writer Julian Gough’s novel ‘Connect’, which led him to explore ideas of postmodernism, the Gaia Hypothesis, and Hegel’s philosophical writings. “Gough discussed the idea that human beings are like blood cells, moving autonomously through a much larger ecosystem, serving a much larger power without ever realising

that’s what they are doing”, he explains. “‘White Blood Cells’ discusses concepts from a geopolitical standpoint: the importance of global supply chains and the lack of respect shown towards them by the average Westerner,” he goes on. “‘Red Blood Cells and Righteousness’ is kind of exploring the same themes, but it’s a more personal record – the songs came from personal discussions and personal relationships with the collaborators.”

Brian Dillon approached his favourite Irish musicians to work on the upcoming release. Hence artists like Limerick rapper God Knows and MC MuRli, Sarah Corcoran from indie-rock girl band Pillow Queens, Caoi deBarra of Wyvern Lingo, Daniel Fox from noise rock outfit Gilla Band, Eoin French of Talos, Dublin singer-songwriter Sorcha Richardson, soulful singer Loah, and a few more all took part in the project. The intention for the record was for the creative process to reflect the themes of community, collaboration, and connection. “Communal values are the most important things that we have in this life, and ‘the myth of the individual’ and the pursuit of personal gain and adulation has caused us to forget this,” he explains. Social media too, plays a huge part in glorifying the individual. “Initially Facebook was community-based but Instagram is all about individuals. You don’t have friends anymore, you have followers,” he clarifies. “All the language around it and the format of it is really competitive and I think it’s pretty negative ultimately, the way it makes you think about the world. I was thinking about how best to combat that with music, and I thought I’d make an album that’s about things which are important and positive and good, like community, family, and faith.”

While The Line’s previous release ‘Matter’/‘Anti-Matter’ was very much a prototypical bedroom producer approach, where Dillon sat in a room on his own for days on end, “a lonely and isolated affair” as he puts it, the plan for ‘Red Blood Cells and Righteousness’ was entirely different. Armed with monitors, an audio interface, a couple of microphones, headphones, and a laptop all tightly packed in a flight case, Dillon brought his portable studio to the other musicians’ house or studio, and together they started the process for the album. “Every track was kind of written in a day”, he shares. “We’d start



with one to two hours long conversation about the kind of themes I was interested in exploring. I thought that was a nice ice breaker and a nice way to set us up to make music”, he continues. “We did that for an hour and then we’d write a track for between three and six hours. Then I’d take it away to my own studio and clean it up. The process was about going in and trusting myself and the other person, and being happy with what was made in that time.”

The album is about to be released on the Strange Brew label and consists of thirteen tracks, which are all very different from one another and unlike anything Brian Dillon previously released. The collaborations really elevate his work, as is evident in the first single ‘Patience of Saints’ with hip-hop artists God Knows and MuRli and the second single ‘Communion’, which stars Loah and her sister Fehdah on vocals. Dillon hopes listeners will get the message he

and the artists on the album are trying to come across – merely that values sometimes considered old-fashioned are positive things, and that they have more merit than individualism, competition, and endless consumption. “This album is dedicated to playing a small but significant role as a part of a world so much bigger than any of us are willing to admit,” he reveals. “After all, maybe we’re all just blood cells, swimming through the veins of the Earth, serving a much higher function.”

Brian has mixed feelings about releasing his music on vinyl, but the artwork, consisting of notebooks and prints of old family photos, will be up for sale along with T-shirts at gigs and on his Bandcamp platform. There are so far four gigs confirmed for the upcoming tour, including the Roisin Dubh in Galway on November 18 and Dublin’s Sugar Club on November 25. For The Line’s appearance at Connolly’s of Leap, it will be a pared back

version of the release. “I’ve got a bunch of keyboards and a drum machine, which would be the brain of it. Certainly, for the Dublin show I’m going to have quite a few guests from the record, hopefully I will have one or two for Connolly’s. But some of it, I’m just going to be rearranging the tracks without the heavy production and singing them myself. I haven’t gigged much as The Line except for the support tour with Talos”, he admits “so it will be good to push myself to have a live identity and establish my name a bit more”.

And though it’s unclear if the sound art piece for sister recording ‘White Blood Cells’ will be released to the public, there will be an exhibition with photographer Mark McGuinness in February in a yet undisclosed location in Dublin.

The Line plays Connolly’s of Leap on November 19. ‘Red Blood Cells and Righteousness’ comes out November 1 on Strange Brew

November Gig Listings

Compiled by Lauren Guillery

- Nov 3 Jape | DeBarra’s Folk Club
- Nov 4 Sam Amidon | DeBarra’s Folk Club
Polly O’Mahony / Ferna / Sasha Samara | Levi’s Corner House
- Nov 8 Joshua Burnside | Levi’s Corner House
- Nov 17 Carsie Blanton | Levi’s Corner House
David Holmes Album Launch | Connolly’s of Leap
- Nov 18 Andy Irvine | St Matthew’s Church Baltimore
Bricknasty | Connolly’s of Leap
Mick O’Callaghan Album launch | Levi’s Corner House
- Nov 19 Ashley Campbell & Thor Jensen | DeBarra’s Folk Club
The Line | Connolly’s of Leap
- Nov 24 Crywank | DeBarra’s Folk Club
- Nov 26 Soda Blonde | Connolly’s of Leap
- Nov 30 Huun Huur Tu | Connolly’s of Leap

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

The Vanbrugh & Friends in concert at Leap's Myross Wood House



St. Barrahane's Church Festival of Music and The National String Quartet Foundation present The Vanbrugh & Friends, a delightful concert at Myross Wood House in Leap on Sunday November 19, at 3pm; with musicians Keith Pascoe, violin; Marja Gaynor, violin; Simon Aspell, viola; Ed Creedon, viola; Christopher Marwood, cello. This special programme will include:

Beethoven's String Quintet Op. 104 (1819); Brahms' String Quintet Op. 111 (1890).

The Vanbrugh and their guests present two of the great works from the extended chamber music repertoire. Beethoven wrote his darkly beautiful C minor piano trio Op.1 No.3 in 1795 and it became one of his most popular chamber works. He published this string quintet arrangement in 1819. Brahms' magnificent 1890 string quintet Op.111 started life in the composer's sketches for a fifth symphony and its final form retains an orchestral grandeur, both in structure and in texture. This is truly one of the finest works in the chamber music repertoire – exuberant, elegant, subtle, original and unmistakably Brahms. A concert not to be missed!

Tickets: €15. online with Eventbrite; Thornhill Electrical, Skibbereen; at the door on the night; text/call: 086 2264797; more information from: www.barrahanemusic.ie



Images of India at Gallery Asna this November

For November, Gallery Asna at Clonakilty Arts Centre will present a photographic show by Maria McSweeney. 'Images from India' showcases 15 of Maria's favourite images she captured of the people in North India when she travelled there in 2022. The show is curated by her sister Clara McSweeney.

Embarking on an immersive two-month journey through the diverse landscapes of North India, Maria traversed the bustling cities of New Delhi, Agra, and Varanasi, as well as the smaller cities and towns of Srinagar, Pahalgam, Manali, Rishikesh, and Leh. Maria also explored numerous remote villages along the Pavati Valley, some only accessible by hiking trails. Encompassing the states of Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh, Maria's journey aimed to capture a narrative of India transcending conventional portrayals.

Rather than succumbing to the clichéd depiction of India as a cacophony of noise and chaos, awash with vibrant colours, Maria's monochrome images



sought to peel back the layers, revealing a nation characterised by tranquillity, peace, and an inherent departure from Western norms. Amidst the density, crowds, and noise prevailing in some regions, she still discovered an oasis of calm amid the everyday struggles of life.

Maria was deeply affected by the poverty she experienced in the urban slums in the bigger cities she travelled to. All profits

from the sale of this body of work, (excluding gallery commissions) will be given back to the people living in the urban slums in New Delhi, choosing to support the charity, Asha India; a non-profit NGO operating in the heart of New Delhi, founded by Dr Kiran Martin. Asha India directly impacts the lives of slum dwellers, having made a significant difference in the 100 slum colonies in

New Delhi, affecting the lives of 900,000 individuals. To find out more about Dr Kiran Martin and her work visit asha-india.org.

Maria McSweeney is a lens-based visual artist, holding a BA degree in Sculpture and Combined Media from Limerick School of Art and Design.

All are welcome to the show opening at 5.30pm on Saturday November 4.

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Students invited to compete for €6,000 prize fund of Oireachtas essay competition

Senior Cycle students are invited to compete for €6,000 in prize money in this year's Oireachtas Essay Competition/Aiste an Oireachtais, which has a theme of 'Parliamentary Politics Matters for Peace' or 'An Pharlaimint agus an tSíocháin'. The competition, sponsored by book and stationery suppliers Eason and educational publishers Folens and CJ Fallon, aims to get young people reflecting on and discussing politics and the democratic process.

'Aiste an Oireachtais' is bilingual and 32-county. Students in fifth or sixth year of Leaving Cert or in AS/A Level are eligible to submit entries.

"This year's Competition invites students to think about on how members of parliament should be, and can be, agents of peace, and how the work of parliament can contribute to peacebuilding," says Ceann Comhairle, Seán Ó Fearghail TD.

"The latest outbreak of

violence in the Middle East, the invasion of Ukraine and the conflict in these and other places present what appear to many as intractable problems that defy hope.

"Yet peace must come, and it must be worked for. No matter how difficult progress may seem, people of goodwill must work for peace.

"The Senior Cycle students taking part in 'Aiste an Oireachtais' are among those who will in future assume responsibility for our world. Their preparation for that time is part of their life now. We are delighted, through this Competition and in other ways, to support them as they prepare for their future role."

Students enter the Competition by first registering on www.oireachtasessay.ie / www.aisteanoireachtais.ie by Friday, November 10. Each entrant is issued a numerical code with which they can upload their essays by the deadline on Friday, November 24.



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Charity ball launches ambitious new project for outdoor performance and garden space in Clonakilty



West Cork’s newest addition to the social calendar is back with the Clonakilty Charity Ball planning to dazzle audiences once again on Saturday November 25 at the beautiful Dunmore House Hotel on the picturesque shores of Clonakilty Bay.

Attracting well-known guests and providing first-class entertainment, last year’s inaugural ball successfully contributed to the completion of a much-needed redevelopment to the Clonakilty playground earlier this year.

The Clonakilty Charity Ball is delighted to announce the Children of Clonakilty Project, a local initiative set up to help support and improve children’s amenities and projects in Clonakilty, through money raised by the gala ball.

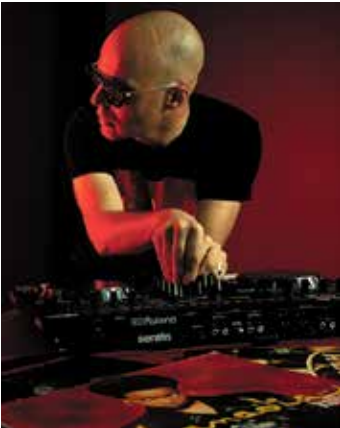
Funds raised from this year’s event will go towards improving the existing park next to the

Clonakilty playground on Park Road. Plans are in place to fully rejuvenate the green space and create a go-to destination for families and children, with an enchanting picnic garden, magical pathways and trails, and an impressive outdoor amphitheatre performance space with extensive seating.

It’s hoped that this new children’s amenity will actively engage visitors to the new park with a wide range of educational, health and well-being benefits, as well as cultivating creativity and inspiring future young talents of Clonakilty and beyond.

Ticket holders will be part of a sensational evening as they rub shoulders with special guests at a champagne reception, followed by a three-course gourmet meal, exclusive entertainment and a thrilling live auction, with the highest bidders taking home ultimate prizes.

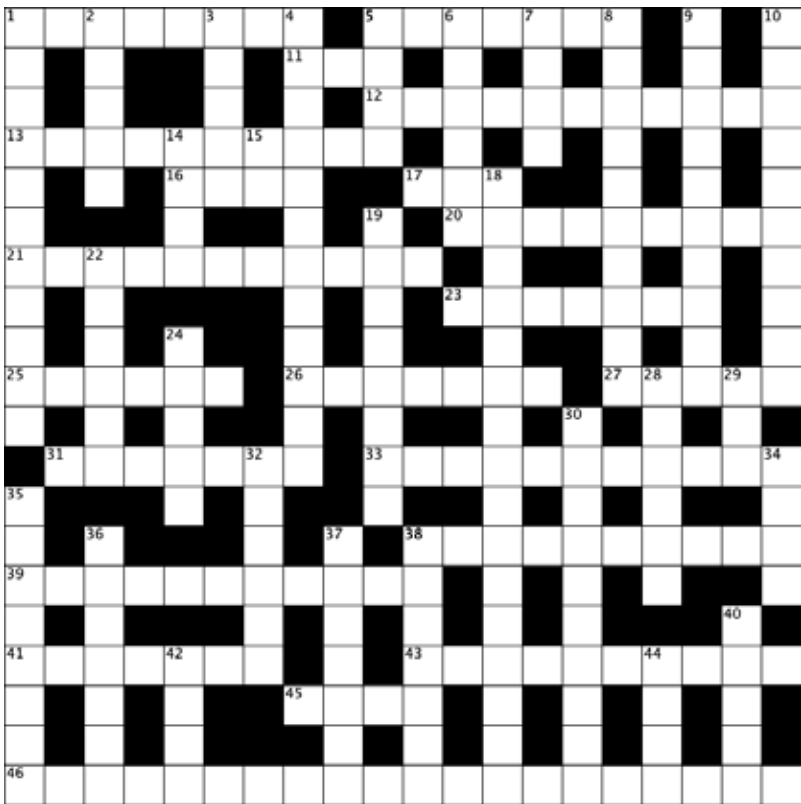
There will be top performances by West Cork’s all girl band The Kates, and DJ legend and Cork’s Red FM radio presenter Stevie G.



Tickets are €100 per person and tables of 10 can be purchased at www.tickettailor.com.

For more details, tickets and to donate please follow @clonakilty-charityball on Instagram

In the news Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 West Bank city (8)
- 5 Pests who covertly listen to pillow talk? (3,4)
- 11 Greeting in Lisbon or Brazil (3)
- 12 Basic ingredient for a salad (3,8)
- 13 Ad libbed (10)
- 16 Strongly positive review (4)
- 17 Athlete who said, “It’s hard to be humble when you’re as great as I am” (3)
- 20 Naked (2,3,4)
- 21 Patron saint of travellers (11)
- 23 Great advances while walking (7)
- 25 Part of Scandinavia grateful for potent drug (6)
- 26 Communal agricultural settlement (7)
- 27 A bit suspect (5)
- 31 _____ and verse (7)
- 33 Notorious dispute (11)
- 38 Artificial body part upsetting to pitchers (10)
- 39 Used by artists to create realistic view (11)
- 41 Gradual absorption (7)
- 43 Self-deceiving (10)
- 45 Area of the Maldives (4)
- 46 Law of the jungle (8,2,3,7)

DOWN

- 1 Contaminated from fallout (11)
- 2 Childhood illness (5)
- 3 Immature animal spotted in spectacular valley (5)

- 4 Previous occupation of US Senator Kevin McCarthy (5,7)
- 5 Banned verse poet? (4)
- 6 Festival of lights (6)
- 7 Location of the Great Salt Lake (4)
- 8 Guided, perhaps with a crook (10)
- 9 Paid back (10)
- 10 Black Ops video game (4,2,4)
- 14 Moons and marbles for example (4)
- 15 II squared (2)
- 18 Cause to form habits while incarcerated (16)
- 19 Data from consumer response (8)
- 22 Agitated Ray hid the capital (6)
- 24 A recurring theme or idea (5)
- 28 Having bovine-like peepers (2-4)
- 29 Way finder, briefly (3)
- 30 Famed Italian educator (10)
- 32 Legislates into law (6)
- 34 Yap away like an Asian ox (4)
- 35 Method of giving up smoking perhaps?
- 36 Percussionist (7)
- 37 Artist behind anti-war painting ‘Guernica’?
- 38 Hanging piece of jewellery (7)
- 40 Foundation for an idea (5)
- 42 Forsaking some drink, in Japan (4)
- 44 Leave out (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

3			2	1				
			8					4
	5						8	
			7	9		8		
	9			2			3	
	8			3		2		5
				5			6	
		1				9		
9							2	1

	6		9	7	4		8	
	4				6	1		3
	3				8			5
		5	3				7	
		4			1			
		9		8			2	
6								
		8			2		1	

Across: 1. Ramallah; 5. bed bugs; 11. ola; 12. raw material; 13. improvised; 16. rave; 17. Ali; 20. in the buff; 21. Christopher; 23. stride; 25. Vagran; 26. kibbutz; 27. dodgy; 31. chipper; 33. controversy; 38. prosthetic; 39. perspective; 41. osmosis; 43. delusional; 45. Asia; 46. survival of the fittest. Down: 1. radioactive; 2. mumps; 3. larva; 4. house spaker; 5. band; 6. Divell; 7. Utah; 8. shepherd; 9. retributed; 10. Call of Duty; 14. orbs; 15. av; 18. institutionalise; 19. feedback; 22. Riyadh; 24. rope; 28. ox-eyed; 29. GPS; 30. Montserrat; 32. exacts; 34. yack; 35. hypnosis; 36. drummer; 37. Picasso; 38. pendant; 40. basis; 42. Saki; 44. omit

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Easy winter crafts: Christmas stocking

Because it is a repetitive activity, knitting is calming and mindful – excellent as a winter wellness practice for your mind! If you are relatively new to knitting or you haven't picked up your needles in years, here is a simple pattern for Christmas stockings from Ravelry.com to get you going.

Materials:

Needles: 5.5 mm and 6 mm
Yarn: worsted or DK weight yarn in 3 colours.
Gauge: 16 st. x 20 rows = 4in, stockinette stitch on 6mm needles. (Gauge is not overly important with this project!)

Abbreviations:

CC1: First contrasting colour (red or green)
CC2: Second contrasting colour (white)
MC: Main colour (red or green)
S11: Slip one stitch without knitting or purling.
SSK: Slip slip knit decrease (google to find great videos showing how to do this and other unfamiliar techniques)

Directions:

With CC1 and 5.5mm needles, cast on 60sts, and join in round without twisting.

Work in *K2 P2* rib for 4inches. Switch to 6mm needles and knit one round.

Switch to MC and knit 7 rounds. Switch to CC2 and knit 4 rounds. Continue in this pattern until striping section is 12inches long, ending on round 2 of MC.

Heel flap:

Switch to CC1 and 5.5mm needles. K26, TURN S11, P25, turn S11, K25, turn Continue for a total of 20 rows.

Begin heel turn:

R1: K15, SSK, K1, turn
R2: S11, P5, P2tog, P1, turn
R3: S11, K6, SSK, K1, turn
R4: S11, P7, P2tog, P1, turn
R5: S11, K8, SSK, K1, turn Repeat rounds 4 and 5 until all 26 heel sts have been worked, ending with a WS row. (16sts)

Gusset:

Switch to 6mm needles and beginning on round 3 of MC, place a marker and pick up 10 sts along the gusset.

Knit across heel sts, pick up 10 sts along the other gusset, place marker.

Knit across top of foot. (70 st.) Begin decreases, continuing in stripe pattern:

R1: K1, SSK, K to 3 sts from second gusset marker, K2tog K1, K first gusset marker
R2: K around
Continue R1 and 2 until you



have 56 sts.

Foot:

Knit in pattern until 10in from back of heel. Finish stripe. And begin toe.

Toe:

Switch to CC1. Set up row: K around, placing markers every 8 stitches.
R1: K to 2 sts before marker, K2tog.
R2: K around.
Continue R1 and 2 until 7 sts remain.

Cut yarn leaving an 8in tail. With darning needle, thread through remaining 7sts and tie off yarn.

If this simple project has whetted your appetite, Olga Prins of Olga's Own has put together some lovely kits (pattern and

required yarn) that can also be posted. For those on a budget, she has a range of one-ball wonders – hats, cowls and socks, all priced under €20. And for those looking for something a bit more substantial, she offers a stunning selection of kits for scarves and shawls ranging from €34 to €60. These beautifully

crafted pieces are sure to elevate any ensemble. Call into her shop to see the range or contact her via WhatsApp on 089 6177905. Olga also runs regular adult and teenage workshops in craft and knitting at her shop in Ballinspittle village if you would like some help to improve your skills.



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COMPETITION

Win a family pass to Beauty and the Beast at The Everyman

Cork's favourite traditional family Panto is back. Oh yes, it is! Be our guest for a tale as old as pantomime with 'Beauty and the Beast'.

In a little town (somewhere in Cork, like!), the beautiful Belle dreams of so much more than her simple life. When she discovers a castle (think Blarney or Blackrock) frozen in time under the spell of an enchanted rose and ruled over by a terrible Beast who was once a hand-

some prince, she must learn to look beyond his appearance if love is to save the day.

With talking teapots, singing candlesticks and clever clocks, this classic tale will delight a whole new generation. Featuring the usual zany gang bringing you non-stop Panto fun, it is directed by the zaniest of them all, Catherine Mahon-Buckley.

The Everyman Panto, it's for everyone!

Tickets: www.everymancork.com / phone 021 4501 673.

We have a family pass (4 tickets, children or adults) to give away to Beauty and the Beast at The Everyman for Saturday 13 January, 1.30pm. To be in with a chance to win answer this riddle:

Normally you find me on people's feet, but at Christmas Santa might also stuff me full of little treats. What am I?

Email the answer with your name and phone number and with 'Panto Competition' in the subject line of email to info@westcorkpeople.ie. Entries must be in by November 20.



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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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The Craft Corner

This month **Natalie Webb** is showing us how to make Happy the hedgehog.

“Autumn is a time of year when hedgehogs will be snuffling around looking to fatten up for the Winter months and getting ready for hibernation so I decided it would be fun to make a little happy hedgehog.”

- Materials:
- Beige or similar coloured card
 - A small piece of white paper or card
 - Fallen autumn leaves (I used oak as they look a bit like spikes)
 - Scissors
 - Glue (I used PVA)
 - A black marker
 - Clingfilm

Method:

Draw a hedgehog body shape on your card and cut out.

Cut out a small oval or round shape from your white



paper and stick this on for Happy’s eye, then with your marker draw a black circle in the middle to bring the eye to life.

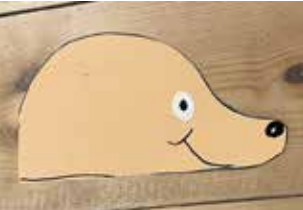
Draw a big smiley mouth and a little nose.

Put glue all over the hedgehog’s body and stick on your leaves in a fan shape so that the top of the leaves are on Happy’s back.

If you feel its needed you can stick more leaves on top to layer up the body.

sticking very well because the leaves were a little bit wet so I put a sheet of clingfilm over the hedgehog then put a heavy book on it until the glue was dry.

Now you are done! If you like you can stick your hedgehog onto another piece of card or paper (I used a bright pink) to really set it off. This will look great if you want to put Happy up on your wall.



How to help real hedgehogs in your garden



- No. 1:** Ask the gardener in your family to not use pesticides or slug pellets in your garden. Not only do they harm hedgehogs if eaten but they also harm the everything in their food chain. Use organic methods instead.
- No. 2:** Keep a corner of your garden wild to offer shelter and natural food for hedgehogs and other wildlife. Hedgehogs like to eat special hedgehog food, meaty cat or dog food and cat biscuits. Provide a shallow dish of fresh water for all wildlife.
- No. 3:** Make or buy a hedgehog house. This offers a hibernation spot that is safe from predators in the winter. It may also be used as a nesting box for a mother and her hoglets in the warmer months. You can do this yourself by getting an old box such as a wooden wine crate, more wood to make a tunnel, and then filling the box with dry leaves or straw to keep the hedgehogs warm. Put it in the quietest part of the garden and cover with leaves or logs.

Spot the difference

Can you find and circle 6 differences between these two pictures?



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Colouring Corner



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Santa brings his magic back to Clonakilty this Christmas

Get ready to be enchanted this Christmas season as The Polar Express returns to The Model Village in Clonakilty, bigger and more magical than ever before! Join Santa and Mrs Claus, all the elves, and a host of festive friends for an extraordinary indoor and outdoor, walk-through

Christmas adventure designed to delight the entire family. Santa will greet you and your family in his cosy Christmas cabin for heart-warming conversations and precious photos. Meet Dusty the magical teddy bear, visit the mystical magical forest, hop aboard the Choo Choo Road Train. Keep your

eyes peeled for Jack Frost and The Grinch who you might spot on Mount Crumpit!

Be immersed in Christmas magic with sing-alongs, interactive storylines, and lots of excitement that will captivate visitors.

Twinkling lights and seasonal magic will fill the air as you explore the Villages of Light and see miniature West Cork as you've never seen it before. Follow the model trains and have fun trying out the remote control boats and mini diggers.

ASD/Sensory time slots take place on Saturday December 2, 11am – 2pm.

Santa, the Model Village staff, and the team at Karl O'Connor Creative are working hard to make sure this is a magical and unforgettable Christmas experience for all the family. They suggest planning a two-hour visit; please keep this in mind when selecting your date and time.

Find out more and book at www.modelvillage.ie.



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GARDENING

John Hosford
The Weekend Garden Centre

November brings shorter days and a slowdown of growth. Despite this however, there is plenty to keep you busy all around the garden.

Autumn leaf

Many of the leaves will have now fallen so clear them up around the bases of plants, paths and drives. Fallen leaves will rot down into a really good soil conditioner so don't waste them! A compost heap can be made from chicken wire to stop them blowing around and you will be well pleased with the composted compost/leaf mould next Spring, as organic material is a great benefit to the soil, improving the humus level and the ease of working the soil. A richer darker soil also generally warms up quicker.

Containers for overwintering

The autumn-planted containers are now being re-planted. Plants for overwintering need to be totally winter hardy and resistant to the ravages of winter including frost, snow, gales and heavy rain and sleet. Containers for winter should have good drainage and all drainage holes completely cleared to facilitate the rapid escape of excess

water. Inadequate drainage and the lack of drainage will result in water-logging and fatalities. Fresh compost, with a good slow-release fertiliser mixed thoroughly into the compost, will achieve the best results. Get rid of all debris from the summer and compost all compostable material.

Some suggestions for winter/spring colour:

- Arabis-pink and white shades – cascading rockery plants.
- Aubretia-rich blues, pinks, reds and even whites. Cascading, delightful rockery plants - flowering February to June.
- Polyanthus – strong, robust bedding plant in a good range of colours, hardy and reliable.
- Sweet William will flower May to September – an old favourite with nostalgic colours and a rich fragrance. Sweet William likes a sunny position. Add lime if the soil has a deficiency.
- Pansies and Violas come in bright, cheerful colours. Choose clean, disease-free plants that are free of spotted diseases and mildew. Plant in containers/areas where Pansies/Violas have not grown before or haven't been grown with four or five years.

Roses

Shorten back tall Roses to prevent wind rock. Collect fallen leaves and dispose of off site. Plant new Roses in a sunny position with a good soil depth. Avoid planting where Roses have previously grown.

Tender plants

If you haven't already brought tender and half-hardy plants indoors they need to be brought in now. Pick off all dead leaves and flowers before bringing inside. If you have a lot of tender plants, it might be worth getting a thermostatically-controlled fan heater to keep out and protect against the more severe temperatures. Watering needs to be done carefully now. Water carefully and judiciously early in the day. Keep water off the foliage. Don't splash water around carelessly. Use lukewarm water during cold weather. Ventilate whenever possible to keep air circulating without draughts. It is vital to keep down botrytis (grey mould). Close the ventilators in the early afternoon to conserve precious heat.

Indoor vines

Begin pruning indoor vines by



- Christmas Cherry is a popular Christmas pot plant with bright red or orange berries from autumn right into Spring. It is ideal as a combination plant in bowls, terracotta pots, window boxes, hanging baskets. It looks particularly festive for the Christmas/New Year period. Protect from severe, cold weather and heavy frosts. Combine Christmas Cherries with ivies, evergreen ferns, dwarf bulbs, winter flowering heathers.
- Dwarf containers make good overwintering sources of interest and combine well with heathers, dwarf bulbs, ivies. The more conical varieties make good centre pieces. The prostrate, spreading varieties look well tumbling and cascading over the edges of your containers.

cutting all the fruited shoots back to one or two buds from the main stem. Vines under glass are best pruned early to admit light for other plants under cover. The prunings can be used for cuttings.

Fruit garden

Complete picking of all but the very late apples and pears. Ventilate the fruit store at night to bring down the temperature. Plant new fruit trees and bushes as soon as possible. Choose a sunny, well-drained site out of a frost pocket for your fruit trees and bushes. Choose an area, which hasn't grown fruit before. Remove apples and pears immediately after leaf fall. Prune currants and gooseberries. Weed strawberries, remove runners. Remove old and dead leaves. Protect peaches and nectarines against peach leaf

curl. Check and protect apples and pears against canker, removing badly-infected branches and shoots. It is important that apples and pears are growing in a well-drained area. If there is a drainage problem, it should be resolved without delay. Order specific fruit varieties especially unusual, novelty or heritage varieties.

Bulbs for late winter and spring colour

November is one of the chief months to plant Tulips, which can be planted up until Christmas in a sunny situation. If your soil is heavy, add coarse grit to improve drainage. Plant Tulips at two to three times the depth of the bulb. The bulbs are ideal for pots and you can fill up gaps between beds and borders in the Spring by bringing the potted Tulips to the beds and borders as they come into flower. It is ideal if you have a special occasion in the Spring. Choose a single variety or colour per pot.

Lawns

Rake fallen leaves so they don't smother the grass, blocking out light and moisture

Mow lawns if temperatures are above five degrees Celsius and ground conditions are suitable. Mowing will also help to control annual weeds that have emerged on new, autumn sown lawns. Straighten the edges with a half moon edging iron. Avoid walking on a frosty or waterlogged lawn. If moss is a problem, try removing it with a spring-tined rake.

Shrubs for winter colour

Choose: Daphne bholua 'Jacqueline Postill' – masses of sweetly scented flowers from November to February. Hamamelis mollis – witch hazel – highly-perfumed shrub, which will fill the winter air with their fragrance.

Autumn colour

Visit some of Cork's gardens to see the last of the autumn leaf colour. The grounds of Fota and Blarney Castle are well worth a visit.

Farewell to Amateur Gardening magazine

The long-established gardening magazine, Amateur Gardening, founded in London in 1884, is to cease publication. Many celebrated gardening writers including Percy Thrower, Alan Titchmarsh, Charlie Dimmock and Toby Buckland were amongst those who wrote for the magazine.

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HOME & GARDEN

Carbery Housing Association leading the energy transition in social housing

The prestigious Irish Council for Social Housing Award for Leading the Energy Transition has been awarded to Carbery Housing Association's REDWoLF Project, that provides an all-solar power system for social and private homes. The system has been deployed in four properties owned by the Association in Cork City and County.

As a partner in the EU Inter-reg NWE funded REDWoLF (Rethink Electricity Distribution Without Load Following) Project, CHA has installed solar PV panels, batteries, storage heaters and a diverter, which sends excess energy in the hot water cylinder, providing space heating and hot water, in four properties purchased under the Mortgages to Rent Programme in Cork City and County. A 'smart' controller decides when electricity is taken from the grid, shifting demand to off-peak times and PV self-consumption is maximised. The system and its performance is being monitored remotely by CHA and used to inform better energy management.

Jose Ospina, Chair of CHA, stated "We welcome the ICSH's recognition of the work carried out by CHA and its Partners. We believe the REDWoLF system represents a game-changer in the provision of domestic power for social



Winner in the 'Leading the Energy Transition' category Carbery Housing Association, 'RedWoLF' Project. Pictured alongside James Gleeson of Allianz are Jose Ospina, Dan Boyle and Ana Ospina from Carbery Housing Association

and private homeowners. It is fossil fuel free and generates most of the energy needed to meet the households needs and to sell surplus electricity to the Grid. Ana Ospina, Operations Manager of CHA added: "We believe it has great potential to support achieving our green energy transition targets around Europe and around the world".

The Award is the culmination of many years of work by CHA on finding ways to make energy more sustainable for its residents. CHA is a Sustainable

Energy Community registered with SEAI and has carried out a Masterplan for retrofit of all its homes. It has partnered three EU projects related to energy efficiency and the installation of renewable energy in homes. It has also carried out a pilot of energy management in homes with Electric Ireland and facilitated a study by the Clean Production Promotion Unit of UCC into energy poverty and energy behaviour in tenants in CHA homes.

CHA is developing new proposals to roll out this all-solar approach to other social homes. This is especially relevant for Island communities, that have a particular need for energy self-sufficiency. Further bids have been and are being made by CHA for EU funding that include the integration of wind energy and hydrogen storage, and a user friendly interface to make system more accessible to and manageable by residents.

TG4 documentary looks at our housing crisis without end

The documentary '100 Bliain de Thithíocht - Géarchéim gan Deireadh / 100 Years of Housing - Crisis Without End', written and directed by Paul Webster, was first shown on TG4 on October 25 but is well worth a re-watch on www.tg4.ie. This feature documentary is a decade-by-decade look at how Irish housing issues have been tackled since the birth of the Irish state and where it all went so wrong.

Ireland was born in a housing crisis and it has never gone away. Every government and generation, has had to contend with this same issue. '100 Bliain de Thithíocht - Géarchéim gan Deireadh' draws a line from the birth of the state to the crisis we find ourselves in today. From the flats of the 30s to the high-rise of the 60s. From the bungalows of the 70s to the bubble of the 00s.

This film explores the ideas that worked and the ones that were disastrous, painting a picture of how we lost our way and how we can fix the current crisis. It's largely forgotten now, but one of the key issues driving the Irish revolutionaries during the War of Independence was the housing question. Once the Civil War was over, the former revolutionaries had to figure out how they would address the desperate housing situation. Now

for the first time ever, the one hundred-year history of housing in Ireland is laid out in this fascinating documentary that looks at the big housing stories of each decade up to 2023 and attempts to pinpoint the seeds of our current situation. The suburb, the flat, the bungalow, these were all ideas, ideas that would fulfil our various housing needs.

This documentary delves deep into the housing concepts

that have shaped the country we live in. A host of historians, architects, planners and thinkers have been carefully selected to give new insight into this living history that couldn't be more relevant today. As well as this, we hear from the people who lived in the iconic developments that make up this history. As housing has always been a huge political issue in Ireland, the media of each era reflects this.

This rich archive is presented in a new light and includes revealing and heartening insights from real people throughout the decades, building a picture of how housing policies affected ordinary people. This beautifully realised cinematic documentary is a unique exploration of Ireland's living history. As well as this, a line-up of the great thinkers on the topic are assembled to explain their ideas for the future of housing in Ireland.



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HOME & GARDEN



THE NATURAL GARDENER

Noah Chase

Noah studied horticulture at the Eden Project in Cornwall, England. He now co-manages a family run nursery, Deelish Garden Centre in Skibbereen, specialising in rare, unusual and edible plants. His passion is sustainable gardening, useful plants and care of the environment.

Growing native

With the bare-root tree and shrub season just about to start, it is a perfect time of year to plant native trees. Irish native trees and hedges have been part of the Irish landscape for thousands of years and are vital habitats for native wildlife. Many Irish wild birds rely on hedgerows for food, nesting and shelter. A single mature tree can be home to as many as 326 different birds, mammals, insects, lichen, ferns and fungi. Hedges act as a wildlife corridor for insects, birds, and small mammals to move between larger habitats. This same single tree can absorb as much CO₂ over its lifetime as a small car will produce in 10 years! In terms of financial value, properties with trees and woodland increase in value up to 20 per cent!

Simply put, native trees are trees which have been in Ireland since the end of the last Ice Age. While Ireland is at the northern end of Europe, our climate (as we well know) still offers some very chilly winters and severe frost and so the trees that migrated and grow here are the hardiest of trees.

Whilst Beech and Sycamore are some of the most common trees in Ireland, they are in fact not a native. They are considered 'Naturalised'. This means that they were brought here by man but have since established and settled here. The birch 'Betula pubescens' is the hardiest broadleaf tree in Europe and is the most northerly tree – found growing in places like Siberia. So when we get a hard winter which can wipe out varieties of ornamental garden plants, our native trees and shrubs just sit tight and wait it out.

Over the last 40 years, we have been delighted to help so many people in West Cork and beyond to plant native trees and hedging on their land. While driving around West Cork it gives me so much pleasure to see so many trees that passed through Deelish on their way to been planted in their final home. Many of our customers choose the bare-root season to carry out this planting for the following

reasons. There is the best range of native options at this time of year, trees can have the whole winter to establish roots, and prices can start from just 70 cent per tree!

For farmers, last year the ACRES scheme started. ACRES stands for; Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme. There are a number of options available to farmers, using Irish grown trees and hedging. This scheme will help capture ammonia emissions from livestock housing or uncovered slurry stores by directing the emissions into the tree belt: To enhance the visual appearance of the countryside, support biodiversity on farms, establish hedgerows and protect water quality. Here at Deelish, we are a department-registered garden centre and are happy to help choose the right option for your farm to qualify for the grant.

Whether you are planning to plant a large woodland or just a single tree, I would advise to plant early in the season to give freshly planted trees the most time possible to establish a good root system. Listed below are some my favourite native tree options and some information on each;

Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*)

The Alder tree is a deciduous native tree used in plantations and also commonly used for



protection from the weather in shelter belts. Alder trees have the ability to improve the fertility of soil by 'fixing' nitrogen in the soil. These trees are very fast growing and can thrive in wet conditions. Alder flowers before the leaves are out, with attractive reddish catkins and small cones that contain the seeds. Given rich damp soil alder will grow rapidly and is easily coppiced, making it a productive tree for timber.

Strawberry tree(*Arbutus unedo*)

Arbutus or the strawberry tree is a small evergreen tree, which in Ireland can grow to be a forest tree reaching heights of up to 15 metres. It has an unusual distribution, as it only

grows naturally throughout the Mediterranean and certain parts of Ireland.

Unlike many of our other native trees, which reached us via Great Britain, Arbutus is thought to have spread here over the land bridge from Brittany.

Called the strawberry tree because of the distinct shape and colour of its fruit, this species is found mainly in Co. Kerry especially in the Killarney district



where it forms a large part of the natural forest on the islands and shores of the lakes. It is also found in parts of Glengarriff Woodland reserve.

Birch (*Betula Pendula and pubescens*)

There are two types of native birch trees in Ireland, downy and silver.

Birch will grow in poor soils, but likes a sunny position. Downy birch is tolerant of wet

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MOTORING



CAR REVIEWS

Sean Creedon

A self-charging medium-sized SUV hybrid

you engage the 'drive' button. In the Kona the 'drive' button is located to the right of the steering wheel, similar to their Ioniq models.

Yes the car is very quiet and the range with a full tank of petrol was showing 668km, which was excellent. It meant that I would have no 'range anxiety' for the remainder of the week.

The Kona could be described as medium-sized SUV that slots into the Hyundai range between the Bayon and the Tucson. It has been a good seller for Hyundai in Ireland since it was launched here in 2017 and only outsold in the Hyundai stable by the massive Tucson.

The second generation Kona is much bigger car than the first one; it's longer, wider and taller, which makes it a lot more spacious and practical than the previous version.

The new version takes inspiration from the brand's latest models with dramatic lighting

and even more pronounced squared-off wheel arches finished in thick cladding for a classic crossover look.

There is now a longer wheelbase so leg and head room has improved. It's also a bit wider so even seating three adults across the rear seat is not be a problem. There's a centre armrest, USB ports and separate vents for rear seat passengers.

My test car came in very attractive shade of light green. Inside the seats are dark, but white stitching on the seats and a white roofline helps to brighten the décor.

The 12.3-inch infotainment screen on the dash is user-friendly with all controls clearly marked. And then to top it off you get two old-fashioned buttons to adjust the volume for the radio and to scroll through the wave-lengths.

All versions of the new Kona come well-equipped. Standard features include automatic



climate control, cruise control, high beam assist and a parking camera.

Elegance models add features like heated front seats, heated steering wheel, driver lumbar support and wireless smartphone charging. The boot is a decent size, but no spare wheel, which is normal nowadays.

It's a lovely car to drive with three settings: Eco, Sport and Snow. We all know that sport means speed, while we are

unlikely to get much snow in Ireland, so last week I was an 'Eco Warrior,' which meant no reason to visit any forecourts. Fuels consumption averages about 4.9 litres per 100km.

Prices start at €30,895 for the 1.0-litre manual version, which I think is great value. The Hybrid range starts at €34,295 for the Signature version, while the 1.6-litre Elegance version that I drove will cost you €36,045. Road tax is €140.

I love self-charging hybrids. It's definitely the way to go; no need to spend an hour charging the car so that you can get maybe 50km in pure electric mode. The Kona's main rivals are the Ford Puma, VW T-Roc, Seat Arona and possibly the Toyota Cross and C-HR.

Meanwhile the fully electric version of the Kona, with a range of approximately 500km is expected to go sale early this month (Nov.)

Recently I thought I was getting into the new electric Kona, but it was the Hybrid version that was waiting for me at Hyundai's headquarters on JFK Drive just off the Naas Road in Dublin.

When I switched on the ignition, the engine was really quiet, but of course if it had been an E.V. there would be no need to press an ignition button as most electric cars start once

HOME & GARDEN



sites, but silver birch needs good drainage. The silver birch tree is a fast growing native tree and often the first tree to naturally grow in a cleared site. The birch is not a wide tree so does not encroach on its neighbouring trees. The silver bark of the birch tree gives great winter colour and looks great when planted in large groups.

Oak (*Quercus Robur and petraea*)

Oak trees are one of the most popular shade trees, and provide excellent habitat for wildlife, as a single oak tree can provide food and shelter for over 500 different life forms. Oaks are hardwood trees, and a mature oak may grow well over 500-1000 years. Even though the large *Quercus robur* is



referred to as the English Oak, it is native to Ireland, as is the smaller 'Irish oak' (*Quercus petraea*). Oaks are commonly used in native forestry plantations and their wood is very popular for furniture and flooring.

Mountain Ash

(*Sorbus Aucuparia*)

Mountain Ash Tree is a very



hardy native tree that can tolerate tough conditions, such as drought or cold. Mountain Ash has a white flower but is mostly known for its large clusters of bright red berries in the autumn. Often found at the top of the tree line, it is a great choice for shallow soil and exposed conditions.

Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)

Hazel nuts are one of the foods associated with the very earliest human settlements in Ireland. Hazel bushes may be coppiced i.e. cut right back to a stump, and will re-grow. The slender timber poles that result from coppicing can be used in the construction of wattle and daub, garden poles and fences. Hazel grows as an under-storey in oak and ash woodlands or as



pure hazel woods. It is often associated with a rich ground flora of woodland flowers and is a fantastic addition to any woodland or hedge planting.

There are many more native options to choose from, including our three native conifers, Willows, Spindle, Crab Apple, Elder to name just a few. We also stock trees with Irish provenance certs (meaning Irish grown from seed collected in Ireland) which are needed for the ACRES scheme. I would also encourage a walk around your own townland and see what is growing well in the local area. Consider collecting your own seed or taking cuttings from trees you think are special, as these may be the best option for your own land and possibly are genetically unique. Feel free to visit us here at Deelish Garden Centre in Skibbereen and we will be delighted to go over the various options available and offer the best prices in West Cork!

"The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now." – Chinese Proverb

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Composting initiative cultivates greener future for schools

Ten schools from Cork County have completed the Composting for Schools programme, designed to help them start or improve their composting systems, to reduce waste, save money and combat climate change.

The programme, delivered by Composting Ireland and supported by Cork County Council, was set up to help students learn about composting and gardening using a variety of fun interactive activities to create a better understanding of the principles of ecology and biodiversity that underpin all life on our planet.

Welcoming the programme, Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Frank O'Flynn said, "By equipping students, teachers, parents, and school staff with the tools of composting, waste reduction, recycling, and environmental awareness, we're cultivating a generation that will not just appreciate nature but actively safeguard its health. Congratulations to each of the ten schools who have taken the time to participate in this year's programme."

Participating Cork County schools included Colaiste na Toirbhirte Bandon, Scoil Fhiachna Glengarriff, Ballymoney

National School, Scoil Phádraig Naofa Bandon, Gaelscoil Charraig Ui Leighin, Scoil Mhuire Naofa Carrigwohill, Kilcolman National School, Timoleague National School, Bweeng National School and Carriganima National School.

To enhance their composting facilities, Cork County Council provided each participating school with a €250 voucher to spend on a variety of composting systems and tools including secateurs, pitch forks, watering cans and thermometers, in-school collection caddies and instructional signs.

Of the ten participating schools, eight schools have already opted to install a composter, improve their existing

systems or add new composting units such as leaf mould cages, garden composting systems and wormeries to provide both a means of composting leftovers from school lunches and a resource for nature education.

The schools are also supported by site visits from Composting Ireland, to establish their needs and receive assistance to set up and maintain their new composting regimes. Donal O'Leary, Composting Ireland added "We are thrilled with the response from Cork schools. The teachers have been enthusiastic and committed to learning about composting and bringing best environmental practices to their schools."





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SPORT

Clonakilty Waterfront Marathon reroutes to Courtmacsherry for 2023

This year's Clonakilty Waterfront Marathon XIII will take place on Saturday, November 25, with a 9am start from Courtmacsherry, and three race distances – a full and half marathon and a 10k distance.

With organisers forced to cancel last year's full marathon due to part of the course being flooded, leaving almost 700 marathon runners disappointed, the decision was made to stage this year's race on the shorter or looped course in Courtmacsherry, a very scenic run around postcard-pretty Courtmacsherry Bay.

The course for all three races runs through Courtmacsherry up to Timoleague, with the full and half marathons running

out towards the Pink Elephant to Kilbrittain beach and back to Courtmacsherry. There will be a second shortened loop for the full marathon, back out to and beyond Timoleague – the same route to make up the full 26.2 mile distance.

Set up to promote Inclusion for runners, walkers and people with disabilities, as well as encouraging health awareness and community spirit, Clonakilty Marathon has taken place every year since 2010 bringing many visitors to West Cork from all over Ireland, Europe, the USA and further afield.

Organisers have cut this year's registration by over half, to 1000 entrants, to ensure everything runs smoothly in the location, a small village, and to ensure that anyone who deferred in 2022, will get to run a full marathon this year. The response from race participants so far has been heartwarming.

The Clonakilty Waterfront Marathon supports charities, individuals and organisations in need, which this year will include The Seven Heads Walk.

Parking will be provided in the first field entering the village near the church, kindly lent to organisers for the day by local man Richard Drake.

To avoid traffic congestion and delays, organisers are asking all race participants to car pool where possible and to allow ample time for travel and parking.

The race start/finish line is a 15-minute walk through the village to the Courtmacsherry Hotel side.

Organisers have asked Cork County Council for permission to close the Courtmacsherry to Timoleague road from 8.45am to 11am to ensure that the majority of race participants are safely finished their race.

The Coastal road from



Timoleague, out past the Pink Elephant Hotel to the turnaround at the bridge by Kilbrittain beach will remain open to traffic so RULES OF THE ROAD APPLY and all motorists are asked to drive slowly and with care; and all race participants are asked to exercise caution and road traffic awareness at all times.

Please use the footpath from Timoleague to Courtmacsherry to ensure a safe and great race day.

Race and diversions signage, marshalls and clean-up crew will be on the race course throughout the day with a race lead car and a back of the race car.

The Clonakilty Waterfront Marathon XII could not take place without the support of Cork County Council, Garda, Civil Defence, Irish Red Cross, medical team including Dr Fiona O'Reilly, residents and businesses in the local community, as well as friends

and family who give their time to welcome the runners, walkers and wheelchair participants.

"The support and patience of everyone in the community is greatly appreciated and on behalf of all The Clon Crew, we sincerely thank you for all the years gone by, as we look forward to another safe and great race day in West Cork," says organiser Bob Hilliard.

Please contact Bob Hilliard on 086 6484811 with any queries.

OUT & ABOUT IN WEST CORK



Michael Collins' Grandniece Fidelma Collins and Great-Grandniece Maeve Burke at the unveiling the new statue of Michael Collins on Grand Parade, Cork. Hundreds of people turned out for the official unveiling by Cork legends Ronan O'Gara, Jimmy Barry Murphy and Rena Buckley at the scene of one of Collins' most famous public orations. Members of the Collins family and the Michael Collins 100 committee, who spearheaded the initiative, were also in attendance. The near lifesize statue depicts Collins standing alongside a bicycle, a nostalgic nod to the iconic photograph of him taken with a Pierce bicycle in Wexford in 1922, a reminder of the time when he used to cycle around Dublin despite there being a bounty on his head. The armoured car "Sliabh na mBan" from the convoy that made the historic journey on the day of Michael Collins' death was also on show, and Cork singing legend John Spillane performed his new Michael Collins song for the very first time. Photo Darragh Kane

Ring of Beara cycle raises €48,000



A cheque for €48,000 has been presented to charities and local groups on behalf of the Ring of Beara Cycle that took place on May 27. The event prides itself on the contribution it makes to local charities and the positive impact it has on the local community.

Since its inception, the Ring of Beara Cycle has donated over €400,000 to local groups and charities.

The annual donation is distributed amongst local groups who each get an allocation from the total amount raised, and this year the beneficiaries were Cas-

letownbere Development Association, local schools and youth groups on the Beara Peninsula, Kenmare Special Needs Group, Kenmare Family Resource Centre, Kenmare Palliative Care Group and St John of Gods.

Pictured are: Front L-R Mickey Ned O'Sullivan (ROB Committee), Roland Blennerhassett (ROB Committee), Alan Sheehy (ROB Committee) and Donal Kelly (Catletownbere Development Association). Back L-R Martina Moore (Saint John of God Kenmare Services), Susan Hennessy (Kenmare Special Needs Children's Group), Shane Dalton (Saint John of God Kenmare Services), Geraldine Topham (Kenmare Palliative Care) and Dorothy Brophy (Catletownbere Development Association).

SPORT

Carbery meets Scotland in showpiece camogie-shinty game in Clonakilty

Carbery Camogie players, who had a progressive season in beating Avondhu in the county senior camogie championship, are looking forward to a fantastic weekend, with an inaugural underage girls medal-giving ceremony topped off by a compromise game between their senior camogie team and a visiting shinty team from Scotland on Saturday, November 4. Matthew Hurley chats to Stewart Reed, a former development officer in Munster Camogie and the organiser behind the camogie-shinty showpiece game

Reed, who was born in Scotland, came over to Ireland in 2017, having previously coached the Scotland women's shinty team for seven years. When the Scotland team this year asked for a recommendation of some place in Ireland to play, he invited them down to West Cork. "It's sometimes an event held in Inverness, Scotland. It would be when the U21s, women and men all play on the same day, and 2019 was the last year of the occasion."

"This is the first edition since Covid so that's why the women want to test something out themselves, test the waters. This year will be a standalone fixture, next year should revert back to all being in one day."

Camogie may have been around since the early 1900s and is well established in Irish culture. However, Shinty is a relatively new sport.

"You're talking about the late 90s when shinty started coming into existence so it's a young sport," shares Reed. "Every year there is always a bit of organisation for a match. When

it is in Inverness, it is quite straightforward.

"The last time the women played an Irish international team was in Ratoath in 2004. That game was quite one-sided. 2013 was when I was first involved and Scotland played Dublin juniors.

"It is all about finding suitable counties and checking if it was ok for us to come over. If we played a senior county team, they'd be too strong. A lot of it is about finding the right level," he says.

It may be an important weekend for the Carbery team and the whole of West Cork but for the Scotland team, it's a chance to gain more exposure.

"This game (against Carbery) is the pinnacle of Scotland's year. It is also an opportunity to see the facilities that they have over here compared to Scotland. A lot of the training facilities and clubhouses are better than they have back home. It is a privilege for Scotland," the former Munster Camogie development officer says.

"Shinty is quite a different

game for the camogie players but once they get settled in the first five to ten minutes, it becomes a good game. The Scottish girls have to adapt to the ball being played in the air, for instance soloing; the camogie girls have to adapt to extra swinging. It tends to go both ways and it makes for a good spectacle."

The game itself will be similar to a normal camogie game, but with a twist. Catching the ball is not allowed, meaning a lot more emphasis will be on stick work.

The West Cork girls will have to adapt but it could lead to a more exciting game according to Reed.

"It's a lovely weekend to be involved in when you're coaching, playing or organising. There's a lot of common themes across both sports, playing for your parish, town or village. That's something we both share. There's a common language there. A lot of Irish girls studying in Scotland would play shinty. A lot of Scottish girls would play Camogie.



Carbery Senior Camogie Squad 2023 November

There's a lot of crossover appeal between the two sports. It's a nice celebration of how competitive the games are. Having a social aspect afterwards can be quite good too. The girls can ask questions about their sports, their backgrounds and so on. It's always good from a Scottish point of view to come over and see what they need to do to get to the next level," he adds.

Reed has enjoyed his time in Ireland having gotten into camogie while on the island. The match will be a special one for him to watch as much, as it is for Carbery Camogie to host.

"There were a lot of things I wasn't prepared for in terms of the scale of this. Camogie is massive compared to Shinty. It's a different world in terms of people playing. Having the county structure, provincial structure, there are a lot more layers to Camogie than Shinty.

"The challenges were similar too in Scotland; it was important to keep girls playing past a certain age and try to give them games, make sure they are coached the right way. It was definitely an eye-opener in terms of the scale and amount

of clubs you are dealing with."

It should be a great occasion for all involved, especially for those collecting their medals and playing in the collaborative match.

One player who won't be at the occasion though is Libby Coppinger, who is up for a senior camogie All Star award.

All are welcome to attend the game, which will be held in Ahamilla GAA complex in Clonakilty with throw-in at 3.30pm.

The inaugural trophy and medal presentation will happen afterwards at around 6pm in the clubhouse with speeches to take place too to honour those who have contributed to the camogie division, including sponsors Clonakilty Black Pudding.

A West Cork select will be in action against the Scots in Bandon GAA club on Friday, November 3, at 7.30pm.

Carbery Senior Camogie Panel 2023: Aoife Sheehan (St Colums), Maggie Coppinger (St Colums), Ellen Sexton (Kilbrittain/Timoleague), Niamh Desmond Collins (Clonakilty), Niamh Kennedy (Clonakilty), Michelle Dullea (Ballinascar-

thy), Libby Coppinger (St Colums), Orla Lowney (Clonakilty), Moira Barrett (Ballinascorthy), Amy McCarthy (Clonakilty), Aoife O'Mahony (Kilbrittain/Timoleague), Millie Condon (Ballinascorthy), Katie O'Driscoll (Clonakilty), Caoimhe Murphy (Kilbree), Kaitlyn Dineen (Kilbrittain/Timoleague), Amy Giles (Clonakilty), Clara Crowley (Ballinascorthy), Eimear Hurley (Kilbrittain/Timoleague), Anna Meade (Clonakilty), Laura Sheehy (Kilbrittain/Timoleague), Mairead Crowley (Kilbree), Rebecca Harrington (St Colums), Aoife Brennan (Kilbrittain/Timoleague), Sinead Walsh (Kilbrittain/Timoleague), Lorraine Dineen (Kilbrittain/Timoleague), Anna Crowley (Kilbrittain/Timoleague), Margaret Murphy (St Colums), Sinead McCarthy (Ballinascorthy), Sinead O'Donovan (Kilbree), Julie Sheehy (Kilbrittain/Timoleague).

Management: Tony Coppinger, Willie McCarthy, Denis O'Mahony, Danny Buckley.

OUT & ABOUT IN WEST CORK



Drimoleague athlete Stephen Murphy, 64, recently competed in the inaugural World Athletics Road Running Championships in Riga, Latvia. Stephen has been running, and winning, races of all lengths since he was nine-years-old, growing up as he did in a house where his father and sister Anne also ran competitively. Stephen stresses the importance for people of all ages to get and stay active and says he has no intention of slowing down.



Clonakilty Ladies Football U16s Win the U16 County D Final. Pic: Alison Miles

SPORT

Plans afoot to revive Clonakilty Special Olympics club

There was an air of positivity and determination at the recent open meeting of the Clonakilty Special Olympics Club, which was organised to try to revive the club, a victim of the Covid lockdowns.

The well-attended meeting was held at the Clonakilty GAA Pavilion.

Rose Dempsey – who has been involved since 2003 when Clonakilty hosted the Danish SO Team in advance of the World Games in June of that year – welcomed everyone, giving a brief history of the foundations and achievements of the club since it was founded in 2005.

There were many great achievements over a 15-year period with athletes excelling in golf and basketball skills and one club athlete even representing Ireland and winning a gold medal at the Abu Dhabi world games in 2019.

Unfortunately the Covid pandemic and related lockdowns resulted in the club's demise in recent years, but there is a demand locally by many people

with additional needs to be involved in a club where there is structure and a safe and fun environment for all.

Eoin Ó Béara of the Munster SO Office also addressed the meeting, which was attended by some new interested people as well as long-term athletes and volunteers. Given the 'buzz' in the room, he was confident that the Clonakilty club could be re-activated and encouraged people to get involved. Thankfully, a lot of the bureaucracy involved before becoming a volunteer or athlete member has been reduced – while still safeguarding athletes and club members. There was a lot of interest in the Young Athletes Programme for four to 12 year-olds to teach them basic skills which would help them prepare for participating in club sports going forward; and it was suggested that when the club got up and running in the new year that this would be vital to establish as a sub group within the club.

There was discussion on what sports might be considered going forward and a suggestion of a survey of people in the community with additional needs who would become members. There was a lot of interest on the night in bocce and floorball.

Qualified coaches will be needed, as well as a good num-

ber of volunteers to attend training sessions and it was decided that the first thing to do was organise a campaign to recruit volunteers with the necessary Garda Vetting and so on.

As the club has been dormant for over three years, everyone

involved previously will need to renew their affiliation and an AGM be held to formally establish a committee with designated officers before sports can commence. These include: Club Manager (Chairperson); Safeguarding Officer; Secretary;

Treasurer; Head Coach and PRO as a minimum.

A follow-up meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 8, at 8pm, at the Community Youth Centre where it will be vital to have a good turnout.

In the meantime people

whose membership has expired, should email renewal@specialolympics.ie and interested new volunteers should email munster@specialolympics.ie immediately to get the ball rolling.



Some of the attendees at the recent Clonakilty Special Olympics open meeting were Back from left: Anthony McDermott, Linda Tanner, Mags O'Donoghue, Elaine Lordan, Evie Nevin, Ellen O'Donoghue, Patrick Battersbury, Pádraig O'Reilly and Eoin Ó Béara of the Munster SO Office who addressed the gathering. Seated from left: Lisa Hodnett, Rose Dempsey and Joan Stapleton. (Photo: ClonSOPRO)

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Dear Sacred Heart of Jesus In the past I have asked for many favours. This time I ask for this special one(mention favour). Take it Dear Heart Of Jesus and place it within your own broken heart where your Father sees it. Then in his merciful eyes it will be your favour not mine. Amen. Say the above prayer for 3 days, promise publication and favour will be granted no matter how impossible. Never known to fail. M.D.

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MIRACULOUS PRAYER

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MIRACULOUS PRAYER

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MIRACULOUS PRAYER

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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. B.F.

MIRACULOUS PRAYER

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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. M.O'B..

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