



SPECIAL FEATURE:

Life Less Ordinary

Living in a pandemic

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From Direct Provision to Cork Persons of the Month: Izzeddeen and wife Eman Alkarajeh left direct provision in Cork and, together with their four children, overcame all odds to build a new life and successful Palestinian food business in Cork. They are pictured at their Cork Persons of Month award presentation with (l-r) Manus O'Callaghan and award organiser, George Duggan, Cork Crystal. *Picture: Tony O'Connell Photography.*

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Contact Ian Carey

Clune calls on Government to “mind our air routes”

Action is needed on the Aviation Recovery Taskforce Report to ensure we have strong regional airports post-Covid. This is according to Ireland South MEP Deirdre Clune who said it should be a consideration that certain routes at airports such as Cork are subsidised to ensure they survive in the long-term. MEP Clune said having routes that connect regions like the Southern Region to the rest of the world is hugely important.

“We need to mind our routes as they were hard fought for and have been nurtured over many years. If we lose them they will not be easily replaced. The Aviation Recovery Task Force was established by Government to make recommendations on what needs to be done to assist the

Irish Aviation Sector to recover from the impact of Covid 19. One of the recommendations of the Aviation Recovery Taskforce Report was to provide a subvention per passenger at Cork, Shannon and other Regional Airports to help rebuild the numbers. “Important connections are not only a means for individuals to travel they need to be considered as vital in supporting jobs in the pharmaceutical, technology, software, medical, finance, food and drink and all the sectors contributing to our export economy.”

According to MEP Clune, routes like the Cork to Amsterdam Schiphol, Paris and London flights are vital routes for the Southern region, providing connectivity and access not only to Amsterdam, Paris and London,

but also to onward flights through the international airline hubs as well as excellent train access across Europe.

MEP Clune added: “This is a very difficult time for our airlines and airports but we must ensure that they get support at this time as we need strong airports, not just in Dublin but around the country.”

The Aviation Recovery Taskforce Final Report was presented to the Minister for Climate Action, Communication Networks and Transport, Eamon Ryan, T.D. recently. The document pointed out that this is a moment of unprecedented financial and commercial risk for the aviation sector. It said that at risk are both thousands of high-skilled well-paid jobs, and a level of global passenger and cargo connectivity that is critical

to Ireland’s economy and its economic recovery.

The report said that a stimulus package should be put in place concurrently for each of Cork, Shannon, Ireland West, Kerry and Donegal airports to encourage the rebuilding of traffic. As part of this package, it said the State should directly provide the airports with a common fixed sum per passenger, which will be used by the airports to stimulate traffic by reducing airport charges for airlines and restoring and growing passengers to the regions. This scheme would represent State Aid and it would have to be notified to the European Commission for approval in accordance with State Aid Rules; and it should apply for the duration of the aviation sector’s recovery from the virus.

#shopkindly



It’s easy to be kind as we get used to our new way of shopping and using public spaces – being mindful of giving each other enough space or wearing a mask if we can’t... and of course sharing a smile and a ‘thank you’.

Everybody is working hard to meet the new guidelines but if you see something that has been missed, notify the business and give them the opportunity to remedy it rather than posting on social media.

Skibbereen youth volunteer honoured

Jessica Collins, a fourth-year student at Skibbereen Community School, was selected from hundreds of youth volunteers across Ireland and recognised for the exemplary work she carries out in her local community at the 2020 Pramerica Spirit of Community Virtual Awards Ceremony, held on Tuesday, September 15.

Jessica was one of 20 exceptional young people chosen from across Ireland, who are considered to be some of the country's most outstanding

youth volunteers, working to make a positive impact on their local communities.

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the awards celebration was a little different this year, marking a unique milestone for the Spirit of Community awards with the celebration taking place virtually, celebrating the creativity and commitment of Ireland's top young volunteers.

A passionate animal lover, Jessica was given the opportunity to volunteer for five weeks

in China at the Slaughterhouse Survivors, Harbin Animal Rescue, looking after ill and unwanted dogs and cats. As well as playing with the animals, she worked in gruelling heat every day giving the dogs and cats water and their vaccines, shaving and bathing dogs that had matted hair, transporting dogs between rooms, as well as power washing and cleaning the yard. Over the course of her trip and, as one of the youngest volunteers, Jessica became an integral part of the animal

Rescue Centre, even mentoring some of the new volunteers.

Jessica overcame the daunting task of travelling to China on her own and, following a visit to a dog shelter which housed thousands of abused dogs, she was determined to come back to Ireland and raise awareness of the cruelty that these animals were facing. She has set up an animal cruelty project and, overcoming her own mental health difficulties, is working to promote this within her school. She also plans on travelling back to China to work with the animals once again.

"If there is anything the last few months have shown us, it is the absolute value of volunteerism, the difference that it can make in communities and the importance of recognising those contributions and achievements around us. We also know it is particularly important that we have shining lights working to respond to challenges as they arise within our communities," said Naomi Hegarty, vice president, Risk & Privacy, Pramerica Systems Ireland and executive



A passionate animal lover, Jessica Collins was given the opportunity to volunteer for five weeks in China at the Slaughterhouse Survivors, Harbin Animal Rescue, looking after ill and unwanted dogs and cats.

sponsor for the Pramerica Spirit of Community Awards. "These awards acknowledge the commitment and dedication of young people in today's society who see challenges as an opportunity to make a difference and provide solutions within their

local communities, making them a better place."

For more information, follow the Pramerica Spirit of Community on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or visit spirit.pramerica.ie



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My constituency offices in Bandon and Skibbereen are closed during the pandemic but please get in touch if there's anything I can do to help you.

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Irish 'real-time' fisheries chart helping to protect Ireland's marine environment



Online Fisheries Management Chart with real-time information on quotas and regulations now in use by industry. Pictured (l-r) are Niall Connolly, MFV Patrick C and Val Reilly using the fisheries management chart online, October 2019.

Skipper and crew working on the 2,022 registered fishing vessels in Ireland can now access an interactive digital fisheries chart which provides guidance on a vast number of conservation and fisheries management regulations designed to help fishermen understand the rules that apply and support sustainability in sea fisheries.

The chart, developed by BIM

in partnership with the Marine Institute and the Sea Fisheries Protection Agency (SFPA) and funded under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund provides guidance on European and national regulations concerning closed areas, mesh size and restrictions on the use of certain fishing gears.

The online version of the fisheries management chart can be accessed at [\[eriesmanagementchart.ie\]\(http://eriesmanagementchart.ie\). The print format of the Fisheries Management Chart produced annually, will continue to be distributed and is available to download from \[www.bim.ie\]\(http://www.bim.ie\).](http://www.fish-</p>
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For further information please contact Mairead Mallon, Communications Office, BIM at M: 087 9197319; E: Mairead.mallon@bim.ie.



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25th annual West Cork Garda Youth Awards launched

The West Cork Garda Youth Awards celebrate outstanding young people between the ages of 13 and 21 years. An Garda Síochána in West Cork and SuperValu recognise that a lot of good work is being done by young people in every community in West Cork. Awards will be considered for nominated young people who by their presence make their communities a better place to live in.

The Irish Examiner is proud to be the Media Partner for this prestigious event, and is privileged to be able to support this worthwhile community initiative.

This year, due to Covid 19, it won't be possible to hold a presentation ceremony, but the process for nominations will remain the same, and Gardai will be distributing nomination forms to schools, youth groups and voluntary organisations right across West Cork. The Awards will be organised in adherence with all Government Covid 19 guidelines. Following on from the judging in November, award winners will be notified by the Organising Committee.

It's also important to remember that due to Covid, there hasn't been the same opportunity for young people to become involved with activities or projects compared to previous years. However, we have also witnessed that many young people were active on the ground throughout the Covid 19 crisis, volunteering and becoming involved in a variety of projects that supported both the vulnerable in the community, and the frontline services.

Garda Damian White,

Community Garda in Bandon, who is PRO for the Youth Awards, commented that as every nominee will receive a certificate, even if they do not win an award. This way, all nominees are recognised for their efforts, and the certificate is a very valuable item to have on a young person's CV into the future.

The nomination forms are now available from any SuperValu store in the West Cork Garda Division, and also at Garda Stations throughout West Cork. Application forms will also be distributed by the Community Gardai in each local Garda District. Electronic versions of the nomination form are available from westcorkgardayouthawards@garda.ie

The Award Categories are; Individual Award, Group Award, Community Safety Award and a Special Achievement Award.

The Individual Award is open to young people who have made a positive contribution to their community, making it a better place to live.

The Group Award category applies for groups of two or more young people whose combined efforts have contributed positively to their communities.

The Community Safety Award is for a young person, or group, who through a crime prevention or safety innovation, have made their community a safer place to live.

The Special Achievement category is open to any young person who has overcome difficult circumstances, or defied the odds and whose commitment deserves recognition.

In launching this year's

Awards, Inspector Ian O'Callaghan, Bantry Garda Station, who is Chairman of the Organising Committee, remarked "These past number of months have presented unprecedented challenges for our community, We wish to recognise the sacrifices made by young people, as they contribute to their community, both at a local level, and also in wider areas. An Garda Síochána would like to pay tribute to SuperValu for their continued sponsorship of the Youth Awards, and to the Irish Examiner for their support as Media Partner."

As SuperValu stores are independently owned by families who live and work in their local communities, SuperValu truly believes in supporting the local community in which they operate. The West Cork SuperValu stores which have sponsored these Youth Awards for the past 24 years are Caulfield's SuperValu Bandon, Smith's SuperValu Kinsale, Healy's SuperValu Dunmanway, O'Leary's SuperValu Macroom, Boherbue Coop, Field's SuperValu Skibbereen, Murphy's SuperValu Castle-townbere, O'Keeffe's SuperValu Bantry, Scally's SuperValu Clonakilty and O'Keeffe's SuperValu Millstreet.

The closing date for the applications is Friday, October 30, 2020.

Application forms are to be submitted to:

Garda James O Mahony, Juvenile Liaison Officer, Bandon Garda Station, or Garda Don Davis, Juvenile Liaison Officer, Bantry Garda Station.

Forms can also be emailed to: westcorkgardayouthawards@garda.ie



l-r are: Garda Damian White, Community Garda Bandon, Alice de la Cour, Advertising Executive Irish Examiner, Chief Superintendent Con Cadogan, Tom Higgins, Regional Manager SuperValu.

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A WEST CORK LIFE

Tina Pisco

Many years ago, I came across Frank Herbert's amazing 'Dune' series. I've read it a number of times since then, and I'm looking forward to the new movie which, if the trailer is anything to go by, will finally do the books justice. It's a great adventure, with an environmental message that has resonated more as the years have gone by. One of the quotes that stayed with me is 'Fear is the mind-killer. Fear is the little death'.

We have all been living with different levels of fear for seven months. "Are you scared?" asked the radio host to a woman calling in to the show last week. GPs and radio shows are being swamped with people who are scared. We've been brave, but being brave does not take away the fear. It is still walking alongside us.

Fear has many different effects. Fight, or flight. Run, or hide. Stay home, stay safe. Eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die. They are all understandable. It's been months. Sometimes it feels like years. Not one of us has been spared, and some of us have had more than their share of fear to contend with.

Staying safe within my family is pretty straightforward. We don't have to take risks to go to work. There are no school age children in the house. It is easy for me to keep my contacts low. However, I still feel an overriding sense of

Stay safe: Stay sane

dread. In fact, there are layers of dread. In the short term, there is dread of the second wave, of another lockdown. In the medium term, there is dread of the US elections and Brexit. Long term is the dread of climate change and the immigration crisis. The dread is, of course, fuelled by my addiction to news.

I know that I should give myself some respite from the news, that I should give it break. After all, nothing will change in my much life if I don't know exactly how many people are in ICU today, or what the figures in Spain are like, or what new level of surrealism the US has descended to. Dread and fear means being hyper-vigilant. The need to know what is going on - even if there is nothing you can do about it - is exhausting. I envy those people who tell me that they never watch the news. Personally, I can't do it.

Unfortunately, we have more than just fear to contend with. Sadness is also colouring our days. We are all dealing with loss. Of jobs and income. Of gigs, and travel. Of friends and family. And for some of us, of those who have died. "I miss elephants," says Michael Sheen in the series 'Staged'. That brought a tear to my eye. I miss elephants too; though coming across one in West Cork would be a rare sight indeed. It's the idea of elephants. The possibility of seeing an elephant. Elephants as a metaphor for loss.

Compounding the fear and sadness is perhaps the most difficult emotion: Anger. It is a combustible mix. Overall Ireland has done a good job of balancing these conflicting emotions. In the first lockdown we faced our fears and we worked together to fight it, despite the hassle of police checks and geographical restrictions. Each restriction lifted felt like progress. Then before we got to the end of the journey, it looks like we are starting over again.

This has made people angry.

The mix of fear, sadness and anger has made some people grab at any straw that can comfort them. In normal times (remember those?) I find conspiracy theories amusing. However, these days don't find them funny at all. In fact, I find them dangerous. Just look at the US...

Conspiracy language has slowly dripped into our conversations, like a slow poison. References to 'they' and 'them' are red flags. Keep a watch out if you find yourself using vague terms that divide the world into Us and Them. It can be easy to slip into it. Using this type of language in difficult times helps dampen the fear, and sadness. It gives our anger an outlet to vent. But beware. The short-term relief can easily morph into even higher levels of anxiety if you start seeing things only in black and white, mask wearers, and not mask wearers, young and old, rich and poor, science and intuition.

The next few months will be challenging. The pandemic has lost its novelty. The only way we will get through it is to stay safe, and stay sane, by being kind to each other, by facing the conflicting emotions without losing the run of ourselves, and by asking for help when things get overwhelming, knowing that friends and neighbours are there for us.

When I checked on the Dune quote for this column, Google gave me the bits I hadn't remembered:

"I must not fear. Fear is the mind-killer. Fear is the little-death that brings total obliteration. I will face my fear. I will permit it to pass over me and through me. And when it has gone past I will turn the inner eye to see its path. Where the fear has gone there will be nothing. Only I will remain."

Stay Safe. Stay sane. We'll get through this together.

Bank of Ireland funding to benefit WCDP Ability participants

The Ability Programme is co-financed by the Irish government and the European Social

Fund as part of the European Social Fund programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014-2020.

West Cork Development Partnerships Ability Programme works with young people aged between 18-29 years of age that may be living with a mental health condition, in the West Cork region.

WCDP's Ability team aim to support, build skills and empower participants to reach their goals, these may include taking part in social activities such as outdoor pursuits, personal development and mental health management

strategies, as well as accessing education, voluntary work or even employment.

WCDP's Ability programme provides support in a variety of ways, facilitating one to one meetings and group work in order to promote confidence and increase skills such as coping mechanisms, anxiety management and social interactions. WCDP's Ability team do this via person centred planning and within each plan is a programme of both physical and mental wellbeing frameworks and have included outdoor activity groups and one to one personal training as well as personal development and Occupational Therapy support. Through person centred planning and one to one support, participants will gain the

confidence and skills needed in order to access opportunities that they may otherwise find difficult to attain.

The participant is central to WCDP's Ability programme and by working together, we set both short and long term goals and tailor the pathway to suit each unique individual.

West Cork Development Partnership CLG have recently been successful in securing €4,500 in funding from the Bank of Ireland Begin Together Fund. This funding will be provided specifically for outdoor activities and initiatives which WCDP Ability participants will benefit directly from.

Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the October issue of West Cork People.

Just as we began to settle in to some form of a routine, Covid numbers have started to rise across the country. So, as we wait to hear if restrictions are on the cards for Cork, let's all do the best we can to keep each other safe, keep our children in school and our businesses open. Listen to the Public Health advice and hopefully in the not-too-distant future, we'll get out the other side of this pandemic.

In the meantime do settle in for a good read.

This month, we bring you 'Life less Ordinary – Living in a Pandemic' where we talk to people of all ages and walks of life about the challenges and positives they faced over the past six months living with Covid-19. Dr Ivan Hayes, Consultant Intensivist and Critical Care Director at CUH tells us that the increasing numbers are "worrying" and gives an insight into the supportive care the CUH team gives to patients with coronavirus. Consultant Geriatrician at Bantry General Hospital and Acute Stroke Clinical Lead, Dr Brian Carey calls for national guidance on the reopening of respite and daycare centres.

Anyone who feels like hibernating through this pandemic should check out our Cosy Homes feature, and as usual, we have lots of positive news, interesting views, recipes, gardening and entertainment to keep you going until November.

I hope you enjoy the read.

Until next month,

Mary



Mary O'Brien
Editor



Sheila Mullins
Creative Director



Ronan Ryan
Sales Consultant

New Sales and Marketing Director at The Montenotte

The Montenotte Hotel has appointed Ray Kelleher as Director of Sales and Marketing. Ray most recently worked as Group Sales and Marketing Manager at Trigon Hotels and previously as Sales and Marketing Manager at the Clayton Hotel Cork City.

He is currently the Chairperson of the Cork city centre forum, is a very well-known personality in the business community in Cork and brings with him a wealth of experience to his new role.

As Director of Sales and Marketing, Ray will provide strong strategic leadership for all sales, marketing, e-commerce and the public relations activity at the hotel as it develops its brand as one of Ireland's leading Destination City Resort Hotels.

Welcoming the appointment, General Manager at The Montenotte Hotel, Brian Bowler, said "I am delighted to welcome Ray to The Montenotte team. With an impressive background and proven track record in the hospitality industry, a true passion for tourism, and excellent connections in the business community, he will be a strong advocate for our hotel. Ray's creative approach will also bring fresh and unique thinking to our team as we continue to innovate



our offering to stay true to our promise to #stayunique".

Ray resides in Clonakilty with his family and holds a Diploma in Hotel Management and Business Studies from the Dublin Institute of Technology – Cathal Brugha Street.

The Montenotte is an award-winning four-star boutique hotel in Cork City, a member of Conde Nast Johanssens. With vast outdoor spaces, stunning Victorian Gardens, and panoramic views over the cityscape of Cork, it is one of Ireland's most instagrammable hotels. TheMontenotteHotel.com

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Contributors

Kate Arbon
Karen Austin
Hannah Dare
Tina Pisco
Louise O'Dwyer
John Hosford
John Bohane
Sean Creedon
Tania Presutti
Noah Chase
Shane Daly
Pauline Murphy
Kieran Doyle
Gary Hannon
Sherna Malone
Tommy Moyles
Jean Perry
Fiona Hayes
Grace O'Sullivan MEP
Rosari Kingston
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Pat Culhane

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Towns across Cork County develop ideas for their town's future vision

Eight towns across Cork County have been developing exciting new visions for their respective towns as part of the My Town, My Plan Community Training Programme. Community representatives from Carrigaline, Cobh, Clonakilty, Kinsale, Middleton, Rosscarbery, Skibberdeen and Youghal committed to several months engagement and participation to collaborate and develop new ideas.

The Hincks Centre for Entrepreneurship Excellence, part of the School of Business at Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) designed and delivered the programme and funded through SECAD Partnership CLG. The face-to-face training and consultative sessions by expert facilitators began last September and as Covid-19 hit in mid-March, the April and May sessions moved online. The programme comprised of four core topics, delivered by experts, on developing community projects/enterprises, moving from ideas to validation, legal structures/governance and strategic planning and were delivered in each town over eight evening sessions. In addition to the core topics, each town group selected four specialist topics most relevant to their town's future development.

Dr Helen McGuirk, Head of the Hincks Centre said; "We noticed one general theme across most towns and that is the idea of developing greenways/trails and parks, opening up new areas to be explored and enjoyed by locals and visitors. This is particularly pertinent with many Irish holidaymakers opting for a staycation this year due to Covid-19. The shared learning between the towns has been incredible and the Hincks Centre is delighted to have played a part in empowering these local communities. It was all about the participants and stakeholders working together, thinking creatively, evaluating options and making collaborative decisions to develop clarity and vision for their individual town ideas".

Ciaran Dineen from Carrigaline remarked, "My Town, My Plan gave me the chance to share my thoughts and ambitions for the future of Carrigaline. By meeting people who shared an appetite and desire to make a real difference, My Town, My Plan has encouraged me to move forward and build upon the conversations we have had with the information and knowledge around community development that has been



A theme emerging is the development of greenways/trails and parks, opening up new areas to be explored and enjoyed by locals and visitors. Pictured is An Taoiseach Micheál Martin visiting the finished section of Clonakilty's new greenway last month with local TD Christopher O'Sullivan.

provided. It has been a fantastic experience".

Maaikje Mijland from Cobh spoke of her experience on the programme, "It has been very useful as it helped us to focus on our community goals, provided guidance with project planning and offered a wealth of information from experts. I really enjoyed connecting with my community and the facilitator and speakers were excellent and gave me useful tools, motivation and hope for the future".

Although the first of the two free online shared learning events has already taken place

on September 29 (West Cork), there is still time to register for the event on October 7 (South Cork) at 7pm. The online events are showcasing each town's work so far and giving the opportunity to listen to great speakers from around the country on topics such as Social enterprise, retail in towns and tourism. The next phase of support that SECAD is offering through the LEADER 2014-2020 Programme will also be introduced. For more information on the project and to register for the free event please visit www.hinckscentre.ie.





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Clonakilty 086 8395058 and 086 6031335



Kinsale and Clonakilty towns finalists in Begin Together Awards 2020

Kinsale and Clonakilty are among the finalists announced for Bank of Ireland's Begin Together Awards 2020. This year, the awards recognise business and community groups who have come together to support their local area as they start to rebuild and recover from the impact of COVID-19.

A total awards prize fund of over €200,000 is available to finalists to help reboot local economies across the island of

Ireland. 21 awards are involved with the overall winner receiving €50,000 and the title of Ireland's 'Most Enterprising Town'. There is also a prize of €20,000 for the winner of the 'Rising Star' award.

Reflecting the new challenges that communities and businesses currently face as a result of the pandemic three special COVID-response awards have been introduced:

Local Town Promotion Initiative – A marketing or promo-

tional campaign designed to help kick-start the local economy.

Local Community Enterprise Initiative – A local enterprise initiative established specifically to ease the impact of COVID-19, or one that has repurposed itself during the pandemic.

Local Business and Community Response Initiative – A joint initiative by local businesses and the community to manage the impact of COVID-19 through lockdown and beyond as towns

start to reopen.

Kinsale and Clonakilty will be competing with towns from across the island of Ireland. The judging panel have reviewed all finalists in September and the winners will be announced on Virgin Media TV's Ireland AM in early October. The awards initiative this year is being fast-tracked to provide funding to winning towns in October in order to directly assist their COVID-19 recovery.

Commenting on the finalist announcement, Eilis Mannion, Head of Bank of Ireland for Cork County said: "Congratulations to Kinsale and Clonakilty on becoming a finalist in this year's Bank of Ireland Begin Together Awards. Through these awards we are supporting businesses and communities across the island of Ireland impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic as they start to rebuild and get back on their feet. We have seen that

incredible and powerful things can be achieved when communities, business groups and local authorities come together to meet their own challenges and make their own opportunities. I would like to wish Kinsale and Clonakilty the very best luck in the competition."

The Begin Together Awards fund is part of wider €1 million Bank of Ireland support for local enterprise and community groups this year.

The tale of two revolutionary friends with a Bantry connection

October 25 marks the centenary of the death of Sinn Fein Cork Lord Mayor Terence MacSwiney, who died in 1920 following 74 days on hunger strike against his internment in Brixton Prison. When his body was brought home to Cork, the Mayor's funeral drew thousands of mourners and journalists from all over the globe. Readers might not know that before MacSwiney joined the resistance against crown rule in Ireland, and became a globally known martyr for the cause of Irish freedom; he worked as a travelling commercial instructor for the Cork Technical Institution and resided briefly in Bantry in the 1900s, when he became friends with Richard Mulcahy, who would also later go on to be a prominent Republican.

Pauline Murphy tells us more.

In 1907, on graduating from Queens College (now UCC) with a degree in Mental and Moral Science, Terence MacSwiney took up a position with the Cork Municipal School of Commerce, teaching business methods. In 1912 he was appointed under Cork County Council as a travelling instructor and organiser for towns across the county; one town he lived and worked in for a short while was Bantry, where he taught in upstairs rooms at No.10 New Street.

MacSwiney detested the job but it gave him the opportunity to live in the heart of West Cork and be near the Gaeltacht village of Ballygeary, where he spent his free time brushing up on his native tongue. During his trips to the village he met and became firm friends with Richard Mulcahy, a Waterford native who had been just 18 when he was sent to Bantry Post Office to work as a telegraphist in 1904. Richard had worked in Bantry for just three years before being transferred out of West Cork but in those years he became active in the Gaelic League and made several visits to Ballygeary. In the years following his transferral he made return visits to Ballygeary where he befriended MacSwiney.

In 1915, MacSwiney resigned to become a full time revolution-

ary and spent that year travelling around Cork County, inspecting Irish Volunteers in places like Ballinadee and Barryroe. On a return visit to Bantry, the week before Easter 1916, he addressed an assembled company of Volunteers in the town.

Richard Mulcahy also gave up his job and became a full time revolutionary and in 1917 he became Chief Organiser for Conradh na Gaeilge in mid-Cork.

In the aftermath of the Easter Rising, MacSwiney was arrested in a roundup of Republicans and served time in Wakefield prison in West Yorkshire until he was released under a Christmas amnesty deal, when he went straight back to his republican activities, visiting Eyeries on New Year's Day to inspect the IRA company there.

In February 1917 MacSwiney was again arrested and this time sent to Bromyard Internment Camp in Herefordshire. While there he sent for his fiancée Muriel Murphy and the two were married. His Best Man was Richard Mulcahy.

MacSwiney was released in June 1917 and, with his new wife, he returned to Ballygeary where the couple lived for a while in a farmhouse near the home of their friend Siobhan an tSagairt.

Siobhan's home drew people



New Street Bantry where MacSwiney briefly worked and lived.



Cork Lord Mayor Terence MacSwiney on his wedding day with Richard Mulcahy as his best man.

from all over; it was the unofficial 'university of the Gaeltacht' and attracted people such as Tomas MacCurtain, Eamon De Valera, Daniel Corkery, Pdraig Pearse and Richard Mulcahy.

In the 1918 general election, MacSwiney was returned unopposed to the first Dáil Éireann as Sinn Féin representative for Mid-Cork. After the murder of Tomás Mac Curtain, the Lord Mayor of Cork on 20 March 1920, MacSwiney was elected as Lord Mayor. In August that year he was arrested and tried by a military tribunal under the Defence of the Realm Act and sentenced to two years' imprisonment to be served in Brixton, where he died from hunger strike on October 25.

Unlike MacSwiney, Mulcahy survived the War of Inde-

pendence and the bitter Civil War that followed. In 1922 he succeeded Michael Collins as President of the Irish Republican Brotherhood and a Free State Army General. He later became leader of Fine Gael from 1944 to 1959. He died in 1971 at the age of 85.

Terence MacSwiney's links to Mid- and West Cork came to the fore in 1965 when the Terence MacSwiney Memorial Museum was opened in the village of Kilmurry by the martyred mayor's only child Maire MacSwiney Brugha. The museum is now known better as The Independence Museum Kilmurry and holds artefacts telling the story of the rebel county's role in the War of Independence and that of Terence MacSwiney.



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HISTORY & POLITICS

Kieran Doyle

Ireland has reinvented itself in the twenty first century. It has emerged from the shadows and secrets of the 1900s. We have dismantled draconian laws against gay people. We have allowed literature and the arts to flourish when censorship forced some of our greatest writers to flee our shores like the 'Wild Geese'. We have made, and continue to make, strides in rebalancing the former chasm between women and men. We have enshrined the rights of our children so we will never have industrial schools or Magdalene laundries again and all our children with additional needs can access education in a way that was unimaginable 20 years ago. Of course, we have more to do and striving for it is half the battle.

Twenty years on from the turn of the millennium, we also have changed as a people. Over a fifth of Irish people living in the Republic were born outside Ireland. The influx of so many different people has opened our minds, enriched our culture, and brought us face to face with racism. This is going to be the next step in our journey as a liberal and tolerant nation. The 'Black Lives Matter' global ripple effect has produced tidal waves in some countries. In Ireland it has made us confront a simple question – are we as tolerant as we think? More and more minority voices have spoken or written about their daily experiences of racism. Thankfully, we don't have a situation like in the USA, or to a lesser extent in GB, where there is hostility and prejudice on an institutional scale and ingrained in the culture. Yet there is enough happening here to illustrate that some black, Asian and other people of colour have been victims of verbal, and sometimes racial abuse, in Irish society. Education remains our greatest tool against racism and schools have a major role to play in shaping the attitudes and behaviour of the next generation.

I have always understood that having a liberal society equates to tolerance, debate, respect for minority opinion and inclusivity. As we roll further into this millennium, I feel a shift in liberalism to mean that unless you are liberal, you are irrelevant. The first cracks of our newfound

Walking the line between liberalism and tolerance: Racism and literature

liberal society appeared when many who had opposing views on recent issues were made feel like pariahs. I gladly debated and discussed with people but, surely, when we try to close the argument down, can we call ourselves liberal?

I have seen worrying trends again with recent calls for the banning of certain books on the Junior Cert course. Some parents have been lobbying the Department of Education to remove 'To Kill a Mockingbird' (1960) by Harper Lee and 'Of Mice and Men' (1937) by John Steinbeck from the curriculum because the 'N' word is used in them. While many readers are familiar with those books, those of you who are not should know they were written a few decades apart but during an era of institutional racism in the USA. Despite the fact that both books decry racism and have racist characters as the villains, does our newfound liberalism feel that any literature that uses the 'N' word is unacceptable? This sentiment was echoed when Eamonn Ryan, leader of the Green Party, received abuse on social media for using the 'N' word in the Dáil. The fact that Ryan used it in the context of highlighting racism and driving a debate for tolerance and anti-racism seemed to be secondary. Ryan apologised and tweeted, 'I know this particular word should never be used.' As I have often written in these pages, context is everything. So, is there ever a context for this word? According to some voices – never.

One thing we can all agree on is that whether one is for retaining or removing these books, we are essentially on the same side – anti-racism. It is the approach that differs. One side wants to ignore the book, the other to contextualise it. I stand firmly behind the latter. In 'Mice and Men' a black man called Crookes works on a ranch with the other men but lives in a segregated world. He cannot share the same quarters as the white workers, go to town with them, or even throw horse-shoes with them in his leisure time. Steinbeck, as brilliant a fiction writer as he is, did not invent this; he merely mirrored what was going on around him in 1937. Being brave and principled about racism now is a hell of a lot easier than it would have been for Steinbeck in 1937, when the weight of the law and society was against you. The men who call Crookes the 'N' word are the characters we are meant to despise in the book and, put simply, the word is part of the language of that era. This masterpiece is as much

about man's inhumanity to man or woman as it is about racism. The black man, Crookes, suffers prejudice; a woman, only ever referred to as 'Curley's wife', is married to a physically abusive misogynist; and Lenny, who has special needs, is misunderstood, scorned and a victim of mob justice. If we are censoring books because of words then we better get the bonfires going because there is a long list of books with all types of offensive words that are no longer PC today. To ban this book is to lose an opportunity to study a masterful writer who presents us with all the ills of society that make a marvelous launching pad for further exploration with children. It gives the debate context to tease out these complex issues with young impressionable minds. What also makes 'Of Mice and Men' and 'To Kill a Mocking Bird' great reads is not just their themes but that the writing is as accessible to teenagers as it is to adults, without losing any of the beauty, craft and depth to the prose. What is more, these books are optional and are part of an ever-increasing list that covers all sorts of issues and genres so teachers can vary their books from year to year.

It would be remiss of me not to point out the Achilles heel of my argument. As I mentioned, we live in a more cosmopolitan society, which means a lot of students are non-white. At the tender ages of 14 and 15 it will be difficult to hear these words. I have witnessed it. What is more, white people live in an echo chamber that for the most part makes us feel comfortable about our viewpoints. Last year, a class examined a caricature of Serena Williams smashing her racket in a tantrum when she failed to win a final. All agreed that the cartoonist did a good job in depicting a spoilt tennis player and a sore loser. All except two non-white pupils who saw much more. The caricature, like all caricatures aim to do with their subjects, exaggerated her features. For these two students these exaggerations were bare-faced racism and not caricature. Period. The class soon went on to discuss the use of caricature of Irish people in 'Punch', a nineteenth century English magazine that portrayed Irish people with ape-like features. Their aim was to illustrate the relative primate nature of Irish people and justify colonialism. Words and images will resonate more with you if your race is the focal point of it.

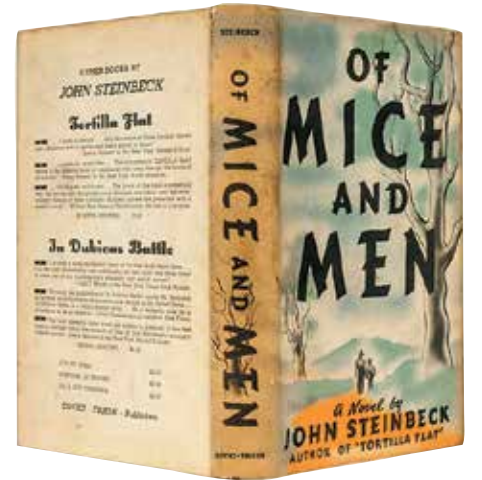
However, I truly believe the contextualisation of these novels, and how teachers can use it to confront the issues, bear

the greatest fruit – far richer than any initial discomfort. The same goes for gay or female students who study literature that uses derogatory terms for people's sexual orientation or misogynistic terms. These terms are there [in educational literature] to capture the mores and prejudices in the themes and characters of these stories – not to insult readers. Fiction is reflecting society and society is sometimes ugly.

Let me end with one of the most inspirational people of the twentieth century – Muhammad Ali. He was athletic, courageous, charming, and intelligent. He had the world at his feet in 1967 – the heavyweight champion of the world. Ali lost it all when he refused to fight in Vietnam because of his principles. It

didn't make sense to him that black men [in disproportionate numbers] were fighting 10,000 miles away for a country that wouldn't allow his kind to vote, or to be given fair opportunities to progress in life. When asked why he would not go, he responded to the interviewer with 'the enemy never call me n****r'. To rewrite that sentence any other way than the way Ali wanted it reported, is to dilute the hatred, pain, suffering of black people encapsulated in that one simple word. It was, and still is, used to dehumanise the very nature of black people

and Ali's fight was in segregated USA not Vietnam. To rewrite that horrible word in a PC manner leaves the haters off the hook. In reporting it as intended was to allow Ali to shine a light on the racists that wanted him to wage their own colonial war, using economic slaves to fight it. Context is everything, especially when we are fighting the same battle.



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Kilmichael Ambush documentary in the works

The Kilmichael Ambush has been commemorated every year for many decades by those who are eternally grateful to Tom Barry and his volunteers for bringing the fight to the British and creating a force to be reckoned with. This year however, on the centenary of the Ambush, Covid 19 will hamper any proposed gathering for those who wish to pay their respects.

Dunmanway native and filmmaker Brendan Hayes, along with fellow filmmaker Jerry O'Mullane from Cork City, have come up with an alternative for those wishing to commemorate the centenary. The filmmaking duo has teamed up with a plethora of

notable historians to tell the tale of the ambush via a documentary entitled 'Forget not the boys'.

Well-versed historians have already been interviewed, hugely relevant areas have been filmed and a plan is firmly in place to screen the documentary without breaching Covid restrictions.

Brendan Hayes explained: "It's too early to announce the plan for the screenings but I'm hugely confident that it can be done and will be done. It will be by booking only and it will be free to people on a first-come first-served basis with priority given to the participants of the documentary for the first screenings."



Filmmakers Brendan Hayes (l) and Jerry O'Mullane.

Jerry O'Mullane added: "Working on this project with Brendan is a fantastic experience and as a city person I am in awe of what beauty West

Cork has to offer." Brendan also says that he is "Deeply privileged and honoured to be able to offer an alternative to those who have

had to reschedule centenary events because of Covid." He promises, "A story that will be greatly respectful to the men who created a turning point in the war of independence with their actions that day" 'I have scripted this narrative with advice from prestigious historians and all the interviews are from historians who have more than proved themselves over the years'.

The pair will keep people well informed about progress and location of the screenings nearer the time and will provide all essential information for those interested in viewing the finished product.

Terence MacSwiney Weekend and Cork Hunger Strikers' Exhibition at Kilmurray

Commemorating former Cork Lord Mayor Terence MacSwiney on the 100th anniversary of his death, the third annual Terence MacSwiney Weekend programme will take place October 16-18 at Independence Museum Kilmurry.

A series of events will be hosted, as well as the opening of an exhibition on the Cork Hunger Strikers who were arrested along with MacSwiney.

Details will be available on IMK facebook page and website www.kilmurrymuseum.ie. Museum Opening times Thursday-Sunday, 2-5pm, Entry €5.

people Farming

Not as easy as it looks



FARMING IN WEST CORK

Tommy Moyles

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

In association with



After the washout in August, the weather in September was a bit more pleasant, giving tillage farmers an opportunity to get back into fields and salvage any crops they weren't able to harvest earlier. That said estimated losses are in the region of 15 to 20 per cent. While the straw may have been standing, many crops bore the brunt of those storms and seed heads ended up on the ground; that most saleable part of the crop was of more benefit to cows

and pigeons than the farmers who planted it.

For livestock farmers the break in weather took a bit of pressure off. Stock were more content than they had been a few weeks ago. Too much of wind and rain combined unsettles cattle especially and they will spend their time walking. On a damp, calm day, they'll barely bat an eyelid at the conditions but when it's wet and windy they're difficult to keep happy.

Grazing

As the year goes on, the dry matter content of the grass drops and it's feed value diminishes. As a result ruminants need to eat more to get the same benefit they would have got from a smaller quantity of forage early in the year.

Driving around over the next few weeks you may notice some farmers closing up their paddocks for grazing or you may notice the cows in the field near your house may only be back in once or twice in 2020. On most farms there is a plan as to how the farm is grazed. From now on the 'autumn rotation plan' will be put in place. It is done to allow grass build up for use early in 2021. The rotation is the amount of days between grazing and this varies depending on the grass growth. A rough guide is 21-day rotations from early April until August and from there it is gradually extended to 28 or 35 days through September and October. There's a bit more organisation to farming than it



Cows sunning themselves in September on Tommy Moyles' farm, Ardfield

might appear at first glance.

Some of the paddocks here are heading for one more grazing before the year is out while there's potentially a bit more, weather permitting, in fields on the out farm or across the road on the home block.

Scanning

We scanned out heifers and young cows in September and I got a bit of a land when there was only a 50 per cent success rate two weeks ago. You'd be a bit on the nervous side at scanning time – it's not the same level of nerves as TB testing, but there's an element of the unknown about it. Being the first year of a new bull doesn't help the nerves and neither do repeated calls of 'no calf'. After half of the heifers were empty, alarm bells went off in my head, as I got the young cows ready. Thankfully, all went better with them. There are two rechecks, but those cows are on course for all being in calf.

Factors at play

Afterwards, we went through what differences there were compared to last year. The 2020 heifers got to grass earlier, but otherwise their treatment was identical. The two factors that may have had an influence are the heat earlier in this summer and the fact that this bull took a different path to other young bulls we have retained for breeding.

Usually, any weanling bull picked out for breeding is fired out in a field for the winter to tough it out with the rest of the stock bulls.

Due to space constraints, this bull was a bit more pampered than usual. He was housed with the rest of the young bulls and got similar treatment to them until February. He was taken out before feed levels were ramped up in any significant way.

There are similarities between him and the first bull Dad bought in the 90s. That bull put the first three or four

cows in calf and then there was a gap of a month or so before he bulled any other cows. It has been said that feeding young breeding bulls can have a negative effect on fertility.

Positive side

After picking through the bones of the results, there was one positive to be had. Sales will be up for the end of the year.

Those extra heifers are on the way out this autumn and they'll command a higher price than cows. In recent years, we have been putting more cows and heifers to the bull than we need to calve down, and letting fertility call the shots. It makes the decisions on who stays or goes easier.

It helps not to have any favourites too. Our stand out heifer calf from last year proved the saying that you can't see fertility in cattle.

The results of focusing on fertility are beginning to show with the in-calf rate of

the cows. All that remains to be weighed from the 2020 calves are one of the heifer calf groups. I've been very pleased with the results so far, so hopefully they won't disappoint.

Beef prices

Beef prices have stayed steady for now and milk appears to be holding relatively well also. 2020 has been a year, which has witnessed a significant rise in lamb price, and as a result, those selling lambs have done well. Weanling prices for cattle are up on other years also. A potential factor for both of these price rises is that they may be as a result of the BEAM (Beef Emergency Aid Measure) Scheme from last year. A measure in this is to reduce the level of organic bovine nitrogen by five per cent for the 12 months from the 1st of July 2020. The catch is, it must be reduced on the reference period from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019. Some farmers have opted to buy in store lambs to graze ground while others have decided to purchase weanlings or younger stock than they normally would. These classes of livestock have lower individual organic nitrogen levels.

Didn't I say farming was a bit more complicated than it might look.

Clonakilty GP still remembered for service during Spanish flu



Dr Laurence O'Cleary (left) and with his wife Nora outside their home opposite the Roman Catholic Church on Western Road, Clonakilty. Dr Clery regularly travelled to surrounding parishes on horseback.

Clonakilty GP Dr Laurence O'Cleary was also the doctor at the County Home in Clonakilty when, while the Great War still raged, the Spanish flu broke out in 1918.

Dr O'Cleary did his medical training at Queen's College Cork. After graduating, he went to London where he worked as a doctor in the East End for a few years, before returning home and getting married to Nora Bennett in 1901. Nora was working in her family's grocery store in Clonakilty at the time. The couple went on to have eight children.

The first wave of the flu

started in the first quarter of 1918 and was relatively mild but the second wave, which began in the second half of August, was particularly deadly, affecting many young adults.

There were approx 23,288 deaths from the virus in Ireland (which in 1918 was 32 counties). The amount of people who were estimated to have contracted the disease was 800,000 and thus the fatality rate was 2.5 per cent. Hospitals were under massive strain. Whole workhouses were full and many families were confined to their homes, with no one to care for them.

With a shortage of doctors

and nurses, Dr O'Cleary was on duty 24/7 in 1918 and eventually succumbed to the virus himself at the age of 54. The eldest child in the family was 16 and the youngest less than a year old at the time of his death.

More recently, locals recounted to his grandson, Laurence Coughlan, how the late Dr Cleary travelled to surrounding parishes such as Barryroe on horseback. Laurence Coughlan's mother Nancy was only eight when her father passed away. "One of the most poignant memories my mother had was of her father thrown into an armchair (which is still in the family)

trying to catch some sleep after a gruelling shift," says Laurence.

One of the most devastating pandemics, the Spanish Flu was estimated to have cost 50 million lives globally.

The people of Clonakilty were so grateful to the late Dr O'Cleary for his service during the pandemic that they erected a monument, still standing today, in his memory at Darrara cemetery.

After her husband died, Nora Bennett O'Cleary opened a haberdashery shop where the family previously had run a pharmacy on Rossa Street. "There was no social welfare or

CHRISTOPHER O'SULLIVAN T.D.

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

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FIANNA FAÍL THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

widow's pension in those days," says Laurence "they were tough times but she was a very strong woman and ran the business to make a living for her own family. All of the children were very well educated and one of her daughters went on to train as a pharmacist. My grandmother Nora was well-known around

West Cork for helping people out with advice."

Today the premises is still in the family. Laurence is retired but his son Finbarr now runs Coughlan's Bookshop from the building on Rossa Street and next door. Laurence's brother Tim has an accountancy practice.

people Farming

Wellness Recovery Action Plan launched for farmers

Joe Cronin of the West Cork Development partnership is in the process of introducing a WRAP programme in West Cork. Standing for Wellness Recovery Action Plan, WRAP is a prevention and wellness process used by people to recover and improve their overall mental health and wellbeing. It was developed in the late 90s by a group of people searching for ways to manage their own mental illness and people in many different circumstances now use it to address physical and mental health.

Speaking to the West Cork People, Joe said: "Between work, external stuff or giving time to your family or community, a person could find themselves busy for 70 or more hours a week, yet have no time for themselves. That takes a toll, as some people are always committed to helping everyone else,

to the detriment of their own health. That drains their own energy and may have knock on effects over time."

This is especially true within the farming community. Given the often isolated nature of farming, particularly around busy times of the year, work can stack up and small problems become bigger, which can sometimes lead to work getting on top of an individual who, as a result, becomes physically and mentally exhausted.

In an effort to help, Joe along with Jimeve O'Neill believes the WRAP programme has a part to play and they're hoping to engage with more farmers now, as the peak work season has eased.

One of the key elements of WRAP is that people will be able to recognise when they're not themselves; preventing any issues from getting bigger and

learning how to take steps to deal with them.

The course is delivered over two and a half days and, while Joe and Jimeve are there to facilitate and work through a process, it is the participants themselves that dictate how the conversation goes.

Joe explains: "The group dynamic stimulates the conversation. One person might say something and it triggers somebody else, so it works well. The content is flexible. We go with the flow so to speak.

"We only facilitate the course as such and it's up to the participants then, depending on how comfortable they are to talk."

He added: "The format of the group session allows people the chance to realise that if they're in a group you realise that other people feel a similar way to you from time to time, and that they are not alone in the way they

feel; but that majority of people may well feel stress or anxiety from time to time

We're gearing this at people who would have had a mental health issue in the past; it's a daily maintenance plan on how to maintain oneself. This includes what is known in the programme as a 'wellness toolbox'.

The idea of this is to get people to recognise what they're like when they are happy."

Throughout the programme participants are enabled to find their own wellness tools that can help in times where they may be required.

The course is free and will run for three full days over four weeks throughout the year.

For further information contact: Joe Cronin on 086 1717592 or email: joe@wcdp.ie Jimeve O'Neill. email: jimeve@wcdp.ie

Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP)

A prevention and wellness process used by people to recover and improve their overall mental health and wellbeing.

Throughout the programme participants are enabled to find their own wellness tools that can help in times where they may be required.

The course, which is facilitated by the West Cork Development Partnership is free and will run locally in each area.



For further information contact:

JOE CRONIN: 086 1717592 joe@wcdp.ie

JIMEVE O'NEILL: jimeve@wcdp.ie



The Glenanne Gang



THE HISTORY & POLITICS CORNER

Shane Daly

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

Last month the documentary ‘Unquiet Graves’ by Seán Murray aired on Irish television. The film took four years to make and two years of relentless questioning and pressure by Mr. Murray before RTÉ commissioned it to air, as the broadcaster felt the information contained within was too sensitive for the viewing public. The purpose of the work is to highlight British State collusion in paramilitary killings in Ireland during the Troubles. The central focus of the film is the Glenanne gang and, John Weir, its leader. The documentary gave an incredible insight into what life was like in Ireland during the Troubles; and through countless hours of painstaking research achieves its goal of exposing the involvement of the

British Government in murders during the Troubles. It shows beyond question that the British State was aware that Catholic men, women and children were being shot in the head and tortured throughout Ireland. But not only were they complicit in the acts, they also ordered them.

John Weir gives an almost unbelievable, hard to watch account, of what he was asked to do as senior member of the Glenanne gang. His admissions are extraordinary and allow the film to be a vessel for something unexpected. Sean Murray believes that John Weir was using these admissions as a cathartic experience. Now living in South Africa, John Weir served very lengthy prison sentences for his involvement in the Glenanne gang, which is attributed with 120 murders; some of which are the most infamous in Irish history, not just of the period 1969-1998, the Troubles.

Who were the Glenanne gang? Run by the British Government, the Glenanne gang comprised of roughly 40 men. It was a secret group that included members of the British police (The RUC), British soldiers, the mid-Ulster Brigade, the UDR and the UVF. The gang’s victims included the 33 people killed in the 1974 Dublin and Monaghan bombings, those killed in the 1975 gun and bomb attack on the Miami Showband, the 1976 killings of six members of the Reavey and O’Dowd families in south Armagh and the killings in August 1975 of Seán Farmer and 22-year-old Colm McCartney, a cousin of the late Nobel laureate Seamus Heaney.

The book ‘Lethal Allies:

British Collusion in Ireland’ by Anne Cadwallader was published in 2013; it is this book that Sean Murray uses as inspiration for Unquiet Graves. Lethal Allies claims that permutations of the group killed about 120 people – almost all of who were Catholic civilians with no links to Irish republican paramilitaries. The Cassel Report investigated 76 killings attributed to the group, and found evidence, that British soldiers and RUC officers were involved in 74 of those. John Weir claimed his superiors knew he was working with loyalist militants but allowed it to continue. The Cassel Report also said that some senior officers knew of the crimes but did nothing to prevent, investigate, or punish. It has been alleged that some key members were double agents working for British military intelligence and RUC Special Branch.

The Troubles had radically transformed the daily lives of people in Northern Ireland; after five years of turbulent civil unrest, the bombings and shootings showed no signs of abating. The armed campaign waged by the Provisional IRA had escalated, with bombings in England and increased attacks on the security forces in Northern Ireland. The British Army and the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) bore the brunt of IRA violence and many Protestants felt their people to be under attack. Rogue members of the RUC Special Patrol Group (SPG) believed that the situation was rapidly deteriorating and that the IRA was actually ‘winning the war’. As early as the end of 1973, it was suggested that drastic mea-

asures had to be taken to defeat the organisation. The SPG was a specialised police unit tasked with providing back-up to the regular RUC and to police sensitive areas.

On February 10, 1975, the Provisional IRA and British government entered into a truce and restarted negotiations. The IRA agreed to halt attacks on the British security forces, and the security forces mostly ended its raids and searches. However, there were dissenters on both sides. Some Provisionals wanted no part of the truce, while British commanders resented being told to stop their operations against the IRA just when – they claimed – they had the Provisionals on the run. Ulster loyalist paramilitaries, fearing they were about to be forsaken by the British government and forced into a united Ireland, increased their attacks on Roman Catholics and nationalists. Loyalist fears were partially grounded in fact, as Secret Intelligence Service officer Michael Oatley had engaged in negotiations with a member of the IRA Army Council, during which ‘structures of disengagement’ from Ireland were discussed. This had meant a possible withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland. Loyalists killed 120 Catholics in 1975, the vast majority civilians. They hoped to force the IRA to retaliate in kind and thus hasten an end to the truce. The IRA did retaliate in what became known as the Kingsmill massacre.

It was this turn of events that culminated in the creation of the Glenanne gang. As per John Weir’s admission as leader

of the organisation, the British government wanted to commit as heinous an act as was humanly possible in the Catholic community in order to get the IRA to react. They felt that if they could kill enough innocent people in one showing of utter ruthlessness and one of enough vitriol they could create such a tide of hatred within the general Catholic public that the IRA would react more viciously than they never had previously. This would then allow them to gain approval for more soldiers on the ground, more weapons combined with more ammunition to just wipe out the IRA in a short period of time.

They decided to attack a primary school in Belleeks, County Armagh. John Weir admitted, “The plan that was decided on was to shoot up a school in Belleeks.” He added that the targets would be “children and teachers”. Weir claims the plot came from military intelligence to make the Troubles “spiral out of control” into a full civil war. However, the UVF put a stop to the plan. Which might give the impression that the UVF, despite their propensity for violence against Catholics, might have a line that even they will not cross. However, it later transpired that the UVF were not against the plan, but they felt if they allowed it to go ahead that it would change the public opinion of the UVF. They knew that the public were aware that the Glenanne gang and the UVF were working together. It was for this reason, and not the loss of innocence children and teachers lives, that they halted the plan.

It is truly a remarkable admission by John Weir that he gave in a sworn affidavit. The documentary maker Seán Murray is a nephew and godchild of Danny McCann, one of three IRA members killed by the SAS in Gibraltar in 1988, where they were allegedly planning a car bomb attack on a British army changing of the guard ceremony. He is a son of the senior Belfast republican Seán ‘Spike’ Murray. Mr. Murray said the story of the Glenanne Gang and its victims would be particularly revelatory for international audiences. “A lot of this, local people will be well aware of it, but internationally I think it is going to dumbfound audiences.... Collusion has left a dark and terrible stain on the North of Ireland; the pain that’s been caused to thousands of people here is incredible. If there is ever going to be a healing process on this island, if we’re ever going to move forward in reconciliation, people need to be able to tell their stories, but more importantly we need truth from the state about their role in the conflict,” he said.

The ‘not-for-profit’ film will also be shown in the US, Canada, Europe and Australia and on iTunes, Google Play and Amazon Prime. It can also be seen for a brief period on the RTÉ Player application on your phone, tablet or smart television. It is a truly remarkable historical document into the lives of Irish people during the Troubles, one of the most turbulent periods of Irish history.

Rural communities should be cycle-friendly for all ages and abilities says Rural Cycling Collective

Last week saw the formal launch of the Vision for Cycling in Rural Ireland by Cyclist.ie’s Rural Cycling Collective, an array of groups and individuals under the umbrella of the wider national Cyclist.ie advocacy network. The Collective seeks to make rural communities (towns, villages, and rural roads) cycle-friendly for all ages and abilities. It aims to re-balance the debate on active travel so that everyday journeys by bike across rural Ireland are enabled and supported.

Launching the vision document, Dr. Damien Ó Tuama for Cyclist.ie said: “Today, we launch our vision document which aims to promote and celebrate everyday cycling in towns, villages and their surrounding areas. Cycling is not just for Dublin and other cities. Our vision highlights the needs of areas outside of the major

cities and the opportunity now presents itself to transform people’s experience of active travel.”

Allison Roberts from the Clonakilty Bicycle Festival, a member group of Cyclist.ie, stressed that “we want a fair distribution of transport funding to regional parts of the country to make cycling for all ages and abilities a reality. But to ensure the funding is spent in the right way on the right kind of infrastructure, Cyclist.ie needs to be viewed as a core stakeholder and actively encouraged to participate more fully in local authority infrastructure and design planning.”

As Jo Sachs-Eldridge of Leitrim Cycling Festival, who led the creation of the vision, explains:

“What we want is to see changes in the way things are being done in our local authorities, we need to move from a reactive, ad-



Clonakilty school cycle

Pic: Anna Groneicka

hoc approach to one that is much more strategic and proactive. And we need to change the environment on our roads – both the physical and the social environment – so that they are safer for everyone.

“The eight key recommendations in the vision document could transform the countryside into places where cyclists are ‘expected and respected’, by

designing useful, connected cycle routes throughout Local Authority areas”, Sachs-Eldridge continued. “As a priority, safe cycle routes to schools and car-free zones should be introduced at school gates in all towns and villages, along with lower speed limits to make our roads and streets safer and more accessible for everyone, and to reduce casualties”.

Sachs-Eldridge added that “we

are delighted to finally see a funding commitment for cycling in the Programme for Government. But it must be accompanied by an improvement in design standards, and improved project management capacity at all levels of local and national government.”

Allison Roberts of the Clonakilty Bike Fest also stressed the importance of community and stakeholder engagement:

“Local authorities should see us as partners and allies as they start to draw up plans for cycle routes. Our expertise and hands-on experience of cycling in rural communities could be invaluable in designing safe routes for cyclists of all ages and abilities. We want to see the best use made of this funding opportunity. It’s a win-win for everyone.”

Navigation entry to Further or Higher Education



LIFE & LEARNING

Pat Culhane

Pat Culhane is a Senior Learning and Development Manager, writer and researcher. He is currently completing a Doctor of Management degree (part-time). He has recently relocated with his family to West Cork. For more, see patculhane.ie

It's that time of year when thousands of young adults (and some not so young) are commencing full-time further/higher education or training courses throughout Ireland. Transitioning to these courses can be an especially challenging time with course applications, awaiting grades/points, getting a place on a suitable course and so on.

It is all the more strange this year because of COVID-19 – no Leaving Certificate exams, teacher-calculated grades and the uncertainty of how, or even if, courses will function. Will courses run in a face-to-face, online or blended way? Will students have to pay for accommodation or stay at home? Is the internet speed (if you have access) strong enough to participate in online classes?

The process of accessing and commencing such courses can be an exhilarating experience. It can, however, also be a stressful and confusing time for many young adults and their loved ones, as it can be for older adults returning to education or training. Too often over the years, I have witnessed people making major life decisions and changes in this regard without understanding the underlying further/higher education and training systems. A basic appreciation is helpful in accessing and progressing through suitable further/higher education or training programmes.

Not having a further/higher qualification beyond post-primary school can profoundly limit many people's long-term employment capacity, their standard of employment and their quality of life. There are many exceptions to this, of course. Some of the best and most skillful workers and entrepreneurs do not have such qualifications. Take for example, Tipperary natives, the Collison

brothers. Neither of these billionaire owners of major tech company, Stripe, finished college. The current Director General of the Health Service Executive, Paul Reid, left post-primary school at 16 years of age with an Intermediate Certificate – the previous version of the Junior Certificate. Some of the most capable and erudite people I know have little or no formal education – particularly of my parents' generation. For the vast majority, a further/higher education or training qualification is a critical factor, which influences their prospects. This is even the case where the individual does not end up working in the field that they qualified in, which is common. Some qualifications are specifically required (e.g. Electrician, Childcare Assistant, Solicitor etc.), but most job applications just require a certain level of further/higher qualification or award to be considered for the position, regardless of the specialisation.

What follows is a basic outline of the Further Education and Training (FET) and Higher Education (HE) systems in Ireland for those who are intending to or who have recently accessed full-time education or training. Note that some of the descriptions are basic, to cater for varying levels of knowledge. This might help students and parents to demystify some relevant elements of the further/education and training systems in Ireland, with particular reference to Cork. This includes an attempt to clarify the plethora of abbreviations in this space.

QQI & NFQ: FET and HE courses are often described on education provider websites as being at a certain QQI or NFQ Level. All FET and HE courses that run in Ireland are approved by the Quality and Qualifications (QQI) Ireland. Established in 2012, QQI is an independent state agency responsible for promoting quality and accountability in education and training services in Ireland. QQI is an amalgamation of the previously operational Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC); the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC); the Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB) and the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI).

Central to QQI's role is to promote, maintain and develop the Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), a 10-level framework for the development, recognition and awarding of qualifications in Ireland. It is a single national entity through which all learning achievements may be measured and related to each other. Underpinned by quality assurance principles, the Irish NFQ describes qualifications in the Irish education and training system and sets out what each qualification says about what learners know, understand and are able to do. It also sets out

qualification pathways from one NFQ level to the next. For more, see qqi.ie.

Further Education and Training: FET occurs after post-primary school but is not part of the Higher Education (HE) system. FET is an addition to the second-level education system. HE refers to the third-level education system.

Cork Education and Training (ETB) board is one of 16 ETBs established by the government in 2013. A major function of Cork ETB – formerly Cork Vocational Educational Committee (VEC) and FÁS – is the provision of education and training services to adults in a variety of settings across the county.

Full-time learning opportunities include Post-Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses, apprenticeships, traineeships, specific skills training, Youthreach, local training initiatives and the Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS). Cork ETB has four stand-alone Colleges of Further Education (PLC Colleges): Cork College of Commerce (CCC), St. John's College, CSN College of Further Education Mallow College of Further Education. Courses run in other settings throughout the county, such as the CCC Skibbereen campus.

Prospective students apply directly to the individual education provider. Entry requirements generally include passing Leaving Certificate subjects, the Leaving Certificate Applied or a relevant QQI Level 4 programme. Mature students (see section below) are usually exempt from the Leaving Certificate requirement. Normally, all applicants are interviewed. Offers of course places are generally contingent on the applicant meeting the entry requirements and satisfactory performance at interview.

The Higher Education Links Scheme (HELs) provides progression opportunities for learners who are interested in applying for Higher Education courses through the Central Applications Office (CAO). Learners can secure Level 5 or Level 6 QQI-FET major award by doing a PLC course and then using this qualification to apply for HE courses. HE or third level colleges reserve places each year for students applying via the PLC/FET route. The simplest way to find and check progression routes for all PLC courses is using the search tools on careersportal.ie.

Higher Education: HE or third level education comprises of the university sector, the technological sector and the colleges of education, which receive substantial government funding. There are a number of independent private colleges, such as Griffith College Cork. All of these are all referred to as Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

Universities are autonomous and self-governing, such as

University College Cork (UCC). They provide degree programmes at bachelor, masters and doctorate level – QQI levels 7 to 10 on the NFQ.

The technological sector includes institutes of technology (ITs) and technological universities (TUs), such as IT Tralee (ITT) and Cork Institute of Technology (CIT), which are amalgamating to become Munster Technological University in 2021. ITs and TUs provide programmes of education and training in areas such as business, science, engineering, linguistics and music to certificate, diploma and degree levels – QQI Levels 6 to 10 on the NFQ. Undergraduate bachelor degrees are at QQI Level 7 & 8 and postgraduate degrees are at Levels 8 to 10.

The colleges of education specialise in training for primary school teachers. Training for post-primary teachers is provided by a variety of HEIs. In addition, there are colleges of education that specialise in the training of home economics teachers, teachers of religion and physical education teachers. Qualifax.ie provides detailed information on programmes for teacher training.

The CAO processes applications for undergraduate courses in HEIs. Decisions on admissions to undergraduate courses are made by the HEIs who instruct CAO to make offers to successful candidates. Applicants are successful if they meet or exceed the points requirements set by the HEI for the particular course/programme. An accumulation of points is awarded in respect of subjects completed by the students as part of the Leaving Certificate – usually by examinations but by teacher-calculated grades because of COVID-19 restrictions this year.

Access Support Services: HEIs run various support services for all students and access services for under-represented groups. Entry requirements can be modified, and specific supports can be put in place to help current and future students. Some of these services include the following.

The UCC PLUS+ programme works with post-primary schools and seeks to target students and to provide motivational and educational assistance to them throughout their secondary schooling to enhance their ability to compete for third level places. Having achieved entry to the University UCC PLUS+ enables students to participate fully in student life and reach their full potential.

The CIT Access Service aims to widen participation by increasing access and supporting positive educational outcomes for under-represented groups. The Service organises and delivers a range of pre-entry, entry and post-entry support initiatives.

The Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) is a third level alternative admissions scheme for school-leavers with disabilities

that negatively impacted upon their post-primary education. Also, the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) is a college and university scheme that offers places on reduced points and more support services to school-leavers from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds who are resident in the Republic of Ireland. For more on DARE and HEAR, see accesscollege.ie.



Mature Students: Many further/higher education and training providers reserve a small number of places for mature students, i.e., those that are at least 23 years of age on January 1 of the year you enter your course. Mature students compete for these places differently to those who are just leaving school.

Generally, a Leaving Certificate is required, but entry requirements are often not the same as for those under 23 years of age. Most education and training providers and courses consider your life experience, your work history, community involvement and other achievements and

interests. This system is known as the Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) or Recognition by Prior Learning (RPL). It is recommended to establish whether potential further/higher education and training providers of choice use this method. In a minority of cases, mature student applicants may be asked to take an entrance exam.

Mature students attending access or foundation courses that are on the Department of Education's approved list of PLC courses may be eligible for funding under the Student Grant Scheme. Mature students completing a foundation or access programme in any other HEI would not be eligible for funding, as those courses are recognised as a second-level course for the Back to Education Allowance. For options around access programmes, check with your local/Cork ETB.

For those who may consider the UK as a potential place of HE study, mature students are defined as those aged 21 or over at the start of their studies. Irish PLC qualifications and awards tend to carry a lot of weight by most UK colleges and universities and can sometimes make students eligible to enter year two or three of courses.

For those with qualifications from other European countries, QQI's NQF is officially compatible with the European Higher Education Area Qualification Framework (QF-EHEA). Recognition advice on foreign (Europe and beyond) academic qualifications in the context of the NFQ is available via naric.ie.



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people Environment : Making a difference



PERMANENT CULTURE

Allison Roberts

As we continue to explore how the Permaculture design system can contribute to the 'Cool Clon' conversation, it seems fitting to me that this month we're delving into principal number nine 'Use Small and Slow Solutions'.

In 2011, Clonakilty won a prestigious international award and was named a 'Cittaslow' destination. This slow-city award and the values it encompasses celebrate this Permaculture principle exactly. Small businesses, quality fresh food, and the enhanced quality of life that residents and visitors enjoy through a slower pace and celebration of tradition, are

Principal 9: Use Small and Slow Solutions

sometimes taken for granted in Clon. This feeling of slowing-down when you get to West Cork is why so many of us have come to visit, and is also why so many choose to stay and live here. Our market, our festivals, so many of our shops, pubs and restaurants emanate this palpable quality of slow-ness and the small-ness is why we love our high streets, we can easily walk them from end-to-end, we know shop keepers by name, can pop in to grab meat from the butcher in less than three minutes and are happy to stop and chat in the street with friends and strangers alike. So how should this appreciation of the smaller and slower things in life translate into how we continue to design our lives and towns?

The principle 'Use Small and Slow Solutions' asks us to apply this same slow ethic to our work, home, garden and equally to how we develop our towns and cities. The permaculture design system asks that we choose solutions that are often the smaller, less news-worthy, and celebrates simple design as well as adaptability, taking one small

step at a time ensures you can change course at any moment. Another advantage of working slowly is that you often can save money and other resources by using what is available, perhaps even taking the time to source free or second hand materials. Small and slow solutions tend to also to save resources by eliminating the need to replace inappropriate or inadequate solutions installed without sufficient thought or consultation.

The 10,000 tree project in Clonakilty seems to be one that started small, growing from a group of friends wanting to plant more trees around Clonakilty seven years ago, and is slowly and continuously growing with more plantings and ambitious plans each year. With such projects starting small and slowly gives community and council stakeholders time to fully understand and come on board, increasing the chances of longevity and success. The trees will also grow slowly and continue to benefit their communities for years to come.

This principal also makes me think about the national 'Love

30' campaign which focuses on asking for a simple, inexpensive solution to make roads safer for all road users, with all ages and abilities in mind, by lowering speed limits built up areas to 30km/hr. It also makes me think of the signposted cycle routes we were promised in Clonakilty at the end of 2019 but were never delivered, simple, inexpensive signs to help cyclists navigate the boreens from our town to the nearby beaches.

To continue on a transport theme, this July, a new Active Travel Stimulus Package was announced by the government to fund projects that would encourage more walking and cycling in our towns and cities – slow and small solutions to major environmental and transport problems. Unfortunately they also gave a deadline that the projects must be completed within a few months, by the end of November. This was hardly enough time to do all the consultations required to ensure the best spend of 88 million in public funds. Though some of the projects should indeed be celebrated, much of the stimulus is being



spent with no overarching plan nor design standard, such as 'greyways' a new term used to describe what sounds like repurposing hard shoulders into bike lanes simply by painting lines; something that has been shown to be both dangerous and unattractive for cyclists. This kind

of major spend with insufficient planning, strategy, consultation and testing is exactly what this principle aims to avoid.

We are in a time of reconnecting with the slow. Everything that has happened in the six months, from lockdown to present, has left us knowing that we must now accept that small and slow steps forward are the only options in the reopening of our town centres and favourite haunts. Up until March many of us were living much faster paced lives, moving in much larger circles, seeking quick fixes and the fastest possible ways to achieve everything we could each day, but this is no longer possible. We have all been asked to slow down and stay local, and this not only benefits the health of those around us and our environment, but has the potential to transform the way we navigate the world in future, offering new depths and rewards.

So this month I invite you to be inspired by the tortoise, not the hare, slow and steady is something to celebrate.

We need to protect our oceans and seas



GROUNDED

An occasional column by Grace O'Sullivan – mother, environment and peace activist, ecologist, MEP

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

As I write, on Thursday September 24, we are celebrating World Maritime Day. It's an important marker for me, particularly as Green Party Spokesperson for the Marine. The theme this year is: Sustainable Shipping for a Sustainable Planet. A laudible idea, but for some perhaps, a little abstract.

The theme got me thinking about the interconnectedness of things. Even if it's not immediately obvious, as a small island nation, anything related to the sea is relevant to us, with no part of the country being more than an hour or so from the sea at most.

Last week, in the European Parliament, we had a Plenary Week, where intense debates and votes on various important topics took place. One of the things we looked at was a report examining carbon dioxide emissions from shipping.

The statistics in this area are stark when, for example, we look at recent annual figures and see that 10,800 ships monitored around carbon dioxide emissions, emitted 130 million and tonnes of CO₂, which is more than the annual CO₂ emissions across every sector of the entire country of Belgium.

A particularly important aspect of this report is the creation of an Oceans Fund to

improve the energy efficiency of ships and support investment in innovative technologies and infrastructure to decarbonise the maritime shipping sector. Decarbonisation is about making improvements to the current health of people and the planet. The long-term implications are widely reported. Not acting will have catastrophic consequences for our future survival.

Moving away from the broader maritime traffic sector and looking at one particular area of it – fishing, earlier this week in the PECH (fisheries) European Parliament Committee, of which I'm the Greens co-ordinator, we heard from the European Commission that in recent years more sustainable fishing has also been more profitable fishing and that protecting our marine environment goes hand in hand with securing a viable future for our fishing communities.

This is good news for Irish fishing communities that face a huge challenge this year. From Dunmore East to Killybegs, to Castletownbere, the COVID-19 crisis is hitting our fishers, their families and communities, at a time when the shadow of Brexit is already threatening to disrupt the industry.

There is hope though. In Ireland this week 1.2 million was awarded to 56 local communities and enterprises, co-funded



by the Government at home and the European Union.

In total 2.7 million in Fisheries Local Area Action Group (FLAG) funding has been awarded this year alone. That's funding that helps communities to create local sustainable employment and support the direct regeneration and protection of our marine areas by helping communities with funding in areas such as marine education projects, heritage, boat restoration, projects around arts and tourism, marine waste management, marine-based holistic therapy and many, many more.

Earlier on this week, my colleague, Minister of State for Heritage & Electoral Reform, Malcolm Noonan TD, joined Karin Dubsy of Coastwatch Ireland, and representatives from Waterford and Wexford Councils and others, and looked

at an estuarine management plan for the Waterford Estuary.

Estuaries are one of the most productive ecosystems on earth. They are also particularly vulnerable to climate change and we need to all pull together to restore their qualities and build resilience. That's not just about improving the sea, the air, the ecosystems. It is about improving fish stocks. If the fish stocks continue to dwindle because of over-fishing and environmental stresses, there will be nothing left to fish. Sustainability and marine conservation is, most importantly, about creating livelihoods and quality of life for the people living in our coastal areas. But those ambitions need financial support.

When other government investment packages were announced this week, including

grants to the tune of €370,000 to the islands (Cléire, Heir Island and Sherkin Island in Cork; Inishbofin and Árainn (Inis Mór) in Galway; and Árainn Mhór in Donegal) it was further acknowledgement that if our coastal communities are to survive, there must be continued investment in roads, seawalls, slipways and coastal defences.

The further announcement of €28 million in government funding of SEAI (Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland) grants for 39 community energy projects, is more good news for coastal communities. The move to sustainable energy is hugely important when it comes to reducing Ireland's carbon emissions. That move, that transition will create warmer, healthier homes, that waste less energy, while creating clean, green jobs. The potential benefits to communities are significant and obvious, and perhaps nowhere moreso than in our hard-hit coastal fishing communities.

Our oceans and seas are great sources of wealth for Ireland. But if we are to continue to benefit from this wealth for years to come, we must ensure that we protect these delicate ecosystems and support the fishers, families and communities who rely on them for their own survival.

people Environment : Making a difference

Seaweed supports a European Destination of Excellence



ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

Fiona Hayes

In 2009 the Sheep's Head was awarded the title of European Destination of Excellence –Tourism and Protected Areas.

This competition was designed for destinations that have developed the tourism potential of their protected areas in a sustainable manner. So why is the Sheep's Head so desirable as a destination? There is no doubt that the stunning, unspoiled, mountainous scenery and rocky coastline enable beautiful walking, cycling and driving. From the coastal roads and paths one can see many species of seabird. If you venture onto the water you may see dolphins, whales and seals.

The Irish Underwater Council lists no less than ten sites of interest for snorkelling or scuba

diving in Bantry Bay. Kayaking, sailing and fishing are important tourist activities.

Bantry Bay catchment includes 20 Natural Heritage Areas, Statutory Nature Reserves, Refuges for Fauna, Wildfowl Sanctuaries, Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation.

A groundbreaking, consensus based strategy for Integrated Coastal Zone Management, known as the Bantry Bay Charter, won the prestigious National Planning Achievement Award 2002 (awarded by the Irish Planning Institute) as well as a Special Merit Award for its 'innovative participatory process' awarded by the European Council of Town Planners. The intended outcome was the establishment of informal contracting between stakeholders, to secure agreed strategies that respect sustainable development and integrated use of Bantry Bay. The Charter addressed sustainable tourism as part of a complex mix of user needs and demands of this marine and coastal area.

Many of these tourist activities, along with the marine fisheries so important to the area, are dependent on Kelp, a seaweed which represents some of the most diverse and productive habitats of the Earth.

Functioning as an 'ecosystem engineer' the canopy of the kelp forest alters light levels, water flow, physical disturbance and sedimentation rates, modifying the local environment for other organisms.

The older fronds of kelp break off, creating detritus that, along with the slimy mucus, which the kelp secretes, rich in organic compounds, directly provides the building blocks of a marine food chain.

Kelp forest habitats are vital for a number of molluscs and crustaceans, which in turn are fed upon by lobster and crabs. Indeed the Kelp Forests provide a nursery for many commercially important species including Atlantic Cod, Sea Bass and Pollack.

From the coastline you can watch as seabirds land on rafts of broken kelp fronds; and seals feed on the fish that live in the kelp forest.

A 2005 National Parks and Wildlife Service report on 'The Role of Kelp in the Marine Environment' noted that "Constant removal of kelp will never allow the macrofaunal community to re-establish itself fully and it must be accepted that the licensing of such activities effectively sacrifices that area of seabed of ever becoming a natural community again,

that is, until the activity stops permanently."

The Community Group, 'Bantry Bay – Protect Our Native Kelp Forest' have been opposing the mechanical harvesting of kelp in Bantry Bay, in and out of the courts, since the licence was first issued in 2009.

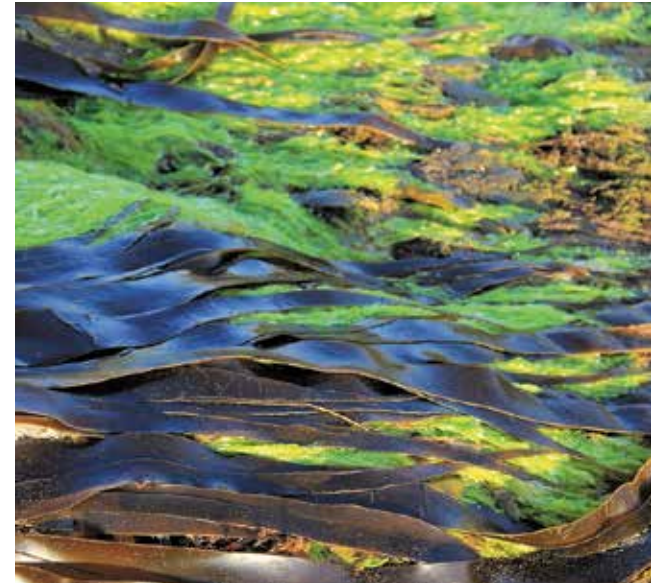
On July 10, 2020, following Judicial Review, Judge Deirdre Murphy stated that the Licence to Mechanically Extract Kelp from Bantry Bay was incomplete, as the State had not published the Minister's Decision to grant the licence.

The State legal team have lodged appeals against the judgement, as it believes that the licence is valid and complete.

Having been obliged to seek an injunction in the courts in order to stop the mechanical harvesting from being started prior to the Judicial Review, as well as returning to court for that Judicial Review, the Bantry Bay community is now raising funds to return to court on October 16 for a virtual hearing to decide whether the Case can leapfrog on to the Supreme Court. They will appeal the Judge's decision, in which she stated that they were premature in taking a Judicial Review against the awarding of the licence and thus could not be awarded costs.

"Constant removal of kelp will never allow the macrofaunal community to re-establish itself fully and it must be accepted that the licensing of such activities effectively sacrifices that area of seabed of ever becoming a natural community again, that is, until the activity stops permanently." 2005 National Parks and Wildlife Service report on The Role of Kelp in the Marine Environment.

www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/publications/pdf/IWM17.pdf



In the mean time the community are continuing fundraising. You can find them, more detail of their story and fundraising activities and events at bantrybaykelpforest.com and on Facebook @bantrynativekelp-

forest.

To virtually swim through part of the kelp forest that without this community would be 'sacrificed' from Bantry Bay, go to vimeo.com/418062943

Pandemic increases awareness of environmental issues

Following the new changes in Government Restrictions to limit the spread of Covid-19 in Ireland, iReach has surveyed adults in Ireland to determine their views on this matter and the impact that COVID-19 has had on the environment. The nationwide survey ran between September 3 and September 10 and received over 1,000 responses from adults on a nationally rep-

resentative basis by age, region and gender.

- Over one in four (27pc) agree that it is more difficult to be environmentally conscious during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 41pc agree that the COVID-19 pandemic has made them more aware of environmental issues
- 35pc agree that they have become more concerned about

environmental issues since COVID-19.

- 36pc agree they have had to prioritise other things over positive environmental actions since the COVID-19 pandemic began.
- Seven in 10 (70pc) adults have made a conscious effort to support local businesses due to the impact of COVID-19.

Commenting on the re-

search, Oisín Byrne iReach MD states "While Covid-19 is the main concern amongst adults in Ireland, attitudes to environmental issues remain important and is in fact increasing awareness of environmental issues as well as increasing concerns about such issues".

For more statistics you can visit ireachhq.com/blog

SOS 2020 fund launched

It is one full year since Brendan McCarthy, Chairperson of Save Our Skibbereen (SOS) heard from the solicitor that RTP Company had withdrawn their planning application for a Polymer Compounding Factory in Skibbereen.

After An Bord Pleanála went against the inspectors advise and upheld the planning application put in by the American Corporate, the people in and around Skibbereen raised the money and went to court to apply for a Judicial Review of that planning decision.

Subsequently, An Bord Pleanála decided not to defend their planning decision in the High Court and so the planning was quashed. The company could have re-applied but instead they withdrew their planning application.

The Campaign to stop the Polymer Compounding Company – that would have shipped tiny plastic pellets called nurdles in to Skibbereen, would have melted them down, added chemicals and heavy metals and shipped them out again – was called Save Our Skibbereen

(SOS) and the chairman of SOS, Brendan McCarthy was the plaintiff in the case. Costs were awarded by the court and so Save Our Skibbereen now has a small fund to distribute back into the community.

The directors are therefore inviting applications from Community Organisations seeking financial assistance for projects of value to the community or environment in Skibbereen and surroundings areas.

The whole Community pulled together and now the whole community have the opportunity

to reap the rewards, so if you know of a worthy project please pass this information on to them.

SOS 2020 Fund initial allocation is of €20,000, which will be distributed as grants for a minimum of €500 and a maximum of €5000 per project.

All projects should demonstrate their value to the community or environment in Skibbereen and surroundings areas.

For further details and to apply for funding please go to saveourskibbereen.ie.

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Special Feature LIFE LESS ORDINARY *Living in a pandemic*

While all of us have been affected by this pandemic, this month, in part one of a two-part series, 'LIFE LESS ORDINARY – Living with the pandemic' will focus on some of the groups most affected.

Clonakilty native **Dr Ivan Hayes**, Consultant Intensivist and Critical Care Director at CUH tells us what coronavirus intensive care is really like and gives an insight into the daily routine in a busy ICU.

Dr Brian Carey, Consultant Geriatrician at Bantry Hospital discusses some of the major issues facing older people in this pandemic.

Minding your mental health has never been so important. Anxiety levels have risen, especially in the over-60s during this pandemic, with social isolation and loneliness major risk factors that have been linked with poor physical and mental health status. We talk to older persons in West Cork about how they coped with lockdown,

the challenges and the positives, and their outlook on life.

With hospital antenatal classes cancelled for the rest of the year due to Covid-19 and women anxious for information on how to have a positive birth experience amid the pandemic. Community midwife **Elke Hasner** answers some common questions that are currently being raised by pregnant women during the pandemic.

Schools have faced huge challenges in the past few months and will no doubt face many more going forward. We talk to teachers and students at **Gaelsoil Dr. Uí Shúilleabháin** in Skibbereen and teacher Siobhán O'Sullivan at **Colaiste Pobail Bheanntrai** about some of the challenges and positives they've experienced in getting back to school and get an insight from them into life in a classroom in the Covid climate.

For this and so much more, read on...

What lies ahead?

The promise of extra beds and staff in the HSE's Winter Plan is welcome, however as numbers of Covid-19 cases rise rapidly around the country, ICUs are bracing for what is to come. With Dublin and Donegal now under Level 3 restrictions and more counties at risk, including Cork, Dr Ivan Hayes, Consultant Intensivist and Critical Care Director at CUH tells **Mary O'Brien** that the increasing numbers are "worrying". He gives an insight into the supportive care the CUH team gives to patients with coronavirus, talks about the seriousness of being admitted to ICU, and urges the public to heed Public Health advice going forward. "This is a disease that you don't want to take the risk of getting sick with: The people who end up in ICU with this virus are very, very sick," he cautions.

The government has committed to invest an additional €600 million in health services this winter. Thirty-four new beds are to be opened at Cork University Hospital (CUH) under the HSE's Winter Plan. The beds are among 483 acute beds, 89 sub-acute beds and 17 additional critical care beds, which the HSE plans to open around the country to meet the "challenging" winter ahead. The success of the plan will be determined by the recruitment of additional staff.

Dr Ivan Hayes wears two hats at CUH: critical care physician and anaesthetist. From an elective surgical point of view, he's very concerned that if we are hit with a substantial Covid wave this winter, resulting in the further postponement of hospital procedures, we'll be facing a separate health crisis to Covid. "Certainly throughout April and May a lot of surgeries had to be postponed," he explains. "The CUH cardiac programme is about 100 heart surgeries behind where we were this time last year. Patients requiring lung cancer surgery, many of whom need ICU care have been impacted also.

"If everyone adheres to the guidelines we will be in a better position heading in to the winter. There is no doubt that when people adhere to the public health guidance, this virus fizzles out, as we saw at the start of the summer."

Last winter was very busy in the Intensive Care Unit at CUH. "We had small babies coming in with bronchiolitis for about six weeks in the lead up to Christmas. We were stabilising sick babies in intensive care and transferring them to Dublin several times a week," explains Dr Hayes. "It came earlier than normal and peaked before Christmas."

Then just around Christmas flu season kicked off. "We were very busy until the end of January with flu patients. That quietened down and then within a month, coronavirus kicked off. One fear this year is that we get all three together, which is something that doesn't bear thinking about really."

According to Dr Hayes, the only plan that can be put in place to cope with this scenario is to have as much capacity as possible. "There's not enough ICU beds in the Irish system, it's about 5.2/100,000 of popula-



"There's not enough ICU beds in the Irish system, it's about 5.2/100,000 of population. That's about 40 per cent of the critical care capacity of the Italian and we saw how they were completely overwhelmed. This part of the country is particularly poorly resourced and when CUH is compared to similar hospitals in Dublin we have about half the critical care capacity of our peers." - Dr Ivan Hayes

tion. That's about 40 per cent of the critical care capacity of the Italian and we saw how they were completely overwhelmed. This part of the country is particularly poorly resourced and when CUH is compared to similar hospitals in Dublin we

have about half the critical care capacity of our peers."

Although there is funding to increase the beds in ICU, Dr Hayes says that getting skilled nurses will be key. "We're trying to train more but this doesn't

happen overnight. It's a world-wide shortage. We were very fortunate in March and April to have many ex-ICU nursing staff come back but they've since gone back to whatever field they're working in."

ICU beds are there for the sickest of patients. "If you end up in ICU with Covid infection, it's often prolonged" explains Dr Hayes, "in those who recover it can take two, four, or even six weeks."

"It's one thing to have a high number of critically unwell patients with Covid but we are really concerned about not having the appropriate staff and infrastructure to treat these patients to the highest standards; international experience has shown that as systems are overwhelmed patient outcomes deteriorate" says Dr Hayes.

"There's no magic bullet with Covid. It comes down to supportive care. Supporting failing organs when they get critically unwell."

Covid care in ICU is typically dealing with respiratory failure, low oxygen levels and what the ICU team calls increased work or difficulty in breathing. However, it's a multi-system disorder, as Dr Hayes explains. "There can be cardiac issues, and renal failure is common in sicker patients. We're still learning about it, but respiratory, cardiac and renal failure can all be factors in critically ill patients with Covid. These patients may require mechanical ventilators, dialysis machines and need very powerful infusions of noradrenaline and adrenaline to keep their blood pressure up." Most important are the staff who can manage these interventions on a minute by minute basis 24/7.

With Covid, often patients who end up in ICU will suffer mild symptoms initially, their condition typically starting to deteriorate around a week into the illness.

"Once you get very sick with Covid, it can last for weeks," says Dr Hayes.

Recovering critically ill patients can be left with extreme muscular weakness and fatigue, however as Dr Hayes points out "from our perspective anybody who ends up in ICU can take months to recover fully in terms of muscle strength."

"Most of our patients who have survived have gone on to make a very good recovery but some may be left with permanent impairment of lungs or kidneys."

"There's no magic bullet with Covid. It comes down to supportive care. Supporting failing organs when they get critically unwell."

Ventilators can be lifesaving but like other treatments there are side effects. "When describing it to families, I compare it to putting your arm in a sling," says Dr Hayes. "Three weeks later, your arm will be skin and bone. It's the same with your breathing. If someone is put on a machine like a ventilator, they lose muscle strength. They are also often very confused and delirious for a while after being taken out of medically induced coma and might struggle with very simple things like getting out of a chair for example. When a patient leaves ICU after being on a ventilator, they may have issues with wheeze, asthma or shortness of breath."

"There was a huge emphasis on ventilators very early on in this pandemic but it was never really about ventilators, it was about skilled people," emphasises Dr Hayes. He explains just how many skilled people are involved in this type of care. "Someone who's that sick needs a trained nurse at the end of the bed 24/7 in ICU. That really is the most important part. The team around them

Continued on next page...

Special Feature LIFE LESS ORDINARY *Living in a pandemic*

..Cont'd from previous page

might include physiotherapists, dieticians, speech and language therapists; a biomedical team who look after the equipment; porters. Care Assistants play a vital role in patient care as do Household and Cleaning staff. The ICU Medical team led by a Consultant Intensivist direct care but also other teams such as Infectious diseases, Respiratory, Renal, Microbiology, Radiology and others link in."

If the patient does recover there can be a long rehabilitation period where all of the aforementioned doctors and therapists have to follow up.

"It's a big set-up and inevitably when systems surge significantly beyond baseline capacity there may come a point where one qualified ICU nurse is now looking after two or even three patients. Certainly that's what happened overseas when hospitals got overwhelmed. To not get into that scenario in Spring we had to sacrifice elective cardiac surgery, which was a huge concern, as most of these cases are urgent rather than truly elective."

There is unprecedented global research into coronavirus. "A first principal in medicine is 'do no harm', " emphasises Dr Hayes. "In Cork, we would have gone with proven therapies and excellent supportive care, obviously always keeping an eye on the emerging evidence.

"Early evidence for Hydroxychloroquine did not stand up over time. There is some evidence that Dexamethasone (a steroid) may reduce illness severity. Certain immunomodulating therapies have been put forward as well as immunoglobulin infusion and 'survivor plasma'. However, as yet there is no 'silver bullet', the mainstay is about supportive care and prevention is always better than cure."

On a positive note, the National Office of Clinical Audit results for Intensive Care Units treating patients with coronavirus in Ireland have been encouraging with 83 per cent survival. "Our patients have done very well, when compared internationally," explains Dr Hayes. "This is partly due to the fact we didn't get overwhelmed and were able to give the quality of care that we usually give. When the system is overwhelmed, the ability to provide that level of care is diluted."

Three of Dr Hayes' colleagues at CUH were cared for in ICU. "It was a shock looking after staff members at various points, in particular Dr Owen O'Flynn, as the week before he was doing the ward rounds with us. Thankfully they all survived



Artwork by a family member of a PT in Covid ICU

and are recovering well. Owen has played a huge role in getting his message out through the media that this illness can seriously affect young fit people."

On a positive note, the National Office of Clinical Audit results for Intensive Care Units treating patients with coronavirus in Ireland have been encouraging with 83 per cent survival. "Our patients have done very well, when compared internationally," explains Dr Hayes.

There were other challenges too. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) made communication difficult at times and was uncomfortable and hot to work in. "Voices are muffled under masks, goggles fog up during procedures. Nurses often spent more prolonged periods in PPE than us, so it was most uncomfortable for them," says Dr Hayes. "Removing or 'doffing' the PPE is when the risk of contamination is highest, so you try to limit that risk by wearing it for longer."

It was also difficult not being able to communicate face-to-face with the families of patients. "Families of patients weren't allowed into ICU so we were often having very difficult conversations over the phone with people we never really got to meet," explains Dr Hayes. That was a challenge. As patients recovered, the team set up video links so families could see their relatives and talk to them. "It was strange, as normally you'd have families at the bedsides everyday."

On a positive note, everyone in the hospital really pulled together during this period. "I got to know colleagues that I would have had no interaction with previously," says Dr Hayes. "And for a period of about two weeks, you could look to get something done in the hospital...and it actually happened!" he says smiling.

"We went from years of lobbying to upgrade our 17-year-old ventilators to suddenly being told to go get them. But of course you couldn't get them because the whole world was looking for them. Some of the equipment we ordered in early March is still arriving now."

Although the summer gave hospital staff a chance to catch up with normal procedures, life has definitely not returned to normal at CUH.

"We've always had an eye on the autumn and a fear that Covid would come back in another wave. Our system is already strained so unless there's an effective vaccine, that fear will remain," says Dr Hayes.

We need to continue to take whatever precautions are necessary to reduce the risk of transmission – simple stuff like maintaining your distance, washing your hands and wearing a mask when social distance can't be maintained. While we are hopeful that there will be less flu cases this winter due to the precautions we're taking with Covid, anyone who is vulnerable should take extra precautions and if you are eligible for the flu shot then get it. Look after your physical and mental health and make yourself as resilient as possible."

Dr Ivan Hayes lives in Clonakilty with his wife Carmel and three young children. He recently took part in the ICU4U charity cycle, which raised over €100,000 for four charities: Alone, Aware, Breakthrough Cancer Research and ICU steps. Donate at www.ICU4u.ie

Pneumococcal disease is vaccine preventable

Approximately 60,000 people turn 65 in Ireland in 2020 and will be eligible to get the pneumococcal vaccine for free as part of the national immunisation programme to protect them from pneumococcal disease.

New research released last month has revealed that four out of five (79pc) of people in Ireland claim to know very little about Pneumococcal Disease, a disease which more than 500,000 people aged 65 and older, are at risk of contracting in Ireland. The survey also revealed only four per cent said they knew a lot about Pneumococcal disease while 17 per cent claimed they knew a little.

The research, carried out by Behaviour and Attitudes on behalf of MSD, examined awareness and perceptions of Pneumococcal Disease. Invasive Pneumococcal disease, or Pneumo as it is also known, is a major cause of illness and death in Ireland, particularly among the very young, those over the age of 65 and those with a weakened immune system. A pneumococcal infection can cause many types of illness that range from mild to very severe.

The Pneumococcal vaccine is free of charge as part of the National Immunisation Programme for the over 65s and identified at risk groups, such as people with diabetes, heart disease or respiratory conditions and patients receiving chemotherapy. Of those who develop an invasive Pneumococcal infection, one in four will get pneumonia, one in four will get meningitis and one in 10 will die. Pneumococcal infection is also a major cause of pneumonia in communities throughout Ireland.

Ahead of the traditional winter vaccination season, the survey revealed a lack of awareness around the National Pneumococcal (PPV23) Immunisation Programme.

Dr Maitiu O Tuathail: "This year more than ever, it is so important to be up to date with vaccination. Doctors play an important role in a person's decision to vaccinate. Pneumococcal disease can be prevented by vaccination. Talk to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist to find out more about Pneumococcal disease and how you can prevent it."

#KnowPneumo


The #KnowPneumo campaign aims to raise awareness about pneumococcal disease and its

potential to cause serious illness.

A number of patient organisations have joined forces as part of the initiative, namely Age Action, Diabetes Ireland, the Asthma Society of Ireland and

Croi.

To find out more about the campaign, check out www.pneumo.ie or follow #KnowPneumo online.




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Included in the sample packs are the contact details of **Mary Kelly, Certified Esthetician** who offers phone support if anyone would like to ask about specific conditions.

Special Feature LIFE LESS ORDINARY *Living in a pandemic*

Bantry doctor emphasises the importance of re-opening respite and daycare centres for older persons

This year marks the 30th anniversary of International Day of Older Persons. As we celebrate it this week on Thursday, October 1, let us remember how difficult a year 2020 has been for the older persons in our society. The Covid-19 pandemic has caused unprecedented fear and anxiety, as well as loneliness and social isolation for so many. In mid March when the Government directed people aged 70 and over to stay indoors, curtail social visits from friends and family, and halt outdoor exercise, it had a huge effect on people's everyday routine and quality of life. There has since been a call for the 'voice' of older people to be heard.

Consultant Geriatrician at Bantry General Hospital and Acute Stroke Clinical Lead, Dr Brian Carey strongly believes that we should be empowering older persons to make decisions for themselves. "Older people are no different to people of any other age," he stresses "they have the right to self-determination and I think once they're properly advised about the risks involved and the protective mechanisms, they're well able to judge for themselves and make up their own minds.

"I, and a number of my colleagues, would have had an issue with the advice that was given initially on the blanket lockdown for people over 70."

At the beginning of lockdown, many of the services that older persons in our community rely upon, simply shut overnight; respite, day care centres, even home help disappeared.

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland has expressed concern

that the health impact on people living with dementia and family carers is not being adequately considered in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Dr Carey is also concerned. "We are seeing a lot of stress and depression, particularly in carers," he says. "Most carers are older themselves and have had difficulty coping because of the lack of access to those services. The loss of routine when having to self-isolate is very disruptive for people with dementia, which of course has a big impact on carers too."

Dr Carey says the loss of day care centre and respite services is a huge blow to older persons. He emphasises again how huge the strain has been on carers. "They are suffering psychologically, emotionally and even physically in some cases.

He is calling for national guidance in relation to the opening of respite and daycare centres. "I believe it needs to happen quickly," he stresses. "I

think it's doable with appropriate funding and precautions but a lot of people are in limbo at the moment.

"Home help coordinators are doing their level best to put home help and support services in place for people who have not been able to access them due to Covid but this is falling short. However we would be in a much worse position except for their efforts."

Dr Carey is also worried about the longterm psychological effects of the pandemic. "One of the worst things I've seen – and it's something that people will carry with them for the rest of their lives – is people dying in acute hospitals without access to family members and limited funerals and so on."

"I don't think we will really know the good we've done and the harm we've done for a few years," he says. "It's only on looking back that we'll be able to say what we got right and wrong.

"One thing I think we can say



Consultant Geriatrician at Bantry General Hospital and Acute Stroke Clinical Lead, Dr Brian Carey

for sure that the HSE got wrong was the protection of older people in residential care. At the time, acute hospitals were being concentrated on, whereas more attention needed to be given to residential care. We know that now in retrospect."

As a result of cocooning, older people have also been getting less exercise. "Like all ages, some older people are terrified by the prospect of catching Covid, but the benefits

of exercise, particularly in older people, are huge in maintaining mobility, heart and brain health," advises Dr Carey.

"I really think people need to get out and about as much as possible because physical activity is so important," he says. "While social activity is of course difficult if you are self-isolating, within the guidelines and boundaries, I would encourage people to get out and meet people, help people and

think about your neighbours."

All of the services are now up and running at Bantry General Hospital. "Everything does take longer in the hospital because of the need to ensure that every precaution is taken for social distancing and so on," explains Dr Carey "but everything is operational, including the Stroke and Rehabilitation Unit.

"West Cork and Bantry Hospital in general has been lucky so far with the amount of Covid-19 we've had to deal with," he says. There have been a total of three confirmed cases in Bantry General Hospital, with the last one back in April. A Covid and non-Covid pathway has been put in place into the hospital.

Dr Carey would encourage everybody to get the flu vaccine and pneumonia vaccine if they haven't had it already. "Especially if you're an older person or living with an older person."

"There is the hope that the flu season won't be as busy as other years because of social distancing and isolating," he says "but we still need to take all the necessary precautions."

Overall the community response to this pandemic has been fantastic. "It has been one of the real positives out of all this," says Dr Carey. "I saw so many older people confined in their homes being helped by neighbours. There is a real spirit of being in this together and I do hope that continues."

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Positive ageing online for Cork County

Cork County Council has launched a programme of creative, cultural and wellbeing tutorials and videos 'Turning Over a New Leaf' on its YouTube Channel. The 'Turning Over a New Leaf' programme was developed by the Council's Culture Team working alongside its Age Friendly and Healthy Ireland Officers and has been tailored for elderly audiences and is aimed at promoting healthy and positive aging. The programme is funded by Creative Ireland under the Positive Ageing and Creative Wellbeing Challenge Fund.

Videos are available now on Cork County Council's YouTube Channel under the Creative Ireland Playlist, with

more videos in production that will be shared throughout November. The videos explore arts, music, history, the literary traditions of many places and will also examine popular sites to visit, particularly age friendly locations.

Mayor of the County of Cork Cllr. Mary Linehan Foley welcomed the initiative saying "While we adhere to restrictions in terms of what we can do due to Covid-19, we are never restricted in what we can learn and engage in. The tutorials and videos available through Turning Over a New Leaf are a great reminder of the wonders of culture available to us."

Chief Executive Tim Lucey added "We have seen incred-

ible resilience throughout the County and across all age groups in response to the current Covid 19 situation. Cork County Council is proud to support elderly people by

providing new and innovative ways to keep active and to connect with our invaluable cultural resources."



Special Feature LIFE LESS ORDINARY *Living in a pandemic*

Life isn't the same without music sessions

Most days, seventy-five-year-old Peter Carney, Skibbereen, hums a happy tune. The energetic musician, who always tries to look on the positive side of life and finds it difficult to keep still, has taken lockdown and the pandemic in his stride. One thing he really does miss however is his weekly music session with participants from CoAction. "It's very frustrating," he says "especially when so many people got so much enjoyment out of those sessions."

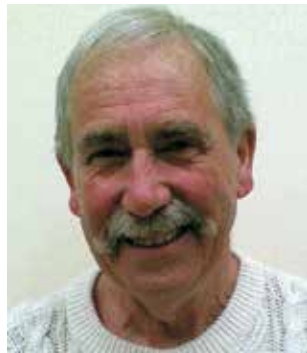
Peter started volunteering at CoAction in 2015. "They told me about this chap living in a retirement village; 60-years-old, blind since birth, who loves music and plays the harmonica. I was asked to collect him each week and bring him to the music session at CoAction," explains Peter. "That's how it started and for the past four years up until last March, every Wednesday afternoon, from 2-3pm, that music session with all the boys and girls of CoAction was the highlight of my week."

Peter grew up in an Irish community in west Ealing, London. After learning to play guitar as a teenager in school, he formed a band with his cousin and they

recruited a drummer, who went on to become known as John 'Speedy' Keen, best recognised for his association with the rock band Thunderclap Newman. He wrote 'Something in the Air' (1969) for the band, which reached No. 1 in the UK Singles Chart.

After school, Peter joined a band called The London Beats and toured Poland for three months. "Something got lost in translation and the Poles advertised us as The Beatles," says Peter laughing. "We played to crowds of 18,000 people!"

Peter went on to join Geno Washington and the Ram Jam Band, an internationally successful soul band in the 1960s. "If you search us on youtube,



I'm the good-looking 21-year-old bass player," he says lightheartedly.

Peter spent three years with the Ram Jam Band, but after getting married and having two children, he decided to pack in his music career to settle down and spend more time with his family. "I thought, I can't do this anymore, so I came home and got a proper job!" he says. Peter became a milkman and then a mini cab driver. "Anything that wasn't too ordinary," he explains. In 1974, the family immigrated to Australia, where Peter found work in construction and later with the Department of Social Services. After retiring at the age of 65, he relocated



(l-r): John McVie of 'Fleetwood Mac', John Carney, John 'Speedy' Keen of 'Thunderclap Newman', and Mike Holmes (John Carney's cousin).

to Ireland with his wife. "My wife has relatives in West Cork, which is why we settled here," he explains.

As well as volunteering with CoAction, Peter became very involved with the Open Door drop-in monthly music sessions at Skibbereen's 49 North Street, a hub that promotes creativity and wellbeing.

He also went on to tour with

the Claddagh Rogues, a band that was instrumental in helping the singer James O'Flynn turn his life around.

On October 16, Peter is hoping to do a live community broadcast with other musicians from 49 North Street, as part of this year's West Cork Feelgood Festival.

"You don't have to be musical to enjoy the music," says Peter.

"Your voice is your instrument so tune in and sing-a-long."

Life just isn't the same without music in it. "What do I do now without the sessions? I phone my mates, discuss music and then you just turn on Netflix don't you," he says.

"The worrying thing is that I'm coming to the end of my chores in the house," he says laughing.

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Special Feature LIFE LESS ORDINARY *Living in a pandemic*

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Email leonardpharrington@gmail.com

Socially distanced aquacise is back at Clonakilty Park Leisure

Clonakilty Park Leisure users that know instructor James Deasy, will understand just how excited he is to be able to welcome people back to his socially distant aquacise class. "I have missed everybody so much during this strange time," he says.

James' famed classes, which take place on Tuesdays at 11am and Thursdays at 10am, are back, "but socially distanced doesn't have to mean no fun!" he promises.



Participants range from aged 18 to 80+ and you don't even need to be able to swim to join in. Those who have taken part

in the class report big improvements in their energy levels and mobility but also their mental health. "Humans are social creatures and being separated doesn't come naturally to us," James notes. "This is a perfect opportunity to enjoy some exercise in a safe setting. All the research shows that even a small bit of regular exercise, particularly in a group, improves not only our fitness but our immune systems."

To protect participants class

groups are now smaller, the pool and the air are chlorine saturated, and pool exit times are staggered to minimise the number of people meeting in the changing rooms.

So, if you are looking for an activity, some exercise, rehab, some great people to socialise with and a whole lot of fun, get to the Clonakilty Park Leisure Club. Please note that advance booking is essential on 023-8834387.

A gentle complementary medicine



Geraldine Fleming HOMEOPATH LIC I.S.H.

A safe, gentle and effective form of complementary medicine. Suitable for all ages and useful in the treatment of many conditions from acute to chronic complaints.

Appointments 086-6773288

Consultations available over Zoom.

"Homeopathy is a safe, gentle and effective form of complementary medicine, Ger explains. "It is suitable for all ages and stages of life, from pregnancy through childbirth, for infants, children and teens to adulthood. It is useful in the treatment of so many conditions from acute to chronic complaints, both physical and emotional."

Ger Fleming is a registered homeopath in Clonakilty. Having just returned from maternity leave, Ger is now offering online zoom appointments.

"I first discovered homeopathy over 15 years ago and was really amazed at how it worked on and improved my health. Now, a husband, three children and a vast array of pets later, I have come to rely on homeo-

pathic remedies and use them whenever necessary on the whole family."

So what is homeopathy and how can it help? Ger explains the principles behind it: "Homeopathy is a medical science based on the principle 'like cures like'. Put simply, any substance that can produce symptoms in a healthy person can also cure similar symptoms in a person who is sick."

"For example: When you peel an onion, it makes your eyes water and often your nose burn. If you are experiencing hayfever symptoms like watering eyes and a burning nose, then a homeopathic remedy

made from onion can relieve it.

"Homeopathy also works on the principle of the 'minimum dose' in that you give the least amount of medicine necessary in order to achieve a healing response."

If you would like more information on homeopathy, or to book an appointment, feel free to call/text Ger on 086 6773288 or email: ardnacarrig@hotmail.com.

Initial consultations generally last approximately 60-90 mins (fee €70), while follow up appointments (fee €50) are approx 30-45 minutes long.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Stay and Spend scheme

Question: I have booked a hotel break in Kerry in October. What is the new Stay and Spend scheme and how does it work?

The new Stay and Spend scheme allows you to claim tax back on accommodation, food and non-alcoholic drink (known as qualifying expenditure) bought between October 1, 2020 and April 30, 2021.

You can check if a business is participating in the scheme by looking out for the 'Stay & Spend Tax Credit' logo or you can check Revenue's list of qualifying service providers at revenue.ie.

Under the terms of the incentive:

- You must spend a minimum of €25 in a single transaction on qualifying expenditure and submit the receipt to Revenue
- You can submit receipts up to a total of €625, or €1,250 for a jointly-assessed married couple
- Revenue will provide an income tax credit of up to €125 per person, or up to €250 for a jointly-assessed married couple

You can claim expenses on:

- Fáilte Ireland registered accommodation, including hotels, guest houses, B&Bs, self-catering, caravan parks, camping parks and holiday camps.
 - Food and non-alcoholic drink – served in a café, restaurant, hotel or pub.
- You cannot claim expenses

on takeaway food, alcoholic drinks, drinks (either alcoholic or non-alcoholic) served without food or amounts below €25.

You do not need to be on a 'staycation' to avail of the scheme. You can also claim for expenses you paid in your local area if they meet the definition of qualifying expenditure.

You must have receipts to prove your claim for Stay and Spend expenses.

You can make your claim in two stages:

1. Submit your receipts to Revenue using the Revenue Receipts Tracker mobile app or using the receipts tracker service in Revenue's myAccount
2. Make an electronic claim for Stay and Spend tax credit through your Income tax return – Form 12 in myAccount (if you are a PAYE

taxpayer) or Form 11 in ROS (if you are self-employed).

Read more about the Stay and Spend Tax Credit on citizensinformation.ie

During the COVID-19 pandemic, you can find comprehensive integrated information online at citizensinformation.ie/covid19/ and you can get daily updates on what's changed on Twitter at [@citizensinfo](https://twitter.com/citizensinfo).

Know Your Rights has been compiled by Citizens Information West Cork which provides a free and confidential service to the public.

WEST CORK HELPLINE
0761 078 390

Email Bantry.cic@citinfo.ie
Information is also available online at citizensinformation.ie

Citizens
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www.gov.ie | www.hse.ie

Special Feature LIFE LESS ORDINARY *Living in a pandemic*

Home is wherever Kay lays her hat

Retired female Covid refugee Kay Raffell, 67, usually lives in New Zealand but this summer found herself travelling around Ireland on her bicycle. When her bike broke down, Kay found herself stranded in Clonakilty but because of the kindness of strangers, she was very well looked after and soon on her way again.



“I cannot thank the team at The Bike Circus in Clonakilty enough for the help, hospitality and good company they offered to a stranger... one of the joys of the cycling community,” she says. “Spending time at the workshop over a few days, I was able to see what a great community resource the team have developed. People of all ages were calling in for advice or to work on their bikes using the stands

and tools available for the modest yearly subscription. It was good to see quite a few new people joining up.

“Over a few days Graham, supported by Jack, rebuilt my wheel; and Jack kindly hosted me at his home and then set me safely on my way again.”

Kay’s journey began last year when she left NZ for the UK where she was to start her trip in a new motorhome. “My parents

live in England so the idea was to visit them and travel around the UK and Ireland in the motorhome,” she explains.

When the motorhome plan didn’t work out, as someone who doesn’t give up easily, the retired speech therapist and psychotherapist simply got on her bike.

After taking the ferry to Spain at the end of January, she cycled down through Spain

and Portugal before getting locked down in the Algarve in March. A member of the Helpx community (a cultural exchange for working holiday makers) in return for gardening, Kay was able to accommodate in an empty holiday apartment with a pool for five weeks. “I was incredibly fortunate,” she says.

Once the border opened up between Portugal and Spain on July 1, Kay got back on her bike and cycled into Spain. She got on the ferry to Rosslare in mid July and found a Helpx member in Co Waterford who was willing to quarantine her. “He was an elderly gentleman with a heart condition but he evaluated the risk and decided he was ok with it,” explains Kay. “It’s like any other risk in life. Everything is possible, but how probable is it? I’ve always found that looking at life with this attitude is a great way of reducing anxiety.”

After completing her two-week quarantine, Kay started cycling along the south coast and Wild Atlantic Way.

“I have quite a fatalistic approach to life and death.

My attitude is if it’s going to happen, it’s going to happen,” says Kay.

“I’m not one to get frightened. Life is life, death is death.”

She quotes “Everything alive has been born and everything alive will die and in between is living.”

“Life is about living as fully as you can, as you never know if you’re going to be here

tomorrow,” she stresses.

Kay’s plan was to make her way up to Donegal, down to Dublin, across to Holyhead and down to Wales. She is still hoping to be able to pick up the motorhome on November 1 and continue travelling.

“I am a home-loving body but the thing is I make home wherever I am,” she says matter-of-factly.

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AUTUMN 2020 AEROBICS TIMETABLE

MON

SPINNING
7.00am – 8.00am

KETTLEBELLS
10.00am – 11.00am

TEEN FITNESS
5.00pm – 6.00pm

FAT ATTACK CIRCUIT
6.30pm – 7.30pm

SPINNING
7.00pm – 8.00pm

TUE

STEP AEROBICS
9.30am – 10.30am

CORK CITY BALLET
(087 7851225)
3.15pm – 8.00pm

FAT ATTACK CIRCUIT
6.30pm – 7.30pm

WED

SPINNING
7.00am – 8.00am

KETTLEBELL CIRCUITS
10.00am – 11.00am

SPINNING
7.00pm – 8.00pm

THUR

CIRCUITS
7.00pm – 8.00pm

FRI

SPINNING
7.00am – 8.00am

CIRCUIT
10.00am – 11.00am

TEEN FITNESS
4.30pm – 5.30pm

HIIT
7.00pm – 8.00pm

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Special Feature LIFE LESS ORDINARY *Living in a pandemic*

WALKING IN MY SHOES

Elizabeth Walsh

Elizabeth Walsh is a founding member of Clonakilty Access Group and current Chair. She fosters the idea that there is a whole range of business opportunities being lost as a result of lack of accessibility; people with disabilities, their friends and family, will give patronage where they can access. Out of this 'Clonakilty' was born, an initiative between Clonakilty Access Group and Clonakilty Chamber of Commerce, whereby, simple steps are laid out to enhance business opportunity through providing access to customers/visitors, encouraging tourism.

Time to find that rainbow

Each and every day our lives impact on each person's life whose path we cross, metaphorically and physically, positively or negatively!

Wow, the landscape of our lives has altered in such an unimaginably short period of time. Our vision of day to day living has required a channel change! In some areas, life has become more challenging however, in others, there are rainbows to be found, gleaming bright in the sunshine.

Back in March, the whole country were 'all in this together'. No one was being left behind. The overwhelming surge of goodwill and altruism simply engulfed the whole of Ireland like warm balmy sunshine, reaching everyone, even

in the most remote of areas, no one was forgotten.

So, what changed? Life became more challenging – for everyone! The fact that we may be tiring of COVID-19 and the restrictions it imposes on our lives, does not make it disappear in a puff of smoke. Perhaps some people in society forgot that they are not immune to COVID-19 and not immune to carrying it, they appear to have refused or forgotten to continue to adhere to guidelines. Who is paying and will pay the price for their actions? Those who are vulnerable, those with disabilities whose health is compromised who may not be in a position to re-enter society while the threat of

COVID-19 lurks and older people compromised by ill health.

Walk in the shoes of people with disabilities! You can continue to demonstrate your solidarity, altruism, care and commitment by adhering to public health advice, for your own health, for your family's health, for the health of your community, including those people living with the challenge which disability brings and those with compromised immune systems.

When you look back on 2020, what will you remember – the lives you supported and assisted or those that perhaps your actions may have damaged, irreparably... 2020 will be a memory either way. Keep safe.

Daniel o'Donnell performs his first ever live-streamed concert

He's back! Daniel O'Donnell will perform his first-ever live streamed show from the Millennium Forum Theatre in Derry on Sunday, November 1 at 7pm (Irish time). Daniel will be joined on stage by his band, who have sadly been out of action since the pandemic hit in March.

No matter where you are in the world, this concert is for all of Daniel's loyal fans, who will be able to tune in from all over the globe, in the safety and comfort of their own home, to see Daniel perform a two-hour set of his best loved hits as well as a selection of tracks from his brand new album 'Daniel', released October 16.

This live-streamed event will

give Daniel an opportunity to re-connect with his many fans worldwide after a long absence due to Covid-19. It will also bring in some much-needed income for his dedicated band and crew who have not toured this year due to the pandemic.

Meanwhile, ticket reservations to watch the concert online will be available to purchase for €20 in advance. Check www.danielodonnell.org for details on how to book. Organisers are advising early booking online to avoid disappointment so don't leave it until the evening of the live stream!

The brand-new album 'Daniel' featuring 13 tracks of new recordings is released October 16.

Living our best life safely

Many older people are feeling isolated and dismissed right now due to the higher percentage of Covid-19 infections and fatalities amongst the oldest members of our population. And the statistics do draw a clear picture – if you have underlying conditions, you're more likely to get seriously ill from the virus. However, if you don't have any pre-existing conditions, you are not in the high-risk group due to your age alone.

Whether you're in the high-risk group or not, precaution and vigilance are two good traits to display now, especially with the winter season arriving, and this is true for everybody, regardless of age. Below I will outline and repeat the WHO (World Health Organisation) recommendations at the end of this month's column, I will supplement with my personal observations, along with some advice from the Danish Government.

Before I go any further, I need to make a disclaimer, that I am in no way a medical authority, and the observations I make herein are personal or derived from other sources. They do not guarantee you staying safe from Covid-19. But I hope, by reading on, you will feel that you have more tools to navigate life in this current situation.

Official WHO Guidelines:

WHO is recommending the use of face masks (covering of nose and mouth) in situations where people are gathered in closed of spaces like public transport and shops. Masks should be worn so they cover BOTH nose and mouth, as this is the most common places for infections. Try

not to touch the mask, but use only the ear-loops when you're handling it. If you use fabric masks, they should be washed after every use.

Masks protect the people around you foremost and yourself to a lesser degree. However if we all wear masks when we are in closed spaces or places with a lot of people standing close to each other, we protect each other and minimise the risk of spread considerably.

Social Distancing is also recommended by WHO, and is the reason why most shops have markings on the floor, to show where to stand in line, where to walk in/out etc. Normal breathing and talking (with masks) makes this distance safe for aerosols (the little droplets of spit that leave with our breath, when we breathe or talk).

Handwashing – the third of the official recommendations came, as it was discovered the virus could survive on surfaces for a longer period, and get transferred from person to person via touching the same surface (and subsequently touching our face). By washing hands thoroughly and often we minimise chance of infection. In my home, everybody, from the toddler to the adults, wash their hands after entering the front door, no matter where we have been.

Personal Observations:

Going out: Just as you will bring your keys and phone, remember now to 'bring a mask', so you have it with you if you end up shopping or stopping by a place with more people. As a mom, I always carry extra tissues, now I'm also stocking up with extra masks and gel.



DIY FITNESS

Tania Presutti

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

If you are in the risk group, try – if possible – to do your shopping in the less busy hours of the day. You can always ask your preferred shop when their least busy times are and plan accordingly. You can also choose to have your groceries delivered. Many shops offer online shopping and home delivery. Alternatively ask friends or family to help with shopping. Many people would love to help, and several cities and towns have organised volunteers to help as well. Reach out and ask if shopping is one of the things that is hard to do.

As for medical attention, doctor's appointments, pharmacy trips and optician visits, call and let them know you are in a high-risk group. Ask to get your appointment scheduled at the first in the morning, or first

after lunch, so you avoid sitting in the waiting room with other people. If you are picking stuff up from the pharmacy and are unsure about the safety, call and ask for their least busy times, or ask if they can deliver. And always remember to use your mask.

Last practical observations:

Keep your social circle small. (This is also an official recommendation from the Danish government). The more people we surround ourselves with, the higher is the risk of infection. If you have a handful of people you see regularly, speak with them, and see if your attitude to the pandemic aligns. If you're both being careful, and both keep small social circles, chance of infection will be lower than meeting regularly with someone who doesn't adhere to the guidelines and keeps a big social circle. It is of course impossible to be 100 per cent risk free, because everyone we come into contact with, has been in contact with other people. However, meeting outside for walks, or a coffee on the bench with a proper distance, is a good way to keep your social life going. As the weather gets worse and outdoor meetings will be more difficult, if/when moving indoors, think about: Proper distance to your friend. Cancel the meeting if you feel the least bit sick, have a cough or runny nose coming on – you can also ask this of your friends (better to be safe than sorry). Air out the room before and after the visit (and preferably during if it's not too cold). Disinfect the seating area afterwards – we touch more things than we are aware of.

As for your health, remember both your physical and mental health. Just as with the normal flu, you want to be as healthy as possible; a healthy person often gets less sick, than a person who's immune system is already compromised. (But as you know, there are no guarantees with Covid-19).

However a good health, including mental health, is essential to a good life. The lockdown took a toll on a lot of people, who lost their ways of exercise and daily contact with their social circles. This had an impact on the overall health and quality of life, which many felt as a depressing loss.

So it's important to actively commit to keeping yourself healthy; Physically and mentally.

How to do that? One way could be to find a friend who will commit to do a longer walk with you one to three times a week. This solution will also work on both objectives. You get exercise several times a week and your mental health will improve due to spending time with a friend.

Another option is to find an activity you like doing, and commit to do this one to three times a week, sun, rain or wind. As you grow accustomed to it, you can either enjoy getting better/ more confident with it, or you can switch up the intensity or duration.

As for joining gyms or clubs – right now, especially coming into the winter – might not be the best time. However if you do wish to pursue some kind of group activity (and I completely understand if you do), use your common sense. Are the classes kept extra small and spaced

out? Is the room is aired out and equipment disinfected between classes? Does the place have air-conditioning (how is the filter)? Are outdoor classes possible? Are outdoor classes possible? Ask before joining, and don't feel bad for backing out if you decide you'd rather train at home. Your health is your first priority and the thing that will carry you through the season we're about to enter.

As for your mental health, there are so many supports out there – including West Cork People's own mindfulness coach – to look into. My most important observation for this area will be to not succumb to fear and anxiety. Be vigilant and take precaution but don't let the virus cripple your life. We can do this by actively working with our thought patterns. If you're prone to worries and often spend a lot of time being anxious, you will almost be certain to focus in on every little detail that supports this pattern. However, if you stop yourself from thinking these thoughts and instead re-direct them to think, for example how you can solve going shopping on a Saturday and avoid the crowds, you'll start to think in solutions and opportunities.

Also most importantly, make sure to remember to spend time with loved ones. Friends and family (and pets). They are the ones who can help us live our best life.

Comments, questions and suggestions are as always welcome at:

taniaskitchenfitness@gmail.com

Special Feature LIFE LESS ORDINARY *Living in a pandemic*

Life is for living

Mary Grover turned 80 in February. “I wanted to go somewhere hot to celebrate it with my husband but of course that didn’t happen,” she shrugs pragmatically.

Mary, a retired counsellor and psychotherapist and her husband John, a retired builder, live in Skibbereen where they run a busy AirBnB on their property.

Last Christmas, Mary was diagnosed with chronic obstructive airways disease; breathlessness and exhaustion are two of the main symptoms.

“Early on I realised that I was high risk and if I got this virus, the chances are that I would

probably die from it,” she says.

As difficult as it is to live with a lung condition at her age (even vacuuming takes huge effort), Mary refuses to let her condition stop her living life to the full. The location of the couple’s AirBnB, up a steep slope behind their home, means that the regular changeover of guests can be quiet exhausting, particularly for Mary; the couple do everything themselves – cleaning, disinfecting and changing of beds in the BnB.

John is about to turn 77. “He’s my toy boy,” says Mary laughing. “He’s very active, always likes to keep busy.

“I think some people believe we have been foolhardy but we’re very careful,” says Mary, as she explains that financially the couple needed to keep the

BnB open over the summer.

After such a busy season, they recently escaped away to Galway for a weeklong break.

Although she is missing her monthly Amnesty meetings, book club and water aerobics, Mary says she’s lucky that she likes her own company; “most of my hobbies are solitary outings but I did miss having friends around for dinner during lockdown.”

“Underneath it all, I think I am anxious,” she says. “But I have more of an appreciation of what’s important and the things that make life worth living, every day.”

In the article below, Mary talks about some of the difficulties facing her generation in the current pandemic and ways of coping.



Mary with her husband John.

‘It is in the shelter of each other that the people live’...or is it?

Each generation has had to face the difficulties that Covid-19 has deposited upon us. But today I am concentrating on our generation says retired psychotherapist **Mary Grover** – the ‘oldies’ the retired; the over 65s or 67s depending when you got your pension. Can we cope? Yes, we can.

At 80, I had thought that, once retired from work and raising a family, life should have become easier. But many of us are limited in activity, or illness. We have not the vigour we once had and took for granted, never thinking it would run out. We are tired a lot of the time. We do less. We let things go – and there is relief in that... We don’t cope with change as well as we used to. We develop routines and habits, which give a sense of security and can feel disturbed if they are. Old age is not all it is cracked up to be!

And along comes Covid-19. If one has a job, has to earn a living, pay a mortgage or rent, rear children, one’s time is consumed in coping with life present and future, and overcoming the obstacles created by Covid.

If one has no work, but enough security of a home and basic needs, one is left with

time to spare and this is when depressing gloomy thoughts enter. Our moods fluctuate. I can be phlegmatic with regard to my own fate if I develop Covid, but when I consider that my sons and daughter are in their fifties, so also at risk, I feel a sense of panic. One moment angry at nothing, the next moment wondering what that was about. One moment more tolerant towards others, the next, less so. One moment anxious and even a little paranoid, the next dismissive of the risk. The internal seesaw is not in equilibrium. Our worries become enlarged, we have time to feel abandoned, lonely; time to twiddle our thumbs. Again, the question – how do we get through this grim period in the life of the entire world?

The Irish are such a gregarious nation, in the main. We are generous, giving and helpful. Heaven forbid that the goodness of these qualities should vanish but sometimes they come at the price of not valuing oneself sufficiently. We forget that we are the most important person in our lives. This has nothing to do with pride. We can be too self-deprecating.

For those who practice a strong faith, it is in fact on the first page of the Catechism. ‘God made you in His own image’.

We can be too dependent on others. Social interaction and close involvement are important but we have to find ways to cope when we cannot attend church, not go to bingo,

not meet in groups; when the neighbours can’t call in, nor us to them, the pubs are shut, the small kindnesses of the early novelty of the shut-down have stopped.

We can be too dependent on others. Social interaction and close involvement are important but we have to find ways to cope when we cannot attend church, not go to bingo, not meet in groups; when the neighbours can’t call in, nor us to them, the pubs are shut, the small kindnesses of the early novelty of the shut-down have stopped.

What are these ways? The first is to recognise that we have an opportunity, many opportunities, to develop ourselves in all sorts of ways. While we are still alive and compos mentis we can go on learning and discovering without the need for other people around.

Many have commented on the keener appreciation of

nature since the lockdown. We can go for walks and see how many flowers, shrubs, trees we can name – or not name but want to find out – which ones please us most, and which least. We can sharpen up our senses.

We can write down family history and the family tree for the future generation. It doesn’t have to be perfect – your own words and memories are what really will count.

We can write the story of our lives – holidays, school, first job and so on; not for the family, but to remind ourselves of the past.

We can learn to use our new smart phone and/or computer better.

Pick up a tin-whistle or any musical instrument going unused. Play around with the keys.

Did we enjoy any hobbies as a child? Try and remember what we used to get pleasure from – wood whittling, knitting, crochet, taking apart old radios, making scrap books, model making. Buy a kit and have a go!

Books! Can you contact the library by phone? Ask for uplifting, light books if you need to get out of yourself? Ask friends for loan of books. Have you got books that you have never got around to reading?

Plan your day – any plan will do that suits you. Keep to your regular meal times – in fact, once or three times a week cook something a little differ-

ent from your usual diet. Look for easy recipes on the TV!

Routine is good, though hard to keep up when we are listless. Be a firm but kind father to yourself to guide you from slumping.

Exercise really does help to lift one – I should know, as one who was lazy, now having to go for daily walks for my health issue. I have really appreciated the wild flowers I used to drive past, thinking I was then. I look forward to seeing them each day and how long each variety lasts and which come next.

Think of a treat for yourself every day – it doesn’t have to be big – it is good to have something to look forward to that you have created yourself.

We need to rebuild new footings, to learn more about ourselves, to stretch our minds, which do not retire, and to discover more that is worthwhile in our world and, most importantly, within ourselves.

In the Guardian, Rebecca Solnit quotes from a justice activist, Mariame Kaba ‘Hope doesn’t preclude feeling sadness or frustration or anger or any other emotion that makes total sense. Hope isn’t an emotion. Hope is a discipline’.

Let’s hope we will all have more faith in our capacity for hope.

If none of these words or ideas has any impact on you, do contact one of the organisations below for more support.

Alone COVID-19 support line for older people: Phone 0818 222 024, 8am to 8pm everyday. www.alone.ie

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland: Information and emotional support and information on supports and services. Freephone 1800 341 341 Monday to Friday 10am to 5pm and Saturday 10am to 4pm. email: help-line@alzheimer.ie

The Dementia Resource Hub provides signposting to information and online resources for people with dementia, families and carers. Visit alzheimer.ie or understandtogether.ie.

Seniorline: Confidential listening service for older people provided by trained older volunteers. Call 1800 804 591 from 10am to 10pm everyday. Visit thirdageireland.ie

Age Friendly Ireland: For a list of all Local Authority Community Response Forums and their contact helpline numbers to support vulnerable members of communities affected by COVID-19 restrictions visit agefriendlyireland.ie

Special Feature LIFE LESS ORDINARY *Living in a pandemic*

West Cork Feel Good Festival going ahead in October

The Wellbeing Network, West Cork and 49 North Street Skibbereen have launched details of The West Cork Feel Good Festival, taking place in early October to coincide with World Mental Health day on October 10.

The Feel Good Festival, which has been running for a number of years, promotes and celebrates community wellbeing, while linking with many ongoing health and wellbeing resources across West Cork. The Festival is all about community, connection, engagement, slowing down, having fun and feeling good.

While it is challenging to organise anything in the current environment, the organisers felt it is more important than ever, to offer a showcase of hope and optimism. The aim of the festival is to inspire people and communities across West Cork to safely do what they can to engage in activities that connect people and communi-

ties safely and in the process contribute to wellbeing.

“The festival is about finding ways that we can still join together in community and support each other in these difficult times, within the current public health guidelines,” according to Kevin O’ Shanahan of 49 North Street.

Events include an audio visual installation space at 49 North Street, Skibbereen entitled ‘Idir Eatarthu’, which translates as between worlds, echoing how we currently find ourselves in a place of uncertainty or transition. The installation combines music, sound, colour, light, and visuals, offering total immersion in a calming setting, to provide a much-needed rest for the senses and total relaxation. It can be enjoyed individually or in small groups from a single household. The space was developed in collaboration with artists Tomasz Madajczak, Aoise Tutty Jackson, Nikki Fitzpat-



rick of Myzenpod.com and original compositions by Kevin Mc Nally, Kevin O’ Shanahan of Gamelan Spréach Geala and guitarist Gerry Leonard, who has worked with David Bowie and Suzanne Vega amongst others.

Another key event in the festival is a webinar on Tuesday, October 13 on reclaiming positivity in this challenging year. The panel includes author Louise O’Neill, Dr. Pat Bracken Independent Consultant Psychiatrist and Rory Doody, who works as area lead for Mental Health Engagement across Cork and Kerry HSE. The panel will discuss the challenges the current pandemic presents to our wellbeing and will offer practical advice to the audience on what they can do to remain positive, stay connected and look after their own and their family’s health and wellbeing. MC for the webinar is Bantry native, journalist and broadcaster Alison O’Connor.

Community based events include a feel-good photographic competition in conjunction with Beara Camera Club and a special feel-good film screening in The Park Cinema Clonakilty organised by the Clonakilty Wellness Committee. Getting outdoors and exercising is so important for general health, especially as we are coming in to winter and the Rosscarbery Steam Walkers are hosting a two-hour walk on Saturday, October 3 as part of the festival, with walkers invited to wear a funny hat to generate the feel-good factor.

The pandemic we are all grappling with has undermined many of the usual ways we support and look after each other as families and communities with social engagements, group activities and larger gatherings curbed. So we need to be imaginative about finding ways of filling those gaps and opening up spaces and opportunities for people to be creative, get out

doors and reconnect. “There were some brilliant community initiatives and online projects to keep people connected earlier in the year and we hope the festival will inspire people to continue to find creative ways to engage and connect, be it online, engaging in the arts and creative activities, or by getting outdoors and having some fun,” adds Ita Murphy, Coordinator of the Wellbeing Network, West Cork.

Information on all of the festival events is at: www.thewellbeingnetwork.ie/feel-goodfestival

Events are either online, or in strict adherence with public health guidelines, with limited spaces and pre-booking required.

The festival is organised by 49 North Street, Skibbereen, The Wellbeing Network, West Cork and Mental Health Engagement Cork Kerry, working in partnership with community groups and organisations.

Turning towards ourselves this Autumn



MENTAL HEALTH & MINDFULNESS

Susan O’Regan

Susan O’Regan teaches mindfulness and self-compassion courses and workshops throughout West Cork.

For more information contact: susanoreganmindfulness@gmail.com Mob: 087 2700572.

As the season has truly turned, and the evenings are drawing in, we need to mind ourselves in an intentional, purposeful way, particularly during these challenging days. One way of improving our mental wellbeing is through mindfulness meditation. This helps us to pay attention to the present moment and to stay with the here and now. Mindfulness heightens aware-

ness of our thoughts, feelings and sensations in the body. We can feel more connected to the world surrounding us and step out of deeply engrained patterns of overthinking, either living in the past or predicting what may happen in the future. This autumn is different to most, as nobody really knows what the season will bring, but we can make a choice to turn towards it with purpose and intention.

We can also turn towards ourselves and how we are feeling. It is ok to feel a level of anxiety during a pandemic. Anxiety is a ‘normal’ enough emotion, which we all experience from time to time when faced with stressful events. Indeed, we have all shared, and continue to share, in many anxious moments and a sense of collective vulnerability this year due to Covid-19. There’s a phrase I have heard being used a lot lately called ‘Covid fatigue’. Yes, for sure, we are all tired of this virus, we wish it was over and done with, we would prefer that it had never entered our lives and had such a devastating impact on so many. Unfortunately, it is still around and maybe we can gently accept this and allow ourselves to feel all the feelings we have around this.

Anxiety shows up in different

ways. Sometimes, it is a need to stay busy, constantly running from one task or meeting to the next, endlessly distracting ourselves and turning away from our thoughts and difficult emotions. Sometimes it’s a physical feeling in the body, possibly in the stomach or the chest or even a vague feeling of nausea. Becoming aware of what is happening in any given moment can be a great way of managing stress and anxiety by regularly checking in and keeping in touch with yourself. We can slowly begin to recognise how we are feeling, and it can be helpful to identify and label our feelings as they arise, for example ‘this is anxiety’ or ‘this is joy’. Just like the impermanence of the changing season, these feelings come and go, if we allow them to.

Most of us don’t like to feel emotions which we typically perceive as ‘negative’, such as anxiety or stress and we can spend a lot of time and effort resisting these feelings, possibly pretending we’re not feeling what we are really feeling. It may seem like a contradiction, but mindfulness inclines us to ‘stay’ or ‘sit’ with a difficult emotion, which can have the effect of softening it rather than ignoring it, covering it up or pushing it away.

As we grow in awareness, we learn to spot signs of stress or anxiety earlier in ourselves and make choices in how we respond. This awareness can be a powerful way of building a relationship with yourself, turning towards what we experience either as pleasant, unpleasant or neutral feelings coming and going. Being in the present moment means we can appreciate our lives with a freshness of attitude and not take precious moments in time for granted. We can begin to enjoy life as a marathon, not a sprint.

At challenging times like this it can be easy to live in our heads and disconnect from our body and the physical sensations contained there. Using the senses is a very powerful way of gently drawing the mind back to the here and now, by reconnecting with the body. We can do this whenever we remember to as we go about our daily activities. It may sound overly simplistic but tuning in to our senses can really help interrupt that autopilot mode that many of us operate on.

We can bring mindfulness to everyday life in many ways, for example, when walking or driving to work, school or any destination. Take a pause at the beginning of your morning and set an intention to be present for

the day ahead. If driving, you can choose to leave the radio off in the car. Become aware of any feelings of tension in the body. Are your hands gripping the steering wheel? Are your shoulders raised? Is your face tense or soft? What would it feel like to drive in a relaxed way? If you find yourself waiting in traffic on the way to or from your destination use this time to breathe slowly and deeply and take time to notice your surroundings, such as the Autumn light and colours of the trees.

When you arrive at your destination, take a few deep, slow breaths in the car before getting out. Pay attention to your walk to and from your car – breathe in the air, feel the cold or warmth on your body. Listen to the sounds around you. Can you walk without feeling rushed?

We know we are up against it this year, so let’s make some deliberate choices about how we can stay well. Mindfulness does not provide the answer to everything and must not be treated as a ‘cure all’, but it certainly has its place as a core element of a healthy lifestyle. I would encourage everyone to take up a mindfulness meditation class this autumn.

Please get in touch with me directly for more information:

Email: susanoreganmindfulness@gmail.com or Tel: 087 2700572 www.mindhaven.ie

Online mindfulness meditation sessions via Zoom continue on Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings at 8pm. Donation-based, these 45-minute drop-in sessions are a great way to cultivate our ability to pay attention to the present moment, keep up a steady mindfulness practice and provide a way of connecting in with others in a friendly and supportive environment.

A drop-in morning class in Baltimore will run on Wednesday mornings. Please get in touch to register an interest as places are limited.

Regular nature and forest bathing at Glebe Gardens provides a safe opportunity outdoors to slow down and connect with ourselves though nature. Each two-hour experience costs €30 per person. Group bookings are welcome.

Look out for ‘ReTreat Yourself’ in Baltimore on Saturday, October 17, a day of rest and nourishment at the lovely Glebe Gardens, including mindfulness, yoga, essential oils, nature and forest bathing, nutritious food and drinks.

Special Feature LIFE LESS ORDINARY *Living in a pandemic*

Big change can happen through the efforts of small communities

We all noticed what the decrease in carbon emissions during lockdown did for our environment: a lighter global footprint gave us a welcome glimpse at how quickly the transition to a cleaner world can happen. We were also reminded that pollution lowers our resistance to disease; the humble bar of soap is a powerful weapon in our fight against both climate change and disease; and that big change can happen through the efforts of small communities.

“Whenever I feel down about the damage we’re doing to our planet, I look at the shelves filled with soap in the shop,” says small business owner Olive Finn.

Olive and her husband Andy Finn are one of many small independent health food stores all over Ireland who responded to the needs of their community as an essential service during lockdown.

“I love that eight shelves in just one corner of the shop that were previously filled with plastic bottles full of hand

wash, shampoo, conditioner, body wash are now replaced with the humble bar of soap that does the exact same job without the single-use plastic bottle; and the simple beauty of all this is it leaves no trace....”

Passionate about helping to achieve change, in 2018 Olive and Andy opened Cork’s first minimal waste store, Twig-Re-fill, which although currently closed to the public due to restrictions, is still fighting the fight against plastic, packaging and waste through its sister shop The Olive Branch.

In the past six months during

this pandemic, it’s become evident how important a part the ancient and humble bar of soap actually plays in our health.

Just 20 seconds of thorough scrubbing and the pin-shaped molecules of soap will penetrate the types of bacteria and viruses, including COVID-19, that protect themselves with an oily lipid membrane.

We only have to look at Australia, who are six months ahead, to see how effective social distancing and good hand hygiene has been in reducing transmission of the flu virus.

A firm believer in something

good always coming out of something bad, Olive says that the pandemic forced people to reassess their lifestyles. “Communities started moving back towards town centres for the interaction, service and support provided by small shops like The Olive Branch,” she says. “We’ve noticed an increase in business with people using us as a daily grocery store.”

A food first shop, The Olive Branch also offers a centre of support to people in the local community.

“Right at the beginning of lockdown, we realised how important the shop was for people,” says Olive. “Although our team was worried that the personality of the shop would change – and of course it did to some degree – we were adamant we’d keep that conversation going with our customers

and to listen as much as we always did.”

Many people felt overwhelmed by anxiety and fear during lockdown and centres like The Olive Branch were there to offer a sympathetic ear and support and advice on coping strategies.

“We took it day by day,” says Olive, who had to step away from the shop with Andy during lockdown due to health reasons. “Our team was really amazing and kept the space as bright and the atmosphere as upbeat as possible.”

“We spend too much time looking at things on a global level,” she emphasises. “If we work on a very positive level within our own communities and stop looking outside, that’s when positive change and improvement is made.”

We’re now heading in to

the winter and a good diet, exercise, fresh air and sleep are all key to strengthening our immune system and giving our bodies the best possible chance to fight off coronavirus.

And for anyone needing an extra boost, The Olive Branch stocks a vast array of immune boosting supplements to support our bodies during oncoming winter

“Good nutrition is so important right now,” says Olive, who has upped the supply of local and organic fruit and veg in the shop to meet demand.

“It might take a bit more time to live like this but that’s definitely something good to come out of lockdown: it showed us that we can find the time if we really want to.”

Special Feature LIFE LESS ORDINARY *Living in a pandemic*

Eating right and staying fit key to good health



Eoin Roe
Chiropractic

Everywhere you turn these days there is advice telling you to eat a healthy diet, become a vegan or at least a vegetarian, and do more exercise. There is also no doubt that diet and exercise are two areas where we have the ability to seriously improve our health and to mitigate some of the serious health complications that beset our society at the moment.

It is also strange that the

number of people taking up exercise is increasing but the level of obesity is also increasing (Maffetone, 2017): How can that be?

It is very hard to fight through the noise around these very emotive subjects, especially diet. You will read a lot at the moment about veganism and how this is not only healthy for you, but also for the planet by reducing emissions from animal

production. The reality is that if you are a vegan you will risk having low B12 (Allen, 2008) and will have to supplement with this nutrient. There are also many other nutrients we need that come largely from animal products such as vitamin A, Vitamin K2 and Zinc (Campbell-McBride, 2017). I fail to see how a diet, which requires you to supplement can be considered balanced or healthy.

There is no doubt that increasing your intake of plant-based nutrition will give you health benefits but to exclude a whole group of foods such as animal-based products in my opinion may not be the healthiest option.

It is well known that exercise is probably the best way to manage stress and the health complications that come with that but it is unclear what sort of exercise is healthy and what is not. All exercise is forced activity. Fifty to sixty years ago, the idea of exercise was completely different; people didn't have cars, they walked or cycled, they didn't have washing machines or central heating – we were just more active every day

and did not need extra forced activity.

There is much interest at the moment in fitness trends such as HIT (high intensity training), crossfit, spinning and other high intensity workouts. If you are not familiar with these training

The reality is that now are lives are more sedentary, we need to make the effort to get out and exercise, which many are doing, and if you aren't, I would encourage you to do so.

programs they generally involve short periods of extreme intensity, followed by slow movement and another burst of extreme intensity; the idea being to get as much benefit from as short amount of time as possible. This might suit our busy lifestyles but it is not clear if it gives us the health benefits we need and certainly has a higher injury risk to lower intensity exercise

(Klimek et al, 2018).

The reality is that now are lives are more sedentary, we need to make the effort to get out and exercise, which many are doing, and if you aren't, I would encourage you to do so. The amount of exercise you need to remain healthy does not have to be of the high intensity type mentioned above, generally purposeful walking is enough but you need to be doing between 40 minutes to one hour per day, every day. If you can combine this with changing your diet to one that includes lots of vegetables, less sugar, less processed carbohydrates and a change from unhealthy fats to healthy ones, you will begin to feel the benefits very quickly.

If you find you are in the situation where you want to exercise but can't because of pain or injury – whether that be in your back, knee, foot, shoulder or wherever, I would encourage you to seek help in sorting it out because there is no doubt that getting active and staying active will have very beneficial effects on your overall physical and mental health.

Eoin Roe
Chiropractic

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NLN's Focus programme follows a recovery model approach to mental health

Everyone has ups and downs. This is especially true today when so many people are affected by mental health issues stemming from the Covid-19 pandemic. With this in mind, the National Learning Network's Focus course follows a recovery model approach to mental health that is both holistic and person-centred.

Developed by NLN, in conjunction with the HSE, the Focus programme is a community-based mental health recovery and personal development training programme that operates from NLN's Outreach Centre in Clonakilty. The 12-month free course supports students to gain the confidence and skills to take control over their futures. Instructors work individually with students to help them develop an action plan and achieve their goals; this increases social participation and opens doors to progress onto further education/training, employment or even just a better quality of life.

The course is delivered by a team of instructors and covers a wide range of activities such as art and craft, gardening, health

and fitness, cookery, computers, relaxation techniques, health and safety. There is also support from a psychologist and a rehabilitation officer.

"Our instructors are passionate about empowering students who have mental health struggles so they can enhance their personal and social development, community inclusion, health and wellbeing and maximising of independence," explains programme instructor Elva Barron.

This is a unique course that uses four approaches that work together:

Personal development. Includes communication skills, time management, self-advocacy, managing change and transitions, coping strategies and promoting positive self-concept

Community Integration. This helps participants to re-connect with what is happening around them in their own communities.

Physical and mental wellbeing. This includes mental health management, stress/tension management, healthy lifestyles, assertiveness and home management/independent

living.

Vocational orientation. Students are helped to understand and reconnect with the world of work, and offered three optional modules: job seeking skills, work placement/skills sampling, and IT/office technology skills.

The course has participants of all ages. Lee Cole, another instructor explains: "The group works well with a mix of people and having different perspectives really helps people to gain the most from discussions and classes.

"The programme is for people who suffer mental health issues but not exclusively diagnosed conditions. We are open to people who may have anxiety issues or are going through very stressful situations and may need help and support. They may have suffered grief in their lives or be out of work due to a number of reasons and feel that they are isolated from society and their communities. There are many reasons people may find themselves going through tough times mentally and need guidance and support. We work

in a person-centred way with each of the course participants and there is a focus on group work and working on each individual's goals. We have a high success rate in getting the students' outcomes that they find themselves. This year we have students going on to UCC, West Cork Campus, employment and other socially positive outcomes."

Elva adds: "It really is a great programme for people who need that little extra support to get back on their feet to be able to progress to further education/employment, or just improve their quality of life, reengage with community, not everyone has to have a goal of work or education.

"What I really enjoy is when I see people developing themselves on the programme, some people come with little or just rusty social skills and no routine, low confidence, not much going on outside for them and to see them coming in, getting to socialise, do activities and gain skills and see them getting a bounce in their step is what makes it worthwhile! It's

lovely to hear students tell us 'it's great to have something to get out of bed for' and having a sense of purpose. They get into a routine of getting up and out of the house and engaged with things, which then helps them continue that routine after the programme. The students themselves are such a great support for each other also, the learning they get from each other is just as important as anything we do on the programme.

Marian Corcoran is one such student: "I got to know a lot about my own mental health. The instructors were always there for me, even through Covid; to know they were there to ring me was a great support. It is a great help for someone to get out and meet others. I got great confidence out of it and I was able to also continue volunteering with meals on wheels and got other community involvement. All the help from the psychologist and rehabilitation officer were very good and helpful. I found it great and really enjoyed it. It really helped with my mental health."

Elva outlines the changes that have been made in response to the pandemic: "While previous programmes have been delivered mainly within our centre, this year we will be moving towards a more blended learning approach. While all the support and benefits of the programme will still be maintained, students will spend less time in the centre. We will work with every student individually and devise a personal timetable to suit their needs and goals. This bespoke approach to training ensures that each of our students get the specific supports that they need in order to help them achieve their goals."

If you are interested in this course but have other commitments like regular appointments/volunteering/childcare etc. you can still get in contact with the instructors, as they may be able work around these. Social welfare is not affected.

People wishing to apply can call or email:
Elva on 087 2316919
email elva.barron@nlm.ie
Lee on 087 2447160
email Lee.cole@nlm.ie

Special Feature LIFE LESS ORDINARY *Living in a pandemic*

Season of mists and Covid



DOCTOR'S ORDERS

Dr Jeff Featherstone

Dr Featherstone is a highly experienced medic and award-winning doctor who works in a busy GP practice in West Cork, as well as at Mercy University Hospital and Cork University Hospital, as an A&E doctor.

It is good to see everyone wearing masks and using common sense even if our politicians are not.

On the subject of wacky politicians – there is another theory that Covid is a designer virus manmade so called ‘Wu Flu’ to bump off those who are a drain on Health Services like the elderly, infirm, addicts, obese and cancer victims.

This is all utter nonsense from the same doctor who came up with the spurious link between MMR and autism. Who believes this rubbish? A lot of people actually, like those who did not immunise their children, who subsequently got measles, suffered, and some died.

A word from A&E. We are not coping at all! You know the problems of old; now we have lost 50 per cent of our beds and trolleys in A&E due to the creation of isolation units. Waiting times have increased tremendously. There is NO social distancing in A&E; ok masks are worn, but A&E med-

icine is up close and personal. Your GP surgery is a much safer place to be assessed. If a serious infection is suspected; rather than a vague over the phone consult, admission directly to a suitable Unit can be arranged. ‘Go to Casualty’ really is not a sensible option without proper assessment either in Surgery or at home.

I think every GP should do a regular stint in A&E as I do and, given the talent and ingenuity which GP’s show, they might come up with better solutions and more harmonious working systems.

I have mentioned alternatives to A&E attendance; South Doc, the Minor Injuries Unit and Medical Assessment unit in Bantry and private units like the Swift Care Centre in Cork. Many patients do not even bother to register with a GP; they just rock up to us for everything.

If you do have to attend, please try and bring a letter with your medical details from your GP and your regular tablets. Get to know your illness as well. Use your mobile to record for example an image of your medical summary blood results, allergies etc.

For a short while, as Covid broke, frontline workers were being appreciated. I have no idea what happened to our regulars. Some 40 per cent of attendances at A&E at the Mercy are about drug addicts and alcohol; they all disappeared during the early Covid peak! They are back in full force again. This puts huge pressure on us, so bear with us.

I was recently assaulted by an addict who had taken out a security officer and two nurses, I had to have a little time off with a bite on my chest and one has to question is frontline medicine just too damned dangerous with violence and Covid together!

Anyway, I am back for now, and doing my best. Stay well.

Community Midwife practice during the pandemic

“Thankfully, the pandemic has not impacted on the HSE Home Birth service too much,” says Community Midwife Elke Hasner. “We are still keeping our women, dads and families safe at home.”

The midwives follow a strict Covid-19 protocol. “I remember the strange feeling when I, and my second midwife, donned our PPE for the first time during a home birth in the house of my client. Thankfully, I had already established a great relationship throughout my ante natal visits and even the kids knew, it was me in the ‘space suit’.”

Elke is also still providing antenatal classes in person and online, and giving breastfeeding support in her capacity as a lactation consultant (both recognised by private health insurance).

Antenatal breastfeeding classes can be excellent to anticipate the most common problems in breastfeeding. Things like perceived lack of sufficient milk supply, ‘second night syndrome’, soreness, poor weight gain, or unrealistic sleep expectations in new parents.

“In my one-to-one breastfeeding classes, I give a broad overview about the most common pitfalls and every mum gets a fact sheet to take home with them, explaining normal infant behavior, information on good latch and feeding positions,” she explains.

“I offer breastfeeding support after the birth also, including house calls within a certain radius.”

Elke’s breastfeeding support is very individual; there is no ‘one size fits all’ approach to pregnancy, birth and breastfeeding.

“There is only one statement in breastfeeding support that applies to all mothers,” she says

“Any problem in mum, or baby, or both, needs to be addressed first, before we resort to formula supplementation in the mother who wishes to breastfeed.”

For most women, pregnancy is a special time filled with joy and anticipation about the changes ahead. However, the current Covid-19 outbreak has brought another aspect to all our lives,

adding fear and anxiety to many women’s journeys. Based on her experience of nearly 40 years working in the community, Elke answers some common questions from expecting mothers on pregnancy and birth during a pandemic:

Is it safe to attend your Health Care Provider (HCP) for antenatal check-ups?

While many people are advised not to go to their GP practice here, it is important to check the pregnancy at recommended intervals. Social distancing isn’t always possible when doing vital checks, like establishing how the baby’s presenting, or checking your blood pressure. However, your HCP is trained to provide the safest way to protect you and your baby during those appointments.

In our home birth service here in Cork, for instance, we offer one-to-one appointments, clean our equipment according to Covid-19 protocol and protect you by wearing a mask, gloves and an apron during heartbeat checks and other antenatal checks. During a home birth, we wear protective equipment once the birth is imminent and make sure an individual and personal approach is maintained always.

In a service where touch and non-verbal encouragement is so very important, we had to change a lot and I very much miss the closeness to mum and baby that was taken from us by this virus. However, I am grateful for the fact that I have met my women and couples before the birth, we’ve been through this pregnancy together and have already established a relationship. And like our colleagues in the hospital, we smile with our eyes and convey our confidence that all is good through other channels.

What should I do if I, or someone I was in contact with, had symptoms?

Although research is still ongoing, the COVID-19 virus has not been found in vaginal fluid, in cord blood or breast milk, which is very reassuring. However, if you are having symptoms, or someone in your family is suspected of an infection, your baby



should be born in a hospital and a home birth is not possible.

Can my birthing partner be present at the birth?

I am very happy to say that our service keeps the family unit safe at home and you have your birthing partner by your side.

How can I protect my baby and myself from and infection with Covid-19?

The advice is simple: stay at home, keep social distancing, wash your hands. Visitors can only see the new baby at a safe distance, which is very hard but absolutely vital for now.

Other recommendations are:

- Avoid contact with anyone displaying symptoms of coronavirus disease (COVID-19).
- Avoid public transport when possible.
- Work from home, where possible.
- Avoid large and small gatherings in public spaces, particularly in closed or confined spaces.
- Avoid physical gatherings with

friends and family.

- Use telephone, texting, or online services to contact your midwife, obstetrician, and other essential services.

Can I safely breastfeed my baby?

Yes, as far as we know. The virus has not been detected in breastmilk to date and the mother and baby dyad should not be disrupted. If you are positive with Covid-19 wash your hands and wear a mask. Some research suggests, washing your breasts with soapy water might be beneficial also. If you are too ill to breastfeed, expressing breast milk might be an option also.

The importance of breastfeeding cannot be overstated and the pandemic has highlighted another positive aspect. Breastfeeding mothers don’t have to worry about formula supply in shops.

Please contact Elke at elkehasner@gmail.com if you have questions relating to the HSE home birth service.

Workshops at Dunmanway Resource Centre

Dunmanway Resource Centre is hosting a Herbal Wellbeing Workshop for anyone with an interest in learning about plant-based wellness and self care. Participants will learn how to make various items from natural products. It takes place on Saturday October 10 from 10-1pm and costs only €5, including take home samples. To book phone 083 8514132.

Also at the Centre on October 10, but from 2-5pm, is a Willow Workshop where you can learn to make your own beautiful willow basket. The cost for this course is also €5, including your take home creation. To book phone 023 8856818.

Finally, on an Adult Art Group, facilitated by a local artist takes place over five weeks from Tuesday October 6 (10-12pm). There is also the option to take part in the Art Group over zoom. Enquiries to Aileen on 083 8514132.



Elke Hasner Pregnancy, Birth & Beyond



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Special Feature LIFE LESS ORDINARY *Living in a pandemic*

Helping young families and families-to-be in times of stress

Barbara Noonan Sexton is passionate about the care of mothers, fathers, babies and older children. Already working part-time as a Public Health Nurse, Barbara had a vision for providing additional support to mothers and families; so in 2011 she discussed this vision with her husband and the

couple decided to invest in a purpose-built large studio, with two additional rooms equipped with bathrooms and baby changing tables, at their home in Courtmacsherry.

"I have the complete set-up for helping young families from my home – facilitating antenatal and baby massage classes and

conducting homeopathic consultations," Barbara says. "Since 2012, I do one-to-one antenatal classes over two evenings and baby massage classes are usually over five mornings."

Due to Covid 19, Barbara is still facilitating antenatal classes on a one-to-one basis and online, via Zoom, for expectant

mums and couples if they prefer this option. One-to-one baby massage classes and online advice regarding baby massage is also available.

Barbara qualified as a registered homeopath in 2017 and has since been conducting consultations both in person and online. In this way she regularly treats pregnant mothers for exhaustion or nausea, menopausal women suffering from issues such as hot flushes, and children's issues such as sleeplessness caused by worry. Recently Barbara has helped clients, including other health professionals, with anxiety surrounding the pandemic.

Barbara has strived to gain knowledge, experience and qualifications throughout her working life: "My love of health and science began when I was studying nursing in 1994 – I qualified as a General Nurse in CUH in 1997. I then went to Australia for a year, where I worked in Cardiology, Orthopaedics and in a respite and rehabilitation hospital.

"When I returned to Ireland,



I studied for a Higher Diploma in Midwifery in UCC and worked in St. Finbarr's and the Erville in Cork. I then went to the Coombe Women's Hospital in Dublin and completed my Bachelor of Nursing Studies Degree in Trinity College. I also completed my research proposal on the services 'Drug Liaison Opioid Dependent Women', which was fascinating work."

Barbara eventually decided to study Public Health Nursing

when she moved back to Cork and completed a Postgraduate Course in Public Health Nursing in UCC.

"I thoroughly enjoy working in Public Health Nursing part-time and also providing support to families through homeopathy, baby massage and antenatal classes. I feel privileged to be passionate about my work and to have found a career that I enjoy so much and that my clients benefit from enormously.

Barbara was honoured to be recently awarded as a Regional Winner with Network West Cork for the 'Power – Within Category'. "I am delighted that I joined Network West Cork in 2018 and I'm looking forward to the National Awards with Network Ireland on October 2."

Barbara's baby massage classes are VHI, LAYA & AVIVA approved. Barbara is a registered homeopath with the Irish Society of Homeopaths.

You can find out more on all her services at her website: barbaranoonahomeopathy.com.



Barbara Noonan Sexton
General Nurse, Midwife & Public Health Nurse.
Registered Homeopath.

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Email: noonan16@hotmail.com
RGN, RM, PHN, BNS (Hons)

Breastfeeding your baby

Advertisements on TV of mothers nursing their babies give the impression that it is easy and enjoyable all the time. In these perfect views, there is no indication of the issues that can arise with breastfeeding, among which are too much breast milk, thrush infections, blocked milk ducts, tongue tie, mastitis, as well as the possibility of a breast abscess.

Nursing mothers with excess milk may notice that their babies are fussy at the breast, have a lot of colic, flatulence, and reflux. They may gulp frequently, break off multiple times during a feeding, and later exhibit signs of gassiness, which may include frequent stools that may be large, frothy, and green, especially when the

infant is consuming inadequate protein-rich hind milk. They may also have a shallow latch due to the overactive let-down reflex. Infants of mothers with oversupply may be misdiagnosed with gastroesophageal reflux disease, colic, or milk protein allergies (Smillie et al 2005).

How does one know if milk oversupply is the problem? There are a number of pointers. The baby gains weight excessively, and the mother notices that her breasts are not noticeably softened by feeding. Her breasts leak quite a lot and she may have the ability to pump several ml/ounces after a feed. If the mother is awakened at night by painful engorgement, when the baby seems satisfied and not yet ready to eat, then

the question of oversupply needs to be examined. A breast milk oversupply also includes symptoms such as a feeling of fullness, breast pain, leaking breast, engorgement, plugged duct, sore nipples and mastitis.

Diet may be one cause of oversupply and this includes an overuse of galactagogues, which are herbal teas drunk to increase milk supply. The following foods are also considered to have a role in increasing milk supply: Oatmeal, spinach, broccoli, alfalfa, fennel, chickpeas, nuts and seeds, papaya and ginger. These foods need to be reduced, if not avoided, if one has excess milk, but these foods are useful if a low milk supply is the issue.

Remaining on the subject of diet, traditional Persian medicine associates an excess milk supply with too much blood humour. This concept equates, more or less, with 'high/hot' blood in the Irish tradition. High/hot blood is exacerbated in the spring and by eating too many sweet foods and meat products. Among the list of foods that increase high/hot blood are lamb, chicken, soft-boiled eggs, whole wheat bread, milk, particularly milk with honey or sugar, lettuce, grapes, bananas, figs, hazelnuts, and almonds, especially almonds



HERBAL HEALING

Dr. Rosari Kingston

Dr. Rosari Kingston PhD, M.Sc (Herbal medicine) is a medical herbalist practising in Dr. O'Reilly's integrative clinical practice in Clonakilty, Co. Cork as well as Church Cross, Skibbereen. Dr. Kingston's area of research are the healing modalities present in Irish vernacular medicine and she incorporates them, where possible, into her clinical practice. In her clinical practice she specialises in infertility and digestive issues.

www.rosarikingstonphd.com

with sugar.

There are some medical conditions also implicated in the over production of milk and among these are pituitary dis-

orders, PCOS, liver and kidney issues, and some medications.

There are a number of ways an oversupply of breast milk may be resolved. Firstly, reduce intake of foods that promote milk production and introduce more vegetables into the diet. Lentils, and any dishes made from them, are good for regulating milk supply.

Secondly, there are topical applications and even though we are all familiar with the use of a cabbage leaf poultice at the first twinge of a painful breast, it is also good for reducing milk supply. Warming the cabbage leaf until it becomes very flexible, almost juicy, and ironing the leaf is one way of achieving this consistency. Make sure it is at a comfortable heat before placing over the breast. A cabbage leaf may also be applied as a cold poultice, as can the mashed root of cabbage. Keep in place with cling film or towel and remove after about thirty minutes. Using this poultice three or four times a day may well reduce milk supply and engorgement fairly quickly. Other topical applications include psyllium powder mixed to a paste, and broad bean flour combined with rose oil and vinegar. Fenugreek seeds or caraway seeds powdered and made into a paste with vinegar will

also serve as poultices. A hot compress of parsley is appropriate for breast engorgement and breast pain and may also be added to the diet. A more sensuous poultice is one made from crushed, fresh, jasmine flowers which is then applied to the breast.

Herbs should only be introduced after diet and topical applications have failed, and even then, they need to be introduced with the utmost care. Sage (*Salvia officinalis*) is the most well-known herb used, and dried sage, about a quarter teaspoon, three times a day, can be added to soups and other food dishes. It can also be made as a tea. This can work quite dramatically so reduce dose to twice a day after day two and stop taking it after the third day.

Lemon balm and oregano are two other herbs that may help with the problem of oversupply and they too may be used as teas or incorporated into the diet. I have already mentioned the use of caraway as a poultice and it may also be incorporated into food. Most other herbs are best left to the professional as there is, currently, insufficient evidence of their effect or safety while nursing.

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Special Feature LIFE LESS ORDINARY *Living in a pandemic*

Supporting a positive birth experience



Louise Lotty is a mama to two little boys as well as a GentleBirth hypnobirthing instructor, postpartum doula and founder of Luna Birth Services. Louise has used hypnobirthing in both of her very different birth experiences with great success. She is passionate about supporting women and their partners towards an empowering and positive birth and early parenting experience.

Are you expecting a baby? Are you nervous about birthing in the midst of a global pandemic? For many women the thought of birth can trigger a lot of anxiety and apprehension, even fear, and often these thoughts have been planted by imagery, which we are all so accustomed to seeing, hearing and reading in society.

However, birth need not be the ordeal that so many of us expect. Yes, it will likely be the hardest work you will ever do but this work can be a really positive experience for both you and your birth partner.

Toward the middle of your pregnancy is the ideal time to start thinking about your labour and birth. Whether you are planning a natural un-medicated, caesarean section, induction, medicated, hospital or home birth – you define your own positive birth experience.

Hypnobirthing involves a range of techniques, which support the mind and body in preparing for birth. Science has shown that our brains are flexible, meaning that they have plasticity to rewire toward a positive image of birth and to

overcome any situation which pregnancy and labour may present. Hypnobirthing uses brain science, mindfulness, and affirmations – amongst other tools – to help you to relax, allay fears or anxieties and even look forward to birth. Apps such as GentleBirth are tailored to your individual stage of pregnancy. In order to get the most benefit, short daily sessions listening to hypnobirthing tracks are advised in preparation for using the app during labour. This is a great way to wind down, connect with baby and disconnect from the outside world.

Attending an independent childbirth education class is invaluable in pregnancy. I provide private in-person workshops, which are small in size in order to comply with COVID-19 safety measures and also to ensure an intimate, engaging and interactive workshop. These workshops cover the importance of the brain in labour, stages of labour, the importance of hormones for birth, birth preferences, natural comfort measures (if you would like to have an epidural, there are potentially a number of hours of labour before this can be

administered), birth positions, breathing techniques and recovery tips as well as many more topics.

Writing birth preferences is highly recommended. Completing your own research after attending a childbirth education class can really help you to think about what you and your partner would hope for in the birth of your child. We cannot plan everything (babies don't read plans!) and birth is unpredictable but in the majority of low risk and healthy women, birth is a very straightforward and uncomplicated journey, which you and your baby will go through together. Birth preferences such as requesting immediate skin to skin with baby post-birth can have a hugely beneficial impact on both mother and baby. Continuing skin to skin contact with baby in the postnatal ward and at home will help to reduce stress, increase bonding and encourage breastfeeding. Did you know that around 30 per cent of your baby's blood volume remains in

the umbilical cord at birth? Requesting delayed cord clamping in your birth preferences can increase baby's haemoglobin levels and increase iron stores for the first few months in life.

If you are having a hospital birth, it is highly recommended to stay at home for as long as possible in early labour, particularly in the pandemic due to restrictions on partners' access to hospitals. Think about how to prepare your home to feel comfortable during early labour. It's not all about the nesting instinct of cleaning the cupboards and purging clutter! Consider how all mammals go somewhere dark, private and safe to birth. Create an atmosphere of safety, warmth, comfort using dim lighting – perhaps candles – a special playlist, your favourite show on TV, warm water immersion in the shower or bath (one of the best pain relievers for labour!), soothing smells through aromatherapy oils, using a TENS machine, birth ball or the touch of your partner through massage or

holding a cold facecloth on your neck. These tools are important to raise the hormone oxytocin in your body. Also called the 'love hormone', this is crucial in lowering anxiety, stress and pain as well as stimulating effective contractions. Stay in contact with the maternity hospital for advice on when to start travelling in and ideally, by the time you arrive at the hospital you will be in active labour and your partner will be able to join you on the labour ward for the birth of your baby immediately. Bring your TENS Machine in the car for extra support during the journey.

Birth need not be something to fear. A little forward preparation rather than 'winging it' will go a long way toward your birth being a positive and wonderful once in a lifetime experience.

If you would like to learn more, you can visit Louise's website at lunabirthservices.ie

West Cork TD seeking answers on antenatal care issues

Holly Cairns, Cork TD, who has been one of the most prominent voices in highlighting varying restrictions in maternity hospitals, also is seeking answers on antenatal care issues.

"In response to messages from pregnant and new mothers, I have raised the issue in the Dáil several times to seek clarity and greater flexibility for partners or a close family member to be allowed to support new mothers during the entirety of labour. However, the restrictions have more impacts as partners are also not allowed to attend antenatal scans and appointments. This is a serious issue as prenatal care, especially those early scans, can be a tense time when many of the complications of pregnancy can occur.

"I have been contacted by women who have received heartbreaking news alone and who have had to phone their partner who is waiting outside in the carpark, or from fathers who have to leave their wives go into difficult appointments and procedures unaccompanied. Mis-



carriages and complications are beyond hard ordinarily, but now they are made so much worse for both parents. We all know that public health is the priority, as it should be, but it's difficult to understand why partners cannot attend these incredibly important occasions, whether it is joyful or tragic news.

"I attended a meeting with Cork/Kerry HSE recently and raised the issue of ongoing restrictions in maternity hospitals. They informed me that they will review the restrictions for the region and that this is likely to take a "couple of weeks". I have also raised this issue with the

Minister for Health and the Taoiseach, who said he will talk to the acting Chief Medical officer about it. I am continuing to seek greater transparency and flexibility on this issue. No-one should have to be alone during labour unless it is strictly necessary.

"The Covid19 restrictions in maternity hospitals were introduced six months ago. As the situation has evolved, many other restrictions in general society have eased and I would urge the HSE and the hospitals to revise these restrictions as a matter of urgency. Some maternity hospitals in Dublin have seen a slight easing of restrictions, yet in Cork it's the opposite. There still isn't clarity as to why this is a geographic lottery, why is there a disparity in restrictions across the country.

"We can't wait any longer as every day more women are going through this alone. There isn't the same kind of organised lobby for maternity care like there is for the hospitality sector or sports, these people need us all to speak out so government will listen.



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Special Feature LIFE LESS ORDINARY *Living in a pandemic*

How pregnancy massage supports and nurtures mums-to-be

The world welcomes new life every day. In recent times however, it may feel as though there is not enough comfort and nurture provided to the mothers who are bringing this new life. **Joyce O'Sullivan**, Solace Holistic Centre tells us how Solace is working to change this.

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In Solace we are here to support you before, during and after pregnancy; we pride ourselves on understanding the female body and the changes it goes through, both physically and emotionally.

Pregnancy massage is beneficial in many ways and can be used to support women through this precious and exciting time in life, not to mention exhausting and somewhat uncomfortable time.

You may have read that it is safest to wait until your second trimester (after 12 weeks) to receive pregnancy massage, and this is true if you have been classed by your doctor as high risk pregnancy.

Otherwise, if massage is something that your body is used to receiving and you have a good relationship with your therapist, and in some cases with doctor's approval, then do continue your regular massage sessions from the start of your pregnancy.

Prenatal massage promotes relaxation and bonding and some much needed time-out. Key areas where massage is beneficial during pregnancy include:

Swelling/Oedema: The extra pressure your uterus places on your legs can cause swelling in your legs, ankles and feet. Massage can improve lymph flow to effected areas and reduce swelling.

Muscle discomfort: Muscle stiffness, leg cramps, knots and

tension can be relieved by massage due to improving circulation and can therefore stimulating the flow of blood to these areas, easing your discomfort.

Headaches/sinus pain: Massage of the shoulders, neck and face can alleviate sinus pressure and headaches caused by tension.

Constipation and heartburn: Your digestive system becomes sluggish due to allowing your baby to absorb key nutrients. Stress can also contribute to both factors. Massage can help reduce anxiety and tension and help ease symptoms.

The fourth trimester: I find this is not spoken about enough and is often forgotten. It is the 12-week period after you have

had your baby. This is a time of huge physical and emotional change for both you and your newborn. Your baby is adjusting to the outside world, whilst you are adjusting to your baby. Whilst you are lacking sleep, your uterus is shrinking back to its former size and your hormones have shifted... this is a lot of change. Postnatal massage can help you recover and recuperate from pregnancy; with natural birth it can be received two weeks after delivery and with C-sections, 12 weeks.

Looking after your baby is your priority, looking after you is our priority. For more information contact Solace on 087 9510554

Do we understand our one-year old? *(continued from September issue)*

Emerging personality – Finding one's own identity

As one-year-olds grow, their unique personality will begin to emerge more clearly. With increased mobility and a few words they are now better able to make their presence felt in the family. Each time they assert themselves is another opportunity to develop their own sense of identity, find out for themselves what kind of person they are. This journey of discovery is crucially important; babies need to find their own way in order to be their own

person. And babies, like people, do things differently.

Some children will thrust themselves on their families with great gusto at this time. Others will be more tentative and may need encouragement to assert themselves. Whatever the case, the important thing is that the lead comes from your baby rather than your baby fitting into someone else's mould.

Recognising the baby for who he or she is fosters the development that helps them feel they

are themselves; only if they are themselves they can reach their potential. And this begins in the family. Whether your one-year old is the first child, the only child, or has brothers or sisters will make a difference.

Our baby's place in the family

If our one-year old is the first child, then he or she will probably have had more of your attention than if there are older brothers or sisters in the family. This is obviously beneficial in some ways: it is a special thing to have your parents' attention all to yourself. Physical achievements will be quickly noticed and rejoiced over; first words may be spoken to a hushed, focused audience; first experiences will be firsts for everyone in the family and they will be treasured because of it. From an emotional point of view, being an oldest child could have other benefits. Our one-year-old may have to content with jealous feelings when younger brothers or sisters come along, but this also means that they will have worked through and survived this experience in childhood. Such previous experience in itself could help in later life in the approach to other relationships with similar feelings.

If our one-year old will be the only child in the family, then he or she will have some benefits of first children, and may also relax easily and comfortably in adult company, having had the advantage of a lot of interested adult conversation. Parents of only children will often make a bit effort to arrange regular play dates with their child's friends

so that they can mix with other children too. This is obviously helpful, as well as being fun for your child.

If our one-year old is already part of a family with brothers and sisters, there will be different issues to content with. Growing as part of a larger family has its benefits too. Being able to witness the rough and tumble of family life provides endless entertainment and stimulation. Certainly learning to share and being part of a group may be less of an issue if your baby is used to these things from early on.

We have talked about how important it is that our one-year-old begins to assert him- or herself. Having one's own opinions, likes, dislikes and favourites are part of what makes us the person that we are. Parents may want to encourage this in principle while recognising that the way ahead is paved with frustration – and not just for your baby. As babies begin to assert themselves in this way we need to recognise that some of their preferences may not be our own.

Temper tantrums and fears

Our child having a tantrum can be a frightening and shocking experience. When the tantrums happen in public, as often seems to be the case; parents have to endure the humiliation of onlooking strangers, as well as everything else.

With the extreme feelings of dependency and the wish for control, which our one-year-old is prey to, holding everything in balance can be a very insecure



DO WE UNDERSTAND OUR CHILD?

Diana Radeva
Child and Adolescent
Psychotherapist

In this series of articles Diana Radeva sets out to consider the emotional life of children from birth onwards; and how relationships between children and parents evolve over time. It is a view of human growth, which recognises the importance of strong feelings experienced at each stage of development; thus offering ways that parents might find helpful when wanting to better understand their children's growth.

This is the extraordinary story of the 'ordinary development' as seen and experienced by a parent and a child psychotherapist.

business. Sometimes the smallest thing can tip the balance and it's not the thing itself, but the culmination of everything on top of each other, and all in the context of how hard it is to suffer being little and wanting to be big, or sometimes feeling

overwhelmed by growing up and wanting to be little again.

The tantrum, in all its force, will usually be directed at the mother or another carer. The adult's role is to act as a container for all the child's terrible, confusing, terrifying feelings. Our one-year-old depends on us to do this.

But how do we react or 'What do I do?' Many parents find the answer to this through trial and error and a more experienced parent will at least have an idea of what won't work. For example, parents soon realise that punishments, like smacking, just make things worse. Trying to reason with our child is also usually a non-starter, as he or she is beyond all reason. Usually, parents find that just holding their children or saying soothing words, if they will let us, is the best thing. Or we may, on the other hand, now be feeling so angry and upset ourselves that it's better not to say a word until we feel calmer too.

Recognising that their most extreme feelings can be contained by us is very reassuring for our child. Uncontained feelings of this kind are experienced as very dangerous and come back to haunt young children. In fact, it is these very same attacking, hostile, tantrum-like feelings that are behind many of the irrational fears and phobias in childhood.

All children have had tantrums at some point or another. But if you feel it is happening a lot, then you may want to think seriously about any ongoing issues that could be affecting your child and possibly ask your GP for a referral for help.



Why do we sometimes find it hard to understand children?

When we struggle with our child's emotional distress or behavioural problems what can we do or what can help us?

Child psychotherapy practice is a proven and reliable method of addressing and treating a number of issues including:

- Pre-school children:** difficulties within mother-infant relationship, eating, sleeping, and toileting, separation and developmental difficulties.
- School-age children:** social difficulties, difficult behaviours such as defiance and aggression, ADHD, ASD, learning and attention problems, emotional problems such as anxiety and fears, family breakdown issues and relationships at home and at school.
- Adolescents and young people (up to 27):** trauma, anxieties, worries, depression, low self-esteem, peer and family relationships problems, gender identity difficulties.

DIANA RADEVA BPsych (Hons) MPsych Clin Mpsych psych
Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist
Over 15 years of experience. ICP Registered, MACP
083 8930386 dradeva.childpsychotherapy@gmail.com

Special Feature LIFE LESS ORDINARY *Living in a pandemic*

Once upon a pandemic: School communities in County Cork encouraged to write about their experience of the pandemic

Irish publishing company Emu Ink has launched The Covid Book Project, an ambitious writing initiative, which will capture school children's experience of the Coronavirus pandemic in their own words and create a local historical record of a time that has changed the world.

Emu Ink has developed online resources to help school children formulate, edit, and proofread their Covid stories. At the end of the project, the school will have a book that documents the lives of the children and staff within the school community during the pandemic.

Founder and CEO, Emer Cleary said, "We are delighted to be offering this wonderful opportunity to children

in Cork and throughout Ireland, who will write a short story or poem about their life during the current crisis. We will then publish the work of these pupils, who are quite literally writing Cork's history from their own viewpoints.

"The finished book will act as a public record of this time and it will be available in the school and wider community for posterity. Future generations of students will gain a unique insight into the pandemic from the accounts of the students who have lived through it at their school.

"This project is going to change how our children's children learn about what's happening right now – and that is something special. We want


everyone to join our movement!"

As well as creating a unique first-hand account of children's experience, The Covid Book Project will encourage them to express their full range of emotions and help the adults in their lives understand how they feel about the last six months.

Ms Cleary continued, "It's been a very tough few months for everyone. The children have been away from their daily routine and their friends – and teachers have been working exceptionally hard over the summer to welcome their classes back to school safely. Now that our school communities are getting back into routine, we want The Covid Book Project to be a positive activity for teachers,

children and parents that will start the discussion about the impact on each other's lives and will work in a classroom setting or as part of a blended learning programme."

The Covid Book Project is open to primary and secondary schools in Ireland. Participating schools will gain access to Emu Ink's online resources or teachers can simply set the children the task of writing a story or poem about life during this time. Schools have a choice of a 'traditional' paperback anthology, which will fit the work of approximately 120 children as well as artwork on the front and back cover or an A4 book in full colour, the cost of which is generally covered by the parents or school community.



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West Cork company launches family-friendly Vitamin D food supplements for the winter flu season

Bandon-based, food supplement business SOMEGA continues to extend its product range - the latest additions are pure and natural Vitamin D3 and Vitamin D3 + K2 liquid supplements. Vitamin D and Vitamin K are fat-soluble vitamins essential throughout life. According to food scientist and SOMEGA co-founder, Mark Clifford "With our new range of vegan Vitamin D and Vitamin D & K supplements, we continue to develop products that are not only good for our immune system and bone health, but are also better absorbed than other supplements'.

SOMEGA launched its first supplement, pleasant-tasting Easy Omega-3, last year. Stocked now in health stores and pharmacies nationwide, it has proved hugely popular with adults and children alike and benefits brain, heart and eye health.

SOMEGA's Liposomal Vitamin C is a powerful nutrient, essential for health. When it comes to supporting your immune system, Vitamin C is key, which is why Vitamin C supplements are often the first port of call for many people when they feel a flu or cold coming on. Vitamin C also supports the nervous system and psychological function –

studies show that Vitamin C supplementation can be effective in reducing stress-related anxiety and blood pressure.

Vitamin D plays an important role in your immune system as it is crucial in the activation of our immune defences. It is also important for bone health. Sunshine is where most of your Vitamin D comes from. Vitamin D is made in your skin when it is exposed to sunlight. Unfortunately, in Ireland, the sun is not strong enough from October to March to allow your skin to make any Vitamin D. Other factors, such as applying sunscreen and aging, also lower the amount of Vitamin D your skin can produce. Your diet generally provides only a small amount of Vitamin D because very few foods naturally contain this vitamin.

Vitamin K is essential for bone health as it helps direct calcium into the bones. Research indicates that supplementing with vitamins D and K together is more effective for bone health than taking either vitamin individually.

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Special Feature LIFE LESS ORDINARY *Living in a pandemic*

Gaelscoil Dr. Uí Shúilleabháin settles in to to a new school routine

The múinteoirí of Naíonáin Bheaga to Rang 6 at Gaelscoil Dr. Uí Shúilleabháin in Skibbereen, share with **West Cork People**, how school life has changed under the current restrictions. Although the changes have proved challenging for everyone, children and staff have adapted well and are all on board with the new routine.

As lockdown happened so quickly, the teachers at Gaelscoil Dr. Uí Shúilleabháin found that the first of their challenges this year was digital learning; the overall consensus was that teaching without being able seeing their 'páistí' was difficult. However within a short space of time, new skills were learned and

innovative ideas and approaches to teaching and learning were introduced.

One of the main impacts of lockdown for the school was that it changed their approach to digital or distance learning. However, being a small personable school, the interaction with children was very much missed.

Fortunately the Seesaw app proved an invaluable resource, as it facilitated feedback for the school and allowed the teachers to keep contact with the children.

As a result of its digital experience during lockdown, Gaelscoil Dr. Uí Shúilleabháin now foresees a greater use for digital learning in schools. In fact it is currently awaiting a delivery of chrome books thanks to Kieran Collins of Ludgate. The teachers are currently working very closely with Ludgate to establish G Suite for Education within the school.

Gaelscoil Dr. Uí Shúilleabháin is newly built so it is a modern and well-ventilated building with plenty of indoor and outside space.

Classroom spaces have now



Páistí ag spraoi

been adjusted, breaks have been staggered and a rigid hand washing routine has been established to create a safe learning environment for pupils and staff alike. Access to the building is now monitored and controlled and where possible only children and staff are permitted on the premises. Bubbles and groups have been created within classes and teachers maintain a two-metre distance where possible.

The teachers all wear PPE, masks and/or visors at different times of the day. Visors have to be cleaned regularly, as they fog up easily.

"Teaching a phonics lesson is not as easy as it is vital that the children can see our faces and even the shape of our mouths for different sounds.

"We are all getting used to them and will be with them for a while yet so we will find the types that work for.

We all find that our eyes tell lots of stories!"

Teaching practices and social distancing

The children in the younger classes now sit in 'pods' of six; distanced from each other. Prior to Covid they were able to play together or swap toys. Now each pod needs to keep their game for a few days and can't share with a different pod. The toys are then put in 'quarantine' for a few days before the next pod is allowed to use it! The teachers are used to teaching children how to share but are now having to do the opposite, which they admit is difficult, as it goes against social interaction with each other.

Older children are required to sit further from each other and can't share in the same way as the younger children can.

The teachers are all working together to support the children.

"All of the children have adapted really well and are really amazing with all the changes. We wear our PPE and can be beside the children and sanitise our hands between helping each child with their work. It is harder to keep distance when working quietly with individual children.

"It is definitely challenging to find creative ways to teach classes when we try and socially distance group work!"

One of the most significant challenges for teachers has been not being able to interact with each other in as relaxed a manner as before. The buddy system for junior infants has also been a loss. Older children would have looked out for the new kids during break times and now they are missing the interaction of shared reading together.

Teachers met regularly over the summer to discuss how the children would settle back once the schools reopened. There was a lot of anxiety amongst children and parents during the lockdown about how children were going to interact with other people again. Making sure the children were happy, settled back and a creating a feeling of safety and wellbeing was of paramount importance to the teachers.

One of the subjects on the curriculum at Gaelscoil Dr. Uí Shúilleabháin is SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education). The SPHE curriculum fosters children's wellbeing, self-confidence and sense of belonging. It also develops children's sense of personal responsibility for their own behaviour and actions and promotes children's self-awareness and understanding by helping them to manage their own feelings, to recognise and appreciate individual abilities, and to cope with change of various kinds and supports children to become active and responsible

citizens.

"SPHE is definitely taking centre stage at the moment! The children's wellbeing is vital to allow for their educational needs to be met."

"SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education) is definitely taking centre stage at the moment! The children's wellbeing is vital to allow for their educational needs to be met."

Frequent breaks outside are also allowed where possible and the children are encouraged to read outside and play more in the school play areas.

Over the next few months, the focus will be on instilling a feeling of safety and wellbeing, as well as making things as normal as possible for the children in these times.

The regular subjects like English, Maths, History and Geography and so on are of course still being worked on and although there is a lot of catch-up being done after lockdown, classes are also looking ahead to new topics.

Overall everyone is very happy to be back in school. Teachers have never been so happy to

hear a noisy school yard!

"The support from the parents of the children really cements our ability to work together as a team. The children in the school are fabulous to work with and have adapted to the new normal and luckily are still excited and happy to run in the gate in the mornings!"

"What we want is that all children go home with a smile and happy at 3pm."

Some feedback from the kids...

What's it like to be back in school? "Thumbs up. It's good to be back." "It's great to have a routine." "It's great to have something to do instead of just sitting around." "I feel really happy to be back" "I'm so happy to see my friends." "It's better than homeschooling." "I feel happy, scared and excited at the exact same time." "I am glad I have some work to do now."

What are the differences this year? "We have to wash our hands all of the time." "We can't share our colours or books." "The windows are open all of the time." "We can't hug our friends like we used to." "Teachers are wearing visors but we are used to it now." "We can't play with the younger classes." "We are going outside more, which is a lot of fun, and we are using our pitch now so we have a lot more space."

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Ag léamh sa chlós

Special Feature LIFE LESS ORDINARY *Living in a pandemic*

Life in today's classroom at Colaiste Pobail Bheanntrai



Siobhán O'Sullivan is a teacher at Colaiste Pobail Bheanntrai (Bantry Community College). She teaches second year Science, fifth and sixth year Physics and sixth year Maths and is also the school's IT coordinator. Siobhán discusses life in today's classroom and how online learning is no longer the way of the future; it is now the way of the present. "It has become the new 'normal' since lockdown, offering an invaluable educational platform for the student who cannot come to school," she says.

Way ahead of lockdown; since it first opened in 2011, Colaiste Pobail Bheanntrai boasted excellent IT systems. The school is constantly upgrading and purchasing new devices and software. While most classrooms have projectors, teachers are now also requesting visualisers so they can show science, home economics and technical graphics being done in real time to their students. "As teachers, it gives us the opportunity to explain fully and answer questions from the student in a safe environment," explains Siobhán.

During lockdown, Siobhán found that a lot of her students engaged online. "Initially it was such a different, new experience of teaching and learning; but it had its benefits, as students seemed to like engaging; asked questions; and submitted work," she explains.

However there were drawbacks. "While my resources were online for the students to access before lockdown, the sharing of them in the classroom and the opportunity to explain them fully and in context is very important. While using these resources in the online classes, there was less opportunity to discuss the topic in depth and its application. Doing experiments is a fantastic way to teach so it was challenging to explain the experiments fully online. But it is a new way of communicating; a new way of teaching; and it has become part of our new normal. Teaching online can support our teaching and learning in the classroom."

CPB now uses an education platform called 'Schoolwise', which communicates all aspects

of the student's school life; students, parents and teachers share the platform.

In today's classroom, students are required to wear masks and desks have been placed apart. Good cough etiquette, social distancing, and hand washing are all part of the new routine. There are sanitisers throughout the school, fixed walking routes and staggered breaks and lunches.

There was Trojan work put in over the summer holidays by the school's lead worker representatives and staff members to ensure a safe environment for staff and students.

Siobhán says she tends to remain at the front of the room to maintain social distancing but uses interesting methodologies to keep her students engaged.

"We have discussed the fact that I can't see their facial expressions...for example, previously a student might look puzzled and I would explain the topic further or ask if they had a question; whereas now they need to be proactive and perhaps get more involved in the discussion."

"There is a loss of a type of communication from the student to me and from me to them with the wearing of the mask and distancing," she says. "I have asked the students not to take offence if I ask them to repeat

something and not to hesitate to ask me to repeat something. We have discussed the science of how the masks impact on hearing someone and we have also discussed the fact that I can't see their facial expressions...for example, previously a student might look puzzled and I would explain the topic further or ask if they had a question; whereas now they need to be proactive and perhaps get more involved in the discussion."

The students have been exceptionally good at adhering to the new restrictions. "The wearing of the masks or the revised seating is not an issue," says Siobhán. "I believe that the students do not want another lockdown happening. How they adapt in the longer-term remains to be seen. We will know more, as learning is assessed, but overall students seem to be glad to have their routine back and be given the chance to learn in school again."

One of the highlights of the new system for Siobhán is the staggered breaks and lunches. "It feels calmer, more peaceful at these times," she says. "The downside is that this has an impact on the students' life; they do not get to meet their friends from different year groups, and teams events and so on are impossible to organise."

Everyone is trying very hard but adapting to these new routines has of course tested teachers and students. "I have to remember to give the students time to sanitise before they leave the room, remind them to keep wearing the masks and observe social distancing. It can feel quite distancing, even lonely... for the students and for us."

There is a good support



TYs on tour in Bantry



In class



system in place for students. All Year Heads in the school communicate closely with their class tutors about their students. Colaiste Pobail Bheanntrai has a chaplain and a pastoral care system and on the first day of term all students had an induction day, where they were given a full explanation of the new rules and made aware of the student support system. Transition students recently went on a picnic

and walk locally to encourage bonding.

In regards to making up the learning loss from before the summer, Siobhán explains that at senior level there will be more choices on the paper for the current leaving cert students. As there will be more experiments demonstrated rather than the full class of experiments there will be more teaching time. Using all the IT available to her, Siobhán

hopes to have her class well prepared for their leaving cert exams next year.

Overall the students at Colaiste Pobail Bheanntrai are delighted to be with their peers again. "They do find the mask wearing difficult," says Siobhán "so 'mask breaks' are most welcome." Students are encouraged to take a quick break outside in order to remove their mask between classes.

Special Feature LIFE LESS ORDINARY *Living in a pandemic*

Different walks of life in the pandemic

Upheaval, pause, stressful, loneliness, isolated, chilled, normal, surviving, mindful-paradox are some of the words used to describe life in the midst of the pandemic by people in five different European countries.

As we are past the six-month mark of living with SARS-CoV-2, better known as Covid-19, freelance journalist **Tania Presutti** sets out to discover more about life in the pandemic. What has changed? What are the hopes for the future? And does it matter if you live in Ireland, Sweden, France, England or Denmark?

As Covid-19 took a serious hold of Europe – after initially breaking out in Italy in February 2020 and flooding the Italian healthcare system – leaving doctors to choose who to put on ventilators and who to pray for, several European countries introduced different models of ‘lockdown’. Within the second week of March, Denmark, Ireland and France had closed their schools, banned public gatherings, closed down hairdressers, restaurants, pubs and even St. Patrick’s day got cancelled. Sweden and England followed the route of seeking herd immunity, but as England saw roaring numbers, a lockdown was also imposed in the UK in late March.

While everybody in this article has faced the pandemic in different ways, and some have found life post-Covid-19 more challenging than others, most are in agreement that the pandemic also gave them more time for life. Time away from the pursuit of making money was instead spent picking up old interests

and getting closer to loved ones. Some found more intimacy, others got in better shape, some started cooking more – and we all got better at washing hands.

Almost everybody mentioned missing seeing family members; from **Caitlin Ruth**, 50, Timoleague, who hasn’t seen her daughter since Christmas, to **Rai Tyler**, 44, Castlelyons, who describes her life as isolated, miss-

Caitlin Ruth in Timoleague



ing the company of both friends and family. In Sweden, Nathalie, Farre and Malik haven’t hugged their parents since March.



(l-r) Anders Nedergaard in Denmark, Rosy Hayward in London, Malik Mawlayi in Sweden and Natalie Zoukatas, also in Sweden.

For **Anders Nedergaard**, 41, (Phd. Muscle Biology) in Copenhagen, Denmark, the pandemic meant less work (less income), no gym and much more time spent with his children and girlfriend. With the usual dry Danish humour, he ‘rates the pandemic a five out of seven and would recommend “The slower pace of life and a new focus on people rather than on materialistic consumerism and expensive holidays”’. But for people like **Mihoko Buffet**, 43, (stay-at-home-mom) in Annecy, France, the pandemic is nothing but a terrible ordeal. As her husband has pre-existing conditions, he is in the high-risk category, so everything in their life has been turned upside down. No more playgrounds and eating out. Everything has to be sterilised before it enters the house.

Another person who has experienced more than mild inconvenience due to the pandemic is **Emiline Christensen**, 47, (student and freelancer), Den-



mark, who lost her income for a longer period: “I had to move in order to survive financially. Since my workplaces were affected, it meant I could not work when we were under lockdown. I couldn’t pay my high rent but luckily I found a cheaper place.”

Hanna Mjöberg, 33, (accountant and yoga teacher) in Falkenberg, Sweden, gives another side to the pandemic. She describes her everyday life as pretty normal. “Living in the Swedish countryside, nothing really changed. When I teach yoga classes, I just space out the mats a bit more.”

In the English countryside, where her ‘name-twin’ **Hannah Godberg**, 77, (retired psychotherapist) resides, the stillness and silence were palpable and quite beautiful. The difficult parts were trying to make appointments, open accounts and contact with my doctor and dentist, which caused stress, and is now a new way of being. But overall my experience has not been too difficult.”

At the other end of the English experience we find **Rosy Hayward**, 48, (dental hygienist) in London, who personally knew several people who got sick with, and even lost their life to, Covid-19. “I do know people who have had it: A nephew, patients of mine at work, including a man who was in a coma for a month whilst being treated, someone who had it and lost a parent to it. A former neighbour of mine died. And more... some people I see don’t know anyone who has been affected and I got the impression they were sceptical about the extent of the problem. Yes, I know people who had it and recovered easily but some died and some were seriously ill.”

Speaking of the brighter side of life in this time in history, Rosy Hayward adds: “I liked that there was no pressure to be making progress in life, that



almost everyone was having to take it easy.”

Re-evaluating what is really important, for everyone, comes down to spending more time with loved ones, or as in Irish chef Caitlin Ruth’s case, missing someone: “I haven’t seen my Aine, my daughter, since Christmas. I’d love to be able to pop over (to London) and see her.

Malik Mawlayi, 40, (special assistant teacher, MMA instructor) in Sweden writes: “To write something positive about Covid-19 is that we have never had so much close contact with our near and beloved ones as now. We also realise who stands close to us and what we mean to each other.”

Another Swede, **Natalie Zoukatas**, 42, (gym owner) believes the pandemic has helped us sort out what’s important: “For me personally this pandemic has been a game-changer, both professionally and socially. Things and people became very real and transparent. What and who really matters in life became so much more important than all the white noise we keep feeding ourselves with everyday.”

Sport, training and fitness are also things mentioned across all the countries. With the extended focus on monitoring one’s health, due to the threat of Covid-19, it has also led many to realise how much they need regular exercise to keep fit and fight the common flu viruses.

In Drimnagh, **Aisling Daly**, 32, (student and BJJ instructor, former UFC fighter) says her life got a fair bit of disruption due to Covid-19. Her studies to become a teacher turned to online learning and her work placement got cancelled; close members of her family got Covid-19 (but are now back to health), and her sport (BJJ Brazilian Jiu Jitsu) took a huge hit from the pandemic with training cancelled for months. “Our sport was one of the last ones to open. It’s been a long



break. I coach Brazilian Jiu Jitsu to women and children. I find it very rewarding and also good fun so I missed the interactions with my students in class.”

For **Kieran McGrath**, 30, (civil and structural engineer), Dublin, the pandemic had the opposite effect on his health. Due to working remotely from home, he is sitting more and moving less on a daily basis: “My life is way less healthy, with way less physical exercise, as I rarely leave home now. I avoid gyms where I am more productive and spend more time sitting down working at home then on site now.” Kieran also says that being more aware of his health and monitoring every cough and sneeze is one of the things Covid-19 has changed for him.

“I think it has opened people’s eyes; they don’t take health for granted and understand that they have a responsibility. People will also re-evaluate things in life and maybe slow down, hopefully. I think living and knowing you can become sick or come closer to death will make us value life more and live better,” says Hanna Mjöberg, Sweden.

The future holds lots of unknowns. Mihoko Buffet, France, is genuinely worried about school start, as it is usual for her son to get sick when he starts school with all the other children: “I’m scared of the future. School starts next week and I’m very anxious about that. My son is always sick when he goes to school (especially in winter). We can’t ask the children to respect social distancing and not to play with the others. ‘Don’t touch your face, don’t touch anything outside’. Seriously it’s not possible to respect all the recommendations. I really hope someone finds a cure or vaccine very soon because I don’t want to live like this all my life!”



(l-r) Mihoko Buffet with her family in France and Hannah Mjöberg with a yoga student in Sweden.



Continued on next page...

Special Feature LIFE LESS ORDINARY *Living in a pandemic*

New health and wellbeing centre opens in Kinsale

A new health and wellbeing centre, Kinsale Health Hub is the collaboration between naturopath and nutritional therapist Louise Kane Buckley and holistic and physical therapist (Kinsale and Clonakilty) Tracy McCarthy. These are the ladies who brought Kinsale its first International Women's Day Festival in March this year. Louise and Tracy are building on their goal to unite talented health practitioners in the area to provide treatments and support services under one roof.

With a fully comprehensive services menu, there is a huge range on offer to treat the body and mind. Whole body health can only be achieved with such a combination. Plus they are putting together a full schedule of workshops and health classes ranging from baby massage and family health to reflexology for babies and children, fermenting workshops, core strength and rehabilitation classes, mindfulness classes for all ages and so much more.

So whether you're local to Kinsale or just visiting, why not treat yourself to some self-care and look out for their in-person and online offerings to support you through the worst of times and the best of times.

See www.kinsalehealthhub.com.



Kinsale Health Hub's five tips to help reduce anxiety

1. Take some control over your immune system: There are so many nutrients and tools that may help boost the immune system and regain a sense of control. Foods that you eat, enjoying nature, salt baths, massage, and simple herbs like ginger and garlic are simple tools. Find out what your own body needs to nourish you through winter.
2. Use the power of touch to help soothe the nervous system: From massage to Bach Flower remedies, reiki, reflexology, and head massage. There are so many ways we can help our nervous system to calm down and feel safe.
3. Reach out and ask for help: You are not in this on your own; everyone is experiencing these changes. We all react to

change in different ways. Ask your friends and family what they do and build yourself a toolbox of ways to soothe your reaction to worry and stress. EFT (tapping) has shown huge effect on PTSD symptoms and can be a great tool to learn.

4. Eat healthy fats: Fats are your friend: Higher dietary fat levels are associated with lower anxiety. Balancing your blood sugar is key to feeling satisfied and happier. Foods like eggs, nuts and seeds, fatty fish, avocados, and meat cooked on the bone taste delicious, but also help us to feel better.

5. Balance your bacteria in your gut. There has been so much recent research into bacteria balance and mood, especially anxiety. Consuming fermented foods like kefir, kombucha and sauerkraut can have a huge effect on your mental and physical wellbeing.

OPEN 1ST OCTOBER
Unit 7 Kinsale Commercial Park, Kinsale



Kinsale Health Hub



www.kinsalehealthhub.com

info@kinsalehealthhub.com



Different walks of life ...Cont'd from previous page

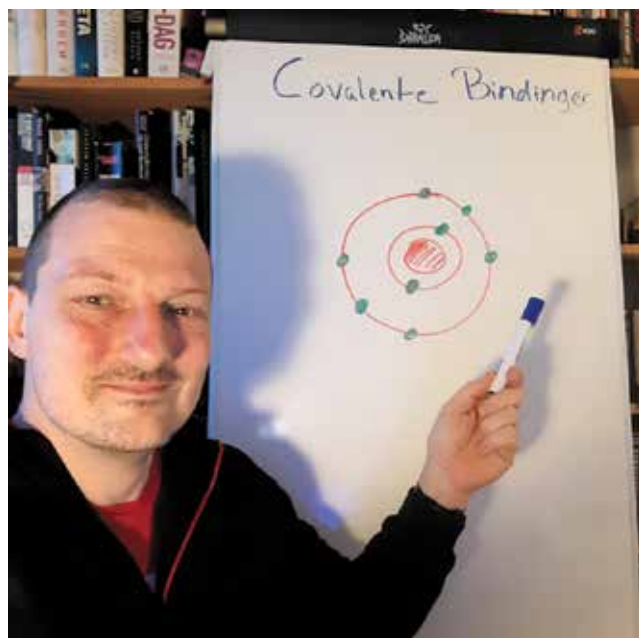
Another Frenchman, **Thibault Duschaîne**, 36, (ER nurse), think the media brought on a lot of the anxiety. "If there is a next time, we could all do with turning off the news channels, as they

added anxiety to the anxiety.," he says. "I think official daily breakdowns could be sufficient. My hope is also that we won't close the borders between our European countries again, as

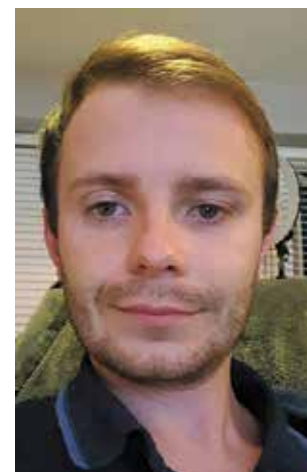
Europe is the best thing we did for ourselves."

Farre Mirzai, 35, (gym owner) in Sweden, says Covid-19 have made him face his own mortality, "I felt my foundation slipping away," he says. "Unlike someone who is working in IT for example, my income wasn't guaranteed. But then my mindset shifted, and I thought, I shouldn't think like this. I have already done a lot in my life. I have travelled to so many places and accomplished so much. Covid-19 made me think about losing people dear to me, even my own life, and it has made me realise that I'm happy with who I am and what I have done in my life. If I was to die, I would be very proud of my accomplishments. It also made me realise even more that money is worthless. The bottom line is, it's who we are that counts."

"We could be awesome," – last words of the final quote from **Peter Andersen**, 45, (science and physical education teacher) in Denmark. I chose this



Science and PE teacher Peter Andersen in Denmark.



(l-r) Aisling Daly and Kieran McGrath, both in Dublin, and Emiline Cho Hae Christensen in Denmark

quote because he speaks about something profound, I think that most of us have been – or are thinking: Thoughts of a future about a better world. Covid-19 has cemented the fact, that the world is bigger than 'us'. We are only a fraction of it and we are part of the privileged. I am aware that I am the lucky one. I live in a well-developed country with a

good health system. I am in good shape and my job is still there. But when I talk to my friends in Nepal, I can see how bad things CAN be. We tend to focus on what is happening in Europe and the US but the problems are a lot bigger in other areas of the world. Perhaps, in general, we need to open our eyes to the fact that there is a world outside what

we normally focus on. The pandemic shows us that the world is in fact one ecosystem and we are all connected.

My hope is this Covid-19 crisis shows us that our society CAN act against a challenge – if we could have the same resolve for stopping the loss of biodiversity or facing the climate challenges, we could be awesome.

Special Feature LIFE LESS ORDINARY *Living in a pandemic*



HEALTH

Hannah Dare
Organico Bantry

How to win the cold war

Last week we had an amazing live webinar with Patrick Holford – it was a fascinating evening, and it was great to hear Patrick’s insights on immunity and health and Covid. Being able to ask him questions is always fascinating, he has an interesting scientific and evidence based approach to the immune system.

In case you missed the webinar, I thought I would share some of my takeaways, because as we heard last week, there are

effective tools easily available to benefit health and help fight off viruses. If you want to know more, sign up to the Organico Newsletter and we will send you the link to the recorded webinar.

Patrick recommends taking two grams a day of vitamin C, upping that to one gram an hour if you get a sore throat or the start of a cold. He advises that up to eight grams a day is a safe and effective way to help prevent sickness.

Patrick’s advice for the onset of any cold or flu is the following, for an otherwise healthy adult:

- 1 gram of vitamin C every hour (this equates to 18-20grams in 24 hours)
- 4 Doses of Elderberry a day
- Aged Garlic (Kyolic Garlic) 1000mg 2 x a day
- Up to 60mg Zinc a day for the duration of the illness (though stop this if you have to start taking antibiotics)

And his recommendation for prevention of cold and flu’s during the winter is

- 2 grams of vitamin C a day, ideally combined with Elderberry Extract, zinc and ginger

- 1 multivitamin including 400iu vitamin D
- Plus an extra 1000iu vitamin D

If you have lung issues, you can add Quercetin to this regimen – quercetin comes from red onions, and helps heal lungs.

On the subject of acidic stomach from taking vitamin C, Patrick said “Notice that Nature puts Vitamin C in the most acidic fruits, fruits like lemons and limes, oranges and so on” and he suggested taking vitamin C in that case with some cider vinegar, to increase absorbency and ease stomach cramps.

Another nutrient we have all heard about in terms of preventing serious viral infections, is Vitamin D. Patrick said “Vitamin D isn’t like vitamin C, you can’t just take a handful of it when you’ve got a cold and the cold goes away. What you need to do is get your blood level up, certainly above 75 nmls per liter and ideally 100 nmls per liter. What Patrick does is he takes a multivitamin containing 400iu of vitamin D and tops up all winter long with an extra 1000iu a day.

Patrick also mentioned red

onions a few times – he eats a red onion every day (it can be cooked but preferably not fried till its brown) because red onions contain a very important nutrient called Quercetin. Quercetin carries Zinc into our cells, and it also helps to repair lungs. “If anyone’s been left with lung problems, vitamin C makes Collagen and Quercetin helps to repair lungs,” he said.

He also talked about taking Elderberry extract for colds and flu’s, as it is key in helping us fight off viruses, and he advised taking a dose of the extract four times a day if you have symptoms. He also addressed the concerns about Elderberry causing a Cytokine Storm, which is an immune system overreaction.

This is only a taster of the Webinar – if you want more information, you can either watch the Webinar (message us if you’d like the link)

and/or read Patrick’s latest book, called Flu Fighters.

We are disappointed to have to postpone Patrick’s 7 Secrets Workshop till the Spring, we don’t have a date yet but sometime in April I hope to be welcoming him to Bantry again. Have a good October everyone.

“there are effective tools easily available to benefit health and help fight off viruses.”



ARE YOU READY FOR WINTER?

FLU FIGHTERS

by Patrick Holford

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Colds and flu, including COVID-19, are viral diseases that a healthy immune system should be able to fight off. This book will help you boost your natural immunity with non-toxic nutrients.



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Amanda Roe

Trauma therapist
& Mind coach

Food as therapy

We all know that what we eat is linked with chronic health conditions like obesity, diabetes, blood pressure, heart disease, digestive disorders, irritable bowel syndrome and hormonal health.

But do you know that changing what you eat will improve your mood and your mental health?

In fact the father of modern psychiatry; French psychiatrist Philippe Pinel more than 200 years ago traced the cause of mental health in his psychiatric patients to the gastrointestinal system stating in 1807 ‘The primary seat of Insanity generally is in the region of the stomach and Intestines’.

Over the centuries research in this area continued and in

his book ‘The Second Brain’ Dr. Michael Gershon shares his 30 years of research of the gut and its enteric nervous system proving that the nerve cells in the gut do in fact act as a brain. Our two brains, the one in our head and the one in our bowel must co-operate. If they do not, then there is chaos in the gut and misery in the head.

There is a huge amount of new science linking poor gut health with our body’s inability to thrive physically and mentally, and how healing the gut through diet is a natural treatment for addiction, anxiety, depression, eating disorders, autism, dyspraxia, ADD, ADHD, dyslexia, and other child development problems.

American psychiatrist Dr. Kelly Brogan MD writes ‘we can address depression and other symptoms by treating, protecting and nourishing the beneficial microbes in our gut’.

From Cork Dr John Cryan Chair of Anatomy and Neuroscience UCC and Dr Ted Dinan Head of Department of Psychiatry UCC have co-authored ‘The Psychobiotic Revolution’ writing about mood, food and

the new science of the Gut-Brain Connection.

If you are curious about changing your food to improve your mood and your health then here are three simple things that you can start with

1. Eliminate processed foods and sugar from your diet: 2. Add whole foods and good fats to your diet: 3. Add fermented foods to support gut ecology.

Processed foods have various chemicals added to improve the shelf life and flavour. When referring to flavour enhancers, colours, various E numbers, additives and preservatives, Dr Campbell-Mc Bride explains ‘many of these chemicals have been conclusively shown to contribute to hyperactivity, learning disabilities, psychiatric disorders and other health issues’.

Whole foods are unprocessed and unrefined plant foods like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds that are a good source of fibre, vitamins and minerals. Good fats can be found in pasture fed meats, wild fish, eggs, nuts, seeds, olive oil, coconut oil or grass-fed ghee.

By eating probiotics in the

form of naturally fermented foods like sauerkraut, olives, kefir or unsweetened natural yogurt you are introducing beneficial bacteria, which help to restore and balance your gut flora.



It is possible to have more energy and feel happier and healthier.

If you are curious about improving your mental, physical and emotional health, I support clients to overcome cravings, addictions, control issues and emotional reasons for eating and not eating, through a range of therapies that include dietary advice, hypnotherapy and acupuncture.

Amanda 087 6331898 or email amanda@marketstclinic.com.

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ADVERTORIAL : MORGAN'S SEAFOOD KITCHEN

Tipping the scales... Morgan's Fine Fish launch healthy 'ready to cook' seafood meals

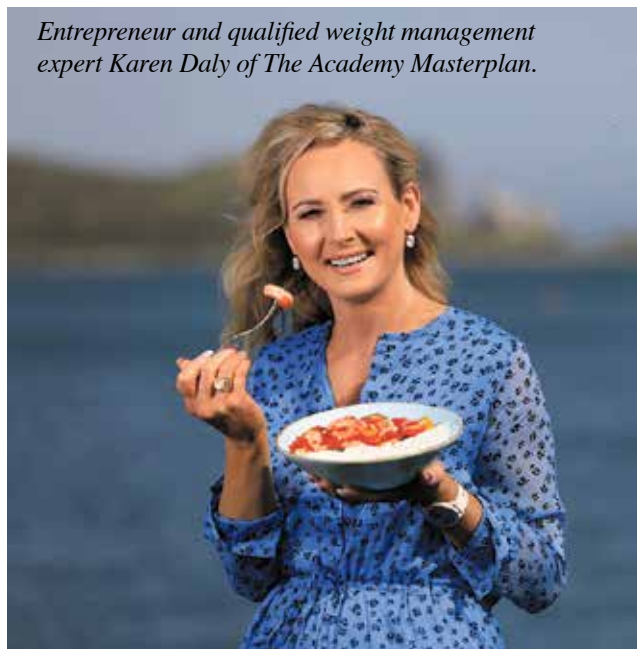


Morgan's Seafood Kitchen, an exciting new range of delicious healthy 'ready to cook' meals, recently launched with the help of entrepreneur and qualified weight management expert Karen Daly.

The innovative new range developed by Morgan's Fine Fish, who supply a number of retailers in Cork, meets the ever growing demand for quick, easy to cook nutritious meals for people on the go.

Morgan's Seafood Kitchen includes three delicious meals: Katsu Fish Curry, Spicy Lemongrass and Lime Seafood and Caribbean Prawns. Priced at €4.99, each meal contains prime pieces of fish or prawns with fresh locally sourced vegetables, basmati rice and a delicious sauce. The range is packaged in the latest recyclable 'Evolve' trays.

Gillian Morgan, R&D Product Developer at Morgan's Fine Fish explains the benefits of the range; 'From the outset, we wanted to develop an authentic and exciting seafood product



Entrepreneur and qualified weight management expert Karen Daly of The Academy Masterplan.

with clean label ingredients. We wanted to make it easier for customers, who may not have the time to prepare and cook fish, to enjoy a nutritious seafood meal in minutes. Seafood is our business and has been for 160 years. We drew from our extensive experience and developed a range that is a natural source of high protein, low in fat, has no artificial additives or flavourings and most importantly, tastes delicious'.

Faced with the challenges of promoting a new product instore due to ongoing COVID

restrictions, Morgan's Fine Fish were keen to partner with an advocate for healthy eating to help promote the range and Karen Daly, owner and founder of The Academy Masterplan was the perfect fit.

Karen decided to start The Academy Masterplan in 2015 on foot of her own four stone weight loss journey. Her online weight management business has successfully grown as has her loyal following on social media. Karen was already getting attention for her practical weight loss approach appearing



on RTE programmes Dragon's Den and Strictly Business. Karen hosts live cookery demos and workouts as well as education, motivation and support to the homes of thousands in Ireland and the UK as well as the USA, Canada, Qatar and even Australia!

'I am honoured to take on the role of brand ambassador for Morgan's Seafood Kitchen. I teach people how to eat better not less. I have always encouraged people to eat more fish

but I know many people avoid cooking it at home. Morgan's Seafood Kitchen is the perfect solution. Cooked from raw in as little as four minutes, the meals are the ultimate healthy fast food! They taste amazing! The Caribbean prawn meal is my favourite and if you like spicy food you will love this one!'

Morgan's Seafood Kitchen

is currently available in select Dunnes Stores in Dublin, Louth and Limerick and is seeking stockists in Cork. To find out more about Morgan's Seafood Kitchen and for live cookery demos and updates from Karen Daly, make sure to follow @morgansseafoodkitchen and @mydalymasterplan on Instagram.

Crookhaven cook appears on Tastes Like Home with Catherine Fulvio

Next week's episode of Tastes Like Home on RTÉ One (Monday October 5), features a face that is familiar around the West Cork village of Crookhaven, as Catherine Fulvio visits sisters Linda Kennedy in Dublin and Fiona Kennedy in San Sebastián. Since this original episode was filmed, Linda is now in West Cork where she runs the kitchen in O'Sullivan's Bar in stunning Crookhaven.

The episode looks back at Catherine's time in Spain where she visited San Sebastián and Barcelona and creates new dishes based on the flavours she tasted during her visits.

Catherine said of her Spanish experience, "San Sebastian had always been on my bucket list

and for it to be the first destination that we travelled abroad to for filming Tastes Like Home means it will always hold a special place in my heart. What's not to love about it – the food culture is outrageously good, when I close my eyes I can still savour the atmosphere, the wonderful aromas and the delicious flavours stemming from the Pinxos bars."

In this new eight part series Catherine Fulvio visits families across Ireland who show her how to make their favourite family dishes, before travelling to locations around the world to recreate these 'tastes like home' for family members now living abroad. In the first four episodes Catherine revisited Cape Town and Johannesburg



in South Africa, Vancouver and Tiny Township in Canada, Portland, Oregon and Mexico to capture individual stories, from contestants who refuse to let the

physical distance from home curb their appetite for home-cooked meal that 'Tastes Like Home'.

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A FLAVOUR OF WEST CORK RECIPE

Karen Austin

The brief Indian summer is settling into autumn and the temperature is dropping rapidly. The seasonal merry go round continues even after the strangest summer in my memory and the vegetable world carries on oblivious to the chaos which can only be a good thing.

It's time to put away the courgette recipes now as we're harvesting the pumpkins and corn. Or I should say, should have harvested the corn but the birds ate it whilst we had our heads turned. Luckily the pumpkins are safe in their armour and we are storing them for winter use.

Pumpkins need to be 'cured' once picked. This entails keeping them in a light well-ventilated place for two weeks before beginning to eat them. Curing hardens the skin, which ensures they will sit through the winter and also improves the flavour. We've harvested more than thirty pumpkins so no doubt come March we will have pumpkin fatigue and begin to look forward to courgettes again!

This month's recipe has nothing to do with pumpkins although roasted pumpkin would not go amiss stirred through this fast and comforting dish.

What we're celebrating is the mushroom season. All over Europe mushrooms are foraged and Ireland is no different, the mushrooms are out there if you know where to look and which



are safe to eat.

An easier option is the farmers' markets, which usually have someone selling a selection of mushrooms. Failing that the supermarkets always have at least two varieties that have been cultivated and will provide that earthy umami flavour.

Here is a recipe that I made when I had a small bowl of borlotti beans sitting on the kitchen counter that had been picked a few days previously. It was too small to have any real purpose but too valuable to waste. A can of borlotti beans would work just as well. I had a bag of mixed mushrooms from the farmers market – shiitake, oyster and portobello and then I discovered a tub of Glenilen crème fraiche in the fridge – surely the creamiest and tastiest, all cooked up with some orzo, comforting and delicious – if little blonde – it was on the table in ten minutes.

Any mushrooms would do the job.

Orzo is pasta, shaped like

rice, which cooks up plump and velvety and wraps itself around flavours.

The awning for our shop has arrived in time for the changing weather. The bright yellow colour is like a ray of sunshine to queue under, especially if sheltering from rain. We are happy to take orders and also have a good supply of orzo if you want to try the recipe below.

Serves 2

Borlotti, Mushrooms and Orzo

Ingredients:

- 400g cooked borlotti beans – or one can drained and rinsed
- 200g orzo
- 300g mixed mushrooms
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped
- 2 heaped tablespoons crème fraiche
- a little chopped parsley

Method:

Put a saucepan of water to boil to cook the pasta

Slice the mushrooms and chop the garlic

When the water boils add a heaped teaspoon of salt and the orzo. Cook for 5-7 minutes – check the packet for cooking time

Heat a large sauté pan. Add the butter and olive oil and as soon as the butter melts add all the mushrooms and stir well. Keep the heat high and stir the mushrooms every minute until they almost begin to brown. Add the borlotti beans then stir in the chopped garlic, cook for one minute longer. Take the pan off the heat.

At this stage the orzo should be cooked. Drain it and add it to the pan.

Stir in the crème fraiche and parsley and you're ready to go.

Happy Autumn Days
Karen

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people Lifestyle

Bantry Bay Lions Club

The Bantry Bay Lions conducted a bucket collection on Saturday, September 5 at SuperValu and Lidl in Bantry. A total of ~415.63 was donated, which was an excellent response from the public. The club thanks all who contributed. Proceeds from this collection will be allocated to Bantry Bay Lions' charity fund and will be distributed locally for flood relief and the homeless.

The Bantry Bay Lions welcomed the Roscommon Lions to

Bantry on the morning of September 16. They were supporting the Lecarrow Lazars Cycle Club who were cycling from Mizen to Malin to raise funds for the Darragh Kenny Memorial Fund; and also came to support the Lough Ree Access fundraising campaign for a boat based in Ballyleague, Lanesboro, which will be used to transport wheelchair users from all over the country around the Roscommon lake and further afield. SuperValu kindly provided bacon and sausage rolls to the

riders.

The Bantry Bay Lions Club is a non-profit organisation and is affiliated to the Lions Club International Foundation (LCIF), which has 100 years of service. Lions are dedicated to giving back to the community and supporting those in need at home and abroad. All members are volunteers. To learn more about the Bantry Bay Lions you are cordially invited to visit their website at www.bantrybaylions.com or attend their monthly zoom meeting.

Bio Oil Gel can help eczema sufferers

Managing and preventing flare ups when you have an inflammatory skin condition can be a minefield with many of the potential causes outside of your control. Environmental factors, stress and even the cold you caught from a colleague can cause a flare up of atopic eczema in sufferers sometime requiring antibiotics or topical steroidal creams to ease discomfort.

Protecting and nourishing your skin when it is not inflamed is essential in preventing these flares up and reducing their severity.

Bio-Oil Dry Skin Gel has been specially formulated using 30 years of research to help dry skin conditions such as eczema, not only to provide relief from dry itchy skin but to actively protect and improve skin condition to reduce the severity of future flares and how long they last. Our skin's protective barrier is made up of oils that prevent moisture loss and bacteria from penetrating and maintaining this water repellent layer is even more important for eczema sufferers whose skin barrier is much more fragile. Oil based products supple-



ment the skin's natural protective oils to help maintain this protective barrier, and significantly reduce the rate of moisture loss. Available in pharmacies.

Eye creams for all budgets



INSIDE OUT BEAUTY

Sherna Malone

Skincare and beauty expert Sherna Malone shares her knowledge and expertise of all things beauty – from skin care do's and don'ts to the latest products out there.

The first signs of ageing often become visible around the eyes and it's no surprise really as the delicate skin surrounding the eyes is thinner and made up of less collagen and elastin compared to the rest of the face. Coupled with the lack of sebaceous glands in this area means it's prone to dryness too. Throw in near constant movement through smiling and blinking, is it any wonder that the eye area is particularly susceptible to signs of ageing. To help camouflage these signs, the eye area often needs an extra collagen and hydration hit, along with some anti-ageing big guns like retinol and vitamin C, to tighten and smooth the skin's appearance. Other key ingredients also needed to help smooth and hydrate include peptides, ceramides, hyaluronic acid, and caffeine.

When it comes to eye creams there's a whole host of options on the market, which can sometimes make choosing the

right one for you and your eye concerns a bit of a minefield! If you think you need to up your anti-ageing game with an eye cream, here's my round up of eye creams for all budgets to help with fine lines, wrinkles, puffiness, and dark circles. Make sure to pick the right one for you and remember, when applying, avoid any vigorous rubbing, apply a small amount of product on your ring finger and smooth below the eye, over the crow's feet area and pat onto the brow bone just below your eyebrows.

The Ordinary Caffeine Solution 5% + EGCG - Counteract dark circles and puffiness with the 5% Caffeine Solution + EGCG from The Ordinary. Delivering a highly concentrated dosage of Caffeine and EGCG (a potent polyphenol found in green tea) it's basically the equivalent of a really good night's sleep in a bottle! This lightweight serum rapidly absorbs into the delicate eye contour to help reduce the appearance of discolouration and alleviate symptoms of fatigue and stress. Skin feels refreshed and lifted with enhanced hydration and a more even tone, €6.95 available in selected pharmacies nationwide and online.

The Inkey List Brighten-I Eye Cream - An instant effect eye treatment cream that is light and gentle and gives your eyes an instant pop of luminosity, while refreshing tired eyes and brightening the eye area over time. It's enriched with Brightenyl, an active ingredient that boasts 4x more brightening properties than vitamin C, to balance skin tone and minimise the appearance of pigmented spots. Paired with blurring and hydrating properties to help with dryness and puffiness, this cream smooths the contours of your eyes for a brighter, well-rested look. It has a metal

applicator tip, which is lovely and cooling upon application, €11.99, available in selected pharmacies nationwide and online.

CeraVe Eye Repair Cream - Fast-absorbing, non-greasy and suitable for sensitive eyes, CeraVe's Eye Repair Cream melts quickly into skin, controlling the release of ingredients to help repair and restore skin's protective barrier. Enriched with three essential ceramides, hyaluronic acid and a marine and botanical complex, the eye cream visibly reduces the look of dark circles and puffiness to leave the eye contour looking brighter and smoother, and for just €13.95, it won't make too much of a dent in your purse, available in selected pharmacies nationwide and online.

Eucerin Anti-Age Volume-Filler Eye Cream SPF15 - This eye cream came on my radar from the wonderful Irish Beauty Fairy, Sally Foran. Ophthalmologically-tested, it delivers a more targeted approach to visibly plumping even deep wrinkles. The anti-ageing formula contains collagen-boosting peptides to support skin's structure and hyaluronic acid to improve moisture retention. Working deep down and on the surface, the volumising formula smooths the skin, targeting lines caused by dehydration, particularly those found around the corner of the eyes, and restores volume for a youthful, rejuvenated appearance, whilst also protecting from damaging UV rays, €27, available in selected pharmacies nationwide and online.

Paula's Choice Ceramide-Enriched Firming Eye Cream - This hydrating eye cream visibly smooths under eye wrinkles with a concentrated blend of five replenishing ceramides, clinically proven retinol, two peptides and four forms of brightening vitamin

C. It noticeably improves the appearance of wrinkles, renews the feel of firmness, and promotes radiant looking skin in the eye area. Nourishing emollients like squalene also help to maintain lasting hydration and protection, €46, available online from cloud10beauty.com

NeoStrata Bionic Eye Cream Plus - This powerful eye cream from NeoStrata strengthens the delicate eye area to help hide dark under eye circles, while a peptide blend and natural yeast extract diminish dark circles at their source. Lactobionic acid, a potent antioxidant, helps prevent collagen breakdown, smoothing lines from the inside out so skin appears firmer and younger while green tea and cucumber extracts reduce puffiness and soothe the eye area. Vitamins A, C and E also provide additional antioxidant protection. It packs quite a punch, €60 available in selected NeoStrata stockists nationwide and online from neostrata.ie

Clarins Total Eye Lift - new to the Clarins family, this exceptional eye care serum has been proven to help you achieve total eye radiance in just 60 seconds! Developed for all women and all ages, it combats puffiness, dark circles, fine lines, wrinkles, and firmness. With 94 per cent ingredients from natural origins, this has a light, super smooth balm like texture, is quickly absorbed and suitable for sensitive eyes and contact lens wearers. In satisfaction tests carried out, 80 per cent of women found the eye contour area lifted, 86 per cent found the skin around the eye looked firmer and 80 per cent saw an improvement in the look of under-eye bags, €68, available in selected stores and pharmacies nationwide and online from clarins.ie.

Murad Retinol Youth Renewal Eye Serum - This clinically-proven treatment serum combines Murad's potent yet gentle triple whammy 'Retinol Tri-Active Technology' featuring a fast-acting retinoid, a time-released retinol and a retinol booster with a nutrient rich marine kelp complex that together minimises the look of wrinkles and crow's feet while lifting, firming and visibly brightening dark circles. Fast performance with visible results, 93 per cent saw a reduction in lines and wrinkles in just 4 weeks and more revitalised, youthful-looking eyes. Tested safe for sensitive skin, this can be used all around eyes (including lids!) with 360 application. €79, available in selected salons nationwide and online.

All details of my facial treatments, skincare consulta-

tions and classes can be found on www.shernamalone.ie. To make an appointment, call

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people Lifestyle

We all love a bit of comfort



IMAGE

Louise O'Dwyer
Image Consultant

Are toes in summer – there is nothing quite like it, until there is a chill in the air; then your toes look for comfort inside big thick fleece socks. All it takes is two chilly nights in a row and fleece sock sales dramatically go up. They are as cheap as chips yet the feel good factor is enormous. While there are a multitude of changes happening globally, the common denominator in fashion circles is that everyone is looking to be more mindful in our consumption and buy items with longevity in mind. I guess we all do need to be more conscious and avoid any trends that may have a short shelf life. We need to focus on styling tweaks that we can achieve with classy autumn pieces or updates that will last far beyond just this season.

While designers always show outrageously flamboyant clothes on the runway, the sudden global shift has caused a significant change and forced that they now show a selection of

'actual' wearable pieces, more than any other time before. This is a wonderful reflection of the customer's desire to make more considered purchases with sustainability in mind, invest now and wear forever.

As clothes wearers, we have all decided to insist that our wardrobes work harder for us than ever before. We want well-loved pieces to be open to being styled in many different ways and also, across multiple seasons. So what do you spend money on now that will last? Boots, outerwear and glorious knitwear will always top the 'Fall' list. You might call boots the bread and butter of autumn attire as they fall in under the 'staple' category. Ankle boots are still as big as ever and available in a wide variety of colours. I guess we think and think again before we buy boots with a slightly higher heel because our social life has changed dramatically. The flatter the boot, the faster they are selling. There will always be the exception to the rule; a cool suede boot with a decent heel in a glorious shade, with blue denim jeans and a chunky jumper is very much it. This chic outfit will take you from 'girly lunch' to afternoon shopping and on to a late dinner with no fuss, just a very classy and understated finesse.

Understated luxury is the keyword in many collections that are filling up our favourite boutiques; it's all about top quality knits, cashmere and neutral tones. Knit dresses and jumper dresses are making a return as a wardrobe essential, just throw it on and ready to go. They might not suit every body shape but they do look really cute with tights and boots.

Victoria Beckham gets it very right with her cutout ribbed wool-blend turtleneck midi dress; it is absolutely gorgeous and with the ever-so-gorgeous price of £1,150!



Silk separates are finding their way into our hearts and our wardrobes. There is nothing quite like that feeling of luxury, that gentleness and elegance that can only be found in silk next to your skin. I've spotted a few glorious silk bow tie blouses that will dress up jeans and have you ready for any classy event... Although it might be harder to find the events to go than the blouses this year! Might I suggest that you keep an eye on any photographic exhibitions or artists who are showing their collections; it's a lovely way to spend your free time, support someone local (even if you don't buy – spread the word) and an opportunity to get dressed up. Some are by appointment only to keep numbers down with current restrictions

but there is nothing stopping two or three of you from going together and having a bite to eat somewhere after. There are plenty of incredible artists and photographers around West Cork so get planning with your friends.

Comfort will always be key but this year it seems to be taking the lead, as loungewear is selling phenomenally well. The focus is on fitted silhouettes, not slouchy baggy bits. Merino wool hoodies worn with sleek leggings, classy runners and a cashmere fitted coat on top should give you an idea of how fashion is incorporating elegance with comfort... and pulling it off exceptionally well.

Big boxy blazers have made a comeback with many buying online in re-sale stores. If you have the confidence to up-style a big jacket that you already have, just go for it. Prada re-released their grey wool blazers and added a black belt around the middle. It's a great look, a confident look!

Sexy is back but not peeled on bodycon; there is a big shift towards fitted silhouettes but with a longer hemline and a relaxed feel thanks to knitted fabrics. This is a more elegant version of bodycon, figure-enhancing rather than figure revealing. Team with second skin boots to keep all the lines clean and smooth.

Capes, capecoats and ponchos are big outerwear items – from tweed to fringing, everything works. The look is very much 'large country estate house lounging' but I'm sure that we can all pull it off right at home or walking down the street, the most important thing is that you get out and get moving 'no matter what'.

Statement collars have been welcomed by the masses, the ideal fashion statement for any video call. They make an impact; there is no doubt about that.



The 'Boho-chic' kind of easy luxe with a folky twist is brilliantly featured with intricate precious embroidery and rich fabrics taking over. While some of the dresses can be toned down for anyone to wear, the choice of footwear will decide whether you are on the bohemian cusp or not. Thick chunky boots or Doc Martins will, most definitely, seal the deal.

Make sure that you have some really colourful thick knit chunky jumpers; they are a real fun addition to your wardrobe and are sure to sell out fast. Retire any scraggy hats and invest in some new ones; after all, for many months going forward, they could be your most-seen crowning glory. Always choose colours that make your eyes pop. Big wrap-around scarves

are 'the bee's knees', they are exactly what you need this time of the year so raid your winter stash now and get ready for all sorts of outdoor adventures... then make those adventures happen!



Enjoy the changing season; the one thing that you can always rely on is CHANGE. Learn to adapt as quickly as you would change your shoes or your coat. The last few months has shown us that at times we need to embrace uncertainty, not recoil as a result of it. It's still a wonderful world out there and it's a better place because you are in it!



ADVERTORIAL : CNM

"Switching to a plant-based diet changed my life"

By Adelle Adams, CNM
Health Coach Graduate

I was overweight, exhausted and unhappy. I knew it was a sign to reflect on what was important and how my priorities needed to change.

I was in an incredibly demanding profession as a Simulation and Training Consultant in the Aerospace and Defence arena, which often involved working away from home for up to weeks (or even months) at a time. I was making poor dietary choices and it was starting to take its toll on my health.

To some people this lifestyle was acceptable but for me this

wasn't the case. I started out by making small changes, like moving more and eating better.

When I switched to a plant-based diet, I began to feel more energetic and like my old self. I lost over 30 pounds and even completed my first half marathon in my 40s.

I really enjoyed learning about the positive effects of good nutrition and being more active. I had seen the College of Naturopathic Medicine (CNM) at a number of expos over the last few years and I was interested in how I could take my knowledge further.

What attracted me to CNM was its naturopathic 'food

first' approach. Discovering that CNM had launched their Health Coach diploma with a programme that supported these principles, including anatomy and physiology, nutrition and fitness, was fantastic. I felt the course was made just for me, so I jumped at it!

All the course modules were comprehensive and the tutors were extremely supportive and knowledgeable. The content made me curious to examine the impact of the lifestyle decisions we make every day. The practical client coaching sessions were invaluable and really brought the whole programme to life.

I'm thrilled to be practicing as a Health Coach in my own business, AdamsEve Health & Wellness, where I provide individual coaching, independent consultancy, corporate workshops and group coaching programmes. Not only is it a career which offers flexibility and work-life balance, it also enables me to help others make positive and long-lasting dietary and lifestyle changes. Gaining my Health Coach diploma has been a fantastic investment.



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Special Feature CREATING A COSY WINTER HOME

A forever home

Niamh Whitty purchased her home in Clonakilty a little over a year ago. Able to see the potential in the four-bedroom 1930s farmhouse that was still firmly stuck in the past, the property photographer from Longford, who has lived in West Cork for a number of years, had the creativity and knowhow needed to bring a project like this to fruition. In Niamh's vision, walls would be knocked, carpets pulled up and wallpaper taken down. By the end of the renovation, the traditional farmhouse, converted to a three-bedroom, would exude warmth and tranquillity. Light now dances on walls that before were cloaked in shadow.

"Cosy, modern, country chic...confused!" is how Niamh laughingly describes the interior.

Niamh started the renovation project in September 2019 – immediately after purchasing through local auctioneer Hodnett Forde – hoping to be finished in time for Christmas. "My expectations were just a bit unrealistic," she says. "These kind of projects always take longer than you think. And then of course we had lockdown too to contend with."

Niamh employed Clonakilty-based builder Frank

Burke to do the renovation. "He got me straight away," she says "Frank said he'd make it cosy for me, which is exactly what I wanted. I couldn't fault him, he was very flexible, and although we did go over budget, this was mostly due to a few unexpected surprises along the way." Fortunately for Niamh, when her bank was unable to grant a loan due to her being self-employed, Clonakilty Credit Union offered the extra finance she needed to finish her forever home.

The entire house was insulated, plastered, replumbed and rewired.

One of the main issues Niamh had with the farmhouse was the stairs opening into the living area. This opening was closed off and the stairs redirected into the hallway. "It almost put me off buying the house but I'm really glad it didn't," she says. "Anything is possible once you set your mind to it."

The house had been reroofed a few years ago, which was a big selling point.

The existing farmhouse kitchen consisted of just a few presses and a sink. Niamh decided to knock the wall between the kitchen and living area, which really opened up the space. She also put in double glass doors from the kitchen into the courtyard area so that natural light could flood the space. When the ceiling came down during the renovations, Niamh decided to use it to her advantage and raised the ceiling height in the new kitchen area. "It changed

Continued on next page...

Niamh's kitchen and living room: Before, during and after!



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Special Feature CREATING A COSY WINTER HOME

A forever home ...Cont'd from previous page

everything," she says.

The room off the new living space became a smart office with the stained glass originally over the front door repurposed as an interior window. It's these little nods to the past that give the house its charming character and prove that old can very successfully marry with new. Niamh had the original kitchen door rebuilt around a piece of glass reclaimed from a church and it now separates the kitchen from the hallway. "The glass was free but rebuilding the door cost me a small fortune," she says. "It was worth it for the

kaleidoscope of light the glass throws out."

The double doors from the kitchen open out onto a courtyard area with a collection of old stone sheds that used to house a smokery and now ooze potential. "A future project," says Niamh pragmatically. "When funds have built up again. The first thing I need to do is knock the one that has a tree growing out through its roof!"

The floor is uniform throughout the house, covered in grey laminate, and Niamh has painted all of the walls white

with pops of colour in carefully chosen places.

The hallway, which used to be four different levels, is now completely wheelchair accessible. Off the hallway, behind a sliding door is a good size bathroom where a tub is revealed; at the end of the hallway is the sunlit master bedroom with walk-in wardrobe and views of the garden – the only sound is the birds.

Upstairs, the two bedrooms are just as bright and inviting. The beautiful white woodwork on the ceilings is the result of hours of caulking and paint-

ing by Niamh. Currently the bedrooms are being used as storage but once she finds some nice bookcases, the boxes will empty.

The privacy enjoyed by the garden was very appealing when Niamh first viewed the property. "I'm really looking forward to getting stuck into the overgrown beds," shares the keen gardener. She has already introduced some of her own favourites; the cosmos and gypsophila planted over the summer are still flowering happily.

Niamh finally moved in once

Covid restrictions relaxed a little; and while the major parts of the renovation were complete, there was only one working socket, no floor coverings in most rooms, bare plaster on most walls and a house that was still drying out. She didn't mind at all, she was so happy to be in! Today there is still lots of cosmetic work to be done and a few bits and pieces of furniture to be sourced, like a sofa bed and a bookcase. At time of writing, she had just purchased a new coffee table from Sheehy's of Clonakilty and Bandon.

Niamh's advice on furnish-

ings is to wait before purchasing until you find something you really love and then save up if you have to, in order to acquire it. She also says don't be afraid to fight for what you want; talk to your tradespeople.

When she's not working on her own home, Niamh is busy taking photographs of other houses. Niamh's photography business is Picture It Sold and she works with estate agents and private clients to bring out the best in each property. www.pictureitsold.ie.

All photos by Niamh Whitty.



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2 Bed 2 Bath c. 1,000 sq ft
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CLODAGH, DRIMOLEAGUE
€265,000

3 Bed 1 Bath c. 1,300 sq ft
Renovated in recent years with a warm, bright & airy interior. Features incl. an office area on the landing & vegetable garden outside. On c. 1 acre of gardens with undulating countryside views.



GALEWOOD HOUSE, BALLYDEHOB
€470,000

4 Bed 5 Bath c. 2,900 sq ft
Impressive residence on c. 2.2 acres with detached studio/garage & double stable block. It boasts a modern & bright interior with generous room proportions. Within 3km of Ballydehob.

Meet the Agent

Name Séan Carmody
Company Charles McCarthy
Estate Agents & Auctioneers



When and why did you get into the industry?

I previously worked in finance but I'd always had an interest in property and the property trade. So, I was delighted when the opportunity arose in 2014 to join the Charles McCarthy team with a view to become a licensed property service provider. I was able to apprentice in the trade while obtaining my IPAV qualifications through part-time education, and then to go on further to become a property valuer.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I enjoy the variety of it; meeting different people from all walks

of life, discussing their future plans or project ideas. I also like that you're constantly learning. There are always new things to find out and situations to take lessons from. No two deals are the same in this job.

Why should I choose you as my estate agent?

We pride ourselves on the variety of property we sell and treating every client in the same efficient and experienced manner. In 2018, the company celebrated 50 years in business. We have an extensive knowledge of West Cork property and we strive to do our utmost for our clients. We are always on hand to help in any way we can to achieve the sale of your property.

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

Buyers and sellers certainly seem to be more concentrated and definitive in their decisions. There are a lot of people eager to make the move; and things like good broadband and office space in the home are of course a huge draw to people looking to relocate and be able to work from home. But it's also the quality of life here; you can have an idyllic rural or coastal property and still be a short

drive from a large town where you can do all your various errands in one stroll around the town. But should you need your city fix, Cork City centre is still easily accessible by car or public transport.

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

Sellers not having their property in order from a conveyancing point of view. Simple things like boundary rectifications as a result of folio map digitalisations can often delay or even lose a sale for a vendor. Before listing a property, we advise clients to contact their solicitor and make sure their property details are in order, title deeds are readily available and draft contracts prepared. All these things can help prevent any unnecessary delays.

What is your outlook of the property market for 2021?

I think the 2021 property market looks very positive. I don't think we will see any particular increase in property prices in West Cork but certain properties may garner more interest than others. With such uncertain times though, it is difficult to say how things will go. Property markets can be hard to predict at the best of times, but at the moment we are feeling optimistic.

Special Feature CREATING A COSY WINTER HOME

Bring the beauty of Ireland into your home with Colourtrend's new palette of 28 shades at Tom Sheehy's



Colourtrend, Ireland's iconic paint brand, has launched a stunning new palette featuring 28 new shades as part of their 2020 Contemporary Collection, and all are available at Tom Sheehy's in Clonakilty. Updated every three to four years to evolve with trends in colour and modern life, the Contemporary Collection's new shades are a

mix of luxurious neutrals and vibrant colours, split across four inherently Irish themes.

Taking inspiration from elements of modern Ireland, the four themes consist of The Irish Landscape, Architectural Ireland, Cultural Ireland and Nostalgic Ireland. Whether it's to inspire, calm or excite, each colour has a purpose and a story, capturing one or more of

these themes, all while celebrating the unappreciated role of colour in our everyday life.

Trends show that sea greens, muted heathers and skin tone terracotta's are significant colours to watch out for this season. Pictured are some other beautiful shades to consider:

Lowland an effortlessly elegant neutral shade is the perfect alternative to grey, as it equally

installs a sense of calmness to a space, making it the perfect choice for a restful space. This beautiful shade is inspired by the limestone landscape of the Irish midlands.

Standing Tall embodies the most common colour observed on a typical Irish day. This deep shade of olive green is naturally impactful but with a soft green undertone that is easy on the

eye, making it an ideal choice for a dining or kitchen space.

City Dusk is a stunning autumnal shade that adds instant depth and a cosy vibe to a space through its warm tones. Capturing the twilight of muted mauves, it is inspired by the saturated sunset skies of our cityscapes.

The 28 new luxurious shades join Colourtrend's iconic

Contemporary Collection and are available in three interior finishes; interior matt, ceramic matt and soft sheen, in addition to three trim finishes; eggshell, satin and gloss.

Colourtrend ranges from €75.00 - €82.50 per 5 litres. Visit Sheehy's on Atsna Square, Clonakilty to pick up sample pots to try at home.

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or chartered building surveyor.

Building your own home gives you a huge amount of flexibility – it lets you choose the design that precisely suits your needs now and into the future. You can decide on layout, room sizes and design features to suit you project.

Our Mortgage Specialist at Bank of Ireland Jerry Shorten has great knowledge of completing self-build mortgages and the expertise to bring you through the mortgage journey



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Special Feature CREATING A COSY WINTER HOME

Glentree provides big city choice in the heart of West Cork

Already boasting a 12,000 sq ft showroom, the completion of a new, expanded storeroom last year couldn't have come at a better time for Glentree Furniture & Carpets in Dunmanway. This extra space enabled husband and wife team, Paul di Rollo and Evelyn Keane, to order in much bigger volume from suppliers than previously, and ensures they can offer both competitive prices and the quantity of stock needed to meet the unprecedented demand of recent months.

Being located at the heart of West Cork – and offering plenty of space to roam and browse – Glentree has welcomed customers from all corners. With such a wide choice of brands and styles in sofas, beds, dining and flooring and knowledgeable service, few leave without finding exactly what they came for. Subsequently there is hardly a road in West Cork that a Glentree delivery vehicle hasn't travelled in recent months.

From talking with her customers, Evelyn has noted that, "With so much time on our hands this year whole houses have been done up. People have put a huge effort into making their space a welcoming retreat and many customers are now replacing furniture that they realised had become tired or downright uncomfortable from use over the years."

"Whilst we make sure to also stock some traditional styles, contemporary is by far the most popular choice in furniture now as it suits every home, from new builds to traditional farmhouses. Customers want to see modern styles that are made with beautiful materials and they want to be able to find that in West Cork, a demand we are absolutely catering for."

Evelyn also has an eye for choosing more unusual pieces that are dotted throughout the store. "Whatever the taste of a customer coming through the doors – traditional, contemporary or slightly quirky – there's something here that will catch

their eye."

Sofas, armchairs and corner suites takes centre-stage in Glentree's showroom, just as the suite is the centre-piece of any living room. A bestseller is The Savoy, available as a sofa, armchair or corner unit. "It's supremely comfortable and comes with or without a reclining function," explains Evelyn. "We first ordered it in two colours of leather and the model was so successful that we quickly expanded the range to include several styles of fabric including the popular stain-resistant microfibre!"

"Our Michigan corner suite is also enduringly popular. Corner suites remain a favourite with Irish families for two reasons: it's a very social seating arrangement and it takes up much less space than a traditional sofa and armchair arrangement – this leaves much more wall space in a sitting room and maximises seating in a small den."

New instore this season is the Scandinavian designed Fendi; a modular suite in many sizes that can be arranged to suit any space. It comes with a movable headrest and a very discreet optional reclining function.

Evelyn explains that, "Whilst the model we have in the showroom is in a beautiful blue velvet, as with all our suites, you are not limited to just what is on the floor. You can mix and match many combinations of fabrics, colours



New this season is the modern modular Fendi suite (above) whilst the Berkley (left) brings a retro style.

and styles to achieve a unique look that reflects your personal taste."

If 'retro' is more your style, The Berkley sofa in luxurious teal or midnight blue velvet



The Michigan corner suite is an enduringly popular choice for families.



will certainly catch your eye. Alternatively, the Stressless London chair and footstool, in tan leather with elegant chrome spider legs, also brings a taste of 1950s glamour.

"You can mix and match many combinations of fabrics, colours and styles to achieve a unique look that reflects your personal taste."

Dining tables have never been so multi-functional as in recent months, catering for mealtimes, schoolwork and remote working. If you're considering retiring a scratched and wobbly table, and replacing it with something built to last, then have a walk around Glentree's dining section.



The cool but comfortable London chair and footrest by Stressless.



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Special Feature CREATING A COSY WINTER HOME

Glentree Furniture & Carpets ...Cont'd from previous page

A standout here is The Regal, a solid oak farmhouse table whose chunky cross legs provide a modern edge. It comes with matching chairs and bench and is perfect for

busy mealtimes. For a classic dining room, The Malmo is a good option, combining a solid oak top with sleek black metal base. There are also tables with scratch-resistant finishes that



The Regal table set is traditional with a twist.



The Children's Department.



See a huge selection in the Carpet and Flooring Department.



Evelyn and Paul have a wealth of experience to help you find the right fit for your home.

can withstand all and every non-dining related use!

Beyond dining is Glentree's carpet and flooring department, where there is an extensive range of carpets, lino and wooden flooring to see and touch. As remote working takes hold in West Cork, Evelyn is seeing lots of customers who have repurposed rooms and see a change of flooring as essential to that: "Carpet can warm up a cold dining room that has become a home office or help soundproof a room. A perfect choice would be our stunning range of high-pile wool neutrals but all of our carpets are warm, very hardwearing and easy to clean.

"Alternatively a bedroom might become an office/treatment room and require laminate or hardwood flooring. While light and medium washed oaks remain a top seller for us, walnut is a lovely choice to provide an interesting contrast to pale furniture and walls."

All flooring from Glentree comes with a 10-year guarantee and is fitted by expert local fitters with over 20 years experience.

Another way to ensure you have a cosy place to retreat to on dark winter nights is to look at your bedroom. Would a divan bed with a headboard in a luxurious fabric be the ticket or would an oak frame suit the space more? Glentree has a huge department at the rear of the showroom that is ideal for viewing beds, wardrobes, chest of drawers and side tables in room arrangements.... and for trying out mattresses.

Glentree stocks a wide range of quality mattresses at different price points including two Irish-made brands, Respa and The Natural Sleep Company. "We display a huge amount to try because everybody's needs are different," explains Evelyn. "From support level required to temperature preferences. For example some love a warming memory foam top layer but others will go for a cooling gel. We talk the customer through all the different options and ensure they make the right choice for a good night's sleep for years to come."

Another tip for creating a calming boudoir is to look at your storage; many of Glentree's divan beds come with an astonishing amount of hidden space underneath and there is also a display of space-saving German-engineered sliding wardrobes with numerous options in sizes, storage configuration and finishes.



Try every mattress in the Bedding Department to find your perfect match.

Relatively new to the showroom is the dedicated children's bedroom area where you will find other space saving solutions such as triple bunks (double below, single on top) and the ingenious Mid Sleeper which incorporates a bed, with a built-in locker, bookshelf, ladder and pull out desk...designed for box rooms everywhere!

In your quest for a cosy home, don't forget the important finishing touches of lighting, rugs, pictures and throws, all of which you will also find displayed throughout the showroom.

The Glentree Furniture & Carpets showroom is situated in Brookpark, on the Clonakilty Road, Dunmanway so make

some time this month to visit and browse. The company has a well-deserved reputation for quality, service and exceptional value for money and the team is always willing to share their knowledge and expertise.

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Special Feature CREATING A COSY WINTER HOME

A home that was worth the wait

Good things come to those who wait and so, after over a decade hiatus from site purchase to build completion, the O'Donovan family finally moved into their perfect house in Clonakilty just in time for Christmas 2019.

Kevin O'Donovan and Sinead Hallahan have been married for 12 years and are both self-employed in Clonakilty town; Kevin is co-owner of Scannell's Bar and Sinead owns Gooseberry Boutique. They are parents to four children, evenly split between boys and girls, and have two dogs thrown into the mix.



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When the couple were first married, they owned a small house in Clonakilty town but, as their family grew, they moved to a larger rented house in the countryside before starting to build their 'forever home' in June of 2018 on a 0.6 acre site at the end of a quiet cul-de-sac just five miles from town.

Kevin explains that, "We actually bought the site 12 years ago with the intention of selling our town house to fund the build. I'm from the area and my elderly parents live just a half a mile away. Unfortunately the crash happened soon after we purchased and our house went into negative equity so we had to wait it out. Eventually we sold at a good price in December 2018, which finally enabled us to start the build."

As for so many, the main challenge was getting approval for a mortgage first day. Then of course as happens so often the project did go over budget. "We expected it because of the design choices we made during the project," explains Kevin. "However we were optimistic about finding a source of extra finance to cover it and were proven right when we approached Clonakilty Credit Union for a loan."

Sinead's sister Sharon of Sharon Brown Designs drew up the plans and did all the hard work to get planning permis-

sion, which was granted on the first application. Once planning was granted, the couple then put the project out to tender to local builders and chose Gilbert O'Sullivan.

The result is a building that mixes old and new; the house looks like a traditional two-storey farmhouse with a single storey extension. It has four generous bedrooms, two en-suites, a family bathroom, open-plan living area and a small TV room. There is also a downstairs

toilet with washbasin and a utility room off the kitchen area. The interior is a very simple, modern and unfussy style that reflects the couple's taste and laidback approach to life.

"We wanted a house that would provide enough space as the kids grow into teenagers," Kevin says. "We thought about little things that would suit our way of life such as installing an outdoor shower on the garage wall for when we return from the nearby beach."



Special Feature CREATING A COSY WINTER HOME

A home that was worth the wait...Cont'd from previous page

Kevin and Sinead put a lot of store in using local trades and suppliers. They spent time researching and taking advice from the builders on all the products they bought for their home and were delighted to be able to source almost everything in Clonakilty.

"The bathroom fixtures and fittings, plywood, steel, ironmongery, doors and more are from West Cork Building, the tiles are from J&T Tiles, carpets are from Sheehy's ("Séan in Sheehy's was particularly helpful," says Kevin) and the painting was done by local painter Mick Connolly.

"We were able to source pretty much everything in Clonakilty but we did go to Cork Lighting for all the light solutions, as the owner Ger Cummins is a relation of mine.

"For furniture, we had a lot already and, while we did buy a few new pieces, we mostly have gone down the road of local second hand furniture shops. We keep an eye out for nice pieces of old furniture and give them a new home."

The house is A-rated and uses an air to water heating system, installed by local plumber Paul O'Regan, has triple glazing and an air exchange system that pulls in fresh air from outside to replace stale air regularly. There is also a biomass sewage plant under the lawn, which Kevin



eventually plans to lay astroturf over.

"Our second eldest Fionn, who was aged nine at the time, was very interested in every process, always asking the tradespeople questions that they were happy to answer. It's a very comfortable house really. I think the only issue is that we have three walls of glass in the living space that can make the rooms very hot when the sun is blazing, but that's only an issue if we are out at the time. Otherwise the house is very comfortable; the ventilation system means that the house never feels stuffy at night."

"We want to explore green energy more when we have the budget. For example, the house is wired for solar energy but we don't have panels installed yet.

"We have a few jobs to finish yet, such as installing the electric blinds that we have wired for and we haven't done anything much with outside yet, except for laying a lawn during lockdown for the kids to kick a ball around on."

As a keen cook, Kevin's

favourite room is the kitchen. Crevan Faley Designs built the bespoke kitchen and utility. "It has a super six burner hob and ovens, a great worktop space and a big fridge, so it's a pleasure to cook in it."

Looking back the couple wouldn't really do anything differently. "The house is a very efficient, spacious family home. If I had my way, I might have scaled it down just a bit, but overall it's great; the open plan really works for us. We love to spend time together making dinner or chatting. As all couples with young families, we will nurture and update the house interiors and grounds to adapt to the children's growing needs."

"To avoid problems engage a highly recommended builder as we did with Gilbert," is Kevin's advice to those starting out on their building journey. "Ask all the questions at the design stage to get a clear idea of costs. A beautiful, well-designed home is possible on any budget."

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Special Feature **CREATING A COSY WINTER HOME**

Keep cold winter nights outside where they belong

After a busy Christmas and Sales season last year, Trevor Perrott had earned a rest but, like many of us, instead he spent his 10 weeks of lockdown power-washing and painting!

“As each announcement of pushing back opening dates came, I found myself saying, ‘right that’s another three weeks to get jobs done!’” he says laughing.

When the doors of Perrott’s Home Living Interiors in Clonakilty finally did re-open, Trevor was inundated with customers who had done the same and were now looking to pull a freshly painted room together with a new sofa or stylish window blinds.

“We have never sold so many sofas,” Trevor exclaims. “Having all the family in the house for so long made everybody realise how important a comfortable home is to them. With sustainability in mind,



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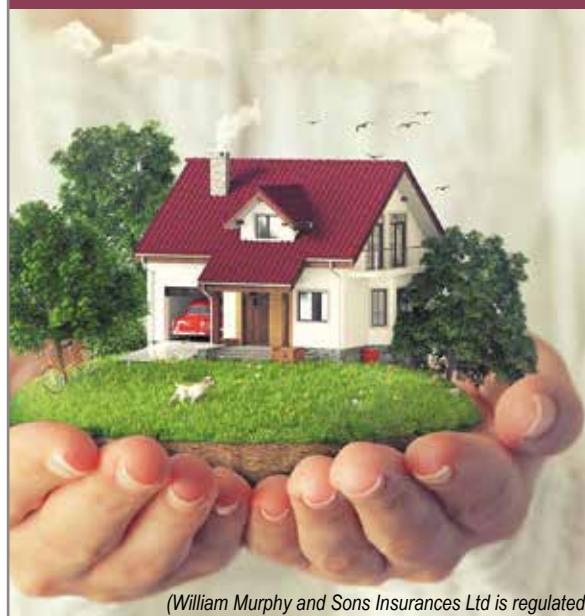
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customers are also looking for quality pieces that will stand the test of time.

“Another reason that sales across all our departments have been very brisk is because so many people are now avoiding the city and shopping locally, which is very much appreciated by all West Cork businesses.

“Also I have to say that those customers have been so understanding of any extra supplier lead-times we encountered because of the pandemic.”

Now as we head into winter and say goodbye to long summer evenings, demand for curtains is keeping Trevor and his team busy.

“Chillier evenings and less daylight can make a home feel bare and chilly,” Trevor says, “but introducing cosy throws and thermal curtains to a room completely changes that feeling to one of welcoming warmth. With so many houses sporting hard flooring like wood, concrete or tiles, fabric adds warmth and texture to a room.”

As well as custom-made curtains, Perrott’s Home Living has a very affordable and quality range of ready-made curtains in stock. “Whatever your budget and taste, we can always be relied upon to help you choose the best option to complement what is already in a room.”

Whether you prefer floral, stripes or checks, patterned

or plain, you can introduce an element of individual style into a room with Perrott’s huge selection including Prestigious Textiles, Clarke & Clarke, Tipperary Textiles, ILIV and Ashley Wilde.

“And by lining your curtains you are retaining the heat and keeping the cold air outside,” Trevor advises.

Some rooms, such as kitchens and bathrooms, may lend themselves better to blinds and Perrott’s has a huge range to choose from; roller, blackout, wooden, vertical or velux and in every colour and pattern you could possibly imagine.

All of the curtains, blinds and carpets are professionally measured and fitted for a perfect finish.

Accessories is another trick used by interior designers to give a room a sense of individ-

ual style... “try adding lots of texture rather than bold colour in a room for interest,” is Trevor’s top tip. To help you achieve this, Perrott’s stock luxurious cushions, throws, mirrors, pictures and more – and are offering 10 per cent off all their accessories for October!

From curtains, blinds, carpets, flooring, bedding, lighting and accessories to sofas, beds, mattresses and dining and occasional furniture – Perrott’s has a beautiful range of home interiors to style your house; and the team is always happy to offer assistance in planning your space.

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Special Feature CREATING A COSY WINTER HOME

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Meet the Agent

Name Martin Kelleher
Company Martin Kelleher Property



When and why did you get into the industry?

Having graduated from the IPAV Auctioneering diploma in 1999, I started with Lisney Estate Agents in Cork City, in their valuation department. It was a great learning process before I came back to work in Clonakilty in 2001. Having a keen interest in property and enjoying working with people, it was an easy fit for me.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

Super variety and no two hours are the same. I get to help people out, give good advice and my favorite part – 'doing a deal' – whether it's for a cottage or country pile.

Can you share a highlight... a property that you're particu-

larly proud of making a sale on?

Having sold hundreds of properties around West Cork and being involved in the sale of 16 new housing developments, I cannot choose a single highlight. I have reached the point in my 21 year career where I have sold some properties twice and recently a holiday home which I have sold three times!

Why should I choose you as my estate agent?

If your property is in the Clonakilty area then we are an excellent choice as we are not geographically stretched and focus on property within a ten mile radius of the town. With 21 years experience here we know most of the buyers and properties on the market at any one time. For maximum exposure, to the widest audience for our client's properties, we use a tailored range of traditional, online and social media.

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

Enquiries and viewings have increased dramatically since the lockdown ended. There has been huge interest from families wishing to relocate to Clonakilty because of the excellent quality of life to be had here. Fast internet speed is a must, decent garden space and proximity to natural amenities such as walks,

beaches, woods and laneways.

Can you give me two of your top questions you feel buyers should ask when purchasing?

Neighbours are so important and can really enhance a home owner's experience. I am always surprised that more buyers don't ask about who is living nearby. Even though we act for the seller, buyers should still ask our advice as to what faults we have seen with the property and what we would suggest could be done to improve the property.

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

There are two main mistakes. Unrealistically high guide prices from some vendors and poor presentation.

What is your outlook of the property market for 2021?

It would be very difficult to predict 2021 but there is a massive shortage of available property for sale and for rent. Even if there is a property market slow down I feel it will be short lived. Basic economics of supply and demand will dictate that. For buyers it will be about job security and access to mortgage finance. The property market is undergoing an evolution buyers are changing their preferences. I feel that some parts of the country and some sectors of the property market will do better than others.



Martin Kelleher
PROPERTY

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KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Fuel Allowance

I'm getting a State pension, can I get help with my heating costs?

Fuel Allowance is paid to people on long-term social welfare payments who are unable to pay for their own heating needs. If you are getting a State pension you may qualify for the allowance as long as you live alone or only with:

- A dependent spouse, civil partner or cohabitant and/or dependent children
- Other people getting one of the qualifying payments who would also be eligible for a Fuel Allowance in their own right
- A person who is getting Carer's Allowance or Carer's Benefit and is caring for you or for your dependent spouse, partner or cohabitant on a full-time basis

• A person getting COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP), short-term Jobseeker's Allowance or basic Supplementary Welfare Allowance

You also need to satisfy a means test. A means test examines your income to establish your means. If you are on a State Pension (Non-Contributory) you automatically satisfy the means test. If you are getting the State Pension (Contributory) you satisfy the means test if you have means of €100 or less per week.

If two or more people living in the same household qualify for the allowance, only one allowance is paid. If your heating needs are met in other ways (for example, if you live in local authority housing where heating is provided) you do not qualify for Fuel Allowance. The Fuel Allowance season usually runs from October to April each year for 28 weeks.

You can choose to get the allowance paid weekly, €24.50 per week or in two lump sums of €343 – one paid at the start of the season and the second, in January.

If you think you are eligible, you should apply immediately. The allowance is not backdated. You can get an application form for Fuel Allowance (NFS1) from your post office or Intreo centre. You can read more about the Fuel Allowance on the citizensinformation.ie.

Know Your Rights has been compiled by Citizens Information West Cork which provides a free and confidential service to the public.
WEST CORK HELPLINE
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Information is also available online at citizensinformation.ie and from the Citizens Information Phone Service, 0761 07 4000

A little inspiration...



You'll smile everytime you enter a room with this whimsical gold giraffe lamp (shade available in a variety of colours) from Abbey Furniture in Skibbereen. Currently on special offer at €99.



Jump on the velvet trend with this Mystique sofa, €449 and available in several colours, from Sheehy's EZ Living, Bandon & Clonakilty



Firesides can be stylish as well as functional with this rattan log holder €95 or Uashmama (washable paper) log bag €100 from Chalk & Easel, Ballinspittle

Special Feature CREATING A COSY WINTER HOME

Through the keyhole of a Fusion Home Interiors' customer

Geraldine Walsh divides her time between a home in Douglas and a home in Skibbereen, where she has extended family. She recently re-decorated both homes, from top to bottom, as she felt the choice of colours was out-dated and the schemes needed to be brought more up-to-date. She chose one of her favourite shops – Fusion Home Interiors in Skibbereen – to source both paint and blinds for the job and is very complimentary about the choice, service and advice she finds at Fusion.

Along with many interests and hobbies such as travelling, walking and indoor bowls, Geraldine also has a keen interest in interior design. "It's my passion," she explains. "I completed a course on interior design a few years ago and I enjoy watching homebuild and design shows on TV, from grim beginnings through to when the final finish is revealed."

Geraldine's city home is an older three-bedroom house with a kitchen/dining room, large living room and sittingroom and a home office. Her Skibbereen home is a newer build in the town and has three bedrooms, the master with an en-suite, a large sittingroom and a kitchen cum dining room. It also benefits from a large garden.

Geraldine's taste leans towards modern contemporary, which Fusion's product range more than caters for: "I use lots of colour, sometimes paired with a touch of a more neutral shade, depending on the particular aspect of the room in the house."

However, comfort and style are of equal importance to her. "For me they go hand-in-hand," she says. "I love to relax in comfort and admire the vibrant colours of both my homes."

Tying in with Geraldine's contemporary styling, the window treatments for both houses



Geraldine chose Colourtrend 'Tara' from Fusion Home Interiors for her kitchen/dining room to pair with her vibrant armchairs. She also had blinds fitted throughout both homes by Fusion.

are from Fusion Home Interiors and provide both privacy and simple luxury. Measured and installed by Fusion's expert fitters, they are a variety of luxurious duo blinds, vertical, roller and roman blinds – all by Luxaflex.

For her walls Geraldine went with Fusion's range of Colourtrend paints: "I like using

Colourtrend as it's very natural and easy to apply and holds its quality. In my houses I've used the Colourtrend shades: Willow White, Pantry Blue, Pheasant Tail, Tara, Aquamarine, Duck Egg, Mid-shadow Grey, Hidey Hole and Charcoal Grey. I have also used some of the paint brand Little Greene."

Geraldine's Skibbereen kitchen is a perfect example of her love of colour and includes units

in her home are her kitchen, sittingroom and master bedroom. Her favourite items



are her Butcher's block in the kitchen, the striking armchairs in her kitchen/diningroom and her many paintings.

For a bright and cheerful kitchen in her Skibbereen home, Geraldine picked Colourtrend 'Pantry Blue' from Fusion for her cabinets.

FUSION HOME INTERIORS Skibbereen



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CREATING A COSY WINTER HOME

Creating a cosy sitting room

Cosy isn't a style...it's a way we feel! When we say the word 'cosy' we think of comfort, relaxing space and warmth of course; this does not mean that a space or room needs to be small for it to be cosy. As an interior designer, I am asked frequently how to add warmth and cosiness to a room or space. This is very important to people at this time of the year, as we settle into the autumn months and hibernate more in our homes.

Creating a cosy space is not just about lighting a few candles and adding a few throws, although obviously this helps. A cosy living room makes living in that space feel easy because it has been designed with comfort in mind. This happens with furniture layout, paint colours, lighting, flooring and textiles used in the room. It's all about appealing to your senses, not just the look of a room. You need to think about scent, touch and sound to create that ambient space where you can unwind and relax. Also, take into account the style of your living room – contemporary, modern, rustic, traditional for example – before you start the cosy restyle. Here are a few ideas to help you create that living room where you can't wait to spend time in.

Paint

If your living room is a good size then you can be experimental with bold colours: Rich and deep paint colours is one effective way of creating that warm inviting look in your living room. Don't be afraid to use bold colours like charcoal or navy – these combined with warm tones for the furnishings and décor, like berry reds and mustard yellows, will create that cosy feel. Autumnal colours are making a comeback this season, so if you have neutral walls and don't want to repaint them, then add shades of orange and brown to your décor. These bold colours will work very well with wooden floors and furniture too. Shape and texture are just as important as colour when trying to create an inviting room.

Window treatments

Choose a fabric in a colour, style or pattern you like. There are so many types of window treatments – pleated curtains, eyelet curtains, roman blinds, motorised blinds, shutters, rattan roman blinds. Picking your fabric before you pick your paint colours is very important. Fabrics that are used a lot for window treatments are velvet,



INTERIORS

Maura Mackey

Maura Mackey is a Cork-based interior and retail display designer. A professional with an eye for detail and interior styling, she thrives on giving any home the 'showhouse feel' when up for sale or rental from a home staging point of view. On the other hand, if you are looking to give your home a makeover or restyling, 'Maura Mackey Design' will help you achieve the home of your dreams. P: 087-7699714. maura@mauramackeydesign.ie

faux, silk, linen, polyester or cotton.

Furniture

Decide what type of couch you want. An L-shaped couch provides maximum seating but also creates a sense of togetherness; you can also create this sense of togetherness by adding two freestanding sofas set at right angles to each other, and one

or a pair of upholstered wing armchairs with squashy cushions – their rounded form looks comfortably padded and the wool fabric begs to be touched. Another option is upholstered button back furniture. If you have a couch or sofa at home that's in good condition, consider upholstering it. There are so many options out there now: A popular fabric for upholstery is Aquaclean – this means if you spill anything, it can be wiped clean. Microfibre fabric is also very popular. Furniture used depends on the size of the room. Place some candles on your coffee table to create a warm glow.

Flooring

Carpet is a popular choice for a living room as it is soft and welcoming. Hardwood floors can work too in warm and earthy tones but large rugs are often added to give that homely feel to floors. A wool rug will wear well and last the distance; there are other options like jute, coir and microfibre. Note: Make sure your rug sits under the front legs of your sofa, or your chairs, as this can make a small space appear larger. Laminate flooring is also popular but in light colours.

Lighting

Create a cosy feel to your room with soft lighting. I would advise putting your lightswitch on a dimmer, as this way you can dim the lights easily and add in

table lamps and mood lighting where required. Candles also create a relaxed atmosphere in your living room. Use a warm white bulb in your lights to create a warmer look in your room.

Focal point

The focal point of a living room is usually an open fire or a stove, which inevitably creates a cosy feel. If your room has a fireplace, make the most of this comforting feature by positioning seating facing forwards. Ramp up the indulgent mood by placing candlelight on the mantelpiece. If your room doesn't have a fireplace perhaps have a piece of art or a mirror as your focal point.

Fabrics and textiles

Adding a variety of textures and fabrics to a living room space obviously adds an extra layer of cosiness. This is the most straightforward way to up your cosy factor so to speak! Chunky knit throws and soft cushions will transform your sofa into a snuggle-friendly zone, while woollen rugs will feel cosy underfoot. Adding an ottoman or footstool in a cosy fabric is fab too. Choosing seating in a tactile fabric, such as leather or velvet will lend your room a more sumptuous feel.

If you get that fuzzy feeling when you put all of the above together then you have hit the cosiness jackpot!



This room has so many elements that add warmth – warm berry shades, a fabric ottoman and woollen rug, soft lighting, button back upholstery and lots of throws and cushions!

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Special Feature **CREATING A COSY WINTER HOME**

Pamela Cull Lighting Consultancy can help you light up your home

Excellent lighting is vital in our homes and its importance is often overlooked. Beautiful and efficient lighting will transform a house into a warm, cosy and relaxing home.

During the home lighting consultations with Pamela Cull Lighting Consultancy, clients are worked with to create a style and a look that suits them and their budget. Pamela Cull Lighting Consultancy will show

client's samples of lighting fixtures, bulbs, sockets and switches; discuss their ideas with them and advise on the latest lighting trends.

How a room is used will be taken into consideration: For example... Is the kitchen used as a home office? Will clients entertain in their kitchen? Clients will be advised on recessed and down lighting to highlight kitchen islands and dining tables. Beautiful pendant lights

and under-cabinet LED strips will ensure that a kitchen will work well and will have the best lighting to suit every occasion.

Living rooms should be a haven to relax in. Many of us have open plan living, dining and kitchen areas. A fireplace may be the focal point of the room and you may have a colour scheme that you wish to enhance. Every Lighting Plan created by Pamela Cull Lighting Consultancy is tailored to suit each area.

Table lamps can look really lovely and an oversized pendant light fitting or a floor lamp can give a room the atmosphere and look that it needs. Coloured shades will tint the light, making it appear creamier, warmer, or cooler depending on the hue you choose. Wall lights are another great way to create a cosy atmosphere and a sense of wellbeing.

By installing dimmer switch-





Pamela Cull
LIGHTING CONSULTANCY

Business partners
Pamela Cull & Lisa O'Sullivan are based in Cork City and work with clients throughout Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Waterford and Tipperary.

Website: pamelaculldesign.ie
Email: office@pamelaculldesign.ie
Mobile: 087 3951339 or 083 3628832



es you can change the mood and brightness of your lighting easily to suit the time of day and the way the room is used. With so many now working at home, it may be necessary to change existing light fittings to ones suited for office work and better lighting can reduce eye strain. Pamela Cull Lighting Consultancy will advise on all of this.

The Consultancy also helps clients to reduce their energy costs by advising on the use of Smart Bulbs. Not only are they a great way create a cosy and comfortable atmosphere but, as they use LED lighting technology, they consume a fraction of the energy consumed by a traditional light bulb. There are a variety of Smart Bulbs to choose from and they can be

controlled using a remote control, a mobile app, or by voice control via a smart speaker such as Google Assistant or Alexa.

Pamela Cull Lighting Consultancy loves helping their clients to use lighting to create beautiful homes that are not only functional; but warm and inviting, and somewhere to relax in comfort, during the winter months.






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Special Feature CREATING A COSY WINTER HOME



Being organised can help a sale go smoothly

Clonakilty based solicitor **Louise Healy** shares her tips that will help you prepare to sell your property efficiently.

Locate your house deeds:

Assemble all the documents you need before bringing it to market. The first thing you need is to locate the deeds. These will either be with a bank, a solicitor or in your possession. It can take

weeks for the bank to release them. Without them you can expect delays and it could even lose you the sale.

Choosing your estate agent:

Invite agents who are most active in your area for their thoughts and recommendations. Ask each what you need to do to maximise the appeal and value of the property. The mean average of the valuations given by a selection of agents is probably

the most realistic asking price.

Engage your solicitor early:

Having your solicitor already engaged with contracts prepared will also expedite matters.

Gather up the following documents so as to assist your solicitor:

- Local Property Tax Printout showing LPT paid to current year end
- Receipt or Certificate of Dis-

charge showing the Household

Charge has been discharged
- Certificate of Exemption of Discharge from NPP (applied from 2009 to 2013)

- If your property has a septic tank, evidence of its registration

- If you are or have ever been married, a copy of your civil marriage certificate

- BER Certificate showing the Energy rating of the property

- Details of any Planning

- Permissions and Architects Certificates of Compliance
- Details of any contents included
- PPS Numbers, proof of identity
- Photographic Identification and a copy of utility bill/bank statement for proof of address.

You can contact Louise on 087 7556770 or email: louisehealsolicitors@outlook.com.



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The Irish Homebuilders Association calls for action in Budget 2021 on affordability and supply of new homes

The Irish Homebuilders Association (IHBA) has called for urgent, targeted action to be taken in Budget 2021 to address the challenges of affordability and supply of new homes. The IHBA represents hundreds of home builders of all sizes across Ireland.

James Benson, spokesperson for the IHBA, said: "The delivery of homes is well behind where it needs to be. We need to see on average 36,000 homes built every year for the next twenty years across all tenure types

from social, private and rental. A survey of IHBA members, who build 85 per cent of private homes in Ireland, suggests that the Covid-19 pandemic has increased the delivery time of homes and added to existing uncertainty in the market. We have seen a noticeable drop in commencements, which will gravely impact supply in the next 18 months. Members are reporting a 26 per cent drop in planned developments this year and a further 13 per cent drop for 2021. Budget 2021 provides the Government with an opportunity to introduce measures that will accelerate the delivery of new homes."

In its pre-Budget submission, the IHBA has identified three measures to address issue of affordability:

- A shared equity scheme would enable consumers on a combined income of €70,000 to access the market. The scheme would be a loan, self-funding over time and capped based on dwelling type and location.
- A commitment to contin-

ue Help to Buy Scheme will help hopeful buyers secure the required deposit to obtain their residential mortgage and assist the rate of commencement of new homes. In the twelve months to the end of March 2020, 78 per cent of first-time buyers used the Help to Buy Scheme. Without the Help to Buy scheme, 'would be' buyers who do not qualify for social housing due to income levels are left behind.

Increasing the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan cap to match the caps of the Shared Equity Scheme and doubling current funding would provide opportunities for hard-pressed first-time buyers. The Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan is a Government backed mortgage for first time buyers who cannot source housing loans from the private funding institutions.

James Benson added: "the Programme for Government recognised the need to increase supply and improve the affordability of new homes. It also recognised the important role that private housing supply will play.

With the right conditions and the right incentives in Budget 2021, the members of the IHBA will play our role in creating a market where the private buyer on a modest income can aspire to owning their own home."

The IHBA has also identified measures to address the issue of supply including:

- Extend the Home Building Finance Ireland 'Momentum Fund' beyond Covid-19 until the end of 2021 as a minimum and provide greater access to development finance at rates competitive with the pillar banks. The HBFI Momentum Fund is designed to ensure that new large-scale residential projects continue to be commenced and delivered post COVID-19.

- Align taxation of private landlord with corporate landlords to create an incentive for private investor to come back into the market. Historically, single investors played a positive role in providing affordable rental accommodation, especially in rural Ireland which is unattractive to institutional investors.

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people Arts & Entertainment

West Cork poets recognised in Trócaire Poetry Competition

West Cork poets Michael Ray and Marie Whelton have been named among the runners-up of the 2020 Trócaire-Poetry Ireland poetry competition. The Trócaire and Poetry Ireland annual competition, which this year had the theme 'Standing Her Ground', uses the arts to raise awareness about global justice, ecological and equality issues.

Given that this has been such a difficult year, with schools closed since early March, the organisers were delighted with the volume and the quality of the response to this year's



Poet Michael Ray

theme.

Clonakilty native Michael Ray's entry, 'Everything Beautiful is Cruel', was named runner-up in the Adult Unpublished Category. The visual artist was previously a runner-up in 2017 with 'Elegy' and he was acknowledged once again this year in a high-quality field, while Castleconnell's Marie Studer was successful in the same category with 'Declaration Winner'.

Originally from West Cork, Marie Whelton, who is now based in Marino, Dublin, was runner-up in the Adult Published Category with her

Irish-language poem, 'Arenaria Ciliata'. Dubliner Cliona O'Connell was the winner in that category with 'Protest Song'.

Joanne McGarry, Trócaire's Campaigns Manager, said: "The 'Standing Her Ground' theme focused on the extraordinary stories of Angela and Madris – two brave mothers from Honduras and Kenya, who featured in Trócaire's 2020 Lenten Campaign.

"We asked entrants to consider how these brave women are supporting their families by standing up for their right to earn a living on their

own land. They are battling enormous odds – and the threat of violence, intimidation and drought – to provide food for their children and to keep them in school.

"It is heartening to see, even in these challenging times, how school children and adults alike can take a theme of injustice and turn it into inspiring poems that tell similar stories often with hopeful messages for the future."

With winners and runners-up from nine separate counties overall, Trócaire and Poetry Ireland expressed their appreciation for the effort it

took all entrants and schools to participate this year.

"We would like to thank everyone for their continued interest and support for the Trócaire Poetry Ireland Poetry Competition. Congratulations to all the winners and runners-up, and thank you to everyone who entered," added Trócaire's Joanne, who was one of three judges along with Catherine Ann Cullen and Aidan Clifford.

The winners and runners-up are across six categories: adult published, adult unpublished, primary junior, primary senior, post-primary junior and post-primary senior.

people Arts & Entertainment



MUSIC

Gary Hannon

Gary plays with the Clonakilty Jazz Collective every Monday night in the Emmet Hotel in Clonakilty.

Having taken a few months off from writing, I was anxious to see what an older person with much life experience and social commentary thought of the new world we find ourselves in. Who better to ask than musician Roy Harper?

I caught up with him over the phone. When I initially made contact with Roy, he said that he was entirely obsessed with what he is writing and thinking at present. He afforded me a rare glimpse into the mind of an artist. He explains: “I’ve been eighteen months writing this one song. It’s a difficult song. It doesn’t sound like it should be because it’s right up my street, but it requires quite a bit of concert to stay on track with it, because of shifting social sands, you know?—the pivoting points of the moral compass sort of thing? You don’t know where you are. I mean every day I hear something that confirms or denies something that I thought I knew.

The song is a tentative emotional picture of attempted mass action, written in musical prose.”

“It’s difficult to nail this down. It’s a song called ‘Politically Correct’ (at least that’s the working title.) Where is society going to now? Where is it driving itself to in such clattering confusion? You can imagine what’s on my plate when I’m trying to write this song! There are just too many things to be thinking about and too many things to go into it, and no way at all to précis any of it. Every time I write a line, it’s likely to be changed the following day, or altered in even a minute way, which means that it’s out of date. I guess the song is a tentative emotional picture of attempted mass action, written in musical prose. It can’t ever be finished though, as finishing it turns it into a frozen snapshot and it’s ‘not that’. I’ve got to have the context of movement

Being present in a world that has divided young from old

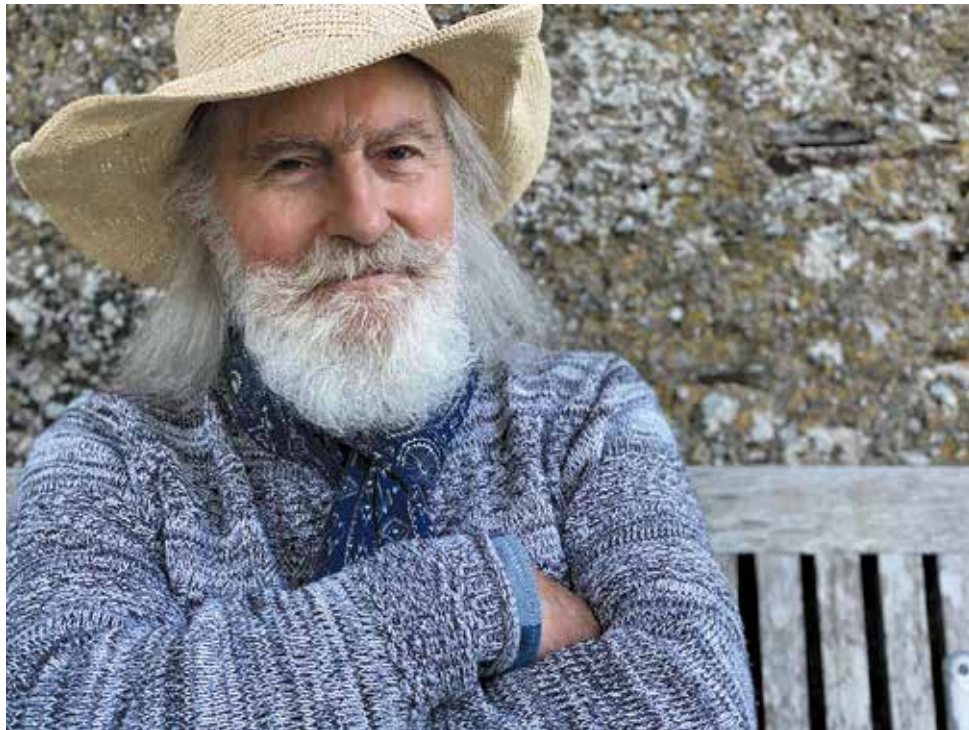
in there, because it moves every day. So I’ve got this serious problem all the time with it. And snapshot/movement are mutually exclusive; and it’s that conundrum has me on the run.”

“I have to have some redemption in it too. It’s got to have that balance: you can’t listen to a song that is entirely a rant, without turning to humanity and being honest with yourself. This is a long-standing argument I have with myself with no particularly good way out, but I know that I actually must write it! I’ve got to actually write it.” Phew! With this snapshot into the inner workings of his mind, I can appreciate what it is like to be an artist.

It’s now more important than ever to consult our wise elders. “Division is rampant in society at the moment; old permissions, old morals, old ethics are gone. Everybody can see what’s going on – that’s the trouble: it’s a cacophony – no one is able to say anything that isn’t thrown into the witch’s cauldron of obverse junk. Five years ago there wasn’t this gap between the young and the old. What’s happening in the world now has almost completely divided the young from the old. There are so many young people that, for instance, are now not bothered about whether they go out or not. In those terms, one or two people perhaps think that I’ve gone off-course in the last few years. But it’s always been a duty for me to be off-course whenever I see fit. In these times, it’s not like that. It’s that the young can’t be contacted by the old anymore. It’s a failing, but I’m no longer really able to contact people under 20. They will not know where I am coming from...It’s a sign of social breakdown. And Ireland is a more integral society – certainly more than Britain is.”

Roy is very interested in what’s happening across the pond, as it can point to where society can lead. “The way that Trump is handling his presidency is inane and criminal. He is actually a fraudulent criminal. Everything he does is fraudulent. But half of the USA can’t see that. They are determined to carry through the Rifle Association revolution. It’s complete poison. And the GOP [Republicans’] message around money, around finance, around big business – the perpetual lie. They horrify me!

“The outrages in Wisconsin and Portland – and everywhere



else – and he is stirring it up. It’s being done on his watch and he is blaming the Democrats for it! Now the Democrats aren’t much better – they are probably where Fine Gael is here. We can’t really recognise where the US is, but it is actually one of the, if not ‘the’ most influential countries on earth, and the direction it takes – and how it behaves – is very important to the rest of the world. And it continues to emerge – and this sounds like a conspiracy theory – that Trump has actually engaged the Russians in passing information to them, which will alert them as to how to be on Trump’s side in the previous election – and this one...Giving them, for instance, the information for all states, all counties where the vote is going, where not to touch, and where to undermine completely with all kinds of bot messages. There are people now with actual paper-trail evidence. If you’re a Trump voter, you’re going to carry that all the way through and say, yes, the Democrats are a bunch of troublemakers. How do you gainsay that? Those are my concerns. It’s a strange world. There are eight billion voices all in the mix and no way for anyone to make head nor tail of that.”

But there is hope. For we live in a very different place, with more freedom. “So what do we do in West Cork? West Cork is conservative, as well as having an artistic bent. It’s full of people who would naturally come to the edge of the universe. The far west has always been a place to run to. I did it! I ran here. The


fact that I came to the far west is only indicative of how far people are ‘challenged’ to go, to actually experience some kind of personal freedom. So I’m thinking about who is like me, and who would have been of a like mind in the past, and I’m thinking that a lot of those guys who wanted solitary existence – men and women – would come to a place where they were less likely to be found. These kinds of areas are still inhabited by the same kind of people – that’s what I’m getting at. The farming community may be distantly related and not out of place. Who knows? But one of the touchstones of my life is to actually be in these places, and to be able to retreat. In terms of that I’ve always wanted a place like this to exist in. It is one of those places that my kind of person goes to. I’m not a foreigner in West Cork at all, I’m just one of many people who like to be left alone most of the time. Living here isn’t the worst thing that I could have done!”

He continues, “What is West Cork? It has this democracy about it of being able to communicate with its own, in its own particular way.”

He is working on his next album, which he plans to have finished for this 80th birthday next year. Time is pressing; he fears that people don’t want to record together because of the virus, but as he says, “I can’t afford to be afraid of it to be honest.” He has eight songs written, including one. “There is one very good song, I think. It’s called, ‘I Loved My Life’. It’s one of those songs that’s going

to travel a long way, I think.” I hope that he has loved his life so far and wish him all the best.


My gig of the month is: any gig! As Roy said, “You have people being driven mad by not having pub life – or for that matter music life!” End the madness. It’s been so long since we have experienced live music, so just attend whatever you can. Pay the long-suffering musicians – for entry to the gig, by buying a CD/record, etc. Give some money to the venue – by buying a drink. Or, if you’re like many of us, and have saved money over the last six months, tip the staff if they provided you with an enjoyable experience. By responsibly attending events, we can show that there is a ‘need’ for many aspects of our lives to return: from day-care centres and events for the elderly and infirm, to music therapy, choirs, etc. Lastly, ditch the device (we’ve been on them enough in recent times!) and ‘be present’.



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MOVIES THIS MONTH

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Haikus at DeBarra's Spoken Word

De Barra's Spoken Word is, once again, virtually meeting via Zoom on Wednesday, October 7 at 8.30pm, co-hosted by Moze Jacobs and Margaret O'Regan.

This will be an evening of difference with the emphasis being on the haiku, a form of short poem with strict characteristics that originated in Japan and has become a popular form of poetic expression in the West.

The star guest for the evening is Anton Floyd, well-known and respected teacher and master of the haiku. He will present a workshop on the methods used to create a haiku and its prose form, the haibun. In addition to sharing his own work, several special guests will feature who will bring their own unique style of presentation.

There will be an open mic, although this will be limited to haiku/haibun presentations only. The Zoom link will be posted on De Barra's Spoken Word Facebook page and is also available by emailing debarraspokenword@gmail.com.



ASTROLOGY

Kate Arbon

Kate Arbon is an astrologer, writer and spiritual teacher. Living in West Cork for over 20 years she gives personal consultations locally and internationally using traditional natal and Horary astrology.
email: astro@katearbon.com
www.katearbon.com

October Sun Signs

October is a decisive month in Astrological terms. There is likely to be many shifts and changes along with unexpected or surprising events as new information is revealed. The next few weeks may take you on a bit of a journey as you keep pace with the “changing tides of fortune” but by the month end choices will have been made and these will have the effect of determining your experience in the following weeks and into 2021. The two heavyweight planets that have been the signature of 2020, Saturn and Pluto, finally turn to move forwards once more and allow a shift in the current astrological dynamic.

We start with a Full Moon on the 1st in Aries which is the culmination of the last two weeks. Situations of conflict and opposing attitudes have been highlighted all around us, on a personal and global level. Saturn finally came out of its retrograde phase on September 29th and Pluto goes direct again on 4th October. Their current positions echo back to early January and important questions

need to be addressed now. Saturn poses the question “Who is going to take responsibility for your life and your welfare?” Whilst Pluto asks the question “What or who has the power and control in this situation?”

Where were you placed in life at the beginning of 2020? So far this year we’ve been forced to continually revise plans, review objectives and reset priorities. Your previous decisions were most likely based on what you believed to be reality. But a true picture of reality begins to emerge this month. You will probably have to re-align your personal trajectory and consider the long term view in a new light.

Saturn has been in Capricorn since December 2017 and will not come back here until 2047. During these recent Capricorn years we have had to take a closer look at the very foundation of our lives. The structures the systems and what we have relied on for stability. During the remaining months of 2020 we need to integrate the lessons we have learned.

You can ask yourself “How do I want my life to proceed now, based on what I have learned since January?” It’s time to do something. It’s time for you to commit to your path!

By the 4th October all three major planets in Capricorn are going to be moving towards Aquarius. Slow moving Pluto will take until 2024 to get there, but the upcoming Jupiter Saturn conjunction at the Solstice in December marks the start of the next social era. The October shift is a significant step towards the transfer of our current system from the hierarchical one we have known, described by Capricorn, into a new egalitarian system, described by Aquarius.

Whilst we still have Mars in Aries making a difficult and challenging angle to the Capricorn planets, it gets too uncomfortable to simply remain compliant with the current situation. But there can be false starts and frustrations. With Mars also in the retrograde phase there is no quick fix or short term solution. It’s no longer an option to stand waiting for other

people to make the moves or the choices. Even if you are seeing clearly what needs to be done it’s going to take until mid November before you can really take positive action. Use this time to decide on your desired path and what you wish to create. Envisage it coming to fruition. Focus on how you can act in small ways to achieve your aspirations.

The other big feature this month is a Mercury retrograde in Scorpio from 14th to 3rd November. This can bring us news of hidden facts and secrets. There may be a lot of backtracking on what was previously claimed. On 22nd as the Moon passes over Jupiter Saturn and Pluto it can stir up all the issues surrounding the themes these planets represent. The Moon then passes Mars on 29th which can add some heat to the emotions and mood. The Full Moon on 31st will trigger the freedom loving planet, Uranus. Also known as the “great awakener” Uranus is in Taurus from early 2019 to 2026 and during these years we are radically reinventing what we value

and the very concept of ownership or possession. This applies to what we need to provide a state of mental, emotional and physical health, including our social connections, financial standing and access to the natural environment.

With the Sun in Scorpio there is always a question about what is real and what is not. Whatever remains hidden or mysterious can potentially be a threat and the Scorpio solution is to shine the light squarely on it to reveal its true nature. With this Sun Moon opposition combining with Uranus at Full Moon, we can expect to get some unexpected revelations that could be shocking or liberating and possibly both.

October has a Full Moon at 10° Aries on the 1st at 10.05pm and New Moon is at 24° Libra on the 16th at 8.31pm. We have a second Full Moon this month at 9° Taurus on the 31st at 2.49pm



Aries: With the Full Moon in your sign you are likely to be a glowing example of both vitality and attractiveness. Let your personality truly shine and you can expect to have a powerful impact on your surroundings through your moods and feelings. You may be seen as over-emotional or sentimental, but you know how to provide a truly nurturing environment for others. You’re motivated to show how much concern and care you have for them now. Bring any critical personal projects to a conclusion whilst you have the energy required to satisfy your own high standards.



Taurus: You need to withdraw from the world from time to time and commune with nature or your inner feelings. During this Full Moon you are extremely sensitive to your environment and could spend a lot of time enveloped in a very private emotional world. Ideally create a place of your own which is sacred to you where you can be alone. In this private retreat, you can become aware of your many dreams and longings. Try to work more consciously with the inner world of your imagination through creative work or meditative practice for a few days.



Gemini: You have the desire for strong bonds with your friends and you are extremely sensitive to how they treat you over the Full Moon. You are both caring and concerned for their personal development, but easily hurt if they let you down in any way. Ensure that you spend time only with people that elevate and support you. Disconnect from the daily grind and tap into your lighter side for a while. Count your blessings and remember that enjoyment of the good life is more about your own sense of well being, not money, friendship or possessions.



Cancer: You have a strong sense of duty and you can feel that your role is primarily to live up to family or social expectations over this Full Moon. You may have been striving to achieve some predefined goals and you want the recognition now. Over the coming days you can reach out for what you want for yourself. Stand in the spotlight whilst acting the part of your unique self in all your glory. Ensure you take time out to wave your own flag and get noticed for your contribution before a new surge of personal creativity rolls in.



Leo: Think big and stretch your imagination this Full Moon. In the past you will have unconsciously been affected by the convictions and values of those close to you. The powerful need for a strong belief to hold on to that is solid and true for you demands your attention now. During these few days as your interest in philosophical and spiritual areas is heightened use the time to expand your inner window on the world and break new ground. The feeling of suddenly having understood something can have you wondering now what to do with it all, but that will take care of itself down the line.



Virgo: Over this Full Moon your experiences will confirm that you must not depend on other people or your possessions to provide emotional security for you. This could be a very transformative few days when you might unearth resources within yourself that you were previously unaware of. Allow yourself to stand aside for a moment and recognise where any deals and contracts have tied up your energy. You no longer need to rely on certain items or belongings as you become more emotionally stable. Clear out any useless things you’ve been hoarding, the sense of freedom will do you good.



Libra: With the Sun shining in your own sign and the Full Moon focus on your relationships you have difficulty distinguishing between your own feelings and the people closest to you. Tune in to yourself, and allow your partner or close friends to have their moods without imagining they always have something to do with your own actions. Connecting with others in a special moment can be enjoyed when close allies or partners become your focus but you could be thinking that you have all got a little too involved or caught up with each other recently and soon you’ll need to stand back.



Scorpio: You may waste too much energy on menial tasks, thus getting distracted from the broader visions in your life during this Full Moon. You are likely to make yourself indispensable through being of service to the physical needs of others, and generally happy to take on a lot of tasks - both in your career and around the house. If you are not careful however, other people will take advantage of you. Now though you should be really getting things together for yourself whilst you can keep the focus on the details. Once done, you’ll be able to stand back and take pride in your accomplishments.



Sagittarius: Spontaneity is the keyword for you this Full Moon and it’s time to loosen up and have some fun. Taking the lead and making some bold statements is also an option. Going just a little bit over the top will be acceptable now as this is a general time of celebration for all. Passion and intensity can run rampant as your enthusiasm overflows so get creative with your energy. You have a strong emotional need for some romantic encounters but you do know how to nurture and maintain the romance in an existing relationship too. So go the extra mile and enjoy!



Capricorn: This Full Moon you might find you needing to spend more time at home and you can find great pleasure in looking after children or family, cooking, making home improvements etc. You feel very sensitive to the moods of others, especially if you share your personal space. Although you’ll be strongly motivated to create a caring and secure environment, a crowd can be claustrophobic. You can get on each other’s nerves. This is a time to acknowledge the comfortable and familiar environment that supports you. Draw on it as a source of strength but avoid being over dominant or demanding.



Aquarius: Any trying or difficult emotional experiences you have this Full Moon result from having strong differences of opinion with someone you have to deal with every day. When you argue your case you are easily swayed by irrational arguments and emotions. Could it be that everybody is trying to get their message through but no one is listening? Try not to get distracted whilst you tie up important loose ends and meet deadlines. You need to keep some time for a new project or mental challenge. You could be making plans for travelling or starting a new class or training programme.



Pisces: This Full Moon will find you focusing on your personal resources and economic fluctuations. You can be a very kind and giving person but you also need to feel secure. Being a little more concerned with your financial status now is probably a good thing although some people may view you as unusually materialistic and possessive. This is a time to cash in on some of your hard earned investments and name your price for your efforts. Be confident in your skills and abilities and turn them to good use now as others will notice and reward you later.

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Piano composer builds musical bridges with new album

Ballinsacarthly based musician Emily Magner Hurley launched her debut album 'Air and Graces' on Culture Night with a debut performance in Jeffers Piano Shop in Bandon that was beamed, through a Facebook live-feed, across the world.

Emily has a long background in music with a music degree, and later a masters in composition, from UCC. She also teaches. "Composing has always been a part of my life," the musician says. "I composed my first pieces of music in my early teens. A personal highlight was Culture Night last year where a body of sacred choral music that I had composed between 2005 and 2018 was performed in the St Mary's Dominican Church, Pope's Quay. It was so fulfilling to hear the manifestation of musical ideas that were in my head!"

The genesis of 'Airs and Graces' lies in one of the shortest of the 17 tracks – 'Macalla' – a jig that came together for Emily one afternoon back in 2004. "I promptly forgot

about it until 2017 when I decided to play it for a few friends. Their positive reaction coincided with the chance acquisition of a Petrof baby-grand piano! A dose of encouragement combined with a beautiful instrument provided all the inspiration I needed and I set about composing for solo piano in a serious way.

"I worked steadily throughout 2018 and into early 2019. The lockdown proved to be the making of the album. Each day after teaching I would head to the piano and unwind by reworking a piece or beginning a new piece. Evenings that would otherwise have been spent in traffic were now spent thinking about my compositions and playing with different motifs and chordal progressions."

Jeffers Piano Shop not only lent Emily a backdrop of fine instruments for her launch last month but lent her their showpiece Petrof for the performance. "The launch was surreal," she remembers. "I had cameras with a live feed to Facebook and people tuning in from across the world instead of



an audience! Most performers will tell you that they feed off their audience. I would be no different and it was so strange to interact with a series of lenses rather than the smiles and nods of an audience. In the past I would have planned a launch in a suitably swish location with all my friends and family invited..... 2020 has really made people reimagine the dissemination of music."

Growing up at home in Whitechurch, Emily was immersed in all kinds of music as she explains her influences, "The likes of Liszt, Fauré, Tchaikovsky and Wagner not only caught but

grabbed my imagination, and I was hugely influenced by the way Micheál O'Suilleabháin and Bill Whelan magically fused traditional Irish music with other styles. The bridges they built between traditional Irish, Classical and Jazz (amongst many other styles) were revolutionary. Some of my pieces at least aspire to do this. I'm not sure if I've managed to build a bridge of my own but I've at least thrown a rope!"

The busy musician already has another piano album in the works with a potential release date of September 2021. She also has a few other new projects up her sleeve: "I am really looking forward to getting back into the studio again, and working with new concepts. Perhaps there will be another Culture Night launch and fingers crossed, this time with people present in the room!"

Visit Emily's website to hear her play and buy her new album: www.emilymagnerhurleymusic.ie

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OUT & ABOUT IN WEST CORK



A charity Ride and Carriage Drive that raised €1500 for Marymount Hospice was held last month in memory of John Joe O'Sullivan, who passed away recently. The Drive travelled from Tullineaskey Equestrian Centre to Rosscarbery and was organised by Chris Collins and Grace Santry. Pictured (l-r) were James White on Prince, Cian Wilson (John Joe's grandson) on Charlie and Grace Santry on Rosie.



Fundraiser 'Doing The Loop' cyclists Sean Gordon and Joe McCarthy (on far right) were welcomed back to Rosscarbery last month by (l-r) Donal Daly, Dr. Jason van der Velde, Dr. Meg MacConnaill, Kate Crowley (all West Cork Rapid Response), Nick Richard c103, Darran CoyleGarde (Pieta House), Betty Hennessy (WCRR).



Jerry Shorten, Hilda Hetherington, Maire McCarthy & David O'Sullivan from Bank of Ireland, Clonakilty virtually presenting a cheque to Marymount Hospice of funds raised in the branch.

Send your pictures of people events in West Cork to email: info@westcorkpeople.ie

The joy of bulbs



Spring bulbs are a joy in late winter and spring, bringing colour and hope to the garden says **Deborah Ballard, Future Forests**. Whether naturalised in grass, planted in borders or containers, or forced indoors for Christmas, there are bulbs for every situation, and autumn is the time to plant them.

Success with bulbs means planting fat, firm bulbs (discard any shrivelled or mouldy bulbs), in the right conditions, and at the right depth (generally, three times the depth of the bulb). All bulbs need well-drained soil; if your soil tends to lie wet in winter, add grit to the planting hole. The one exception is beautiful, chequered snakeshead fritillaries, which tolerate quite wet soil, and thrive in damp

meadows.

Bulbs (daffodils, snowdrops, netted iris), corms (crocus), tubers (winter aconite) and rhizomes (lily-of-the-valley, anemones) are perennial, coming back year after year. Tulips are rather different – species tulips may perennialise, but the big, glamorous cultivars are less likely to do so. Tulips are different in other ways, too, and I'll deal with them in a separate section.

Naturalising bulbs in grass

Naturalising in grass is suitable for reliably perennial bulbs and corms like daffodils (Narcissus), crocus, snowdrops, grape hyacinths and Cyclamen coum. Plant them where grass is allowed to grow long, as the bulbs must be allowed to die down naturally before the grass is mown (this also conceals the unsightly dying leaves). You can mow six weeks after the last flowers go over, but the longer you can leave it, the better it is for wildlife. Mow in November, so that the smaller bulbs show up well. A particularly good site is the grass under deciduous trees, like fruit trees, as most bulbs have evolved to flower early in the light coming through the leafless branches, but prefer light shade in summer. The soil will usually be humus-rich, which bulbs like.

Choose reliably naturalising bulbs – species or large-flow-

ered crocus, and the simpler daffodils and snowdrops rather than the double forms; check the website for which cultivars will naturalise well. Mixed bags will give you a blaze of varied colour, while patches each of one cultivar will look more natural. Plant in September for best results. If you're planting a big area, it's worth getting a long-handled bulb-planter – a hand bulb-planter will be fine for smaller spaces. To give a natural effect, throw the bulbs down and plant them where they fall, more thickly in the middle of the group, more scattered at the edges. Most bulbs should be planted three times the depth of the bulb, no deeper. Then use the bulb-planter to take out a plug the right size, add grit if necessary, drop in the bulb, pointed end up, and replace the soil and patch of sod. When planting little bulbs, you can remove a section of the sod, fork over the soil, scatter the bulbs, and replace the sod, watering in well.

Planting 'in the green'

There are some bulbs which establish better when planted 'in the green' in spring (in active growth) than from dry bulbs in autumn. Snowdrops and bluebells establish reasonably well from bulbs, though better 'in the green', but cheerful winter aconites and lily-of-the-valley (from 'pips') do much better bought 'in the green'.

Bed and Borders

There are some really striking perennialising bulbs to light up a border in May, before late summer perennials start to shine. Tall, upright crown imperials (Fritillaria imperialis), with a collar of brick-red or bright yellow bell shaped flowers under a pineapple tuft of leaves look marvellous in a formal garden; plant them in full sun. Tall camassias (Camassia leichtlinii), violet-blue and creamy-white, have a softer look, beautiful in a herbaceous border, and will tolerate partial shade. Ornamental onions (Allium), which flower in May and June, are also lovely in borders;



White and purple hyacinths



Crocus in woods



Snowdrops



Allium



Tulips

they prefer full sun, but tolerate a little shade, and can be planted any time in autumn. Their dying foliage will be hidden by the foliage of late-flowering perennials; and their seed-heads are ornamental. Borders are also the place for the gorgeous double and split-corona daffodils, which will happily come up year after year, if planted in sun or very light shade in fertile, well-drained soil. Plant all these as early as possible, preferably in September, and no later than November.

Also lovely at the front of a border are 'the little blue bulbs' – violet-blue scillas like tiny

bluebells; starry Chionodoxa luciliae, glory-of-the-snow, blue with a white eye; scented, dwarf Iris reticulata Harmony; violet crocuses like Flower Record; Muscari latifolium; and the Greek windflower, Anemone blanda (which comes in other colours, and can also be naturalised in short grass). These look lovely with dwarf daffodils, like the ever-reliable Tête à Tête, or its double form, Tête Bouclé, or white Toto. Mixed bags of dwarf daffodils are also available. Crocuses need full sun; the others will also tolerate partial shade. Double snowdrops are also lovely in beds,

and need partial shade. All these early bulbs should be planted in September, if possible, for best results.

Tulips

Tulips must be planted in full sun in very free-draining soil, and should not be planted until November to prevent the fungal disease tulip fire (by Christmas at the latest).

Apart from species tulips, and the cheerful red and yellow Darwin types, which will last for five years, most tulips don't perennialise well. They are more likely to perennialise if planted 8 inches deep in a border, which discourages the bulb from splitting into bulblets, which will not flower for years. Some of the singles, doubles and Triumphs are better perennialisers than others, but generally need topping up each year. This means the older bulbs come up a little earlier and smaller, giving a subtle, less regimented effect when the new bulbs join them.

Tulips are often grown as annuals. They work well as bedding, yellow ones over a froth of forget-me-nots, pinks over grape hyacinths, or deep purple with frothy white alliums. Alternatively, grow them massed, mixing and matching: pinks, purple, pink and purple-streaked white, a blaze of yellow, orange and scarlet, or smart purple-black and white.

Containers

Almost all hardy bulbs are great in pots, and can be layered in larger containers, with the latest to flower at the bottom, and the little early bulbs at the top.

Indoors

Gorgeously scented hyacinths and paperwhite narcissus can be forced to bloom in time for Christmas. Paperwhites are not hardy enough to be planted outside afterwards, but hyacinths can, growing less top-heavy in subsequent years.

After flowering

To preserve vigour, dead-head daffodils and tulips to below the bulge under the dead flower, leaving the stem, but allow crocuses and snowdrops to set seed. All bulbs should be let die down naturally to nourish the bulb, so it flowers well the following year.

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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.

Over the past six months we have seen a huge interest in gardeners wanting to grow their own food. For this article I am going to write about soft fruit, as there is a huge variety of options and here in West Cork we have fantastic growing conditions for all types of soft fruit. Even a novice gardener should be able to get great returns from just a few plants. Children (and adults) will be delighted to feast on the tastiest fruit grown in their own gardens! Even with the smallest garden you will be able to find somewhere to grow some soft fruit, unlike fruit trees, which can take up lots of space.

This time of year is the best season to plant soft fruit, as plants have a great chance to establish strong roots, without any chance of drying out! There is also the largest range of varieties available at the best prices, as many are sold as bare root, available from mid November.

Listed below are some of the most popular as well as some more unusual, with information on planting and after care. They are all tried and tested with feedback from our customers here at Deelish Garden Centre. We also stock a range of more unusual soft fruits including; hardy paw-paw, chilean guava, feijoa, cape gooseberries, mulberry, figs, passion fruit and dead man's fingers!

Blackberry, Wineberry, Tayberry, Loganberry, Sunberry and Boysenberry: A selection of these fruits can provide fresh berries from early July until the first severe frosts occur in the autumn. They provide a variety of flavours ranging from that of the true blackberry to those arising from crosses between raspberry with blackberry and other Rubus species. Plant in well-drained but moisture retentive soil in full sun or partial shade. Grow them on wires against a fence or wall, or as single plants up a post. Space at least 6ft/2m apart. Cut back to 10in/25cm straight after planting to promote

fresh growth from the base. During autumn or winter each year remove canes that have fruited to ground level and train and tie in the new growth that has grown up from the base during the summer. In late spring cut out the tips of the leading canes to promote the growth of extra fruiting laterals.

Blueberry: Blueberries, a well known 'superfruit' grown for their health-boosting properties can be a tasty and attractive addition to the garden. In the autumn the bushes turn crimson; adding brilliant colour to what can otherwise be a dull season. In the spring the bushes are covered in masses of sweet scented dainty white bell shaped flowers. The soil in West Cork generally gives them the acidic conditions they require. If you do not have the appropriate soil, they should be grown in containers using an ericaceous compost. Two varieties should usually be planted to improve pollination and ensure a good set of flowers under adverse weather conditions. Plant 3ft/1m apart in a sheltered position in free-draining ericaceous soil in full sun/partial shade. In winter, cut out any damaged or dead branches. It is also recommended that each year a few old stems that have borne fruit are cut hard back to promote new growth in the following spring. They will thrive from an annual mulching of pine needles or similar acidic mulches.

Cranberry: Cranberries add a tangy flavour to everything from stuffing and sauces to drinks and barbecues. Best grown at the edge of a pond, otherwise in a container or raised bed lined with plastic which has been pierced so that water is retained but not allowed to stagnate. Incorporate plenty of moss peat when planting and water regularly with soft (rain) water. Space about 1ft/30cm apart.

Currants: Closely related to the gooseberry, currants have a markedly different flavour and use. Currants produce insignificant flowers followed by long strings of shiny berries, with a sharp flavour. Plant them in moisture retentive soil in an open position in full sun or partial shade. Avoid planting in a position where the bushes might catch a late spring frost, which will damage any emerging leaves and new growth. Space currant bushes 3-4ft/1-1.25m apart. After planting, cut blackcurrants down to 3-4in/8-10cm above ground level, and cut the stems of red and white currants back by about half. Blackcurrants fruit on new wood so aim to remove a third of the old wood each year, taking out at or near ground level the oldest branches (those with the darkest wood). Unlike Blackcurrants, Red and White currants fruit on two year old wood so require only that the leading shoots are shortened by about half each year to encourage branching. If and when the bush becomes crowded, remove the occasional branch to open it up to allow air to circulate more freely.

Gooseberry and Jostaberry: The gooseberry is the first fruit of the season. The fruit should be thinned in late May and the thinnings used for cooking. The re-

mainder should be left to swell near to full size and then used for pies, jamming and freezing. Jostaberrys were produced by crossing a blackcurrant and gooseberry. The berries resemble a large blackcurrant, but are about twice their size. Plant in deep, well-drained but moisture retentive soil in full sun or partial shade. Avoid planting in shallow soil which dries out in summer as this will result in poor sized fruit. Also avoid sites liable to catch late spring frosts. Space bushes 4ft/1.25m apart Jostaberrys 6ft/2m. Cut stems back by about half after planting. This is very important for successful establishment. Try to build up a well-shaped bush by annually cutting out crossing branches from the centre in the spring before bud break. Also cut out any diseased or damaged wood.

Goji Berries: Goji berries are the latest 'must have' fruit and are said to boost your immune system, contain more vitamin C than oranges, more iron than steak and play an important role in traditional Chinese medicine. Plant 1.2-1.5m (4-5ft) apart. Goji berries are self fertile and are easy to grow and thrive even in poor soil. Flowers and fruit are formed on the stems that grew in the previous year, so pruning aims to encourage the production of this wood. Prune lightly in early spring, removing dead and badly-placed shoots.

Grapes: Grapes are very hardy and the breeding and selection of varieties has progressed so far in the last ten years, that it is now possible to plant a range of varieties suitable for growing under cover and outdoors. If we get more summers like 2018, we may see a West Cork wine company in the future! They will give the best results if planted and trained against a south facing wall; they will also do well when trained onto a horizontal wire support away from any wall. When grown under glass or plastic, vines can be planted outside and brought in through the wall. Vines should be spaced 1.2-1.5m (4-5ft) apart. Many a book has been written about pruning grapes and there are various methods to choose from depending on where you are growing them. Fruit will be produced on new growth, so pruning is needed for a good crop. The main pruning time is early winter. Pruning later can cause the vine to bleed sap, weakening the plant. Training and pinching out of new shoots, as well as thinning of fruits, is carried out in spring and summer.

Honeyberry: The fruits are very similar to blueberries in taste and looks, and can be eaten raw or used in jams and jellies. Like blueberries they are high in antioxidants and vitamin C and make an interesting addition to your fruit collection. Plant 3ft/1m apart in spring when there is no risk of frost, this allows the plant to get established over the following summer. They do not mind acidic or alkaline soil which makes them a great alternative for gardeners who struggle to grow blueberries. Young plants only need dead material removed for the first three years while they get established. For more established honeyberries, pruning should be done in early to

mid-summer after harvesting. At least one other variety will be needed for pollination. It may be worth considering pollination by hand to increase yield of fruit.

Kiwi: The Chinese Gooseberry is a very hardy twining climber and can be cropped outdoors wherever grapes grow. Baby Kiwis (*Actinidia arguta*) are edible, grape-sized fruit similar to kiwi fruit in taste and appearance, but are green, brownish, or purple with smooth skin. Often sweeter than the kiwifruit, baby kiwi fruit can be eaten whole and do not need to be peeled. It is important that the bush is given very good shelter from the prevailing winds. Bushes are excellent for covering old walls and should be planted at least 5.5m (18ft) apart. Some varieties are self fertile, others need a male and female for pollination. In winter, cut existing laterals back to three or four buds beyond the last fruited stems. Each year cut back about one-quarter to one-third of the oldest laterals to a bud around 5cm (2in) from the main stem. New growth will be produced from this stub in the growing season.

Lingonberry: The Lingonberry is from the same family as the blueberry and cranberry and therefore enjoys the same acid soil conditions. They are ideal for growing in pots in an ericaceous compost and are evergreen and self fertile. They have a natural spreading habit and are particularly useful as an under planting around blueberries.

Raspberry: Raspberries are really delicious, but very expensive to buy fresh in shops. A single cane (costing just over €1) can produce over 2kg. Of fruit! Plant in deep, rich well-drained but moisture retentive soil in a sunny or partially shaded position. Space canes 15-18in/40-45cm apart. Allow 4-6ft/1.25-2m between rows of summer-fruited varieties (summer fruiting varieties will need a support) and at least 6ft/2m between rows of autumn-fruited varieties. Dig the planting hole deep enough so that the root sits in the soil with the previous soil mark just below the soil surface, back fill and firm in. Cut back Regular canes to 2in/5cm above soil level after planting (these off cuts can easily be used as cuttings to produce more canes). Keep well watered until canes get established and add an annual top dress of organic fertiliser in the spring. Do not hoe in the planting area to remove weeds. Pick weeds by hand. The growing shoots of the Raspberry plant grow from underneath the soil. Hoeing could chop off these growing shoots resulting in canes dying. Summer-fruited varieties fruit on canes produced in the previous year. After fruiting, cut out the old, fruited wood in autumn/winter and tie in the new growths to the support. Autumn-fruited varieties fruit on canes produced in the current year. After cropping, these should be cut down to ground level to promote the growth of new canes.

Rhubarb: Rhubarb has been cultivated in Irish gardens since the late sixteenth century. Its leafstalks can be stewed or used for making preserves. Plant about 21/2-3ft/75-

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90cm apart in an open, sunny position in moisture retentive soil that has been enriched with well-rotted manure or organic matter prior to planting. Over the years the crown may begin to spread. To keep it producing healthy growth for long it will need to be divided, which can be done during winter-time (at a time when the ground isn't frozen). This is done by digging up either the whole clump or a section of it, cutting it into smaller pieces, and then re-planting each bit in an area with a bit more space.

Strawberries Framberry and Pineberry: Strawberries are most children's and some adult's favourite soft fruit! Pineberry is a white strawberry cultivar with a pineapple-like flavour, white colour, and red seeds, great for confusing hungry birds! Framberry grows like, looks, and is classified as a strawberry, but has a distinctively different flavour, somewhere between that of a raspberry and a strawberry combined. Plant them in an open, sunny position in soil which is rich in humus. Set plants 18in/45cm apart in rows 30in/75cm apart. After planting, water thoroughly. If no rainfall occurs during the first few weeks after they have been planted, water regularly to keep the soil moist until plants re-establish. Replace with fresh, certified stock (or your own 'runners') in a new bed or a different part of the garden every three to four years. Strawberry 'runners' (baby plants on the ends of stalks) should be potted on next to the mother plant to increase the number of plants or cut off, giving the plant more energy to produce fruit.

All the soft fruit (as well as fruit trees) mentioned will produce much more fruit with the application of potash as a top dressing in late

winter or early spring. This will help the plants produce more flowers and fruit. Potash will also help strengthen plants and make them resistant to extreme weather and diseases. An excellent source of potash is found in pure wood ash from your fireplace (not mixed with coal or briquettes), just spread on the ground around the plant and the rain will wash it down to the roots.

During the growing season an organic fertiliser and or mulch with added seaweed will add much needed nitrogen and trace elements for leaf growth and overall health of the plants. Fresh compost will make an excellent mulch around the base of the plants (keep it a few inches away from the stem), as this will contain earthworms and soil microbes.

If there are long periods of dry weather, regular watering is advised, especially for freshly planted fruit. Organic liquid fertilisers can also be added at this stage for a quick feed.

Fruit nets are sometimes needed to keep the birds from eating your buds and fruit before you get a chance to! Regular checking of the netting is needed to make sure they do not find a way in. If using a pest or fungal control on your fruit bushes, be sure to buy an organic product, or make your own. Always wait at least a week before eating any fruit after applying the product.

Feel free to visit us here at Deelish Garden Centre to discuss which of the above options would suit your garden. Then all that is left to do is choose which of the above soft fruit is for you, plant it as soon as possible and enjoy your tasty rewards next season! And remember, gardening doesn't have to cost the earth!

people Gardening

Set for the winter



A COTTAGE GARDEN PROJECT

Jean Perry

Over the coming months Jean Perry of Glebe Gardens will share the ongoing successes and failures of growing a small cottage garden using no-dig and organic principles to see just how much food she can get out of such a plot. Join her on this journey...

We have just passed the Autumn equinox, the time when the length of the day and night are equal. Although we have had some lovely sunny days, the evenings are noticeably colder and the garden is definitely winding down. As the day length shortens and the soil starts to cool, growth rates also slow down. For instance, when we are picking salad leaves in the spring with perfect growing conditions, the regrowth is very fast. It is often possible to pick over lettuce and salad leaves every week but as the day length shortens so does the growth rate, making decisions on how much to plant for winter production trickier. We start thinking about winter salad production as early as August, sowing lettuce and other salad leaves to plant in the tunnels as soon as there is space. By the beginning of September, we strip off all the lower leaves of the tomato plants letting in light underneath and before the tomatoes are finished, we underplant with salads and spinach. This will give us salad at least until Christmas and some plants will



go on even longer. We cut the tomato plants out when they finish cropping, usually by late September. Some could go on but the salad will be more useful. We sow more lettuce in September to take us right through to spring. Salads such as rocket, mizuna and other brassica type leaves grow happily through the winter.

It is quite possible to grow all this salad outside in a sheltered spot, but the regrowth will be even slower, and they would really benefit from some cover such as fleece or a cloche. They don't mind the cold but in wet, windy weather they get buffeted

around and here in our coastal garden, can get a bit worse for wear without some protection.

Kales, chard and spinach are our mainstay winter greens. We do grow a few cabbages, but I find the kales more useful, as you can just pick off a few leaves as you need them. Half a cabbage kicking round the fridge is very unappetising and here it often gets fed to the chickens. I love spring greens though and a red cabbage at Christmas is a tradition with us.

We dug our potatoes about six weeks ago and I was really pleased with the crop. We didn't seem to have any obvious blight



damage but for the first time we did get some significant blight on the tomatoes in the tunnel, so I shouldn't have been surprised to find a horrible rotting potato in our stored sacks. We have tipped out all the sacks and found quite a lot of blight which wasn't obvious when we first harvested them. So, if you have stored potatoes for the winter it pays to check them over now and again.

We are stripping out the beds as the crops are finished and most of the beans are gone. The Brown Dutch beans have been hung up to dry in the tunnel. They have cropped really well

and will give us plenty for winter meals. The courgettes are also ready to come out, which leaves us with a few empty beds to cover with mulch over winter. With beds of leeks, kales, chard and fennel, some pumpkin and winter squash to harvest, salads and spinach in the tunnel, potatoes in store and beans drying in the tunnel I think we are set fair for the winter. But I'm already thinking of seed orders for next year, more of that next time.

October in the garden

October is a busy month in the garden. Now is the time to divide rhubarb, cut back perennials and divide established perennials, as well as lots of other jobs to get ready for winter.

Move tender and frost-susceptible plants indoors to a glasshouse, conservatory or porch – more on this subject later.

Harvest apples, pears, grapes and nuts. Apples and pears should be stored in a cool, well-ventilated shed or storehouse. Make sure there aren't any chemicals or other contaminants in the storehouse

or the fruit will pick up the taint. Fruit should be carefully picked to ensure they will last; avoiding any bruises or damage while being harvested or on route to the storehouse.

Mow the lawn when weather and ground conditions permit and complete the trimming of hedges this month.

Pot up hyacinths for Christ-



mas and New Year colour. Use bulb fibre if planting into bowls without drainage holes.

Greenhouse, Conservatory and Indoor Gardening

Pick tomatoes as they ripen. Apply water or liquid feed early in the day to avoid dampness or wet going to the overnight period. Pick off dead or damaged leaves frequently. Ventilate the greenhouse or conservatory on bright, sunny or warm days, closing up in the evening before nightfall.

Plant up Hippeastrum (Amaryllis) bulbs, using a 15-20cm terracotta or plastic pot, for a New Year display. Reduce watering of houseplants, as the days shorten and growth slows. Stand tropical houseplants on trays of wet gravel to counteract the drop in humidity when the central heating comes on. Grouping them together can also help to create a more humid microclimate.

Sow Sweet Peas early in the glasshouse for planting out next spring. Keep an eye out for mice digging up the seed as a food source and take appropriate preventative measures to avoid this occurring.

Remove any shading paint from the glasshouse to maximise reducing light levels late in the season.



GARDENING

John Hosford
The Weekend Garden Centre

Greenhouses can be insulated using plastic bubble wrap. This will cut down the heating bills for the winter but do make sure to attach the polythene in such a way as to minimise the amount of light blocked out by strips of tape and so on, as the bubble wrap itself will reduce light levels somewhat.

Check that heaters have been serviced and are in good working order.

Pest and Disease Prevention
Dampness during the cool nights could be a recipe for fluffy grey mould (Botrytis) and damping off of seedlings.

Check and pick over plants

regularly, removing pests, yellowing or dead leaves and faded flowers before rots develop. Slugs are often found lurking underneath pots.

When bringing plants indoors for the winter, ensure they haven't picked up pests or diseases from the garden. Unhappy looking plants can always be tipped out of the pot to examine the root-balls for signs of over or under-watering or soil borne weevil.

Clean the glasshouse if not done last month to prevent pests and diseases from overwintering in nooks and crannies.

Take care when watering indoor plants not to wet the leaves (although this is not a problem with foliage houseplants where you are trying to increase humidity around the leaves). Watering is best in the morning so that the plants have time to dry off before the cooler nights.

Fruit Garden

Remove broken branches from stone fruits and protect the wounds. Prune blackcurrants if not already done. Prune gooseberries, red and white currants at leaf fall.

Order new fruit trees and bushes for planting immediately after leaf fall.

Choose a sunny, sheltered

site for your new fruit trees and bushes.

Look ahead to the Spring

Plant Sweet William now to flower early next summer. Sweet William provides a rich tapestry of bright, cheerful colours, with great fragrance as an added, welcome bonus.

Wallflowers for flowering next spring can also be planted now.

Continue planting of spring flowering bulbs during October, choosing dwarf varieties for containers.

Dwarf Narcissi, tulips, crocus, outdoor hyacinths and dwarf iris are all ideal in containers. Winter or spring flowering heathers are a great choice for overwinter colour with many of the best varieties continuing well into the spring.

Vegetable Garden



Now is the time to plant spring cabbage.

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Winter stars in the garden

By Mags Riordan
of Bumbebee Farm

The change in temperature, light and in the overall look of the garden is so obvious now that we're heading into October. I must admit I'm enjoying the changes; it's such a beautiful time of the year. Here on the farm it's all about getting ready for spring with tulip and narcissus planting season well underway.

If you haven't already invested in some spring bulbs, I highly recommend it; there's nothing compared to the cheer they'll bring from January onwards. It's getting late for crocus, and daffodils but still worth it. Tulips on the other hand are best left to be planted until early November, as the tips can get damaged in early spring by frosts, but you could pop a few into a pot to have a little garden on your table come spring. Layered or 'lasagne planting' is a great way to extend the season in pots, using indoor and outdoor

planters. Get a decent sized pot with good drainage and added grit at the bottom and a layer of compost. Add the largest and latest flowering bulbs first like tulips, then add another layer of compost, followed by daffodils and lastly some crocus and muscari. These will flower from February right through to April and you'll be so glad you did this.

I recommend taking some photos now while the trees and deciduous shrubs are still in leaf and in a few weeks when they're gone; it's so handy to reference where you'd like to make changes. I love when the leaves fall because you get a real sense of the garden structure. The garden is laid bare but holds the promise of late winter with my all-time favourite winter flowers like hellebores, snowdrops, and our native primrose. These almost indestructible plants will crank out flowers no matter what the weather throws at them and, as they're woodland natives, they can fill those summer shady locations like beacons of light



and life. I've noticed my Mahonia sending out flower spikes; it will fill the air with its delicious scent, feed my pollinators who have foregone hibernation, and in turn it will bear beautiful black berries to feed my blackbirds and thrushes in the spring.

Scent is so important in winter, as it's a lure for pollinators and we get to benefit from it too. Shrubs like Saraccoca sweet Christmas box is a beautiful winter flowering,

shade-loving plant, that out of flower you'd completely ignore, but come winter is a star! Equally Winter Honeysuckle, with its sweet fragrance filling the air on those still crisp winter mornings, is an utter joy.

Viburnums are another star of the winter garden, both the deciduous types like 'Bodnantense', and evergreen 'Eve price'. But the workhorse for me is Skimmia japonica 'Rubella'. All these shrubs provide



a vital winter food source for our pollinators while giving us joy and colour in what can be a drab time of the year.

These will all be available in good garden centres now and this is a great month to get them in so they can establish before

the onset of winter.

I hope you'll find these suggestions useful and together we can build pollinator corridors while giving pleasure to ourselves.

Bee Kind
Mags

people Motoring

CAR
REVIEWS

Sean Creedon

Big cat is now a practical sharp-driving machine

The Government are trying to curb the number of cars imported from England by imposing extra charges for older 'dirtier' models. One of the reasons why the demand was so high in the past for imports is that UK customers always got cars that were better spec'd than what we were offered in Ireland.

That thought was brought home to me last week when I checked the Ford Ireland website for a price for the new Puma I was driving. There was a picture of a young lady car-

rying two shopping bags, using her left foot to open the boot of her Puma. But in the left-hand corner was a note saying 'model shown not available in ROI.'

However, that was an old video and my top of the range ST-Line X did have that service where your boot will open by using your foot, but it costs an extra €700. There is also a button on the dash to open the boot and it can also be opened from the key fob, so I didn't really need to open the boot with my right or indeed left foot.

Ford has resurrected the Puma nameplate after a 19-year absence on this Fiesta-based crossover. While it might annoy some purists that the big cat is no longer a sports car, the new Puma is a practical, well-made, generously equipped, sharp-driving machine that should find a whole new fanbase with a new generation of buyers.

My test car was a top of the range ST-Line X version with a plethora of goodies. And I have a feeling we could be getting better spec'd cars from Ford in future. Staff numbers have been cut at Ford's Irish offices in Cork and the 'show' is now being run from the UK.

I really liked the infotainment

display on the dash. It worked really well and I probably wrecked the heads of my passengers by trying all the local radio stations from around the country on my i-phone.

It's really comfortable to travel in and was ideal to travel around the country last week. And those eye-catching alloys will certainly grab the attention of curious shoppers in the car park.

The big talking point about the Puma is the Mega Box in the boot. You could pack in golf clubs or gardening items in that massive area in the boot. But everything has a downside and there is no spare wheel and I had difficulty locating the repair kit. It's located under the front passenger's seat.

I drove a black model and it looked very attractive, but I thought there was too much black in the interior; it could have done with a white roof to brighten up the decor. The official colour was Agate black.

Prices start at €24,835 and the ST-Line X starts at €27,917 and my test car with a plethora of extra will cost you €31,717. Road tax is €180. But I always say buy what you can afford. And you certainly won't need to pay many visits to garage



forecourts; the engine is frugal with a capital F.

And if you want something larger, Ford has just launched a new version of their Kuga, which is bit like a larger version

of the Puma. Prices for the diesel version of the Kuga will start at €33,357, while the PHEV version starts at €35,432.

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Clonakilty Intermediate ladies' footballers celebrate county final glory



SPORT

John Bohane

Clonakilty Intermediate ladies' footballers captured county final glory recently after they defeated Glanmire by three points following their county final played in Kilmichael. **John Bohane** reports.

The West Cork outfit were captained to county final glory by their star midfielder Clare O'Leary. Victory for Clonakilty in the county final ensures they will be competing in the senior grade next season.

Their captain fantastic, Clare O'Leary, is still coming to terms with the nature of their county final triumph. "We are absolutely delighted. No one gave us a chance going into the game, so to put in a massive performance, which surprised everyone and to come away victorious is very sweet. It's also been a long ten years since we competed in our last county final, so the celebrations were good and well deserved."

Glanmire had previously beaten Clonakilty in the round robin section of the intermediate football championship. Clonakilty had to produce a great display to defeat such strong opponents.

Clare was full of praise for the challenge posed by Glanmire. "They are a very good team. They had lots of young players with a lot of pace. They play the same style of football as us. They focus on moving it through the hands fast, so it made for a good game of football. We were probably hungrier and that got us over the line in the final."

There were great scenes and celebrations in Clonakilty when the victorious Clonakilty ladies' footballers and their management team arrived home with the county title. Clare and her teammates were overwhelmed by the reception they received upon their arrival home to their beloved town. "I was absolutely honoured to captain this brilliant team and I'm so proud of how far we have come this year. This will probably go down as my most special sporting achievement. It was an amazing feeling to lift the cup on behalf of my teammates. We got a great ovation in Clonakilty. We got a Garda escort through the town, and so many supporters who couldn't make the match due to the restrictions, gathered on the streets to cheer us on. It was a surreal and great moment. It meant a lot to all of us. It has been such a long time since we achieved any success, I never thought I'd be doing this again in my football career."

Clonakilty possessed a very strong coaching line up who each played a huge and integral role in guiding them to county final glory. Clare was full of praise for the diligent sextet. "There are six mentors in the management team. Iain, JJ, Joe, Finbarr, Casey and Yvonne. Each have a job to do and I can honestly say without them we would not have been crowned county champions. They are so invested in us and no stone was left unturned in our preparations for the final. We, as players, are very thankful



The victorious Clonakilty Intermediate Ladies Football Team celebrate with sponsor Scally's SuperValu.

Back Row (l-r): Siobhain Callanan, Meabh O'Donovan, Meabh Deasy, J.J. Deasy (coach), Ruth Shanley, Katie O'Driscoll and Aine O'Leary. Front Row (l-r): Yvonne Ryan (chairperson), Ciara Ryan, Martin Scally, (SuperValu) Claire O'Leary, (captain), Eugene Scally, (SuperValu), Kira O'Mahony and Iain O'Driscoll (coach). Pic: Dermot Sullivan.

for their roles in our set up."

Orlaith Deasy netted the two goals for Clonakilty. The young forward is one of a number of talented young players who featured very prominently in spearheading their drive for county glory. Clare acknowledges the crucial role the young players brought to their squad. "The younger girls have been the best addition to our panel. Four of them won U14 All-Ireland medals with Cork two years ago and Siobhan Callanan is playing with the Cork U16 team this year, so they are used to playing in big pressure games. They are as tough and physical as the senior players, which is great to see. They are so committed also, which is admirable. Orlaith executed the penalties with class. She has great experience from playing soccer with Ireland. Her goals were huge on the day."

Clonakilty can also call upon the services of Cork senior goalkeeper Martina O'Brien who has been a huge stalwart for

both club and county. Martina kept a clean sheet in the final, which was a huge factor in their triumph. Clare loves playing with the experienced custodian. "Martina is a great leader. Her position in goal ensures she can see what's happening or about to happen faster than any of us on the pitch. She is very vocal in her instructions which helps guide us. Her experience is invaluable and she's the best net-minder in Ireland in my opinion. She greatly reduces the number of scores we concede in games by the saves she pulls off. She is a great leader and a vital player in our team."

Clare and her sister Aine also played key roles in their triumph. They combined brilliantly at midfield, with their sheer athleticism, strong running, and ability to link play key features of their game plan. Clare loved teaming up with her sister. "We are playing together a long time now. We can read each other's next move well. This ensures we link

up well in games and support each other. Aine is top class and versatile too. She can easily play in the forwards and get a couple of scores when required."

Immediate focus for the intermediate county champions is a Munster championship game against the Kerry champions, which Clonakilty is due to host. Clare is looking forward to that appetising game and once again competing in the senior ranks next season. "We are looking forward to competing in the Munster club championship. Our management team have planned a training schedule, so we will give Munster our best shot. Now we have had a taste of success, we want more. I can't believe we are back competing at senior level. We dropped down four years ago and it was such a big call at the time. Many advised us that we might not ever get back up to senior level,

but look at us now. We definitely possess the players required to compete in the top grade. The influx of the younger girls combined with their passion and enthusiasm for the game is really encouraging."

Clonakilty ladies' football club is thriving at present. The club boasts huge numbers, both at adult and underage level. They possess a plethora of players who currently play at all levels for the various Cork teams. There is great unity within the club with lots of great work going on behind the scenes. There is also a great buzz within the club, which suggests it is poised for a very bright future. Clare is very confident the club is in a good place. "The effort that is put in within the underage club is huge and the hard work is reaping its rewards now. The future is bright."

Castlehaven ladies capture Junior B county final

The Castlehaven ladies footballers captured the Junior B county final for the first time in their history recently after they defeated O'Donovan Rossa following an enthralling game played in Dunmanway. **John Bohane** reports.

Castlehaven emerged victorious on a final scoreline of 5-11 to 3-8. Their coach Dinny Cahalane was thrilled with the nature of their impressive win. "It was a great game of football and the standard

on display from both teams was brilliant. Both sides deserve great credit, as it was a great advert for ladies football in West Cork and Cork. We were just thrilled to come out victorious."

The Haven heroines produced a brilliant display in the second half, which enabled them secure county final glory. They struck 2-6 without replay in the opening 17 minutes of the second half, having trailed by one point at the interval. Dinny had full confidence in his charges. "I wasn't that worried at half-time. We knew the players had more

in them. We were very clinical in the second half. Although we created good chances in the opening half, we didn't convert them. Our players upped the tempo in the third quarter and it helped guide us to victory."

Dinny himself, a former decorated player with his beloved Castlehaven, has enjoyed his role coaching the Castlehaven junior ladies footballers. "They are great to work with. Anything we ask of them, they carry out to perfection. They are so talented and dedicated. Their attitudes are great. They are always wanting

to improve. We started out on this journey five or six years ago. We were hammered by the Dohenys in a challenge game. It has taken a lot of hard work by everyone involved. Look at us now. We are Junior B county champions. We have come a long way. We have great numbers with lots of talented underage players coming through. We have a great committee driving the club on. We are looking forward to competing in the A grade next year."



Castlehaven player Noreen O'Sullivan pictured with her mother Mary and her boyfriend John McGuckin who is also part of the management team.

people Sport & Fitness

Ladies football continues to thrive in West Cork

By John Bohane

The West Cork senior ladies footballers captured the county title for the first time in their history after they defeated reigning All-Ireland champions Mourneabbey by two points following a thrilling final played in CIT recently.

Castlehaven club player Siobhan Courtney played a key role for the team who are comprised of players from Valley Rovers and Courcey Rovers, right through to Beara and Bantry. Siobhan was thrilled to play her part in their historic triumph. "It was a fantastic win. We knew we could do it this year. The belief was there even more so than in previous years. A lot of the team have been involved the last few years so we know each other well. We've become friends off the pitch and I think that made a huge difference. We were turning up to training and catching up with people, chatting away during the warm up, like at club level. The management had a lot to do with that. They make everyone feel welcome and always try to make connections with people."

All the West Cork players produced heroic displays on the day.

St Colum's dual star Libby Copping netted two goals, while the Kiely twins from Valley Rovers also shared a goal between them. Siobhan was elated with the sheer heroics from her teammates. "It was a great display. The whole team gave everything they could. It was hard fought and that makes it even better. We had a bad start but we recovered and ploughed on from then. The goals were excellent. The forwards played out of their skins. We pulled together and worked as a unit and it paid off. The work rate was outstanding. We got a good few turnovers from Mourneabbey kick outs. We put them under huge pressure. Daire's goal was fantastic. She took it so well...it was perfectly placed. We defended for our lives after that."

Siobhan and her teammates enjoyed great receptions when they returned home to their respective clubs. All the players are great role models and ambassadors for their proud clubs and families. Siobhan was glad to represent her family and beloved club with great distinction. "It was a very proud moment for my family and I. It was a shame that they couldn't be there as they always support me. I think that was harder on them. My mother couldn't

believe I was heading off to a senior county final and she had to stay at home and watch it on the television. It was just a bit surreal really, but at least it was available to them to watch; the county final has been watched a few times in our house since! We had a great celebration afterwards and it also lovely returning home and having a little family celebration too."

Ladies football in West Cork continues to thrive and growing

on an annual basis. Membership is up across the board in every club, while great work from administrators and coaches alike is ensuring clubs are progressing accordingly. West Cork clubs enjoyed unprecedented success this year, which augurs well for the future. Siobhan is thrilled ladies football continues to grow in West Cork. "Our county final success is a huge boost for West Cork football. There is great

talent around the division and I'm sure there will be a lot more players coming through. It's great to get the opportunity to play senior football. It's not something I ever thought I'd do and to now have a senior county medal is amazing. It's hard to believe really."

Brian McCarthy, Anne O'Grady, James O'Mahony and Michelle Dullea guided the West Cork senior footballers to county glory by. Siobhan is lavish in her

praise for the diligent quartet. "I couldn't speak more highly of the management. They are brilliant. Each one contributes in different ways. There's a fun atmosphere at training, but always with the end goal in mind. I'm delighted for them that we won this year. They deserve all the credit, as do the coaches who played their part in other years."



Clon connections to Cork success in 1945

While winter might be a strange time of year to see Cork GAA in championship action, the football match against Kerry is a rivalry we're all familiar with. Pre Covid saw a number of Clonakilty players donning the county red with Sean White, Maurice Shanley, Thomas Clancy and Liam O'Donovan all making League appearances. Last year's starting keeper Mark White could possibly return to the squad having been forced to abandon his travel plans making it the strongest Clon presence on the Cork team in many years.

September 23, 2020 marks the 75th anniversary of Cork's third All Ireland triumph in Gaelic Football and this was a team that was backboned by Clonakilty players. Clon at the time dominated Cork football. Having experienced so much heartbreak in the 1930s when they lost the county final six times in seven years between 1932 and 1938, Samuel Kingston says that one would be forgiven in thinking that they had missed their chance.

In 1939 as the country plunged into the Emergency and with war escalating in Europe, Clon finally conquered the county title beating Beara in the final, revenging their defeats in 1932, 33 and 34. 1940 was a bad year in Clon with the closure of Deasy's Brewery, which gave the town its nickname and unfortunately the Brewery Boys of Clon GAA crashed out to Beara in round 2. A year later after an epic five match tussle with Dromtariffe in which Clon finally advanced, they would end up being disqualified after a dispute with Bantry who were also disqualified.

Then in 1942 began the start of Clon's golden era and their rivalry with Fermoy. Clon became one of

the few clubs to win three in a row defeating the unfortunate Fermoy in each final. Each campaign bringing excitement to the town and of course, in the middle of all this Clon had the surrealness of the US warplane T'aint a Bird landing in White's Marsh in April 1943. Even Tojo the Monkey couldn't distract the Clon players as they started out on their 1943 campaign a few weeks later.

All this success inevitable attracted the attention of the county selectors. In 1943, Clon stalwart Tadhgo Crowley was captain of the Cork senior team that secured their first victory over Kerry since 1928 with the team going on to lose to a strong Cavan in the semi-final. Two years later Crow-

ley was again captain as Cork secured another Munster title. After beating Galway in the All Ireland semi-final, they now had to face Cavan in the All Ireland final. By now Crowley was joined by many of his club mates. In total there were nine Clon players on the county panel in 1945. Five starters in the final - Tadhgo Crowley as captain, Moll O'Driscoll in goal, Fachtina O'Donovan in midfield, Edward 'Togher' Casey at right wing forward, Humphrey O'Neill at centre forward and with Mick Finn, Fr. Jim Ahern, Dessie Cullinane, and Paddy 'Hitler' Healy in reserve. An incredible feat for any club. Cavan were defeated by 2-5 to 0-7 but two years later they claimed their third title in a triumph over Kerry in the famous final staged in the Polo Grounds in New York. Kerry, in the 1947 Munster final, had beaten a Cork team with six Clon starters. Dessie Cullinane was now county captain and he was joined by Tadhgo Crowley, Moll O'Driscoll, Fachtina O'Donovan, Humphrey O'Neill and Fr. Jim Ahern.

As the Sam Maguire cup had only been introduced in 1928, Tadhgo became the first Cork captain to bring the cup back to Sam's home county. He was greeted with jubilant scenes in both Cork and Clonakilty. Cork GAA was on a roll at this time, the county won an All Ireland every year between 1941 and 1946. Hurling in 41, 42, 43, 44 and 46 and football in 1945. Jack Lynch, the future Taoiseach would win a medal for each



Cork team that won the 1945 Football championship.

of these, starting at corner forward in the football final.

The All Ireland success, while great for Cork, took its toll on the Clon players who still had a county final to play. Fermoy finally succeeded in getting their victory. Back in Clon where the victory parade was already being planned there was shock and disbelief. Normal service would resume in 1946 with Clon once again defeating Fermoy and the golden era would end the following year with Clon defeating Jack Lynch's St. Nick's in the final.

It was a remarkable era for Clon football winning six county titles between 1939 and 1947. If a club All Ireland championship had existed at that time, it would be fair to think that Clon would surely have captured one or two titles and certainly the club's impact on the Cork All Ireland in 1945 lends credence to that notion as well.



Tadhgo Crowley bringing Sam Maguire back to Cork

I want to acknowledge the work of Tom Lyons in recording the history of Clonakilty GAA. The books he compiled and wrote were a massive help in putting this article together. The books are available to borrow from Clonakilty library.

Samuel Kingston is a freelance TV Producer, writer and local historian from Clonakilty, West Cork. He is currently writing a book – 'The Sporting Irish' – which tells the story of the Irish impact on sports around the world.