

SHERKIN NEWSLETTER

October 2012

Very autumnal weather this month so far, apart from the glorious day on the 6th for the BAVA graduation ceremony, so that makes 3 in a row! Well done to all who made it yet another very special Sherkin day.



(photo courtesy Robbie Murphy)

Now that autumn is being felt all around it is a good time to get the flu vaccination. For this purpose the Skibbereen Medical Centre is holding clinics from 3-5pm, Mon – Fri (no appointment necessary), and all those aged over 65 or those with chronic disease are advised to get the vaccine which is free to medical card holders.

The newsletter is trying out a new page of general tips which are relevant to the time of year. This month's article includes tips on how to get your property ready for winter, both inside and out, as well as things you can do in the garden. It is hoped that readers will contribute items to this page which we hope to have in every issue if contributions and ideas flood in!

And a Very Happy Important Birthday to Martin O'Driscoll who will be blowing out a lot of candles on October 26th, along with his twin Gerard in UK.

This newsletter is produced by Karen Mould and Sue Cahalane and published by SIDS. We welcome news and articles of general interest and please do contact us with information about forthcoming events. Articles can be emailed to sherkinnewsletter@gmail.com, or delivered by hand, and any enquiries to 087 7715862. We look forward to hearing from you! Next deadline 10th Nov 2012

BA Visual Art Conferring 2012

A perfect morning on Saturday last, 6th October, as Dinny McGinley, TD, Minister of State at the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht was warmly welcomed on the Sherkin pier by Maureen O'Neill chair of SIDS, Cait Uí Raghallaigh, school principal, and the schoolchildren of Sherkin. The Minister was accompanied by Brid Ni Congaile, Noel Harrington TD, Adrian Healy representing the Mayor of Cork County, Karen Coakley, Mayor of Skibbereen, and other Councillors.



Susan Murphy Wickens gave a very interesting talk and tour of the Abbey to the dignitaries and then she and Maureen gave the Minister and his party a guided tour of Sherkin. Minister McGinley was very interested in the history of the Abbey, the school and the children's signage. As he was driven around the island he showed a keen interest in the farming activities, the fishing activities (including oyster, shrimp and mussel farming), the recycling at

the Rugher and the work of the tidy islands committee.

Back at the Community Hall there was great excitement as the academic procession entered the Hall to a recital by students of Conservatory of Music, Kathleen Gorey-McSorley (bodhran), Aimee Farrell Courtney (fiddle) and Fiona Gryson (harp).

Dr. Michael Mulvey, Head of Academic Affairs at DIT conferred the graduates in the presence of Minister McGinley to generous applause.



Minister McGinley and John O'Connor, Dean of College of Arts and Tourism addressed the graduates. DIT was also represented by Dr. Sheila Flanagan, Head of Learning Development. The celebrations continued late into the evening at the Islanders Rest...

These were the first group of students to enrol directly onto the first year of BA Visual Art, shortly after it was validated as the first honours degree programme of its kind.

They were also the first group of graduates to have their final year exhibition across the width and breadth of Sherkin, thanks to the generosity of the community here who gave their Abbey, pier, homes, living rooms, gardens, land, and businesses to host the first island-wide art exhibition.

The funding support of the Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht and Cork County Council is hugely significant for this third level arts education course and is instrumental in the programme being able to progress. It has enabled a further group of students to begin their 4 year degree on Sherkin Island in September this year. Mayor of County Cork, Cllr Barbara

Murray said “*the support of Cork County Council firmly consolidates the recognition of this programme’s significance for the West Cork region.*”.

BA Visual Art is a community-based, four year honours, Visual Art Programme. It is fully accredited, managed and delivered by the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) in partnership with Sherkin Island Development Society (SIDS). West Cork Arts Centre (WCAC) is also a key partner in the planning and implementation of the programme. It is supported by funding from the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and from Cork County Council.

We warmly congratulate Anna, Anne, Chris, Claire, Danny, Diarmuid, Donagh, Gana, Jane, Janet, Jocelyn, Luisa, Margrit, Michele, Maureen, Paul, Wendy as they continue their artistic journey.

Bernadette Burns,
Programme chair, BA Visual Art

West Cork Islands Interagency Group

A meeting of the West Cork Islands Interagency group took place in Bantry on September 28th, chaired by James Fogarty, Divisional Manager Cork County Council, and attended by delegates from the seven islands and representatives of the various agencies involved in the Islands’ Development Strategy. Four working groups have been established to implement the strategy in the key areas of Economic, Physical, Social/Community and Cultural development, each group composed of island representatives and a dedicated development worker.

After a review of progress to date by the development workers concerned, Syd Cheatle Chairman WCIC , stressed the importance of maintaining island populations at a viable level and noted the vital contribution made by existing island schools over the years in encouraging families to settle on the islands.

Aisling Moran, Development Worker for Sherkin, Heir and Long Islands, also stressed the importance of retaining County council workers on the islands to maintain the basic minimum services.

Mary Lavelle of Comhar listed a number of Rural Development grants still available and advised that although funding for some categories was exhausted (e.g. new buildings etc) others were undersubscribed and urged intending applicants to submit their applications as soon as possible.

Trees For Free

Does it sound too good to be true – well it is true. I MILLION TREES IN ONE DAY is a charity, not-for-profit, cross-border community and environmental initiative which will plant a million young native trees at many different locations across both the Republic and Northern Ireland in 24 hours.

The goal of this project is the establishment of individual trees and woodlands in rural and urban areas. These will grow for many years’ – in some instances-generations, and will provide valuable resources: ecosystems beneficial to wildlife, shelter, firewood, fuel, food, drainage of land, (tree roots soak up a lot of



water), beautiful objects to behold and a legacy for the future generations.

Types of planting to be carried out

- Establishment of new native woodlands
- Establishment of groups of trees and woodland of appropriate species as coppice woods for future wood fuel supply
- Planting fruit & nut trees as a source of food and to help biodiversity
- Improving existing native woodlands

Those interested should give the following information to Aisling 087 7669657 in the Community Hall:

Name, Contact telephone number, Location of proposed site, Number of individual trees to be planted And/Or Size of site in Acres.

Include as much information regarding elevation, soil type, aspect, any other trees or other features of the site, as possible. The trees are owned by the landowner and any profits arising from the harvest of trees will belong to the landowner.

As I MILLION TREES IN ONE DAY is a charity it is grateful for any donations, no matter how small, to help the project. Donations can be made at the donations page of the website. Also more detailed information is available on the web page.

<http://www.onemilliontreesinoneday.com/landowners.html>

Rainfall for September 2012

The rainfall recorded at Sherkin Island Marine Station for the month of September 2012 was 26.6 mm – the fourth driest September since recording began in 1972. The days with the highest rainfall were:

1 st	3.2 mm
3 rd	1.9 mm
11 th	2.4 mm
15 th	1.0 mm
21 st	1.0 mm
25 th	2.0 mm
27 th	1.2 mm
29 th	2.5 mm
30 th	6.5 mm

The driest September was 1986, with 6.2 mm. The wettest was 1974 when 215.3 mm fell.

Parking at the Abbey Pier

It has come to the attention of SIDS Committee members that the parking on the Sherkin Island pier is becoming overcrowded due to the number of vehicles idle for long periods of time. This congestion is causing access difficulties for our residents, for those working on the island, as well as visitors to the island.

If you expect to be away from the island for a week or more, please avail of our bus service, and park your vehicle at home.

With the winter months approaching, the pier is experiencing more activity with commercial vehicles and vehicles carrying heating oil, other fuels and winter farming supplies. The pier area is very limited and with all of the parked vehicles blocking areas, they are experiencing great difficulty maneuvering their vehicle, cargo and goods on and off the pier. Additionally, residents who commute to the mainland each day cannot get a parking space.

Please remember that the Sherkin island pier is a working pier and we would appreciate if everyone could work together to keep our pier free from overcrowding and safe for all of our residents, workers and visitors.

Sculpture for the Pier

In appreciation of the many years he has spent on Sherkin, Claus has designed a sculpture to be displayed on the seaward side of the pier, ie at the end of the pier facing Baltimore. The sculpture, cast in bronze and approximately one metre in length, shows the mythical 'Salmon of Knowledge' emerging from a natural stone background and is intended to provide a more memorable introduction to Sherkin than the present expanse of blank concrete. It has been located at the dead end around the corner to avoid any interference with pier traffic arrangements.

Naturally, Claus would not wish to proceed further without the approval of the island community and so it is intended that a public meeting will take place in the near future at which all islanders can feel free to express their views.

Subject to the Islanders' approval, funding for the project will be applied for under an allocation from Comhar Na n'Oileain.



George Packard's Farewell Ceremony

It has been over a year since George died and much life has happened and people have moved on. Because he died far away in the Canaries we never had a community ritual to see him off and I thought it would be wonderful if we could do that now. I'll be coming home to Sherkin on Oct.13th for 11 days and will bring George's ashes with me to be scattered in Roaringwater bay. **I invite everybody who wants to join me on the ferry leaving Sherkin at 2.15 pm on Sunday 21st October.** We will be picking up people in Baltimore and then take a tour into Roaringwater Bay opposite our house where we will open the urn and everybody can take out a spoonful of ashes and scatter it into the water. You can do it silently or with a prayer, poem, song, reading, story, anecdote, whatever you want to give him on his way or to share.

Of course he is long gone. But I believe and trust that this ceremony will be a lovely event for all of us. It certainly is important for me. George himself didn't want a big funeral but wanted to slip away silently and privately. However, a trip out to sea with friends and neighbours I am sure he would have enjoyed.

And I do know that he loved this island, and the view from the bench in front of the house or out of his tiny study window is like no place else on earth. So, let's release his earthly remains right here in Roaringwater Bay between Slievemore and Mt. Gabriel and afterwards gather around the pianos in the hotel and the Jolly Roger, both of which he went to choose from Jeffers Piano store and brought on to the island.

I am looking forward to seeing you all,
Kordula.

NB. To accommodate the number of people who expect to attend, this gathering after the scattering of the ashes will meet initially at the Islander's Rest at approx 4.15pm.

Part-time Courses - educational, social or just for fun!

Eleanor Calnan from the V.E.C will hold a meeting

**Wednesday 17 OCTOBER 2012
6 P.M
SHERKIN COMMUNITY HALL**

Eleanor will discuss a range of courses that may be available on the island so if you would like to see something happen please come along.

A Message from our Neighbours

Residents of Cape Clear are hoping to extend the rural transport scheme to run a bus service on **Sundays from Baltimore to Skibbereen** at approx 5.50pm so as to connect with the 6.20pm bus to Cork. The provision of the service depends on the numbers wanting to use it, so if you think this service would be useful to you please phone Dorothee 028 39190, or email dorocleire@yahoo.com

West Cork Save Our Service bed push from Skibbereen to Cork

IN order to highlight ongoing concerns about the future of ambulance services in West Cork, the Save Our Service (SOS) campaign have announced details of a stretcher push from Skibbereen to Cork University Hospital (CUH) to take place from **Wednesday, October 17th to Saturday, October 20th** next.

Relay teams of four will push the stretcher from Skibbereen to Dunnes at Bishopstown in Cork over a four day period where they will be joined by supporters to complete the last leg to the CUH.

The schedule for the walk is as follows:

Day 1: October 17th – Skibbereen to Clonakilty – 32km

Day 2: October 18th – Clonakilty to Innishannon – 28km

Day 3: October 19th – Innishannon to Dunnes, Bishopstown at 18km

Day 4: October 20th – Dunnes, Bishopstown to Cork University Hospital

The group is looking for volunteers to work in relays to push the stretcher, and are also appealing for as many people as possible to join them on the final leg to CUH.

Nuacht S N Inis Arcáin

The first month is over and mid- term is fast approaching. How time flies.

We were pleasantly surprised to be chosen once again as one of the finalists in the Fís Film Festival this year. The film which qualified is an animation film entitled Coming Home. This film was produced by last year's 6th class. Well done to all of them. The whole school, along with past pupils and parents, are getting ready to travel to Dublin for the festival on November the 8th. We will have a full account for you next month.

On Friday the 26th of October we will have our game playing day in the school. This event happens annually and raises funds for a local charity. This year we are raising funds for the life boat. We hope that all islanders will come and play board games with us. It is a very

enjoyable afternoon and is a good way of remembering how things were before technology took over. Not a digital gadget will be seen. We could even arrange a card game if we had players!! Come and join us. It costs just €2 or a donation of your choice.

The school would like to congratulate all the students and SIDS on the graduation on Saturday. You even got the weather right. We would like to thank you for including us as part of the welcoming party for Minister McGinley.

As it is only October I feel a bit slow to mention Christmas just yet but Team Hope boxes are being filled again this year by the children and their parents, for children in war or famine stricken countries, as Christmas gifts. If anyone reading this would like to join in and prepare a box please contact us in the school and we will give you the details. The box is usually a shoe box covered in Christmas paper. Both cover and box must be separate as the contents needs to be examined for suitability by the organisation before shipping. You will be provided with a leaflet outlining the items which might be included in the box eg. cap and gloves, a picture book, sweets with a long shelf life, colouring pencils, underwear, socks, a small game or a ball. These seem so little compared to gifts for Christmas in Ireland but they mean so much to the children who receive them.



Sherkin Choir

Tuesday 16th October

First meeting of the season is at 7.30 pm in the Islander's Rest. New members very welcome, and so are any former members who wish to make a return appearance!

Tips for October

Preparing your home for winter. (Extracts from <http://www.aaireland.ie/AA/Motoring-advice/Driving-advice/Maintaining-your-home-this-winter.aspx>)

Inside your home

- Double check that your smoke alarm works
- Get your boiler serviced regularly by a qualified engineer
- If you regularly use an open fire or log-burning stove, get the chimney swept
- If you know how to, bleed your radiators, as air pockets reduce their efficiency
- Familiarise yourself with the location of your mains water stop valve (it's usually under the sink or stairs), in case you need to shut it off in the event of a burst pipe
- Make sure your pipes are properly insulated to avoid them freezing. Outside pipes should be fitted with insulating sleeves if exposed
- Check windows and doors for draughts – fit draught excluders or repair seals as necessary
- Keep a torch and spare batteries in a convenient place and have emergency contact numbers to hand

- Never leave candles lit in an empty room

Outside your home

- Remove dead/damaged branches from any trees which could damage your property in stormy weather.
- Store your garden furniture in a properly sealed shed/garage/conservatory.
- Check guttering from ground level by looking for signs of water overflowing during heavy rain. Get someone in to rectify if you're not confident on a ladder
- Clean dead leaves and other debris from your gutters from time to time or risk rainwater overflowing on to your roof.

Health

Season Flu Vaccination is now available from your GP or pharmacist.

People who are at risk from flu should get the Flu Vaccine. This includes people with long term health conditions, people aged 65 and over, carers of these groups, healthcare workers and pregnant women. The flu vaccine is available free from GPs to everyone in an at risk group. People aged 18 and over who are in an at risk group can also get the vaccine free from their pharmacist. While the vaccine is free to those in at risk groups there may be an administration charge to those who do not hold a medical card or GP visit card. For more details check out - <http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/flu/faq/>

In the Garden

Feeding birds

1. Feed regularly: don't put out lots of feeders and then forget to refill them. Birds can become dependent on a food source during harsh weather.
 2. Only use fresh peanuts and seed. Do not feed mouldy, wrinkled or wizened peanuts or seed.
 3. Ensure fresh water is always available for drinking and bathing. An upturned dustbin lid with a stone in it is often all that is required. Be sure to remove the ice in cold weather so that birds can drink.
 4. Birds often feed on the ground below a feeder. Make sure that there is no shrubbery nearby that could conceal a cat, and try to keep all feeders at least 5-6 feet above the ground.
 5. Remember to wash all feeders and to change the water in the birdbath on a regular basis.
- For more information check out <http://www.birdwatchireland.ie/>

Butterflies

Red admiral butterflies often over winter in sheds, but may become active on milder days. This uses up valuable energy so, if you do see any, leave out a dish of sugar water to give them a boost. If you find a butterfly indoors in winter, release it in a cool, sheltered place, such as a garage or shed, rather than a cold garden. <http://www.fernsvillage.ie/ferns-tidy-towns-page55080.html>

Library News

The children's author Roisin Meaney will be making a visit to Sherkin NS on the morning of 26th October to talk to the children about their reading and writing. She was a very entertaining and inspiring visitor last time she came, and once again her trip is part of the

Children's Book Festival which is run through the month of October by the Cork County Library and Arts Service.

For those adults who like to write short stories there is yet another competition that could win you a nice bunch of notes. The Merriman Short Story Competition is dedicated to the memory of the late Maeve Binchy, who was a life-long supporter of Cumann Merriman and a regular visitor to the Merriman Summer School in Co. Clare. In 2005 Maeve wrote a special short story for the Brian Merriman bicentenary celebrations. The story, entitled '[A Week in Summer](#)', was read by the author at that year's Summer School in Lisdoonvarna and was recorded live. A limited edition of the story was subsequently published in CD and booklet form. Maeve generously donated the royalties from the US edition to Cumann Merriman, and she agreed that her donation be used to award a short story prize. **A prize of €1000 will be awarded to the winning short story**, which must be original, unpublished and unbroadcast. Entries should be not more than 2,500 words in length and set in Ireland. Stories may be written in Irish or English. The competition is confined to writers born or living on the island of Ireland. The closing date for entries is **October 31st 2012**. The Merriman Short Story Competition is being run in association with Cumann Merriman, the Ennis Book Club Festival, Clare County Library and the Irish Times. The winning story will be read at the 2013 Ennis Book Club Festival and will be published in the Irish Times.

Dates for your diary

October

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| Tues 16 th | First choir practice of the season at 7.30pm @ Islander's Rest. |
| Wed 17 th | Meeting in Community Hall at 6pm to discuss arranging evening classes/activities with Eleanor Calnan VEC. |
| Wed 17 th – 20 th | 'Save Our Services' bed push from Skibbereen to Cork. |
| Sun 21 st | Farewell Ceremony for George Packard, ferry leaving Sherkin at 2.15pm. |
| Wed 24 th | Digital Switchover Day, will your telly be blank??!! |
| Fri 26 th | 'Game Day' at Sherkin NS in aid of Baltimore Lifeboat, all welcome. |
| Sun 29 th | An extra hour in bed as clocks go back an hour on the Saturday night!! |