

# Bere Island Newsletter

Issue 77

Spring 2021



*Above: The Range by Helen Riddell*



*Above: The Standing Stone by Helen Riddell taken on New Year's Day, January 2021*

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### Bere Island Radio

A new venture with Bere Island Community Radio and the West Cork Fit-Up Festival will broadcast live theatre on the radio at 8pm on the last Sunday of the month.

The 2020 Fit Up Theatre Festival was cancelled due to the pandemic, and the organisers say there is a strong possibility that the 2021 festival will not go ahead. Following contact with the organisers and Bere Island Projects Group, who host the Fit-Up Festival on the island, it was decided to present a one-hour radio broadcast of four commissioned plays on the last Sunday of the month. The show will be run as a pilot project for three months, with a view to this being extended.

The annual theatre festival has been running on Bere Island for over ten years, playing to packed crowds in the Lecture Theatre during July and August. This new venture on the radio station will continue to keep the Fit-Up actors and writers connected with their audiences. The next broadcast of the Last Sunday Fit Up Connection will be on Sunday March 28th at 8pm on [www.bereisland.net](http://www.bereisland.net) (Submitted by BIPG)



### Bere Island Energy

Renewable energy on Bere Island.

The Bere Island Energy Group has, with assistance from the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), appointed a consultant to formulate an Energy Master Plan for Bere Island. This plan will concentrate on:

- Reducing energy usage in buildings through better insulation.
- Using solar photovoltaics (PV) to generate electricity; and
- Electrifying the island transport system.

Please feel free to contact the group on [bereislandenergy@gmail.com](mailto:bereislandenergy@gmail.com) to make suggestions or to join the group which is open to all. The Energy Master Plan will help us to identify ways in which we as an island can make changes to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and pollution. Further updates will follow as progress is made. (Submitted by the Bere Island Energy Group)

### Rural Social Scheme

Comhar na nOileán are updating their waiting list as there are vacancies to fill. The RSS aims to provide services of benefit to communities and support to low-income farmers and fisherpersons who are in receipt of specified, social welfare payments. Hours of work are 19.5 per week and participants are paid on a weekly.

**Eligibility Criteria for Farmers** Be able to provide proof of farming:

- Application for the EU Single Payment Scheme for the current year, or
- Declaration from the District Veterinary Office (D.V.O) confirming stock details at last test

AND be in receipt of one of the specified social welfare payments

Note: Each participant must occupy and farm in their own right a minimum of 1 Hectare of land within the State

The following people are also permitted to participate in the scheme:

- Dependant Spouse/Children/Siblings of a qualifying farmer (who meets the existing underlying eligibility criteria, mentioned above)
- Qualified adult dependants of a State Pension (non-contributory), who themselves are under 66, who meet the existing underlying eligibility criteria, mentioned above.

**Eligibility Criteria for Fisherpersons** Be in receipt of Fish Assist OR be a:

- Self-employed fisherperson on a fishing boat, in the Register of Fishing Boats / whose boat has been issued with a Pot Fishing Licence
- Self-employed fisherperson who has been issued with a Commercial Salmon Fishing Licence / Commercial Eel Fishing Licence
- Self-employed fisherperson who has been issued with a dredging licence for shellfish
- Holders of an Aquaculture licence issued by the Department of Communication, Marine and Natural Resources / Permit holders for shell fishing issued by a registered Cooperative

AND be in receipt of one of the specified social welfare payments The following people are also permitted to participate in the scheme:

- Dependent spouse of a person qualified i.e. instead of the spouse
- Qualified adult dependants of a State Pension (non-contributory), who themselves are U66

To apply please contact a member of staff at the Projects Group Office who will be happy to give you the application form. (Submitted by BIPG)

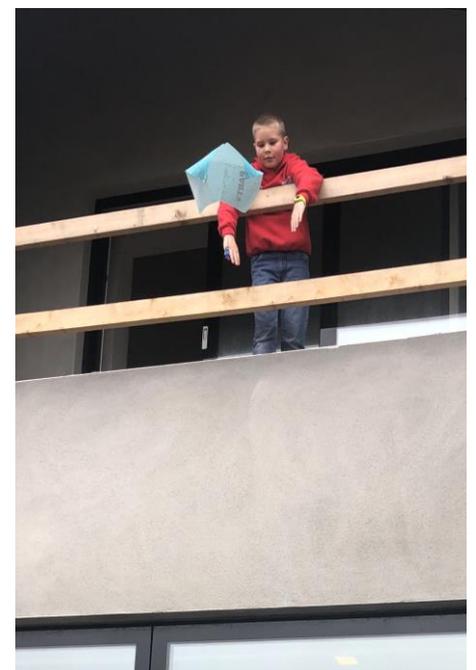
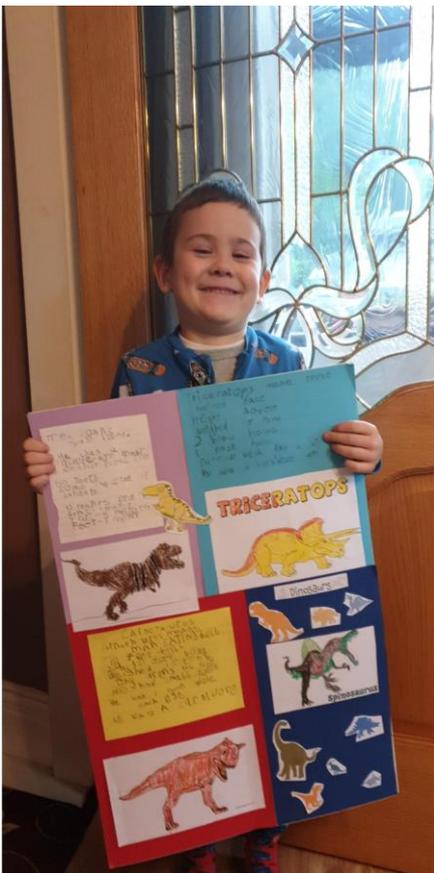


### School News

We reverted from a school without students since before the Christmas holidays back to a bustling hive of learning and activity on Monday, March 1st when we were delighted to welcome the Junior Room back to the school building.

Teaching and learning from home was at times exciting and interesting but it can be hard to keep everyone motivated and to feel the sense of connection that we all share when we are in school. All members of the school community, parents, children and teachers worked so hard to continue with school work at home and some amazing things were achieved. We worked on diverse topics ranging from Rural Electrification to Animal Habitats, creating Parachutes & Bird Feeders to putting on Fashion Shows, thinking, creating and getting out and exploring the island's history and our wonderful natural environment.

We are setting our focus on outdoor lessons and have major plans for our school garden this year, drawing on the knowledge of all our young botanists and horticulturists. We look forward to welcoming the students of the Senior Room back in the coming weeks and getting back to exploring, learning and developing our skills together. You can follow our activities on Twitter @smnbereisland and on our website: [www.bereislandschool.ie](http://www.bereislandschool.ie)  
(Submitted by Scoil Mhichíl Naofa)



### Meals on Wheels

Our Meals and wheels service which started back in the first lockdown in 2020 continues every Wednesday. The service is proving very successful with up to 30 dinners being provided every week. If you are over 65 or have exceptional circumstances and would like to avail of the service, please contact Tim Hanley on 0851679052. A feasibility study is currently being carried out on the service and the results will impact on the future funding from the HSE. (Submitted by BIPG)

### Down memory lane

Can you guess the year? (Answers on back page)



A

A happy Active Retirement outing to Dursey cable car



B

School field trip



C

Bere Island Regatta



D

Bere Island Talent show



E

School field trip

### Stork

Congratulations to Marla and Aidan Cotter on the birth of their first child, a baby boy Ewan Thomas Cotter. Congratulations also to Lynne (Kingston) and Jai Grogan on the birth of their first child, a baby girl Cora. We wish both couples and babies well.

### I.F.A. News

The main topic at the present time in the worrying of sheep by dogs. Over the next month the sheep will be lambing, so this is a particularly vulnerable time for them to be chased by dogs. Even being chased without being attacked causes stress which can result in aborted lambs.

On February 28<sup>th</sup> I spoke to Nealie O'Leary who is chairman of the Hill Sheep Farmers Association as well as the dog warden. He spoke of the financial implications of sheep worrying. The average sheep is worth roughly 100 euros with lambs being valued at 100 euros each. The cost of a dog not under control is 100 euros, so it pays to keep the dog on a lead. If that dog does not have a licence that will cost an extra €100. Posters are in place in many areas throughout the peninsula including Bere Island, advising owners to always keep their dogs on leads especially when hill walking. Nealie also reminds us that if a dog is found worrying sheep the owner of those sheep is well within their rights to shoot the dog.

In other news February 28<sup>th</sup> was the last day of burning scrub but the IFA are lobbying to extend this date to mid-March as this is the only way to control the growth. This is the date they allow in England and they have had no adverse effect. *(Submitted by Brenda Elphick, Chairperson of the Bere Island Branch)*



**Congratulations** and best wishes to Kathleen and Tim O' Leary, Whiddy Island (photo above) who were married recently. Tim is well known as the ferryman to Whiddy Island and together they run the Bankhouse pub and restaurant. *(Submitted by BIPG)*

### Parkrun

An online competition to find the world's most scenic parkrun location has been won by Bere Island. The World Cup of parkrun Beauty was held by the organisers of the With Me Now podcast, who produce podcasts featuring all the latest news from parkrun world. People were asked to nominate the parkrun which, in their view had the most beautiful scenery, two West Cork parkruns were among those nominated, Bere Island and Glengarriff. Through a process of elimination, the Bere Island parkrun made it through to the final, along with Fountains Abbey parkrun in North Yorkshire, with the island eventually crossing the finish line with over 1,500 votes.

The Bere Island parkrun started in 2014 and is the only parkrun on an Irish island. The 5k route takes in a loop at the eastern end of the island, overlooking Bantry Bay and the Caha Mountains, and includes some of the island's rich heritage, including a wedge tomb, Viking harbour and World War One gun battery.

Over the years, a number of top athletes and celebrities have also taken part in the Bere Island parkrun including Olympic medallists Sonia O' Sullivan and John Treacy, legendary wheelchair marathoner Jerry Forde and Daniel and Majella O'Donnell while filming an episode of B&B Road Trip on the island.

*(Submitted by BIPG)*

### Remembering Bernadette

The community of Bere Island were saddened to hear of the passing of Bernadette o' Sullivan, Church Place, Ballinakilla on January 25<sup>th</sup> last. Bernadette was always at the heart of craic and was known for her great humour and wit. She was always to be seen with a smile on her face. Pre-deceased by her husband John, Bernadette was a caring and loving wife to him during their life together. She adored her children and grandchildren and was a great friend and neighbour. We offer our sincere sympathy to Seamus, Enda, Sheila, Dara, Blanaid and Tade and also to her brothers, sisters, daughters in law, sons in law, grandchildren, sisters in law, brothers in law, neices, nephews, relatives, many friends, neighbours all her family at Deerpark Nursing Home. Bernadette will never be forgotten, may she rest in eternal peace.

## Bere Island GAA

As with many events this year in the sporting world, things are uncertain and dependent on Government restrictions and guidelines. We are hopeful that with the lifting of restrictions as the year progresses, we may be able to run some of our usual events and perhaps host the ever popular Cúl camps during the summer months.

### AGM

At the recent Annual General Meeting for Bere Island GAA, the existing board were re-elected for the coming year, officers include Cathaoirleach / Chairperson Michael O'Sullivan, Rúnaí / Secretary Robbie Hillard & Cisteoir / Treasurer Fionnán O'Sullivan & Cláraitheoir / Registrar Michael Crowley. Bere Island GAA would like to thank all of the people who have volunteered and given their time and energy over the years to building up the club.

### Membership

Bere Island GAA are updating their membership system this year and are encouraging all Bere Island GAA fans, young and old to join. Membership is very reasonable and as well as supporting the club, benefits include use of the GAA facilities and access to match tickets dispersed via the club. Membership rates for 2021 are as follows:

Membership Rates	2021
Player	€20
Adult	€20
Senior Citizen	€10
Family (2 Adults & children under 18)	€30

For further details, contact the club by email [secretary.bereisland.cork@gaa.ie](mailto:secretary.bereisland.cork@gaa.ie) or on facebook: Bere Island GAA or Twitter @bereislandgaa

### Rebel's Bounty Draw

In addition to regular membership there is also an opportunity to become a member of the club by supporting Bere Island & Cork GAA through the purchase of a ticket for the **Rebels' Bounty 2021 Draw**. Tickets cost €100.

A ticket can be shared – 2 names may be entered on a ticket, allowing friends/family members to split the cost and share the winnings. The draw can be entered online at [gaacork.ie/rebelsbounty](http://gaacork.ie/rebelsbounty) – when entering online please nominate '**Beara Island**' as your Club.

A full ticket will also entitle the holder to family membership (2 adults and children under 18) of Bere Island GAA. A shared ticket will entitle each holder to single membership of Bere Island GAA Club. The closing date for entering the 2021 draw is **25th March 2021**.

Thank you for supporting your club and county.

(Submitted by Orlagh Ni Arrachtain (PRO) [probereislandgaa@gmail.com](mailto:probereislandgaa@gmail.com))

### Biodiversity Project Bere Island

Recently we were donated over 1000 tree saplings from Trees on the land org to be planted up with local farmers and individual small holdings alongside a Leader grant that has provided funding to purchase a number of Apple trees, fruit hedging and fencing materials to compliment the project. The idea behind this project is to support general biodiversity measures that will support insect and bee population and offset our carbon footprint in tree planting that helps in soaking up carbon from the atmosphere. It will also help towards our Tidy Island application in which it has been a successful decade and more in winning Irelands islands most clean, tidy and environmentally friendly island.

(Submitted by BIPG)

### Recycling Centre

There is an ongoing problem of household rubbish being left in the recycling centre. This is causing a serious health and safety issue in that it attracts vermin and is posing a health hazard for the RSS workers who manage the centre. More rubbish has been dumped at the centre again in recent weeks. If this continues, Bere Island Tourism Environment Group who oversee the running of the recycling centre will be left with no option but to close the recycling centre.

All household waste which cannot be recycled is collected on a monthly basis. Waste stickers are €10 and can be purchased from Murphy's Shop, Rerrin and the Heritage Centre. A list of collection dates is available on [www.bereisland.net](http://www.bereisland.net) and can also be found in locations throughout the island, including outside the Projects Group Office.

The waste is collected and brought to the Civic Amenity Site in Castletownbere, however, Cork County Council have recently increased charges here and in order that we can keep the charge for island waste at €10 per bag we would ask that you could recycle as much as possible. All tins, bottles and plastic to be recycled should be clean and placed in the correct containers.

The Recycling Centre is a valuable asset to the island, and great credit must go to John and Teddy who go above and beyond the call of duty to run it.



### WEEE Collection

BIPG in conjunction with Cork County Council organised a WEEE (white goods collection) at the end of January. As you can see from the photograph left a lot of electrical goods were successfully removed, helping in our efforts to keep the island clean and tidy. We ask that people don't leave any electrical items at the recycling centre as there is no room to house them and when left in the car park make the area messy and untidy.

*(Submitted by BIPG)*



### Training Room

BIPG were fortunate to receive funding from the Cork Education and Training Board (Cork ETB), in December 2020 to fully fit out the community centre as a training room (see photos above). The training room will enable people to participate in courses remotely. We are especially thankful to Michael Crowley and Teresa O' Sullivan, Cork ETB for all their help with the project.

We would also like to thank Dermot Sullivan and Andy Lennox for the work completed on the floor of the community centre. I'm sure you will agree it looks great after being sanded and varnished to an extremely high spec. *(Submitted by BIPG)*

### Benefit Payment for 65-year-olds and retirement

Many people must retire at 65 but don't receive their state pension until 66. The Government recently announced that a social welfare payment similar to the Jobseeker's Benefit will be made to those retiring at 65 who have stopped working and meet the social insurance (PRSI) conditions. When receiving this payment, you do not need to be looking for work or sign on at a social welfare office.

**PRSI conditions:** If you were an employee, you must have paid at least 39 PRSI contributions in Class A, H or P or have credited contributions in the second last complete tax year before the year of claim (2021 claims the complete tax year is 2019). If you don't have 39 PRSI contributions, you can use a minimum of 13 PRSI contributions from that year and 26 from the previous year. If you do not have the minimum 13 PRSI contributions for the relevant year other years can be looked at. These are (a) the 2 years before the relevant year (b) the last complete contribution year (c) the current contribution year. You must also have paid at least 104 PRSI contributions in Class A, H or P (or at least 156 PRSI contributions in Class S). If you were self-employed, you must have paid 52 PRSI self-employed contributions at Class S in the second last complete tax year as well as 156 PRSI contributions at Class S (or at least 104 PRSI contributions in Class A or H).

You may also be eligible to claim for adult and child dependants and can take part in courses and continue in subsidiary employment. Subsidiary employment is part time work you were doing outside of the full time work you retired from. You will continue to get credited contributions that count towards your State pension while receiving the payment.

**Rate of payment:** Maximum personal rate is €203 per week. The increase for an adult dependent is €134.70. The increase for a child dependent is: Under 12 €38 (full-rate) €19 (half-rate) 12 and over €45 (full-rate) €22.50 (half-rate).

**How to apply:** You can apply for the Benefit Payment for 65 Year Olds online at [www.mywelfare.ie](http://www.mywelfare.ie) using a MyGovID account or you can request a paper application by emailing [forms@welfare.ie](mailto:forms@welfare.ie) and the form will be posted to you. If anyone would like help applying for or completing the form, please contact us at the office on 75099 and we will be happy to help. *(Submitted by BIPG)*

### Bere Island Website

BIPG are in the final stages of redesigning the Bere Island Website. We will be including a new page called Our Community with a section based on people from the island. This will consist of photos of four people with 100 words bio per person. If you are interested in being one of the first four to take part, please contact us on 75099. The newly designed website will be launched shortly so please keep an eye out for it on [www.bereisland.net](http://www.bereisland.net) and feel free to send us feedback on your thoughts. *(Submitted by BIPG)*

### Daffodils by William Wordsworth

I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the milky way,  
They stretched in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay:  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they  
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:  
A poet could not but be gay,  
In such a jocund company:  
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.

Down memory lane answers: (A) 2014, (B) 2012, (C) 2018, (D) 2017, (E) 2016