

# Bere Island Newsletter

Issue 88

Winter 2023



*Wishing all Bere Islanders  
at home and abroad a  
Merry Christmas & Best Wishes for 2024*



*Above: Snow at the Holy Year Cross. Photo by Helen Riddell*



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### West Cork Islands Community Council AGM

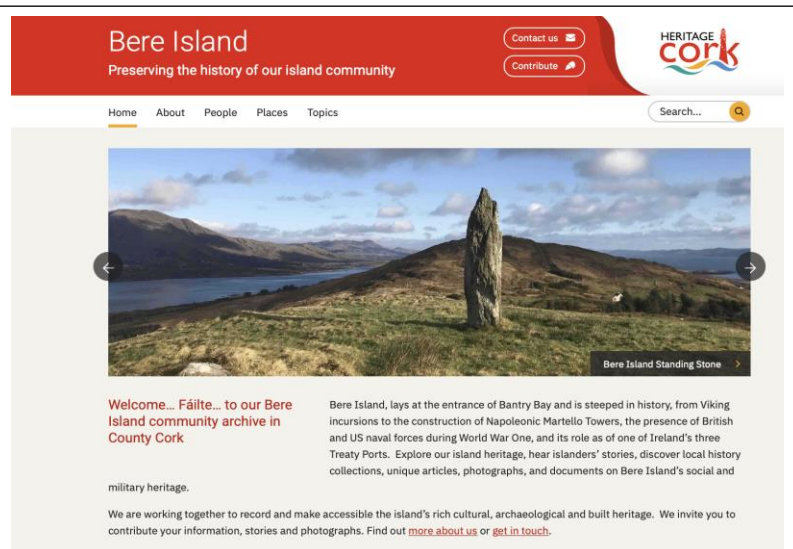
will take place on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December at 11am in the Sherkin Island Community Hall. Ferry leaving Baltimore at 10:30am. All residents of the West Cork Islands of Sherkin, Bere, Cape Clear, Dursey, Heir, Long & Whiddy are welcome to attend.

*(Submitted by BIPG)*

### Bere Island Community Radio

Bere Island Community Radio will broadcast the annual Christmas show from the Hotel on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December. Call in on the day or text us your requests for family and friends to 0831511100.

*(Submitted by BIPG)*



<https://bereisland.heritagecork.org>

### Irish Community Archive Network

Bere Island Projects Group are continuing to digitise island heritage collections and add them to our community archive website. At the moment the graveyard database is being digitised, some graves are already online, and the full project will be completed in the coming weeks.

BIPG are looking for your help in adding to our community archive. If you any old photos of Bere Island up to the 1980s or documents relating to the island and would like to share these, we would be happy to scan them an upload them to the website which will preserve them for future generations and form an important part of our island's history. We will also provide y records. If you would like to share any photos or documents please contact Helen Riddell at

[bereconservation@gmail.com](mailto:bereconservation@gmail.com) who can arrange a time for you to call to the office and scan your items.

We will also be adding island field names to the community archive website in 2024, if you would like to share any in your locality, please contact the office and we can provide you with a map where you can mark any names on and the history behind these. Its main aim is to encourage and support communities to collect and share their local history and heritage online. iCAN was established by the National Museum of Ireland in 2009 and has been developed in partnership with participating local authority Heritage Officers and with support from Creative Ireland. In 2023, the Heritage Council joined iCAN as a new funding partner, to facilitate an expansion of the initiative. To date, iCAN has supported the creation and development of 33 online archives in counties Clare, Cork, Galway, Mayo and Wicklow. The project aims to support the development of at least 80 digital archives across Ireland by 2028. *(Submitted by BIPG)*

### Farewell from Tim

Hi Folks,

Well after 12 y pastures to Ahab have a heavy heart with leaving the friends I have made and many memories of the friends we have lost in the ARG group and island. Lots of memories of Regattas, summer camps with kids and islanders who have supported my work these past years. I'll be beautiful hills and drop into friends for a cuppa and of course to catch up on the gossip! Thanks for supporting me (there are too many to mention) I wish every success to the new worker in their new role. Cheers, Tim Hanley

### The Bere Island Projects Group CLG office

*will close on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup>  
December 2023 and will reopen on  
Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024.  
We would like to take this  
opportunity to wish everyone a very  
Happy Christmas and Best Wishes  
for 2024.*



### Santa Alert!

Santa will visit Bere Island on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December, at 3:30pm in the Hotel. Everyone is welcome.





### The Hotel

Bere Island Community Radio will broadcast from the Hotel on Sunday morning 17<sup>th</sup> December followed by a visit from Santa at 3:30pm.

Bere Island Community Christmas meal will be held on the 16<sup>th</sup> of December with music by Michael Hyde. Call Maria on 0861628344 to book. ARG members contact Tim to book 0851679052.

We will also have the annual Christmas darts and pool tournaments and music on be up closer to the time with dates and details... and keep an eye on Facebook page!



**Above: Members of the Bere Island Active Retirement Group who recently visited Dzogchen Beara for lunch. The Active Retirement Group meet every Thursday at 11am in the community centre for their weekly coffee morning. Everyone is welcome to come along.**

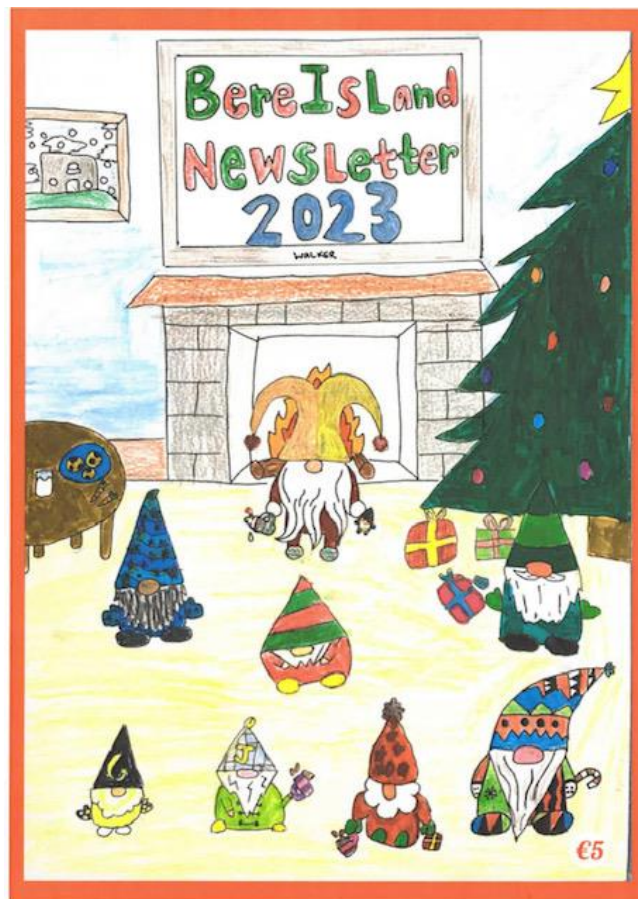


**Above: Eugene Glendon, Chairperson BIPG presenting John Walsh with a framed photo of Ardnakinna**

**departure from BIPG.**



**Nollaig Shona 2023**



**The Bere Island Christmas Newsletter is now on sale**



**Santa exploring the Martello Tower! Photo by Helen Riddell**



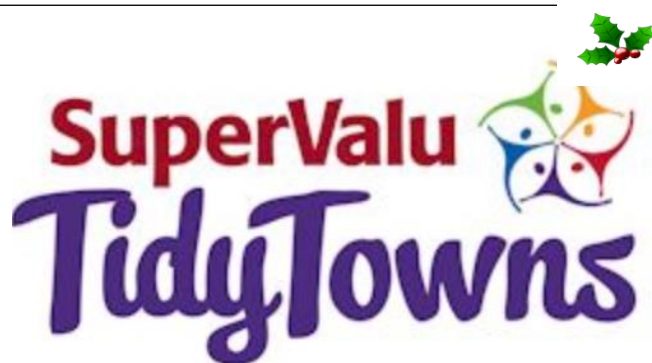
### Tidy Island Award 2023

Bere Island was announced as the winner of the Tidy Island Award at the 2023 Tidy Towns Competition at the awards ceremony held in Rosc na Taidí, Bere Island. Bere Island has won this award for the first time. Bere Island's entry to the competition is overseen by the Tidy Towns Committee. Bere Island entered the competition in 2001 and achieved their first win in 2007.

Bere Island received a total of 358 points (out of a possible 550) in the 2023 competition, up 11 points from last year. In their report the adjudicator noted that it was their first visit to Bere Island and praised several initiatives.

*"Bere Island is a beautiful island for your adjudicator and from the moment of arrival on the ferry, it was obvious that there is a great pride taken in the upkeep and maintenance of the island. Bere Island was a pleasure to visit and the amount of work that has been undertaken is highly commended. Keep up the good work and best of luck to you all."*

The Tourism group are always looking for new members to join them to help out with their work on the Tidy Islands campaign, if you would like to help, please contact a member of the committee: Gemma Hunt, Rachel Harrington, Maria Murphy, Barry Hanley, Caitriona Hanley or leave you details with Helen Riddell in the Projects Group Office.



### Recycling Centre & Waste Collection

The recycling centre will be open throughout the Christmas season. The following items can be recycled: cans, glass bottles, plastic bottles, plastic wrapping, paper and cardboard. There is also a clothing bank, but please note the clothing bank does not accept bedding or duvets.

The centre is staffed by RSS workers John and Teddy. If you have large quantities of recycling, or large items of cardboard these can be dropped to the centre during working hours: Mondays and Thursdays 9.00am to 5.00pm and Fridays 9.00am to 1.30pm. Glass is crushed on site and the crushed glass can be used domestically in building projects or as garden mulch. Please ensure all materials you bring for recycling are clean and are placed in the correct container.

There is an honesty box at the recycling centre and all contributions made go to the upkeep of the centre and extra running costs associated with the rubbish collection.

Dates for upcoming rubbish collections are:

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December  
Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> December  
Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January  
Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> February  
Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March  
Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March

Rubbish stickers are €1. Murphy's Shop, the Heri Office. Please ensure your rubbish is left out by 5pm on the day of collection.



**Christmas Mass will be held on Christmas Day at 10am**





**Bere Island GAA - Online Shop**  
**www.oneills.com**



### **Bere Island GAA**

Spoil your loved ones with the perfect gift for Christmas visit the Bere Island Oneills club shop.

Bere Island GAA had a very busy 2023, with both Mens and Ladies teams travelling to Clare island for the All Islands. In August the mens team played in the Aidan Cremin 7 aside in Adrigole and also played in the Junior C final at home vs Castletownbere GAA.

During the summer the club hosted the Cul Camp, there was a fantastic turn out with over 80 children taking part.

The clubhouse was also host to the summer arts camp for kids, which was a great success again.

In July the club hosted the annual Bere Island mid summer run.

We would like to thank all of our players, volunteers, supporters and sponsors for all of their support during the year. Bere Island GAA would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

*(Submitted by BI GAA)*

### **Scoil Mhichíl Naofa News - Science Week**

From the 13th - 17th of November, it was Science Week. We learned about lots of different scientists including Albert Einstein who was famous for his equation  $E=MC^2$ , Stephen Hawking who was famous for discovering that black holes emit radiation and Florence Nightingale who was famous for discovering modern nursing. We also learned about Lise Meitner (1878 - 1968) who loved maths from a young age and discovered that nuclear fission can produce large amounts of energy and Nikola Tesla (1856 - 1943) who was a brilliant scientist and inventor. His work with electricity led to many advances in communication and technology.



We also learned some fun facts: Did you know that honey never goes off? Archaeologists have found pots of honey in Ancient Egyptian tombs that are over 3,000 years old and still perfectly edible! Did you know that butterflies use their feet to taste things?

We did some cool experiments also throughout the week: We explored the density of different liquids. We looked at what happens to an egg if it is left in vinegar for 24 hours. We also made our own bees to show how their wings make a buzzing sound through vibrations.

By Erica Murphy



## **Scoil Mhichíl Naofa News continued**

### School Mass

On the 16th of November, we had our school mass.

The theme of the mass celebrated mass with us. We sang some lovely songs such as 'Circle of Friends' and 'This is the Day'. The theme of 'friendship'.

It brought up the gifts which included a bouquet of flowers, a birthday card, a board game and a football. Abby read out the meaning of the symbols. Feiya read the First Reading, Cillian read the Responsorial Psalm and Abby read the Second Reading. James, Meabh, Erica and Jason all read Prayers of the Faithful. It was a lovely mass where we celebrated the wonderful friends we have in our school and community.

By Feiya MacCarthy



### Swimming Lessons

On 8th of November, we started swimming lessons in Kealkill in the Water School. Every Wednesday, we get picked up by the Rural Transport bus and we go out on the 10am ferry. It takes about 45 minutes to get to the Water School. There are four groups in the pool. They are the Seahorses, Otters,

six people in Seahorse, four people in Otter, five people in Salmon and four people in Dolphin. After swimming, we get changed and we eat our lunch and then head back to catch the ferry. We all have a great time! By Abby Harrington



### Kindness Week

Kindness Week took place between 13th -17th of November. Everyone made a huge effort to show kindness to their friends and to the staff in our school throughout the week. Kindness is: being friendly, generous, considerate of others, showing good will to others, helping people when they need you and being nice to others. Pupils received a button when a member of staff noticed them showing kindness to someone. We can show kindness by: Smiling at someone, helping someone if they fall over, letting someone go ahead of you in the line, holding the door for someone and saying hello. We are so lucky that our school is full of kind pupils and staff. By Kyla Harrington



### Theatre Group 'Graffiti'

On Monday 20th of November, a theatre group performed a short play for us. The play was called "An Sean Duine Óg" but the two of them had huge languages. In the end, both realised that they spoke the same language. There are many other ways of communication. Some of our parents came in to watch it and they enjoyed it too. By Amelia Harrington





#### Rural Transport Bus Service Bere Island

The Rural Transport Service on Bere Island is operated by Local Link, Bantry. The service operates weekly on Tuesday, Friday and Sunday and is available for use by both residents and visitors alike. A small fee is required for those using the service who do not have a Free Travel Pass.

#### Timetable Tuesday & Friday to CTB (Effective from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023)

Departs Rerrin PO	9:20am
Departs The Hotel, Bere Island	9:30am
Depart on Bere Island Ferries Ltd	10am
<u>Returning on the 1:30pm ferry</u>	

#### Timetable - Sunday Mass

Departing Rerrin PO	9:20am
Departing The Hotel, Bere Island	9:30am
West End, Bere Island	9:35am

All passengers dropped home after mass. Please note anyone availing of the bus who does not have Free Travel must pay for the ferry separately in the usual way. For more information contact BIPG on 02775099. *(Submitted by BIPG)*

#### Eradicating Invasive Species on Bere Island

One of the actions of the Bere Island Conservation Plan is to prevent the spread of any invasive species on Bere Island which could have a detrimental impact on our island landscape. Two main invasive species have been identified on the island, Japanese Knotweed and Gunnera. However, in certain areas of the island we are aware that Rhododendron coverage could also become invasive.

**Japanese Knotweed** is a tall, vigorous herbaceous perennial which grows in dense patches and can reach up to 3 metres in height. It has distinctive hollow bamboo like stems which are green with red/purple speckles during summer. The leaves are green, shield shaped with pointed tips and a flat base. It produces off-white coloured flowers in small clusters which hang from the joint of the stem and the leaf. They flower from August to October. The roots are tough, thick and wood like in their appearance.

Japanese Knotweed is one of the most problematic invasive species and if left untreated it can seriously damage buildings and infrastructure by growing through concrete, tarmac and other hard surfaces if any cracks exist. It is spread via the deliberate or accidental movement of rhizome fragments of the plant or through cut stems. Even tiny amounts of cut stem, or rhizome are capable of producing a new plant.

Landowners are being asked to be on the lookout for Japanese knotweed, and if you find any sign of it, it is imperative not to cut back the plant. Japanese Knotweed should only be treated by an experienced contractor using an approved herbicide. It can also spread through construction, if you are having work done on your property we would advise to check first for Japanese Knotweed. If Japanese Knotweed is growing on your property near a public road, please notify the Projects Group Office (027 75099) so that its location can be marked to prevent hedge cutting in that area.

#### Treatment of Japanese Knotweed

National Biodiversity Ireland recommends that the only control of Japanese Knotweed involves the use of herbicides, the plant should be treated in the spring and again in the autumn. However, these chemicals can post a risk to human health, and for that reason it is essential that qualified and experienced contractor undertakes all treatment work. *(Submitted by BIPG)*



#### Comhar na nOileán

**SICAP** - Comhar na nOileán are delighted to be awarded the delivery of the SICAP West Cork Islands lot again this time around. They have designed a bespoke programme of supports, service provision, training and events based on the specific needs of Cork Islanders. This will enrich the lives of beneficiaries socially, personally and economically particularly those individuals and communities most in need.

**Leader** - Comhar na nOileán are eagerly awaiting the announcement of LEADER 2023-2027. Comhar hope to be the successful Implementing Partner for the islands and based on the actions submitted, those actions will complement the SICAP Programme.

### **Gunnera**



is a fast-growing, clump forming, perennial plant, which can grow over 2m in height and has huge leathery leaves on thick stalks arising from a scaly rhizome. It forms dense clumps which prevent native vegetation from growing. It can also contribute to flooding by blocking drains and streams and can quickly dominate large tracts of land. Each plant is capable of producing up to 250,000 seeds every year. Gunnera was originally introduced as an ornamental garden plant, however it quickly outgrows most domestic gardens and can escape into the wild.

**Treatment of Gunnera:** Again, National Biodiversity Ireland recommends the use of herbicides to treat Gunnera, however if the plant is located near a water source it should be cut back and the stumps covered in black plastic.

*(Submitted by BIPG)*



### **Rhododendron**

was first introduced to Ireland during the 18th century as an ornamental garden plant because of its attractive flowers. There are over 900 species of Rhododendron, but only Rhododendron ponticum is invasive in Ireland. It can form dense thickets which can crowd out native plants and impact streams and rivers and can block access to sites by the sheer mass of plant material and can produce chemicals which prevent native species from growing in soil in which it is present. Each plant can produce over one million seeds. Rhododendron can also spread by layering as branches can root anywhere they touch the ground.

Treatment programmes can be divided into three main stages: initial removal, control of stems and roots, and follow up. Rhododendron regrows vigorously when cut so some method of treating or removing the stump is necessary. When the plant is cut back the stump should be treated by painting it with a herbicide immediately after it has been cut. A handheld applicator will help avoid spray drift onto other species nearby. The use of a vegetable dye is recommended to mark treated stumps. The final part of the treatment is to dig the stumps out, either manually or with a small digger. To avoid any potential regrowth, stumps should be turned upside down and soil should be brushed off roots.



### **How you can help**



If you discover Japanese Knotweed or Gunnera on your property, please notify the Projects Group on 027 75099 who will advise of the best course of action and put you in touch with a licensed contractor who will treat the plants.  
*(Submitted by BIPG)*

### **Farewell to Tim**

Bere Island Projects Group CLG bids farewell to our Development Worker, Tim Hanley who is retiring after 12 years with us. Tim worked on many projects in this time including the meals on wheels service, biodiversity projects, summer camps to mention just a few. He supported many groups including the Active Retirement Group, Afterschool group and BITE with the annual Tidy Islands application as well as Dursey Island Development Association and Whiddy Island Development Association. I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Board of BIPG to wish Tim all the best in his retirement.

Eugene Glendon, Chairperson



**Tim Hanley with members of the Active Retirement Group**

**Courses** - BIPG are organising a number of courses and workshops for the New Year. These include 4-week yoga class and a quilting workshop over a weekend. If there are any courses, you would like to see run please contact the office on 02775099 and we will try to arrange them.

*(Submitted by BIPG)*