Bere Island Newsletter

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Above: Cloughland Pier. Photo by Leila Sidley



Above: View of Shee Head Bere Island. Photo by Leila Sidley



School News

Planting

The whole school went planting down at our dome. We all have our own plant pots. We planted peas and sunflowers in them! 3rd-6th class helped the juniors when they were planting. Every day someone goes down to the dome to open the doors and water the plants. We are also doing 'No-Mow May', 'No-Mow May' is when you don't mow the grass and leave the flowers grow to feed pollinators for the whole month of May. We all really enjoyed planting! Thank you to the Men's Shed for giving us our new planters which you can see at the gate at the top of the school. By Abby + Feya

On Tuesday the 21st of May Erica, Jason, Abby, Feya, Meabh, Amelia ,Kyla and Marley went to Sciath na Scol. Sciath na Scol is where a few different schools play football against each other than whichever school has the most points at the end wins and moves on to the final in Clonakilty. We were playing against Cappabue and Urhan. First, it was us against Cappabue, then it was us against Urhan then it was Urhan against Cappabue, overall Urhan won . We all did really well and we had lots of fun.

By Erica Murphy

On the 21st of April Cillian, Anthony and Jude made their Holy Communion. Múinteoir Fiona directed the school choir. They all enjoyed it and after they each had their own party with family and friends. There was also Jason, Erica and Abby's Confirmation on the 2nd of May which was just as good with the school choir and they all had their own parties, it was great. By Jason Harrington

A few weeks ago, a man dressed as a pirate called Captain Baloney came to our school. He told us ALL ABOUT REAL PIRATES a long time ago.

He told us

1. About when pirates got captured they got hung, hung is when a pirate is locked in a cage by the shore as the water gets higher it slowly drowns them.

2. All the pirates got treated equally, if the pirates had to eat dog food the captain had to too.

3. When pirates stole they didn't steal gold or diamonds they actually stole spices, clothes and, if they were really lucky, they would get seeds.

4. Pirates had to turn off their lights before 8 ó clock because if they didn't hunters would come to try to KILL them.

5. There was once a pirate called Blackbeard who lit his beard on fire using cotton wool, he didn't even need to use his gun because everyone he encountered ran away screaming and crying.

BY CAPTAIN AMELIA AND CAPTAIN MEABH

Recently, our class has been studying the Impressionists

The Impressionists were a group of artists who started the art movement known as Impressionism. Impressionism originated in Paris, France in the late 1800s.

There were a few reasons why people considered the Impressionists different from artists at the time. For one thing, they painted outside rather than in a studio, and their style of art was very different.

We have been following in their footsteps and painting outside on canvas using oil paints

It was a great experience!

By Marley Sloyan



Military Heritage Festival

Bere Island Projects Group will hold the 2024 Bere Island Military Heritage Festival over the weekend of Saturday June 22 nd and Sunday June 23 rd in the Drill Hall Rerrin. The festival will feature an exhibition of the island's military heritage and will feature a number of guest speakers including Ted O'Sullivan, Michael Kennedy of the Royal Irish Academy, the Irish Military Archives, Dr Rory Finnegan, Professor of Military History at Maynooth, a talk on the guns of Lonehort by Eoghan Foley, an expert in coastal artillery guns, and Fachtna O'Donovan from the Beara Historical Society. The festival is funded by Cork County Council West Cork Islands Community Funding Scheme. For the full schedule of the weekend's events see www.bereisland.net



West Cork Islands Health Forum

HSE Design Thinking Workshop - Design thinking is a people-centred, cyclical approach to innovative problemsolving. It consists of 5 distinct phases: empathy, define, ideate, prototype, and test. A three-day design thinking workshop was held in Skibbereen and Bantry to look at the health needs of the West Cork Islands. Design thinking is an innovate way of looking a problem to find solutions that work for everybody. Participants were present from all sections of the HSE, Nursing, Primary Health Care, GPs, Island Nurses, Chronic Health Care, Academics and Islanders. A deeper understanding of all perspectives was garnered. The issues affecting island health care were discussed in detail through the design thinking process. Due to the level of knowledge and expertise in the room, solutions were found to many problems.

The final result was to develop a protype of Island Health Care; We go virtually everywhere. This prototype would build on existing heath care services in conjunction with digital technologies. The West Cork Islands Health Forum will be continuing to work on this prototype.

Creative Places

Sea and Strone the Islands Creative Places Newspaper has been released in both Gaeilge and English. The islands newspaper is an annual publication that tells the story of how Creative Places West Cork Islands is working on the islands. You can also pick up an application pack from BIPG, this contains a simple application form and other information about opportunities CPWCI has to offer. The newspaper can be downloaded from https://creativeplaceswci.ie/about/

BIPG

EV Charger

The EV Charger located at the community centre is open for use to the public during office hours (Monday – Friday, 9am – 1pm & amp; 2pm – 5pm) for a minimal fee of 50c per KW. Please contact BIPG for more information on 02775099.

Oileáin na gCaorach update

Since the last newsletter the subgroup met both online and in person with representatives of the Department of Rural & Community Development and Cork County Council. The Department have agreed to fund the scoping and feasibility study of Oileáin na gCaorach under the management of Cork County Council. We will keep the community updated of any further developments as we get them.

Cork Summer Show

Cork County Council have given the West Cork Islands a stand at the summer show on the 15th & 16th June 2024. The Cork Summer Show is a fantastic family day out with something for everyone and this is a great opportunity for the West Cork Islands to market the islands collectively. If you are available to "man the stand" at any stage over the two days or would like to promote your business please contact BIPG as soon as possible.

West Cork Islands website

Siobhan Burke, Wordhoard Communications has been busy revamping the website and adding events for 2024. Any events for 2024 should be forwarded to her by emailing <u>info@wordhoard.ie</u>

Island Development Companies Funding Review

The Department of Rural & Community Development are carrying out a review of the 5 Island Development Companies which they fund on the English-speaking islands. The five companies are BIPG, Sherkin Island Development Society Ltd, Inishbofin, Inishturk and Clare Island and so far, the Department have visited Bere and Sherkin Islands. The funding we receive covers the office running costs and wages and it is expected the review will be completed by the end of the year. We are hopeful that a commitment of 3-5 years funding will be one of the results of this review.

BIPG Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)

BIPG held an EGM on 8 th May 2024. The purpose of the meeting was to consider and if deemed appropriate by the members approve a special resolution to adopt a new constitution for BIPG. The special resolution and new constitution were unanimously approved by the members and will be forwarded to the Charity Regulator for approval followed by Revenue.

BIPG Office

The Bere Island Projects Group Office is located adjacent to the Community Centre and is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Closed for lunch from 1pm to 2pm.

News from Comhar na nOileáin

Blueways – A draft of the feasibility report for the West Cork Islands is now ready and a meeting will be arranged shortly with all the Blueways West Cork Islands subcommittee to discuss and agree.

Bere Island Family Festival

The Bere Island Family Festival will take place this year from Tuesday 6th – Sunday 11th August. If you would like to volunteer your help for an event please contact the office – 027 75099.

Rural Social Scheme

Comhar na nOileán currently have 2 vacancies on the islands through the RSS. The aim of the RSS is to provide:

1. Certain services of benefit to rural communities by harnessing the skills and talents available among low income farmers and fishers

2. Income support to low income farmers and fishers who are in receipt of specified social welfare payments.

Applications are open to farmers and fishers who meet the eligibility criteria. For more information contact BIPG on 02775099 or Comhar na nOileán on 09975096/ fios@oileain.ie



Pupils and teachers from Kealkill National School who visited Lonehort Battery for their school outing, the group had a great day on the island and thanked Teresa Hall who was their guide on the day.

Parent and Toddler

The Bere Island Parent and Toddler group continues to meet Friday mornings at 10.30am at the community centre. Everyone is welcome to join.



Lowneys Organics Seasonal Vegetable Boxes Available from Late June/Early July Freshly Harvested and Delivered

Please Call/Message 086 1774657



WEST CORK FIT UP THEATRE FESTIVAL

We're delighted to host four performances of the West Cork Fit Up Theatre Festival on Bere Island again this summer. Performances will take place in the Lecture Theatre, Rerrin on the following dates: Saturday 13 th July Saturday 20 th July Saturday 27 th July Saturday 3 rd August Further details of performances will be announced nearer the time. Bere Island Projects Group would like to extend their thanks to the Department of Defence for the use of the Lecture Theatre.

Bere Island Women Create

Bere Island Women Create have had a busy few months. With funding from the Creative Places West Cork Islands programme we have held workshops with members of our group sharing their craft skills. To date we have had workshops in patchwork quilting with Harriet Andrews, crochet with Catherine Sullivan and lino cut printing with Madeleine Dunne. All were thoroughly enjoyable and the group are planning to arrange more classes in the autumn. The group are also delighted to have received funding of €981 from Cork County Council to purchase a Perspex display case for a patchwork quilt which was made by the group and was the key exhibit of The Hold exhibition. The group also received €983 from the West Cork LCDC (Local Community Development Committee) from the Cork County Women's Group Fund Scheme to purchase two sewing machines and a table top printing press.

The Bere Island Women Create group is open to all women living on Bere Island, the group also hold a monthly book club. If you would like to join please contact : bereislandwomencreate@gmail.com



Bere Island Tourism and Environment Group

Bere Island Tourism and Environment Group have been awarded €1360 from Cork County Council's West Cork Islands Community Fund Scheme 2024 toward new signage on the island, along with funding of €1000 to purchase new benches for Cloughland Strand to replace ones damaged during Storm Kathleen. Over the weekend of 13 th and 14 th April the group held a successful spring clean on the island as part of An Taisce's nationwide spring clean campaign. If anyone would like to continue to help keep the island clean and tidy, litter pickers, gloves and bags are available from the office. Rubbish collection dates for the summer will be on:

> Tuesday 11 th June Friday 5 th July Tuesday 23 rd July Tuesday 13 th August Tuesday 27 th August

Please note the collection on 5 th July is on a Friday. Rubbish stickers are priced €10 and are available from Murphy's Shop, the Heritage Centre. Rubbish bags should be left out by 5pm on the day of collection. Please do not leave rubbish bags out in advance of the collection dates. If you are leaving the island contact Caitriona (Wild Atlantic Glamping) 086 6027819 who will arrange somewhere secure for the bags to be dropped to and stored until the collection date. Please note individual bags should not weigh over 15kg. The new recycling collection facility will also continue through the summer months. On the days of the regular waste collection, bags of recycling will also be collected. Papers, plastics (wrappings and bottles) and cardboard can be placed in these bags. They should be left outside with your usual rubbish collection. Please note glass bottles and cans should still be brought to the recycling centre, along with any large cardboard items. Please ensure that all cans and bottles brought to the recycling centre are clean, and if possible crush any cans before they are deposited in the appropriate container. A clothing bank is also in operation at the recycling centre, and operating the waste collection service. If you would prefer to give a yearly donation this can be done via bank transfer. Please contact a member of the committee for bank details.



Irish Community Archive

With funding from the Irish Community Archive Network (iCAN) a Storytelling Festival was held on Bere Island in May which featured oral history workshops with Dr Angela Maye-Banbury and a storytelling session with Teddy Black. Thanks are extended to all those who attended. Our Bere Island Community Archive can be found at <u>www.bereisland.heritagecork.org</u>. If you would like to share your family's stories, photos or documents on the archive please contact Helen Riddell at bereconservatoin@gmail.com

To complement our digitisation of the Bere Island graveyard we would also like to create an online collection of memorial cards, if you have any family memorial cards you would like to share, these can be scanned in the Projects Group office, please contact Helen to make an appointment to have any cards scanned. With much of Ireland's cultural heritage in the care and ownership of its citizens and diaspora, iCAN is empowering local communities to document their own history, heritage and culture on digital platforms so that is preserved for future generations and accessible to a worldwide audience.

Bere Island Oral History Project

Recording Our Bere Island Stories launched in 2022 as a result of Bere Island Project Group participating in the Burren Beo Trust Heritage Keepers Programme, since then a number of islanders have had their stories recorded and these are now available to listen to on our community archive at <u>www.bereisland.heritagecork.org</u>.Recording the oral history of Bere Island is a way of preserving our island stories for future generations, everyone's story matters and we all have a story to tell. Stories can be recorded face to face, over the phone or by Zoom. If you would like us to record your story, please contact Helen Riddell at bereconservatoin@gmail.com The members of the Bere Island oral history project are: Eilis Duggan, Barry Hanley, Seamus Hanley, Chris Sullivan, Barry Sullivan, Mike Crowley, Helen Riddell, Christine McCreary,

Advice from Castletownbere RNLI

Water based activities increase at this time of year, as do the number of incidents in which people get into difficulty. Minimize the risks with the following advice for a safe enjoyable summer. How to enjoy water-based activities safely:

- Check the forecast for your local area, including tide times and sea conditions for coastal activities.
- Always carry a means of calling for help and keep it within reach.

• Water temperatures are still cold. Acclimatise by getting in slowly, swim within your depth and avoid staying in the water for extended periods. Swimmers should be aware of rip currents and if caught in one should swim parallel to shore and then back to land.

• Swim with others, never alone, in recognised, traditionally safe bathing areas. Lifeguarded waterways are listed at https://watersafety.ie/lifeguards/.

• Supervise children at all times near water and never use inflatable toys in open water as currents and breezes can cause persons to be swept out to sea, endangering those onboard or others trying to assist.

• If you find yourself struggling in the water unexpectedly remember Float to Live. The best way to float is to tilt your head back with your ears submerged. Try to relax and breathe normally. You can gently move your hands to help you stay afloat if you need to. Spread your arms and legs out to improve stability. Once your breathing is under control, call for help or swim to safety.

• Stranding is a risk when low tides expose areas of the coastline for walkers to explore sandbanks. Watch out for incoming tides, local signage, and always carry a fully charged mobile phone.

• Wear a Personal Flotation Device when paddle boarding, kayaking or boating, or when angling from shore.

• Avoid alcohol as it impairs judgment, balance and coordination - all essential for swimming and boating and avoiding hazards in the water.

If you see somebody in trouble on the water or along the coast or if you suspect that they are in trouble, dial 112 or use Marine VHF channel 16 and ask for the Coast Guard.



Left: Abby Harrington, Jason Harrington and Erica Murphy on their Confirmation Day 02/05/2024

Right: Jude Harrington, Cillian Harrington and Anthony Murphy on their Communion Day 21/04/2024

Summer Camps

Children's Circus Skills Workshop

Saturday 22nd July Juggling and hula hoops for children aged 6+. Time and venue to be confirmed. For details contact Oscar 027 75099.

July Summer Camp: Monday 22nd –Wednesday 24th – Advance booking is essential. Open to all Children ages 6 years and upwards. For more information contact Oscar 027 75099

August Summer Camp: Wednesday 14th –Friday 16th - Advance booking is essential. Open to all Children ages 6 years and upwards. For more information contact Oscar 027 75099

GAA Cul Camp

Monday 15th to Friday 19th July Children will have the opportunity to learn a variety of GAA skills. Registration is now open. <u>https://www.kelloggsculcamps.gaa.ie/booking/?county=Cork</u>

Swim Week: Monday 8th – Friday 12th July Organised by Water Safety Ireland – Cork. Please see their Facebook Page for details.

GAA

The 2024 All Islands football tournament took place this year on the 25th of May on Arranmore Island. The long trip north was made by both the Men's and Women's teams and supporters. After a rocky start the women grew into the competition progressing through to the final. Unfortunately, it wasn't to be our year and Bere Island missed out on the title to Inis Turk on a score line of 0-7 1-5. It was a brilliant effort by the team and management and the Bere Islands ladies can be exceptionally proud of themselves. The future is bright for this group.

After the ladies it was the Bere Islands men's teams turn to see if they could go one step further this year after narrowly missing out in 2023. After a rocky start against the hosts in the first game of the group, Bere progressed to the semi-final where they faced local rivals Whiddy. For the 3rd year in a row Bere progressed to the final and faced the hosts Arranmore in the final. Unfortunately, like the ladies before, the Bere Island men's team narrowly missed out on the title, with a score line of 1-8 2-6. The players left everything they had out on the pitch and can be extremely proud of themselves. I'm sure they will have a major say again in Inis Oirr next year.

Huge thank you to Bere Island Community Radio for bringing the tournament into people's homes throughout the world, it's fantastic coverage of the tournament.

Bere Island GAA would like to thank all of our supporters who made the long trip north, the support from the side-lines makes all the difference. We would like to thank everyone who sponsored the teams.

Bere Island would like to congratulate Arranmore on hosting a fantastic weekend, the craic was 90 and we are all looking forward to Inis Oirr in 2025!!!



Active Retirement Group

The Bere Island Active Retirement Group have had a busy spring, with a visit to Bantry House and Gardens being the highlight. Thankfully the rain stayed away and everyone had a great day. Following a tour of the House, gardens and lunch, the group went to Lidl before the trip home.

Members of the group attended a brain health day at the meeting rooms in Eyeries in May, there were talks about brain health, nutrition and a singing for the brain session at the end enjoyed by all.

The group would like to thank the Age & Opportunity Active National Grant Scheme for Sport and Physical Activity for Older People for providing funding of €260 which will go towards exercise classes for the group. Weekly coffee mornings are held at 11am at the community centre. Everyone is welcome.



After School Group

The After School Group continues to be held every Monday between 3-5pm at the community centre. As the school year comes to an end, we would like to thank all the children for the fun times and memories throughout the year, and wish you all great summer holidays. Also, a huge thank you to Sylvana and Belinda for supervising throughout the year.

The John 'Farmer' Walsh Memorial Trophy

Darts Tournament 21st – 22nd June 2024 The Hotel Bere Island

Bere Island Midsummer Run

Saturday 13th July at 1:00pm

A 5k and 10k run along with a 5k walk and children's walk organised by Bere Island GAA. Please see Bere Island Midsummer Run Facebook Page for booking link. https://eventmaster.ie/event/56kA5QvsEz

Men's Shed

The Bere Island Men's Shed is now officially up and running. It became a member of Men's Shed Ireland. The Shed met throughout the winter on Thursday nights at the community centre at 7.30pm. Some great evenings were had by members especially when playing 45. The Shed has around 20 members and new members are always welcome. They will continue to meet every Thursday throughout the summer at 7.30pm. The Bere Island Men's shed would like to thank Creative Place West Cork Islands for funding their latest project building planters for the community's amenity areas. They recently gifted the first two built to the National school. This funding has helped the Shed promote social inclusion and skill sharing among its members. A summer event is in the planning to celebrate the completion of the project.



BERE ISLAND ARTS FESTIVAL

We are excited to announce that the 2nd Bere Island Arts Festival will take place from Thursday 19th to Sunday 22nd September. Following on from the hugely successful inaugural festival in 2023 we are now in the final stages of planning an amazing programme of visual art, workshops and readings, music, film, and dance. Come along to the pop up Gaeltacht and try out your cúpla focail, dance the night away on Culture Night, renew acquaintances and make new friends from the 7 West Cork islands and beyond.

We are delighted that there are lots of new volunteers onboard this year and we would love to see even more people join us. If you are interested in getting involved please contact us on <u>bereislandartsfestival@gmail.com</u>. The full programme will be available on the website at <u>www.bereislandartsfestival.ie</u> and online bookings for events will be open soon. We are really looking forward to seeing you all there.





Behind the Scenes for the Bere Island Community Radio All Islands Football 2024 L B'cast from Arranmore Island, Donegal



Bere Island Community Radio began streaming at 8.00am on Saturday 25th, but, in fact, it all started in earnest on Tuesday 21st, beginning with technical preparations, followed by packing of all the gear into the van. Thursday 23rd: we're out from Bere, on the 7.30 east for Arranmore, and, after a couple of pit-stops to change a tyre and get a bowl of soup on the way, we arrive for 6.30pm ferry Burtonport to Arranmore. A 15 minute crossing and then straight to the pitch, to check out scaffolding, power supply and internet coverage for the Broadcast. After a couple of calls and a chat with Jerry Early, Oscar Daly and Daniel O'Donnell (no, not him...) we have a plan! Off to our B&B and then dinner.

Friday: it's early morning, we head to find scaffolding assembled, and now our real work begins; getting power safely to the scaffolding, finding tables, chairs (space is always tight), and a tarp to wrap the whole rig against wind and expected rain. By Friday evening, hours later, we are finally testing the sound system; mics, headphones, leads and, most importantly, streaming links. Happily all working, we are all set up! Time to head for evening meal and a beer. Saturday: early breakfast and by 7.30 we are heading to power-up and recheck everything for our streaming which must begin at 8. The pitch is a hive of activity; tea stations, food wagons, noisy generators, the ambulance, all getting into their various places. No power! Fuse board keeps tripping. Burca Boilers may be the culprit, it's 7.51, lots of people trying to re-set breakers. Finally, the breakers stay put, no-one knows why, but the power is now staying on, so only another 12 hours or so to go. 08.00 BICR are broadcasting. The special *All Islands Idents* from Ted and Maurice hit the air. 08.01 and Paul Brady's *Homes of Donegal* is being been blasted through our PA speakers out loud over the hills of Arranmore and also streaming on BICR all over Ireland and the world.



08.15 Dominic is LIVE; interview with Jerry Early our Host Club to give an overview of their preparations and a welcome to all, followed also by a welcome from Simon Murray of the All Islands Football Committee. Since its inception, Simon has pushed and promoted the All Island's Football Competition to highlight island life from all around our coastline. 08.27 Dominic is back up the scaffolding joining fellow commentator John, to prepare notes on teams for the first two ladies' games, matches to be played simultaneously kicking off the Competition at 08.30.

John has Inis Mór "A" v Boffin and Dominic has Arranmore v Inis Oírr. Headphones on and Team Sheets at the ready, they try to concentrate on their own game, setting the scene for the listeners at home and abroad. Both games kick-off and, from then on, the relentless game after game follows, until the finals, far away at the end of the day. It gets a little easier after awhile and things settle in. The atmosphere builds as teams, coaches, assistants and crowds generate excitement around the ground, reaching a feverish din. Robbie at pitch level checks scores with the referees at both half-time and full-time, so that the final scores broadcast for each game, are accurate. Switching from Ladies to Men's Pool Games adds to the general levels of excitement around the pitch, midday comes and goes, it's on to the semi-finals in the evening and then, ultimately, it's the final.

For the Finals both teams are led onto the pitch by pipe band. All the while BICR try and keep warm, sip cups of coffee or tea, which come welcome via Theresa. The day is now all consuming, the excitement of the crowds, the reaction to pitch events, and now, the presentations to the Winning Teams and Runners-Up. The Winners jumping with joy, the Runners-Up disappointed of course, and BICR are up on the scaffolding trying to capture the scene for our listeners. Staying impartial is hard, as we are looking at our own Island Ladies and Men, each after a loss of just one point.



Incredibly 12 hours have flown by, and it's now over for another year, the arguing, the banter, but also the companionships, just renewed again. So now the games are over, and the opposition an enemy no more, all head away to socialise. Bere Island Community Radio now dismantle all the gear, repack the van, and, after an hour or so, we can join the community to engage and relive those last 12 hours.

Sunday morning 09.15 the long journey home begins, Arranmore to Bere. Sunday 19.00 ferry west, we are now back where it all started! Others appear, board, now the ferry is in! Home at last. Monday: unload the van....

Now that's Community Broadcasting!!!

Ardagh wood

A thousand or so years ago all of Ireland was covered in trees like oak and alder. Over the years the vast majority of these forests were felled for agriculture, building materials and as fuel.

Today, there is a focus on planting native trees - the plantations we see in many parts of Ireland of sitka spruce are not native and the dense way they are planted allows very little to live underneath. Planting native trees helps restore the original ecosystem and bring back all the dependent species which would have once filled the land; a diverse range of insect, birds and mammals which are now missing.

In our small part of Ardagh, we are attempting to plant native trees. Through the community scheme – Trees on The Land - we obtained roughly 100 saplings of oak, alder, hawthorn and rowan, and have planted these as best we can over one area of the farm. Rabbits are a danger, but we are lucky on the island that there is no deer population, which would make short work of any sapling. With luck and time, we hope to grow a small wood here and recreate a tiny fraction of what's been lost. Wish us luck! By Andrew Huntbatch and Joni O'Sullivan



First delivery of Scots Pine - our favourite tree.



We used the Bere Island community rotavator and some hard work to plant a garden to grow saplings.



Native Irish Trees

If any households or farms would be interested in Native Irish Trees or Fruit Trees please contact Oscar in BIPG Office at 027 75099