



CRANN

Ireland's tree magazine

AUTUMN/WINTER
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Det

New strategy requires a leap of faith

THE LONG delayed and much lauded new Forest Strategy 2023 – 2030 was launched recently along with the accompanying Forestry Programme for 2023–2027 which boasts an impressive €1.3 billion budget and an annual planting target of 8,000ha.

The overall objective of the strategy is “to urgently expand the national forest estate on both public and private land in a manner that will deliver lasting benefits for climate change, biodiversity, water quality, wood production, economic development, employment and quality of life”. While commendable in intent, one cannot but remain a little sceptical about the chances of delivering this when trust in Irish forestry remains low as a result of the as yet unresolved licensing delays, the ongoing plight of ash plantation owners and the long delays associated with the delivery of the programme itself. In addition, it has been very many years since 8,000ha per annum of new forest has been planted.

One of the key aspects underpinning the development of the new strategy was the extensive consultation that was undertaken to develop the ‘shared national vision for the future’. Just how shared exactly this vision is, could be queried as forestry (forest management, species choice, and so on) remains a somewhat contentious issue. Thankfully, the strategy also acknowledges the need to develop “an understanding of the value of forests, collective support for forest expansion and a nationwide awareness of the potential of wood products within housing construction”. To meet the many challenges that exist, a suite of ‘strategic enablers’ and high level goals have been developed;

Building and developing trust amongst forest stakeholders

- New organisational arrangements to facilitate ongoing monitoring, reporting and implementation
- Public consultation and engagement will continue to be an important tool used to improve transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of regulation and in policy decision-making

Regulation and legislation

- Establishment of an efficient and effective regulatory and legislative system and support structure

Land-use planning and community support

- Better integration of trees and forests with other land uses at farm, catchment and landscape level

Forest culture

- Support for promotion and awareness initiatives which will deepen the understanding and cultural acceptance of forestry

Incentives for forest creation and management

- New incentives for the establishment and management of diverse, multifunctional forests

Sustainable Forest Management

- Develop an updated Forestry Standard for Ireland

Forest Health

- Monitor and assess the ongoing health and condition of Irish forests

Education, Skills and Careers

- Support training, education and continued professional career path development, to increase the diversity, capacity and capability

Research and innovation

- Meet the needs and requirements of forest research and innovation in forest establishment, management, health, supply chain and the use of timber in construction.

While the programme designed to deliver the strategy signifies a departure from previous iterations and brings the focus sharply onto native species and other efforts to address climate change and biodiversity challenges, it remains to be seen whether it is deliverable and can continue to support the timber processing sector and associated rural employment.

However, directly acknowledging the many challenges – including the permanency of the land use change to forestry, and the sometimes conflicting targets between agriculture, biodiversity and forest policies – and providing rationale, background and context as presented in the detailed Strategy Implementation Plan, indicates an openness and willingness to find a way forward for the ongoing development of forestry in Ireland.

Marie Doyle

Marie Doyle is a lecturer on the Forestry Degree Programme in UCD and a board member of Crann



cranntrees



Crann – Trees for Ireland



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OUR MISSION: To enhance the environment of Ireland through planting, promoting, protecting and increasing awareness about trees and woodlands.

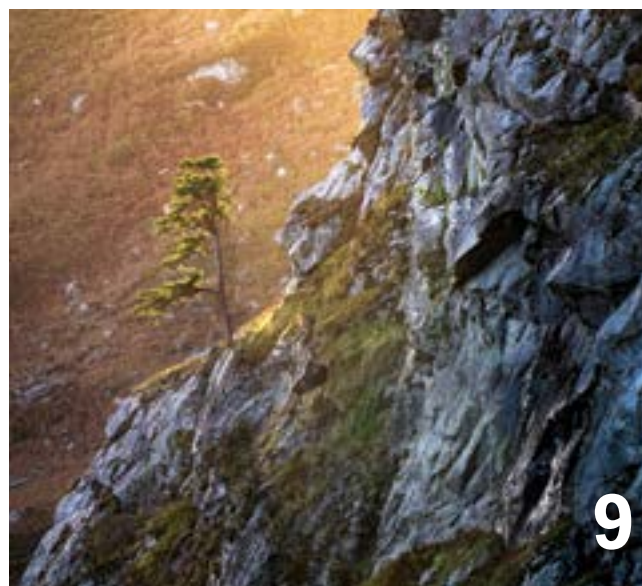
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CRANN Membership applications

Ireland was once entirely covered with woodland. It is now the least wooded country in Europe. CRANN is Ireland's leading tree organisation, uniting people with a love of trees. CRANN's mission is to enhance the environment of Ireland through planting, promoting, protecting and increasing awareness about trees and woodlands. CRANN is pursuing this mission through contributions to urban & rural planting projects, through its schools programme and through this magazine.

Members receive:

- A copy of CRANN magazine.
- Invitations to join with other members on a variety of woodland walks and talks.
- Access to advice and information about trees in Ireland.
- Most important of all, by joining CRANN you will be helping secure a future for Ireland's rich heritage of trees and woods.

Annual Membership rates:	Unwaged/DAPs	€25
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Payment option: via PayPal www.crann.ie

CRANN is an Irish non-profit organisation promoting and planting broadleaf trees.



Crann members should engage in local projects

THE 2023 Crann AGM was held in the National Botanic Gardens in Glasnevin, with thanks to Dr. Matthew Jebb and his team. Crann Chairman Peadar Collins gave his report on another busy year for Crann. He expressed his sincere thanks to our three board members who retired: Jess Bolton who shared a wealth of knowledge and sound advice in relation to our corporate governance. George Cunningham for his long time service to and promotion of the organisation, as he continues to host Crann events in the Tipperary area. Marie Louise O'Donnell for her vibrant, open and honest contributions to further develop Crann.

Welcoming Marie Doyle from UCD to the board he expressed a desire to invite more people onto the board and to promote the need for trees as part of the architecture of our living spaces.

Acknowledging the success of Crann at Bloom 2023 Peadar said that we plan to grow this as an event next year.

Peadar also let it be known that we have received offers of two parcels of land from Crann members.

The secretary's report was given by Crann administrator Marguerite Arbuthnot-O'Brien with an overview of Crann's activity in the past year:

Crann Schools Programme:

Environmental education is high on Crann's objectives, teaching children all about biodiversity in a fun, yet educational manner. By following these workshops with the practical activity of planting saplings and/or hedgerow plants, instils the take-home message in the pupil's mind.

The Crann programme enables schools to create and/or enhance a school garden/mini-woodland, which becomes an outdoor classroom and a very valuable resource for many subjects in the curriculum. These outdoor classrooms became very relevant during Covid times, especially with the slow but safe return to the school environs.

National Tree Week

This was very successful thanks to Coillte, the Tree Council of Ireland and Easy Treesie for a huge roll out of saplings, in response to the various requests to be part of this nationwide initiative.

Crann organised various tree talks, guided woodland walks, symbolic tree plantings and tree planting events with schools and local community groups nationwide.



Farewell Mr Treadwell

Everyone at Crann would like to wish good luck to our Environmental Education expert, Dale Treadwell as he packs up his big box of tricks and mattock to head back to Australia. Dale's contribution over the years has been immense with his knowledge and willingness to engage with the public up and down the country.

He'll be sadly missed and there is always a welcome on the Crann mat for him! Dale is pictured here with his son, Nathan, who we referred to as Nigel in a previous edition

Easy Treesie

The Crann Easy Treesie Project continues to engage with local communities and schools by organising tree planting events. The Project has welcomed the partnership with the GAA Green Clubs initiative, who have committed to planting 45,000 trees with their communities nationwide.

National Biodiversity Week

Another successful initiative, as it reaches a nationwide audience via media exposure. We held a workshop and woodland walk in Sligo, various school workshops with tree planting, potted tree presentations in Tipperary and canal and biodiversity walks in Westmeath, along with a variety of online educational webinars.

Giants Grove

This project is thriving, with Phase II site preparation on target. With the ongoing climate change issues, this project is definitely becoming a conservation project as well as a tribute to Ireland's diaspora.

Bloom

In June we exhibited at Bloom, Phoenix Park, our stand was hosted by Dale Treadwell and his son Nathan, with daily help from the Crann Team and volunteers. The addition of the Sustainable Living Stage this year was a super focal point for the Conservation Area. The public showed great interest in our stand and Dale, who also performed on stage, was a great hit with the little ones! We were honoured by a visit from our Patron, President Michael D. Higgins and his wife Sabina.

Public Participation Networks

Crann is represented as an NGO on an international forum, Forest Europe with the theme 'Forests for Health and Green Jobs'. Crann continues to promote the nationwide campaign, Public Participation Networks via our Membership and Crann magazine. The PPN initiative supports various groups e.g. Tidy Towns which are the backbone of local community participation. We encourage Crann Members to consider getting involved in their local PPN.

Maria van der Wel (née Cummins)

It was with great sadness that the Crann Board learned of the passing of Maria van der Wel, who died on 18th October 2023. May she rest in peace.

Maria and Ari started their family run business (Cappagh Nurseries and Garden Centre, Tinnakilly, Aughrim, Co. Wicklow) back in 1967. Over the years they have been friends and proud supporters of Crann.

Crann wishes to extend our deepest sympathy to Ari and the van der Wel family.



A field day at Longford Demesne



THIRD year Ecology and Ecosystems students from St. Angela's College, Sligo visited Longford Demesne Wood Beltra on September 25 this year.

Longford Demesne Wood comprises 31 acres in total, 25 acres of Woodland and 6 acres of wild bird cover. This area was historically owned by the Crofton family from 1580 until the 1970's when it was purchased by the Foleys. In 2010 Yvonne and Declan Foley won the prestigious RDS Forest Service Biodiverse Forestry Woodland Award. The RDS Awards are Ireland's National Forestry Awards that recognise the input and commitment of those supporting biodiversity. Longford Demesne Wood has a number of fundamental objectives, namely to maintain the cultural and historical integrity of the site whilst also promoting its biodiversity and increasing forest cover.

The students of Ecology and Ecosystems have been visiting this forest for ten years, as part of their field work. Here Yvonne and Declan provide an in-depth background to the forest followed by a guided tour. This highlights

the fungi, bug hotels, hedgerows, wildflower meadows, the fulacht fiadh, fort, watercourses, and of course not forgetting the lush ancient woodland. The students are immersed in the captivating stillness that Longford Demesne Wood provides and in recent years they have partaken in some forest meditation. This trip allows for a break away from the demands of student life and also gives an insight into how the forest can enhance their wellbeing.

This year our students were fortunate enough to have Diarmuid McAree of Crann discuss with them the importance of trees. From improving the air we breathe and the water we drink, Diarmuid engaged with the students and opened their minds

Andrew St. Ledger

The Crann Board heard with regret and sadness of the passing of Andrew St. Ledger (environmentalist, Woodland League, CELT). Andrew (of Glendree, Feakle, Co. Clare and formerly of Beaumont, Dublin) died suddenly at his residence on Sunday, October 29, 2023. Crann wishes to extend our deepest sympathy to Andrew's family and friends. Suaimhneas síoraí dá anam uasal.



Yvonne Foley sharing her knowledge with the students.

Below and left: Diarmuid helping students with identification



to all that trees have to offer. For the first time students witnessed an increment borer in action expertly performed by Diarmuid and were able to draw on his extensive knowledge when it came to the identification segment of this fieldtrip. This included hedgerows,

grassland, wildflower and tree identification to name but a few. The students have the unique opportunity in Longford Demesne Wood to identify species from several different habitats in such close proximity to one another.

The fieldtrip is one of the highlights of the year for these third year students. They come away from this enchanting forest with a newfound respect for wildlife and woodland and of course fond memories of the warm welcome that Yvonne and Declan provide each and every year when they open up their forest home to St Angela's college.

*Written by Dr. Sara Meehan,
Lecturer, St Angela's College Sligo.*



This summer, Crann received a donation of €2,500 from Kalun to remember his former partner, Mary Prendergast. Here Kalun remembers a life well lived. For further information, please visit www.remembermary2018.com

A LIFE REMEMBERED

MARY'S life was a remarkable journey filled with resilience, intellectual curiosity, a deep love for nature, and a passion for literature and music. This is her inspiring life story:

Mary Bernadette Prendergast was born on 16 April 1956 in County Westmeath. When she was small, her parents, Tom and Eileen, emigrated to England to start a new life. Mary was left behind in an orphanage. She later joined them in England but often had to fend for herself as her parents worked night shifts at a hospital. Her mother who by then had separated from her husband, sent Mary to St Finian's Convent School in Cold Ash, Berkshire as a boarder. Despite her early childhood trauma and the lack of parental care, Mary did very well in her GCSE.

When she was 16 Mary enrolled at Filton Technical College in Bristol where she studied Sociology and English Literature. She read widely from Dostoevsky to Sartre and from Shakespeare to various radical philosophers that helped to develop her free-thinking mind. Throughout her life, Mary had a great passion for literature, the arts and cinema and she drew inspiration and strength from her deep reading of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*.

In 1981, after obtaining a degree in development economics from the University of Westminster, Mary began to travel widely. Over the years, she shuttled between Taiwan, China, Hong Kong, England, and Ireland. In 1996, Mary returned to Westminster to pursue an MA in Hypermedia and was awarded a distinction for her dissertation. Linguistically talented, she mastered Mandarin, and could read classical poems



Mary Prendergast

from the Tang dynasty. Her favourite Chinese book was the translation of *Aesop's Fables*.

As a child of the diaspora, Mary found her roots and kinship in Ireland, thanks to her uncle Joe, aunt Maureen, and their children. This familial bond gave her an anchor from which she nurtured her affection for Ireland. She appreciated its rich history along with the warmth and character of its people. It was here she found her love for nature, wildlife, and animals with a particular fondness for horses and donkeys.

In 2006, Mary moved to Galway, where she enjoyed the happiest time of her life. The city's charm and beauty gave her tremendous contentment and tranquillity. Mary had a penchant for swimming in the sea in Salthill, even in winter.

Under the tutelage of the renowned master Bergin, Mary became an accomplished tin whistle player and after a three-year training course at the Alexander Technique Centre in Galway she qualified as an accredited teacher in 2016.

With a nature-based spirituality, Mary's love of trees went beyond environmental protection, sustainability, and ecology. She was fascinated

to create an ecosystem in proximity mitigates the impact of extreme heat or cold on the whole group. This also explains, she said, why trees in a family or community can live to be very old unlike solitary trees.

On 15 December 2018, after 18 months of battling breast cancer, Mary passed away in Marie Curie Hospice in Hampstead, London. She is survived by her loving cousins and a circle of caring friends. They will remember her affection and resilience for the rest of their lives.

Mary's life is a poignant example of how one can overcome adversity, pursue knowledge, find joy in nature, and leave a lasting impact on the lives of those around them. Her story is an inspiration to all who strive for a life filled with passion, learning, and a connection to the world around us.

Mary's legacy lives on.

Kalun

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The Irish
Garden

Be prepared to Bee amazed

FERS, the company I work for, has been very lucky to work on behalf of the Office of Public Works since 2008. The work has been very varied and has included bat surveys, vegetation and habitat surveys, flora protection order species surveys and ornithological surveys. The OPW sites we have visited have been up and down the country from the beautiful Annes Grove in Cork to the majestic Emo Court in the Midlands to the Magazine Fort in the Phoenix Park. Surveying at OPW sites is without doubt my favourite.

Not too long ago I had the joy and honour to survey the grassland opposite Áras an Uachtaráin. Not only did I meet the President's dog but I found viable acorns on an Evergreen Oak (Holly Oak). I had never found these before, so I was really chuffed and hope to have an Áras oak grove in a few years.

Over the years I have come to know several OPW staff who've become not just colleagues but good friends. One such person is Rory Finnegan who is head gardener at Castletown House, Celbridge. He has an outstanding knowledge of and passion for the natural world which is just as well, because Castletown House is home to Annex 1 quality grassland habitat, and species listed in Annex II/IV of the EU Habitats Directive (protected by European law), a Flora Protection Order species and mixed woodland containing a multitude of mature and veteran trees.

Rory knows every tree onsite like an old friend including an old beech which he recognised was ailing. It had succumbed to fungal infection of the heartwood at some point in its 150-year lifetime, and it's days were numbered. The tree was holding onto life whilst standing on a completely hollowed out base. On closer inspection, Rory noticed that a feral honeybee colony had taken up residence inside this cavity. As trees age, they support a progressively wider biodiversity and such features wouldn't bother a tree-man under natural woodland circumstances. This particular tree is located on the main

EMMA REEVES looks on in wonder as a team of tree surgeons go about their work

pedestrian path from Castletown House to the banks of the River Liffey. It had the barest grasp on life and represented a danger to those traversing beneath its canopy. A decision was made to make this tree safe whilst preserving biodiversity potential. Reducing the crown is a typical method used to prevent trees which exhibit damage to the trunk from falling in strong winds. Shaw Tree Services were enlisted to carry out this delicate work. Shaw Tree Services, run by Terry Shaw, are one of the oldest tree services companies in Ireland. Founded in 1925, they have a reputation for dealing with older trees and understand the complexities of maintaining biodiversity at all costs.

As any beekeeper will tell you bees do not

like vibrations and as any tree surgeon will tell you, chainsaws make a lot of vibrations. Brian Gibson, the head tree surgeon on the day had been stung recently whilst operating a chainsaw, this was not something he wanted repeated. The bees had to be dealt with. So, myself and Rory met in Castletown House early in the morning, before the bees had begun their work. We confined the bees to their comfy tree residence with a lot of drawing pins, nylon mesh and copious amounts of tape. I surveyed the tree for other occupants such as roosting bats and birds. Being confident that ill effects to biodiversity were minimised, the tree surgeons moved in and began their work.

I had the great pleasure of staying during the works just in case the bees started to escape. Very little holds my attention, I have countless projects sitting on my shelves awaiting completion. But for four hours I was transfixed. These boys were amazing! The professionalism was outstanding, keeping the men on the ground safe, limiting damage to the surrounds of the tree whilst removing monstrous boughs. Overall, they showed tremendous respect to an old tree. I thought it was going to be upsetting watching the boughs come down but it was done so expertly, it was actually a beautiful event to witness.

Following completion of the works, I released the bees with no stings or ill effects. The tree remains on site as a 10m tall sculptural feature in the landscape with boughs removed so as to mimic natural events. It looks 'right' and will in the future, as it decays in position, becoming home to an ever increasing biodiversity.

info@shawtreeservices.com
aaronreeservices@gmail.com
www.castletown.ie



Terry Shaw, left, and Brian Gibson get ready for the big job

Dr Emma Reeves, who lives near Navan, has a PhD in botany from UCD





Main picture: The remnants of the Beech after surgery
 Left: Etchings on the bark an example of the trees' cultural importance at Castletown Demesne

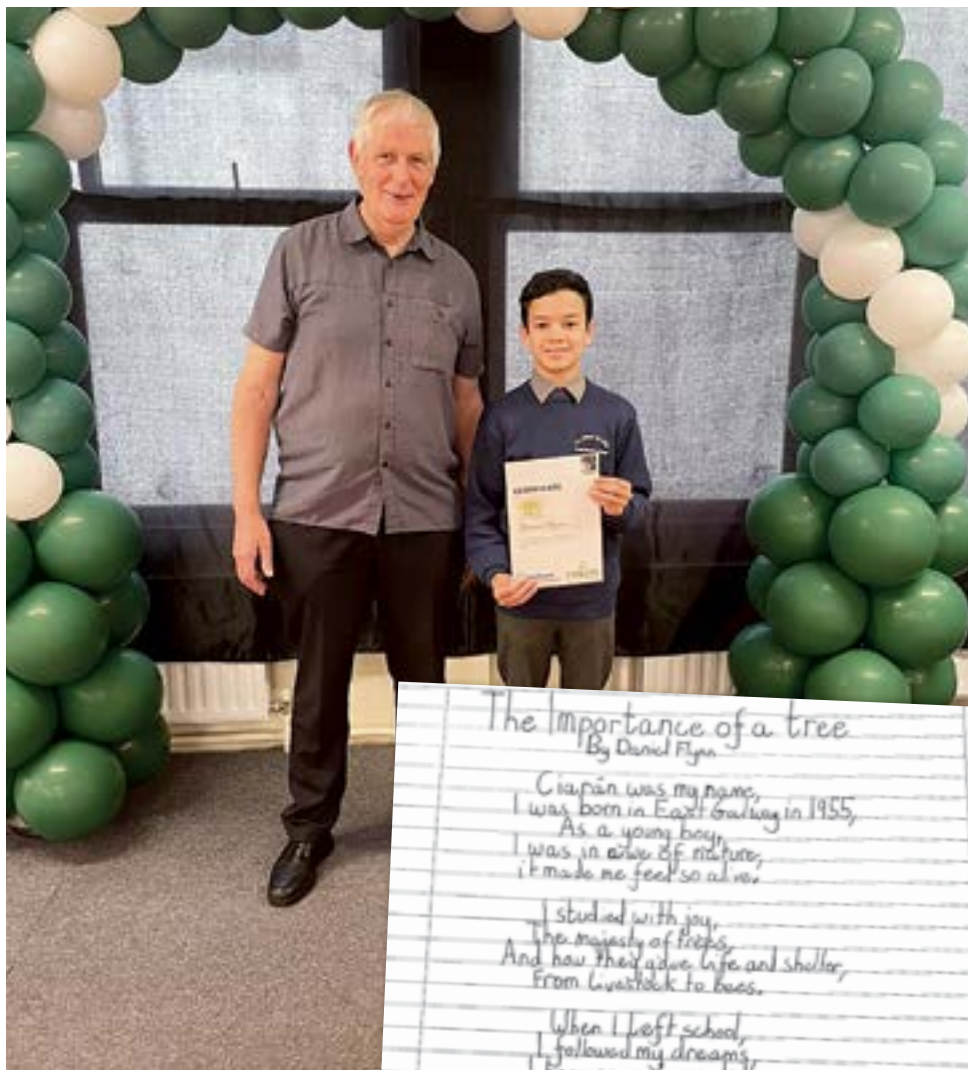
New beginnings from old memories

Founder member of Crann is remembered by his grandnephew

by PJ FITZPATRICK

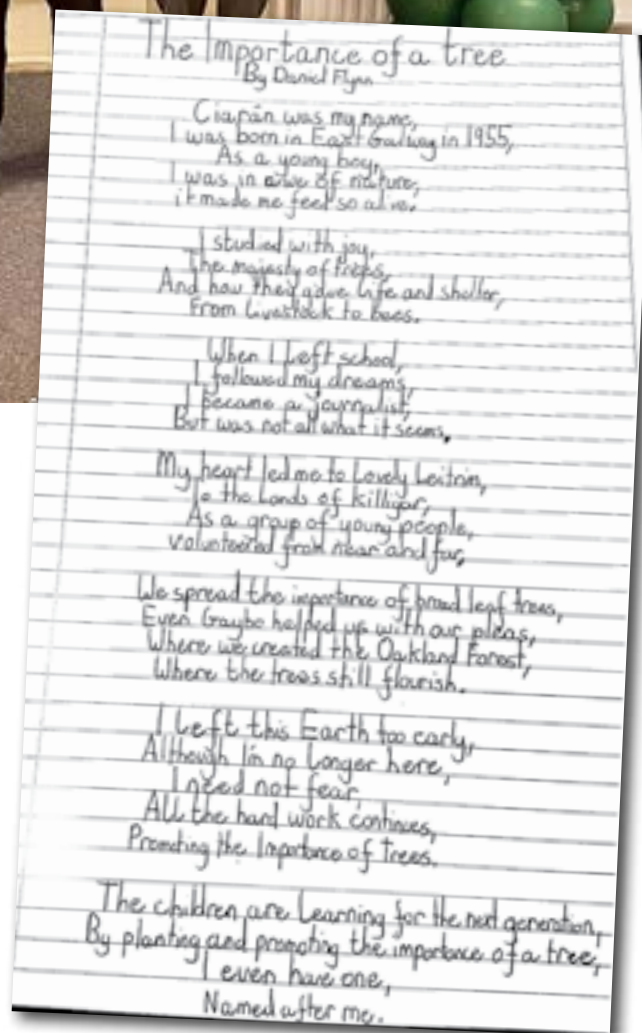
MULLINGAR Tidy Town along with representatives of both Coillte and Crann visited Coláiste Mhuire, Mullingar early this year to meet with first year students to launch 'New Beginning Tree Programme for 2023'. Each student was gifted a tree and were encouraged to plant the tree in their garden at home in honour of something or someone in their life – in memory of a lost family member, relative or to mark a special life occasion. The students were asked to write a short story, poem or do a drawing about the tree they planted. Winners of each section would be awarded a certificate a few weeks later.

The students were advised about how to plant and look after their tree. The benefits of trees to rural and urban settings was spelled out. The role that trees can play in the climate change process. A great discussion took place which showed the interest students have in trees and nature around them. When the meeting was just over one student, Daniel Flynn approached me and said that his granduncle was one of the founders of Crann. His granduncle was none other than the late Ciarán McGinley. I intended to find out some more from this young man but when I looked around he was gone in a flash.



PJ Fitzpatrick (Crann Director) and Daniel Flynn after receiving his certificate for the poem about his granduncle Ciarán McGinley (A founder member of Crann)

At the end of May we visited the school again for the presentation of certificates associated with the tree planting. Daniel Flynn was awarded a certificate for a poem, 'The Importance of a Tree'. When I read down through the poem (right) I noticed that it and the planted tree are in honour of his late granduncle. What a nice honour for his granduncle. It appears we could have an up-and-coming member for Crann.





FOCUS ON THE PICTURE



THE WINNER of this year's Crann/Coillte Photographic competition is Deirdre Casolani from Fermoy in Cork.

This is what she had to say about herself and her winning photo.

"I joined Fermoy camera club when I moved to Fermoy in 2015. I live in Fermoy town by the Blackwater and my morning walk with the dogs is down Barnane way. The smell of the garlic when it flowers is amazing when it wafts through the forest. I love the walkway through the garlic and eventhough I live in the town it feels like I am in the countryside when I walk here."

She took her winning picture with a Nikon D750







The 2023 Crann/Coillte Photographic Competition is sponsored by Coillte, Ireland's largest commercial forestry and land solutions company.



Judge
Mark
Wilkinson, LIPF

FIRST PRIZE €250
INTO THE WILD
Photographer:
Deirdre Casolani

JUDGE'S COMMENT:
A lovely well composed photograph, the picture is sharp with lots of interest, the footpath leads your eye to the focal point of the shot. The wild garlic adds a carpet, making it a place that anyone would love to visit for a walk down the inviting path.



SECOND PRIZE

AUTUMN GLORY €100

Photographer: **Ragnall Glasgow**

JUDGE'S COMMENT:

Another excellent photo with an eye full of detail. The sapling beech tree, slightly offset to the right pinpoints the sense of impending Autumn, as does the foreground of ferns making for interesting ground cover. Altogether another worthy photograph.



THIRD PRIZE €50

LONE TREE

Photographer: **Kevin Foley**

JUDGE'S COMMENT:

I'm a sucker for a lone pine tree hanging on for dear life. The tree highlighted by a ray of Sunshine draws the eye to the main feature of the picture, the contrast of the wet black limestone to the soft vegetation as a background. We had hoped to use this picture on the cover of the magazine, but it was a bit dark.

HIGHLY COMMENDED
WHERE NATURE JOINS
 Photographer: **Deirdre Casolani**

JUDGE'S COMMENT:

I loved this photograph with its fascinating joined lime trees with the little gate and the bluebells in the foreground. A well composed photograph, well done.



PHONE CAMERAS

FIRST PRIZE €50
**POWESRCOURT
ESTATE**

Photographer:
Maria McCormick

JUDGE'S COMMENT:
I liked the late afternoon
light on these majestic
parkland Beech trees.
The overall composition
is excellent, giving
the viewer a good
view of the Wicklow
countryside.



COMMENDED
SELF REFLECTING

Photographer:
Maria McCormick

JUDGE'S COMMENT:
I normally don't like
water and waterfalls
in our competition
entries, but this
image is all about
the trees. I love
the fact that it is
almost impossible
to tell where the
trees stop and the
reflections start.



COMMENDED

FIVE LEAVES

Photographer:

Denis Twohig

JUDGE'S

COMMENT:

Now this is a tree! Did you really count the remaining leaves? Nice composition and excellent light, another well taken image.



COMMENDED

BEECH TO THE SKY

Photographer:

Mark Heffernan

JUDGE'S

COMMENT:

A real winter photo of the tree canopy. An interesting take on an unusual view of the network of branches above our heads.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for taking the time and effort to enter our annual photograph competition. The standard of entries was higher than ever this year, well done everyone.
Mark Wilkinson

FORESTS

Cathedral Oil
Gerhardt
Gallagher



Opposite page
Seed Trees
Aquatint
etching
Gerhardt
Gallagher

In Praise of High Forest

AN ARTIST FORESTER'S PERSONAL VIEW

THE technical definition of a high forest is a 'type of forest originated from seed or planted seedlings usually consisting of tall mature trees with a closed canopy'.

But to me this rather dry statement hardly expresses the biological, material and spiritual potential of a life form that has pre-dated us all down through the aeons and has supported our evolution since we first appeared. It is best expressed at near maturity when the final population has developed with its characteristic ecosystem and its site potential for a successor stand. It is not surprising to me that when I encounter such an entity, even when created by foresters, my mood lifts and I relax.

My life has been shaped by two main influences, trees and visual art. I could draw before I could write and have been pursuing this through painting and etching ever since. My first forest impressions of forests were probably as a toddler of the pine and spruce woods which stretched down to the sea near my grandmother's house at Warnemünde on the German Baltic. Then there were the woods around Dunmore East, thankfully still healthy, where we walked as children during holidays and finally, at a pivotal point, when pondering on what to do after finishing at school, a visit to Emo park in Laois with its impressive tree collection, including redwoods. This paved the way for a career in Forestry paralleled by my painting activities.

My first job after qualification at UCD landed me in the Forestry Division of the Department of Lands, later to become the Forest Service, as an assessor in the first inventory of forests. This brought me straight into contact with some of the finest maturing or mature stands which were then part of the developing national estate, though then amounting to no more than 250,000ha the

by GERHARDT GALLAGHER

national forest still included maturing early plantings as well as a scattering of acquired older private woodlands. Our training ensured that we got to know these high forests intimately. In an early paper penned in the 1960s I described a number of remarkable stands seen and recorded, some of which dated back to pre State times. Many were along the Suir valley, the Knockmealdown and Galtee mountains and south Wicklow and some outliers in the border counties. They largely comprised near mature Douglas fir, Scots pine and European and Japanese larch, many with thinned spreading canopies, with a ground vegetation of bracken, briar and fern through the forest undergrowth and along roadside which changed colour with the seasons from a variety of greens to gold and russet as did the larch foliage. There was of course Norway and Sitka spruce the most impressive of which was in the south Wicklow forests around



Aughavannagh and later experienced in the Slieve Blooms, some approaching 40 years and upwards, with heights of 30 metres or more with their typical ground vegetation of wood ferns, mosses, sorrels and sedges. At the time I also came across surprises such as a magnificent old stand of Deodar cedar in the Galtees near Mountain Lodge, and redwood reproducing by suckering. Also seen were stands of lesser commonly planted species, Silver firs and Monterey pine. At that time broadleaved forests with oak, beech and sycamore were mainly confined to private estates, surveyed later by the Forest Service, but some areas of notable public mature oak forests remaining were the woods of the Avoca valley, Glendalough, south Wicklow and Killarney, with their typical ground vegetation of broadleaved sedges, myrtle and bluebell and also a unique beech forest developing at Lough Sheelin.

Being immersed in this survey for a formative year instilled in me a deep respect for the forest experience, technical and aesthetic, with it the partly realised hope of a developing wood culture to be expanded by way of experience in our full land and landscape potential. Later I was involved in research looking at the impact of different types of stand management on the development and composition of different conifer species as they matured and after that on the harvesting which renewed the cycle once more. I was fortunate enough during my career to visit many notable European forest areas in Scandinavia, France, Germany and central Europe and elsewhere both during my career and with the Society of Irish Foresters.

Three of these stand out in their magnificence, Białowieża Forest, a mixed species ancient forest in east Poland, the coastal spruce and hemlock forests of Vancouver Island Pacific coast and the stately slow-grown Norway spruce of north Italy

which has supplied makers of the world's finest string instruments, including Stradivari, for centuries. The latter is now sadly at risk from bark beetle infestation. Of course there are many iconic high forests I have never seen and indeed am unlikely to, such as tropical rain forests, (though I did get a taste in Queensland), the Russian Taiga which covers millions of square kilometres and the Californian Redwoods to name but a few. However I am always hopeful for a new high forest experience closer to home.

As well as supplying environmental, social and economic needs high forests have inspired music, literature, art and well-being as the millions of annual visits to Irish forests demonstrate. Even if we are far from a forest culture in Ireland the historical memory of trees that survived amid vestiges of mythological imagery has expressed and continues to form parts of our arts and literature. The depictions of ash woodlands by Thomas Roberts the 18th century landscape painter from Waterford, which can be seen in the National Gallery of Ireland, form part of this tradition which is reflective of the work of many others world wide. Ivan Ivanovich Shishkin the great Russian landscape painter and draughtsman of northern coniferous forests and Hong Ling the Chinese painter of superb mixed forested mountain landscapes, shown some years ago in the Chester Beatty library attest to a world forestry culture. Numerous young visual artists now draw on forest imagery for their inspiration.

In my pursuit of visual art I stayed away from depicting trees for many years preferring semi-abstract figurative themes to avoid a confusing dichotomy between both careers, but high forest imagery kept intruding and I mounted a number of one-man-shows with trees as a theme from the 1990s on. In another development I became more aware of my grandmother's legacy. She was a relatively well known painter and etcher of the north German landscape who had studied art with some of the greats, including Chagall and Lieberman in Berlin, before World War 1. I have a collection of her etchings which include striking depictions of pine forests along the Baltic coast. On taking up etching myself I found inspiration through her work and many of my pieces have brought me back to the imagery of high forests in Ireland which I included in some recent exhibitions.

This enthusiasm for mature forests may sound a bit over the top but I believe we may be becoming dangerously complacent about the state of our own forest resource. It is no secret that the effort to address our historical loss of woodlands has ground to a halt with historically low levels of planting which has been in decline



for more than ten years. Indeed this is to such an extent that in the context of annual tree felling for building, re-wilding and other causes, deforestation may be exceeding both new and replacement planting with attendant adverse impacts on wood, carbon storage and biodiversity benefits. With the disappearance of older stands, due understandably to the pressure for renewable building materials, the opportunity to encounter a high forest experience diminishes. The laudable interest in native species forest comprising a limited composition of high forest species and a high proportion of minor trees and shrubs may take many years if ever to reach high forest status. It

is therefore time in my view to look at retaining some of our forests to maturity or at least to the achievement of maximum growth increment.

Are there straws in the wind to instil hope that we are climbing out of a temporary trench towards a forestry culture and an *Island of Forests* as described in Paul McMahon's recent book of that title? Though the last few years have been difficult for forestry I believe there is some evidence of a revival. There is a suggestion that a moribund forestry plan may be showing signs of life to restart woodland activity. The recent revitalisation of Avondale by Coillte presents among other experiences a bird's eye view of high forest from its magnificent canopy



walk and there appears to be, in a response to public pressure, a new recognition of mature conifer forests through their retention beyond specified felling age for biodiversity, recreational and aesthetic reasons. The concept of continuous cover forestry (CCF) has been adopted by private woodland owners where site and stability allow and there is a move by Government to support this. A belated effort to prevent the destruction of oak forests by the invading *Rhododendron ponticum* has been made though how successful this will be is open to question. However there is more to be done. Not every developing forest can or should be converted to mixed CCF and surely the timber industry is flexible enough to deal with some increased sized saw log to allow for greater distribution of forests, under more conventional management closer to rotation

age, offering a longer retention of carbon and timber capital while afforestation recovers. No one wants to clearfell our broadleaves but we are surely missing opportunities in the official resistance to our vibrant naturalised high forest species of beech, sycamore and lime as well as the potential of others such as hornbeam, trees which can fill the gap made through the loss of our iconic ash and elm.

The greater the distribution of Irish forests of adaptable species allowed to reach their growth potential, gifting satisfaction to the public who can visit and enjoy these places, the greater will be acceptance and appreciation of the irreplaceable resource that is our forests and the reawakening, after millennia, of a wood culture. As for me I could then rest looking up into the complex architecture of a tall tree crowned canopy.

Dr Gerhardt Gallagher

Gerhardt has had a varied career in research, management and wood supply in the Forest Service, followed by a period in Coillte where he was responsible for its estate management and continuous improvement programme. He later took up consultancy work with the Forest Service and other forestry organisations. He contributes voluntarily to the activities of the Society of Irish Foresters of which he is a past president. Gerhardt also has a long involvement with the visual arts through painting and etching. He is a full-time member of Visual Arts Ireland and Black Church Print Studios.

POETRY

Beech Wood

*Last week you stood tall and august
In your total nakedness,
Arms stretching for the sky
And sometime sun -
Your grey-silvery bark
Straight, distinct and proud
As you stood in a row
Rehearsing opening day.
Now you are garbed in
Brightly new yellow-green
Dancing back and forth,
Your dresses swaying with you -
Bluebells, wood sorrel and primrose
Splashing your floor with colour
While they can.
For in full summer your dress
Will be so lavish that you will let but
Little sunlight in.
Then fungi, bird's nest orchid
Small birds and mammals
Will gambol round your roots.
Some of you wear boots of moss
While others rather feel the carpet
'Neath your feet.
But you are all-alluring and delightful -
A pleasure to the seeking eye,
A brightness for the probing mind
A sheltering for the needy soul.*

Winter Sleep

*Red, russet, yellow leaves
Carpet softly the earthen floor
Beneath our trees,
As they gently close down
For their winter sleep.
It's cosy there, and warm
Under branches that now
Are quietly resting,
While they await Spring's arrival
And the budding of next year's fashion -
But for now they lull,
Yet shelter our grey, white-lichened
One-eyed quern stone,
That forever remains awake
Shielding them,
As they doze through bitter
Bleakness,
And the winter season.*

Carmel Cunningham, whose early life centred in Cork and north Kerry, has lived in Roscrea since 1965 where she taught at Roscrea Vocational School until 1996. Married to George since 1968, their two sons Paul and Brian work in Dublin.

These poems are taken from the collection 'Unfolding Moments'



The Forests of the counties of the Lower Shannon Valley



As researched and recorded by Thomas Johnson Westropp in 1909.

A short review by
GEORGE CUNNINGHAM

PROBABLY one of the most famous Irish antiquaries of all time, Thomas Johnson Westropp (1860-1922), while most noted as a field-working archaeologist, produced more than 300 papers with his own hand drawn plans, maps and diagrams on Irish history, architecture, archaeology and landscape,

to mention just a few of his interests. This published material is only one part of the legacy of this extraordinary scholar: his manuscript material held in many Irish institutions is enormous and of enduring value. Westropp's great strengths were at least twofold: his ability to use the Irish primary sources and his unflagging fieldwork.

One of his least-known papers is the one highlighted in this short review, as he says himself, 'these notes, collected during a quarter of a century are, of course extremely fragmentary, especially for the early period;

for it was no object of the monk, bard, or historian to tell more than incidentally of the great forests among which lay the theatre of their heroes actions.' Westropp wrote his paper at an anxious time for forestry in

Above: Westropp drew his own maps and inscribed them with his distinctive handwriting; here he lists the 'derry' or oak woods on the southern flanks of Slieve Aughty in north-east Clare, noting that these, 'are as a rule devoid of forts, dolmens, castles and churches, and so were probably from the earliest times to the fifteenth-century uninhabited woodland.'

Left: This portrait of Westropp by Gordon d'Arcy was presented to this writer at the 21st Annual Burren Spring Conference in 2008 in recognition of his contribution to sustaining the heritage and culture of the Burren.

Right: County Limerick parishes as drawn by Westropp.

Below: Cover of book

This definitive biography of Westropp and his work was published by Department of Archaeology, UCD, in 2000.





Kemp apple blossom
Right: A traditional orchard

The history of traditional orchards in Ireland

THERE are up to 7,500 different varieties of apple tree in the world. The ancestors of the cultivated sweet apples as we know them today are derived from a species that grow in the forests of the mountain ranges of Central Asia, Kazakhstan. They naturally moved along the Silk Road and were then spread further by the Romans.

Apples have been grown in Ireland for almost 3,000 years and the presence of orchards are reflected in place names throughout the country, such as Oulart (Wexford) and Knockullard (Carlow) derived from abhal ghort – apple garden. The importance of growing apples is made clear in the Brehon Laws, as ‘The penalty for cutting

Words and images RUTH WILSON

down these is a fine of five cows, with lesser fines for cutting down the limbs or branches.’

Ireland has a native crab apple (*Malus sylvestris*), they were known as ‘Nobles of the Woods’ and were protected under Brehon Law.

Traditional orchards became popular around the 17th century and usually consist of five or more fruit trees grown on vigorous rootstocks, often crab apple seedlings, and widely spaced trees with crown edges less than 20 metres apart. They are lightly managed and the orchard floor below the trees is usually meadow and is either grazed or allowed to grow and cut for hay.

They have been at risk, with modern

agriculture practices encouraging farmers to replace their orchards with English varieties. The practice was seen as progressive, as they were high yielding varieties, but we lost a lot of our Irish varieties. Today, we’re fortunate that Heritage varieties have been collected and curated at several sites across the island of Ireland.

University College Dublin (UCD) have the historic Lamb-Clarke Heritage Apple Collection at their Rosemount Environmental Research Station, which is used for both research purposes and teaching orchard management, known as ‘Pomology’ (that’s the science of fruit-growing).

The orchard was started when J.G.D. Lamb, known as Keith Lamb, started a PhD thesis in the 1940’s. He was one of the few people who worried about the loss of the Irish heritage varieties, and he travelled the country on his bicycle identifying, collecting, and cultivating 53 Irish varieties of apple, such as Irish Pitcher, Munster Tulip and Greasy Pippin. Dr Lamb obtained his PhD in 1949 entitled ‘The Apple in Ireland: Its History and Varieties’. E.J. Clarke continued this research, while Prof. Michael Hennerty curated the present collection.

In the early 1990’s, the founder of Irish Seed Savers Association launched a public hunt to recover the varieties Keith Lamb had collected and any that he missed. The result was a restored national collection at UCD, and the start of the Irish Seed Savers Association own national apple collection in Co. Clare. The Irish Seed Savers Association now use the orchard to share the knowledge they’ve gained. They also have Heritage varieties that can be purchased.



The Armagh Orchard Trust was set up in 1995 to establish an orchard to preserve the apple varieties which had been associated with fruit growing in Ireland. The introduction of the Bramley Apple, around the 1800's led to the decline of many local heritage varieties. The orchard is in Loughgall and has around 100 varieties, including Bloody Butcher and Keegan's Crab.

The Heritage varieties of apples have characteristics that we may not need at present, such as fungus resistant skin, extended flowering and longer harvesting periods, more frost hardy, later flowering, a natural resistance to disease and scab or special medicinal properties. These characteristics may be valuable to future generations, so it is important that we conserve these.

Pollinators and biodiversity

As well as containing some of our rare heritage fruit tree varieties, an orchard can be valuable for biodiversity. They're made up of several habitats, including elements of woodland, hedgerow, meadow and the unique way fruit trees age. This mosaic of habitats is home to a range of biodiversity, including bumblebees, butterflies, birds, bats, mosses, beetles, fungi and lichen. Windfall fruit is also a vital source of food in autumn and winter for a whole range of wildlife.

The absence of herbicide use in most old orchards often contributes further to the range of species that can be found.

Species-rich grassland beneath the trees can be a haven for pollinators and biodiversity, especially if they contain the native, naturally occurring wildflowers.

Pollinators like wild bees, hoverflies and moths have a vital 'pollination service' role in orchards, with almost all fruit resulting from pollination by a bee or other insect. In turn, fruit trees provide nectar and pollen, essential for the survival of these important insects.

Apple trees need to be pollinated by another apple tree to produce a reasonable crop. If there are apple or crab apple trees growing locally, they should be able to pollinate a small orchard. If the orchard or tree is in a remote area with no other apple trees nearby, they will need several trees to ensure a good crop.

There are three flowering groups: early, mid and late season. All apple trees fall into one of several flowering groups depending on how early in spring the blossoms emerge. Varieties from the same flowering group or adjacent groups will ensure that bees and other pollinators are able to visit the flowers on both trees – allowing pollination to take place and resulting in a good crop of apples.

We have one managed pollinator, the honey



A solitary bee pollinating
 Right: Apple harvest (mainly
 Kemp) on the shores of Lough
 Neagh, Co Antrim, 1940's.
 Below: Kemp apples



bee, and over 100 different types of wild bee. 21 of them are bumblebees and 80 are solitary bees. The honey bee is not in decline, but one third of our wild bee species are threatened with extinction from the island of Ireland.

Pollinators need pollen and nectar throughout the nesting season (February to late September). The blossom from fruit trees provides them with a vital early source of food when they emerge from hibernation in the spring. After the blossom is over, pollinators will depend on flowers beneath the trees and in the hedgerows and margins around farmland and gardens. They need these food sources right through to the end of the summer to ensure they can complete their lifecycle. By managing hedgerows, field margins and non-farmed areas in and around the orchard more pollinators can be supported, boosting pollination and fruit yields.

Here's a few key pollinators that might visit a traditional orchard to help with pollination:

Drone Fly, Early mining bee, Early Bumblebee, Red Mason Bee, Tiger Hoverfly and Common Carder Bumblebee.

It's possible to encourage pollinators to an orchard by managing hedgerows, field margins and non-farmed areas to support pollinators.

Food and income from orchards

Small orchards have in the past been a feature of many farms across the island of Ireland, providing traditional varieties of apples, pears, plums and damsons. The crop was sometimes destined for local sale or for use in the home and were an important resource when fresh food was not available or rationed. Small traditional orchards have become increasingly rare, but the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine have included traditional orchards in several Agri-environmental schemes, including the current ACRES.

Best trees to plant, now and in the past.

If you're thinking about establishing a small traditional orchard, it's important to choose the right place. Avoid any areas that already have a high biodiversity value and check you have enough space. Choose a site that is warm, sunny and sheltered from strong winds, avoid frost pockets and areas that may be prone to standing water.

Find out which varieties are local to your area; they will be most suited to your site, and you'll be helping to conserve cultural and genetic diversity.

Ruth Wilson, Farmland Pollinator Officer, All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, implemented by the National Biodiversity Data Centre.

The post is funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

A haven of peace to remember the fallen firefighters of 9/11

JERRY AHERNE celebrates the living memorial Kathleen Murphy created in Kinsale to honour the New York firefighters who lost their lives on 9/11

DO YOU remember that awful day in September 2001, the day when two aeroplanes crashed into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Centre in New York? Do you remember when the news first broke? The horror of the first plane hitting the towers and then the second plane sending a pall of smoke and flame out into the surrounding plaza? I remember it vividly and the shock and horror of the event still sends shivers up my spine even to this day. I was a firefighter then working out of the Cork City Fire Brigade HQ at Anglesea Street in the city. I was off duty and knew very well that my fellow brother firefighters in the New York Fire Department would be making their way to the scene of this disaster and going in to rescue people trapped within the towers.

As the day unfolded we witnessed both the towers collapsing in upon themselves and the carnage of this event would be beyond comprehension. Almost 3,000 people perished in this terrorist attack and 343 of them were my brothers.

Over the ensuing days, weeks and months rescue personnel would toil amidst the rubble

trying to locate those who had perished, a task that would have been taxing even for the well prepared people who worked in the Fire, Police and Paramedics services of the City of New York.

Everyone reacted differently to the disaster. People came to Firehouses across New York and laid flowers. At the nearest Firehouse, Ladder 10, and St Paul's Chapel just one hundred yards from the World Trade Centre, affectionately called the little church that stood, people hung messages and photographs of loved ones who were missing. New York was in a state of shock and anguish as was the whole world following the attack.

Kathleen Murphy was a staff nurse at Lenox Hospital in New York and on the day of the tragedy was on duty. All off duty personnel were called in that day with the expectation of thousands of casualties but as the day progressed it became apparent that there would not be as many as expected. Kathleen knew most if not all of the firefighters who were lost. She applied for an extended leave of absence and came home to Kinsale to set in motion an idea that had formed in her mind.

With the assistance of her extended family



in Kinsale and a few friends she set about clearing a portion of her land at Ringfinnan, just outside Kinsale, and planted 343 trees of various species in her garden adjacent to her home. It took several weeks, choosing the trees she was going to plant, getting the stakes to support them, having the name tags that were tied to the trees made and making everything perfect for her living memorial to the memory of the men whom she knew, loved and respected dearly.



Above: Members of the FDNY Emerald Society Pipe & Drum Band in the garden in September.

Opposite page: Every year a keeper places Christmas baubles on the trees.

Left: One of the many avenues of trees dedicated to FDNY



In January 2002 she held an official opening of the garden. Several families of the fallen firefighters were in attendance for the opening and she made it a point of not indulging in too much publicity for the event. In her mind's eye she wanted news of her special place to be spread through word of mouth.

Today the Garden of Remembrance is in the hands of Kathleen Murphy's nephew John. Kathleen passed away on March 29, 2011 just before the tenth anniversary of 9/11.

Today, John, is rearranging the garden and bringing all of the trees closer to the monument. Some varieties did not fare well over the years and a replanting is in progress. Visitors to the garden will be able to locate individual trees by their Ladder company, Engine company or Rescue company. Recently a large group of visitors arrived from New York prior to the twenty second anniversary. They were former and serving firefighters and their families who knew most of the firefighters who were lost on that day. Members of the Emerald Society Pipe & Drum Band accompanied them to the garden where a recital was played in honour of their brother firefighters.

It was an emotional time for them and the respect that they held for the late Kathleen Murphy was palpable in their words of appreciation for what she had created in their

honour in her beautiful Field of Dreams in Kinsale. Families of the men visit the garden regularly. They are welcomed by a keeper when they are calling. Keepers are the volunteers who meet the families, honour the men on the anniversary and place Christmas baubles on the trees on December 8 every year for the families in New York. It is only right and proper that this day event is continued as it gives the families great comfort knowing that their men are well cared for and remembered at Christmas time.

To the sides of the monument in the garden stand two trees. On the left side lies the tree dedicated to FDNY Chaplain Fr Mychal Judge. Fr. Mychal was in the towers the morning of the attacks helping the injured and while assisting them he was fatally injured by falling masonry thus becoming the first FDNY casualty. On the right of the monument stands a tree dedicated to Kathleen Murphy.

The Garden of Remembrance is open all year round. American tourists to Kinsale are taken to the little garden of 343 trees that we all call 'Little America' on a daily basis and it is a fitting testament to the love and care Kathleen had shown to the firefighters.

I AM often introduced like this. “Here is Orla Farrell, she’s planting a million trees with Ireland’s million school children and their communities and she is just SOOOOO passionate about Climate Change.”

I’ll tell you why that’s not true.

In these dark mornings as I turn on the radio news and read the paper over my morning tea, I confess to you that the more I learn of new climate change-related floods, fires, and fleeing refugees the less I feel “Passionate about Climate Change”. In fact, I might go so far as to say that I would think anyone completely sane would prefer to engage with anything *but* the subject of climate change. The bad and sad news all around is heavy going, especially if we are around young or vulnerable people and want to shield them from trauma.

Who actually relishes end-is-nigh stories? I admit to inordinately enjoying those alien or asteroid Hollywood films where the brave astronauts and scientists save the earth just in the nick of time and celebrate with tall coloured drinks, catchy rousing music, and a cigar. I love those films precisely because I am not actually expecting aliens to park in the clouds over our heads. Or for a burning asteroid to show up next to the moon in the winter sky any day soon. But in a week where I damaged the tree-mobile as I left a planting party on the Cooley peninsula due to my unexpected encounter with a pop-up-pond in the middle of the road I feel it doubly important to park the passion. Calm focus on what we can all do right here, right now to make things even a little better is a proven effective approach.

I confessed my unease at being introduced in the above fashion recently to Majella McAllister of the Museum of Childhood over a mug of tea and a thick slice of Hazelnut Coffee cake. I’d accepted her kind invitation to talk on a panel for Heritage Week in Tipperary Town Library, despite protesting that talking is not what we do (it’s all in the motto; “Stop Talking, Start Planting”). An august assembly including the local heritage officer, a local councillor and an assembly of families had come on their Saturday afternoon with a promise of hearing of our passion project, of climate danger, of anger and protest.



No matter what the - the answer is

“I just feel somewhat lumped into the particular doom-mongering spiral when I am introduced as being passionate about climate”, I said to Majella as we sat in the beautiful Excel Centre Café in the middle of town.

“I’ve been teaching since I first stood in as a ‘sub’ as a twenty-year-old UCD student. We teachers meet with great variety during our careers; a lot of us it’s probably fair to say are cautious and perhaps rightly so around

the notion of extremism. I felt profound sadness, it’s that grief you hear of now, when I watch David Attenborough’s documentaries of species nearing extinction and hear of extraordinary efforts to breed endangered animals like the cheetah in game parks around the world. I wonder if my two new granddaughters, born this year, will ever see these animals. So, I recognise that Climate Change - in a time of so many challenges



Left to right: Evelyn Murphy, Dr. Emma Corrigan and pupils of St. Mary’s School with Grant Holden and Franke Van Der Laan (MeerBomenNu) at our National Tidy Towns multi-Award winning project, Baldoyle



Diarmuid McAree, Gerhardt Gallagher and Brendan Fizzsimons with Orla staffing the Tree Council of Ireland stand at the Bloom Festival

question TREES

- is the prime challenge of our generation. It's plain to see that this requires addressing and the sooner the better. What I have learned tells me that tree planting is the simplest way to cool the planet." I add that I had to use a petrol car to get to the Museum of Childhood Munster event because the Leaf, a 2014 Electric Vehicle would require hourly charging on such a journey. However, I'm pleased to report how my tree-deliveries are now mostly running on sunshine thanks to my 11 new P.V. panels on the roof of the house powering the Leaf Electric Tree Transporter. Decarbonising is of course vital too, to turn off the tap on global heating at the same time as planting trees, it's our other important message.

I feel about tree planting like I feel about housework. It is something very nice to have done. A bit like polishing, like dusting, like floor mopping. I do like, to take an example, when my house is vacuumed, I cannot say I am passionate, or even happy about hoovering my stairs. If someone offered to do that I would be delighted. In fact, when I retired early from my teaching job one of the shower of surprise gifts I got from my colleagues - along with, at my special request a stout pair of work-boots, was of a robot

News from Ireland North

North West neuro-diverse volunteers lead the way

ALL THIS talk of extinctions brings me back to our great outing to "Wild Ireland" in Donegal - have you visited? It was such a pleasure to meet its owners and family, to hear their story of how they are restoring species that once roamed our countryside such as bears, beavers and their wolf pack and to join in their film-making about restoration. Their park is a world-class setup, located in a beautiful water and woodland setting. We are delighted to include them in our list of 2023-2024 restoration projects! This visit was the last stop on our celebration of projects with Cora Luttrell, Easy Treesie - Crann Ireland North co-ordinator and started with an invitation to the opening of the new Seán Dolans Gaelic Athletic Club in Creggan, Derry. Cora has been working on a variety of superb initiatives on our behalf, right through the Covid era and it was such a pleasure to take a trip up to see how some of our projects there are taking off. Thanks so much to all who



Mayor of Derry City and Strabane District Council, Patricia Logue at the opening of the Sean Dolans GAC facility with its 1301 Easy Treesie trees

have carried out so much re-greening with Cora. It is great to see such dramatic progress over a short 3 years. Tree cheers to all! We celebrated the official opening by First Minister Elect Michelle O'Neill and 1300 saplings planted by members of Seán Dolans GAC. Many thanks to all who worked on this project!

We'd the pleasure of meeting Mayor of Derry City and Strabane District Council Cllr Patricia Logue and Ulster GAA president Ciaran McLaughlin, who attended the grand opening along with Mark Durkan MLA and many local politicians, school and community representatives.

Cora's report to us reads,

"Many thanks to Danny McDonagh, Head Gardener, Ballymagown Allotments, Derry, for facilitating and coordinating the planting of over 2,000 saplings at Ballymagown Allotments and Seán Dolans GAC. With Danny's enthusiasm, knowledge and care, along with his ability to always provide "the digging equipment", community groups and schools from the City of Derry planted native hedge rows, an apple orchard and pocket forests with saplings provided by the Easy Treesie - Crann, Trees for Ireland project. Danny has recently retired from his post as Head Gardener and "gone fishing" although he can still be found planting in his spare time.

A special thanks goes out to Claire Allinson, owner of Aí Grianan Livery and Stud, Derry, for providing the space for many a planting party on her property. Louise Moorhead and her team from North West Spectrum have planted a variety of native saplings over the past two years, on lands at Aí Grianan Livery, in collaboration with Easy Treesie."



Danny McDonagh, Head Gardener, Ballymagown Allotments (left) with members of North West Spectrum, Louise Moorhead-Project Coordinator and Cora Luttrell, Easy Treesie - Crann

vacuum cleaner so that when I came home from tree planting the house would be done!

So the latest buzz; we don't need passionate communities. It's enough if you would quite simply like your place to look and feel a bit nicer by adopting some trees - and diligently - (that nice old-fashioned quality, beloved by teachers everywhere), and conscientiously - caring for them.

The magazine is always a great opportunity to give a big shout-out to the many planting communities, the children and community leaders who have been working so hard on greening their home places with new trees with us. Particular thanks again to Coillte, which continues its sterling sapling and logistical support for us again this year. A special high-five to the many businesses and government agencies who have supported us over the years - in recent weeks alone, the IEN, Patagonia and new donor Wells Fargo Bank for example who have sponsored two one-day-long children's workshops and whose volunteers will be joining us out planting in early 2024. Salesforce, The Loreto Order, Maxol-Greenprint and Kelsius have continued to provide donations to support our work. Goodera with Microsoft and others have not only organised tree maintenance parties but have gifted 120 most welcome Science and Wellness kits for our school Science Week programme. The complete list of our helpers and supporters will appear on an updated list of you all for our new easytreesie.com website ready to go any day now.

The Easy Treesie Story - listen wherever you get your Podcasts.
Logo by Ruza Leko



Would you like to donate to our project please?

Please contact Orla or Marguerite at orla@easytreesie.com and info@crann.ie if you

- would like to come out planting with us
- are a local authority/institution administrator with space for establishing small native woodland projects 1 hectare (2 GAA pitches or so) or smaller (Public Land Prioritised)
- want to apply for trees to establish in your community
- would like (please) to donate or to sponsor trees on our project (Certificates available, €10 per native tree), the new Stripe link for the Crann Easy Treesie project is below;
- <https://buy.stripe.com/bIYal4cDMcPV7p6144>

The Microsoft Ireland team, with family and friends had a picnic at our Excel-lent Tree Maintenance event and sent thanks to the Santry Community Gardeners who showed us around their magnificent Fingal Co. heritage orchards afterwards



Stop Talking Start Planting

How to Plant an Elder Wand

MANY of our dear readers of this magazine are committed to our Crann goals of "Re-Leafing" Ireland. Our Easy Treesie project aim is in support of this goal. Our growing list of planting communities is added to each season. We plan to pass the half-a-million-trees planted this coming season 2023 - 2024. By finding space for trees with the children in our families and local communities and planting first in our gardens and even patio pots, next in whatever public spaces we can organise, in our institutions and our workplaces, on farms and wherever we can wedge them in using the "Right Tree, Right Place" guidelines, we are being the change we want to see. Most of us may not be able to attend high-level meetings on global policy. We can, though, do our little bit in our own home places.

This winter we are issuing a simple challenge; can you do this Three Minute project and plant an Elder Wand?

Our native elder trees will capture carbon, soak up flooding, provide a haven for nature and you can make delicious recipes from the flowers and fruit! This project costs

nothing, it will provide useful shelter and can fill in gaps in hedgerows or borders. It doesn't grow very big so will suit most gardens, give it a haircut with a snips or little saw if it's getting too tall for you and give the cuttings to your friends so they can also grow their own trees! Check out our simple instructions. (We recommend planting three, in case some don't "take"). We



Felix Finkbeiner started the world Trillion Tree project by planting one apple tree at his Munich school at the age of nine, with a challenge for the children of the world to plant a million trees in their own countries.



Does your corporate group want to volunteer with us?

WE LIKE nothing better than handing out spades to strapping youngsters, enthusiastic seniors

and - well, all those who want to help in any capacity. Our volunteer communities themselves love nothing better than doing some very hard digging in the ground, or perhaps just encouraging their colleagues, getting out of their classrooms and offices. We admire them, praise them and we go around with our Blackwater Valley Maker oak bowls of chocolate tree-ts for them, talking trees as we go. Always followed by tea and chocolate cake (we actually *are* passionate about that element of our programme!)

What's it like to come out with us? Here are a few quotes sent to us by Milda of Microsoft Ireland from her Green Team volunteers who shared their feedback following their day out with Fingal CoCo and us this summer.

"I had the privilege of volunteering in Northwood Park, Santry yesterday. With the guidance from Orla Farrell from Easy Treesie - Crann, Microsoft Ireland helped to carry out some tree maintenance and weeding around the young saplings planted a few seasons ago.

It was amazing to get involved in such an important initiative. I was inspired by the dedication and enthusiasm of everyone involved."

"Thank u very much for organizing such a great event. Awesome planning & execution We really enjoyed such a great day"

"Thanks for organizing, Its was great to meet ye all and have the chats"

"Thanks Milda and everyone for the great experience."

"Such an amazing day, thanks for organizing"

Plant-for-the-Planet
Global Youth Summit 2023
Photo: Nicolas Det



are kicking off the project with our friends at MeerBomenNu at three Dublin workshops taking place with school children in Fingal, at Patagonia in Dublin City and at the Crann Nursery at Da Farm, Kiltarnan with local schoolchildren and their communities and interested tree growers. You can even start your project in a bottle if it is too rainy to go out and you can watch the formation of the elder roots over the weeks of winter until you get to plant it out when you have found a nice space for it. Do you know how to plant a native elder tree for free? Learn the technique of harvesting an elder cutting - or magic wand - and watch it grow from Franke van der Laan of the MEERGroen organisation in the Netherlands who paid a visit to Easy Treesie for National Tree Week 2023. Hear their inspiring story where "Nature is Our Nursery". Learn about how to identify an elder tree in your locality so that you can do some harvesting from it once

its leaves fall. You can learn more on our instructional film here on the Tree Council YouTube channel;- https://youtu.be/D9_ZJs6L6kU?si=4AIhf0pL8tb8v7Is

Another highlight of the year was the Plant-for-the-Planet Global Youth Summit held in Frankfurt in September, where Easy Treesie represented Ireland for the sixth year in a row. The highlights of the five days of workshops? Planting an apple tree, here in the heart of the Apple Wine district, that we donated to our hosts and meeting with country co-ordinators and young tree planters from all over the world. Participants included our hero Felix Finkbeiner, the young man who inspired our project and indeed the world Trillion Tree Project at the age of nine and is now working on the global restoration project. Their newest achievements? A million trees planted in the Yucatán this year and the launch of the new "Fire Mapper" app, free to all who want to monitor their woodlands.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Mr Naturally Wild, DALE TREADWELL, says goodbye to Ireland as his journey in life takes him back to where it all began - Australia

AS A child I recall reading a book titled *A Fortunate Life* by A.B. Facey. It was quite the life story, from an outback childhood, enlisting for the first world war underage and witnessing at first hand, atrocities, and heroics. Through a lifetime of other adventures, some exhilarating, others mundane and domestic, I probably wondered to myself then, at around the age of ten or eleven whether I would also have a collection of enough stories later in life to write my own book.

Sometimes life takes shifts in directions that you never really imagined and thankfully I have never had to endure the horror of war or any true grief beyond the normal ebb of life. Recent events on the domestic front and unfortunately not that uncommon in modern day living have resulted in a shift in my own circumstances. With this upheaval going on, a friend of mine suggested recording some of my adventures in wildlife and education for my children and the many good friends that I have met along the way. As the saying goes 'everyone has a book in them' some are just better reads than others! It occurred to me that I have in a way already written such a book throughout the pages of the Crann magazine. All that was needed was for me to collate the articles and find a common thread to piece all the musings together. The thread of course.... *Trees and Me*.

This will be for my beautiful, nearly adult children Leah and Nathan whom I often referenced as they grew up throughout my stories and also for my parents Helen and Barry.

My second children's story, Robby the Robin, was dedicated to my father for instilling in me a suffer no fools, take no prisoners, and most important jesting attitude to life. I intend to dedicate my new book to my extended Queensland family headed by my uncle David who is one of the best storytellers of them all

and also to my partner for over 25 years and the reason for me being in Ireland in the first place, Jennifer (I wish that things were different but if wishes were fishes I'm worth a whole school').

Trees and Me begins not with an article of my own but Mr. Joe Barry who brought me into the Crann fold and for whom for many a year I regarded as my own personal Louis Walsh - no better PR man could I have wished for. Thanks to Joe, a true man of the trees!

However today with the heaviest of hearts, I will drive away from my home that has been a sanctuary for over two decades. During my Bohemian youth, of living out of the back of a Jeep while camping and planting trees from one rural Australian location to another, I never expected that I would end up settling in the midlands of Ireland. It is what happened and I grew my world around me. It took some time and many a failing project as all good gardens are bound to do. Now I am back out on the road, to couch surf and camp, back to a life I once flourished in and will do so again; in the best company of friends that I have made from one end of this Island to the other.

As I take one last final walk around my plantings of trees both native Irish and from around the world (like many in Crann I was always loath to be entirely xenophobic or clannish about trees). I take in the eclectic madness of my own imagination all those years ago and the ongoing result. Pacing out along the front corner is the Bee Hotel and Butterfly garden which was once was the garden dedicated to my beautiful baby daughter; to be seen through her nursery window.

Meandering past the Snow Gums and shrubbery of Australian plants that have been knocked down by the harshest of Irish winters to regenerate or be planted again and again they give the approach to what was my Gum Tree cottage a distinctive character unmatched by



anything else in Ireland.

I stroll up the drive flanked by larch and birch still only babies at 20 years of age but providing an imposing avenue into the rest of the enchanted mix of woodland, poly tunnels and meadow to come.

Trundling to the rear of the dwelling there is an open deck that is a mash up of the two decks that were constructed for the Bloom gardens I gave the world in 2007 and 2011.

The first themed on Children and Play, the second was the Dinosaurs and Gondwanaland.

At the end of this deck protected by a mass of Chinese gooseberry also known as kiwi fruit (New Zealanders are cunning marketers!) are remnants of that garden. Some tree ferns from the southern states of Australia that have so far survived the worst a midland winter can throw at them. Hopefully in the future they will continue to be covered every time the forecast is bitter.

I ramble back through the trees I first planted from the Conservation Volunteers Ireland millennium urban forestry stock that I was in charge of way back when.





Christmas greetings from Gum Tree cottage.
Closkwise from above right: All hanging out in the tree-house.
Outside the cottage on World Earth Day with his daughter Leah.
Showing the world of bugs to curious minds.
The future is safe in the hands of Nathan.



The mix of ash, Scots pine, sweet chestnut, and hazel form the backdrop to the amphitheatre of small lawn area at the back of the house and provide shelter and cover for the geodesic dome structure in amongst the now 22-year-old plantings. Strolling on and behind a hedge of blackthorn and hazel is an area of alder that has self-seeded after works to renovate septic drain lines.

The alder will fix nitrogen to the soil slowly improving it after the upheaval of the ground works that placed subsoil back metres above its natural place. The alder can then be harvested for future firewood to make way for the oaks and holly that currently they shelter. That's a job for my ever growing teenage son. It is fitting as it is this part of the garden which once sheltered his childhood tree house.

Marching onwards towards the rear pathway now covered by a ring of towering Scots pines that form the backdrop to an orchard of apples, plums and cherries, I had pears too but they never did that well. The fruit trees would probably do better without the year round evergreen cover from the Scots pines but the

sight of red squirrels in recent times feeding from the cones prevents me from having any notion of letting more light in by taking out even a solitary Scots pine.

In amongst the Scots is a solitary horse chestnut, in memory of the beloved father of my dear friend Margaret McQuirk.

Arriving at perhaps the most surreal area, yet another amphitheatre created by the firewood trail of eucalyptus and Ships Mast (*Robinia*) plantings (thanks to Peter Barry for the trees) with an understory of alder buckthorn, the food plant for the brimstone butterfly (thank you Dean Eaton for the extras, although he may not have known it at the time I procured them). I now emerge into the glade of my BBQ area and scene of many a wild campfire cookout and storied evening. This is protected by a line of oak my daughter and I collected as acorns in the local woods many moons ago.

A front row along the fence of rowans that she and I also planted amongst the mass of all the colours of the rainbow butterfly bush's including the one that I have named after my grandmother 'Buddleja Beth'.

Traversing now it is almost too much for me to bear one final look. There it is, the latest of the plantings, a redwood planted by my father on his last visit to Ireland, prior to the Covid lockdowns, with my youngest son.

At the time of planting both redwood and boy were much the same height, today after four years of growth they are still of similar heights though in years to come the redwood will surpass my son but not for a while! He may yet even outpace the redwood in the coming

months thanks to a year of the teenage growth spurt.

My loop walk is nearly complete but I can't go without planting one more tree, where is 'Matilda'? I could do it the easy way with the mechanical auger but no, this one has to be old school.

Half an hour goes by with every last remaining piece of anger and frustration and confusion as to what has happened and why, is taken out on the earth as the mattock flies through the air from this now middle aged, physically and mentally weakened but still imposing six and a half foot swing.

This tree requires a larger than average hole. Watered in by the beads of sweat from my brow and dare I admit to it some tears, a Wollemi pine - the Dinosaur tree!

It won't need much more of a water than that, it has been the wettest July on record. Fitting as it matched the rain in my heart. Someone once told me that I would like Ireland as it is very green. They forgot to tell me why it's so green but I soon found out about the liquid sunshine!

I have described in this small musing every speed of walking by foot I can manage. The reality is that anyone who has ever met me knows I only really have two speeds, flat out and flat out on the ground. At the moment and for a while to come I am, and will be the latter.

Goodbye Ireland it's been a long hike, but great craic.

My name is Dale Treadwell, I am still and always will be Naturally Wild (mic. drop)!



Ireland's Arbor Days

MARY FORREST looks back at a government initiative to treeplanting

CAPPABOY, Drumavaddy, Knockavilla, Lismacaffrey, what poetic placenames, all places where schoolchildren planted trees in the 1930s.

They were taking part in an Arbor Day initiative established by the Minister for Lands to promote afforestation in Ireland.

Arbor Day was the idea of John Sterling Morton (1832 – 1902). Morton lived in Nebraska where he became president of the State Board of Agriculture. He proposed a day be set aside for tree planting to be known as Arbor Day. The Board agreed and the first Arbor Day was held on 10 April 1872 with over one million trees planted by individuals in the state.

By 1892, tree planting and associated educational programmes had spread to 40 states and territories in the US and the Arbor Day message was beginning to spread beyond the United States to Japan, Australia and England.

In Ireland, Arbor Day, Arbour Day, or National Arbor Day or Lá na gCrann - several titles - all with the one purpose to promote tree planting, occurred through the 20th century.

There were three periods, 1904 – 1924 organised by the Irish Forestry Society or promoted by the Provisional Government and organised by local groups. Secondly from 1935 – 1939 by the Department of Lands and the third period by Trees for Ireland 1951– 1997.

Arbor Day in March – call to schools

In 1935, the Government launched a national scheme of afforestation in Ireland and the Minister for Lands sought the assistance of schoolchildren in this task. At that time there were 5,000 National Schools with some 500,000 pupils enrolled. The Department of Lands sent leaflets outlining the scheme to each school. March was designated as Arbor



Arbor Day at Cappagh Hospital in 1937.
Irish Press

Month and the day for planting as Lá na gCrann or Arbor Day.

In a statement, published in newspapers, the Minister for Lands requested that a committee with teachers and locals be formed and permission to plant on suitable ground obtained. Site selection was important – one where ‘protection necessary for successful tree growth can be assured’.

Suitable sites included school grounds, fair and market greens. The committee was to arrange a formal ceremony on the day. Prior to the ceremony, the children were to be given lessons in tree planting. The schools in their turn completed a voucher applying for trees, free of charge, from a designated nursery and sent it to the Forestry Section, 88 Merrion Square, Dublin.

Tree planting ceremonies took place throughout the country in cities, towns and rural areas. Many Arbor Day ceremonies were reported in local and national newspapers and provide information on the attendees, the speeches and the trees planted by both

dignitaries and school children. Many ceremonies were held with twenty seven reports of Arbor Day tree planting were found in newspapers.

In Waterford in 1935 ‘an impressive event at Airmount’ marked Arbor Day in the city. The Barrack Street Brass and Reed Band led pupils from Mount Sion School to Dominick Place where a platform had been erected for the local clergy, Mayor, Town Clerk and Superior of the school. The speeches emphasised the Dáil’s call to promote afforestation as well as the role of trees in beautifying the local surroundings and the links between education and Arbor Day. The trees were then blessed by Mgr. Byrne P.P., one of several Arbor Day events where local clergy officiated. Twenty lime trees supplied by Power’s Nursery, Ballinakill, were planted in the sidewalks and given into the care of a particular boy. Girls took charge of tree planting held at Cappagh Hospital and school in March 1937.

What was claimed in the *Irish Press* to be the largest Arbor Day tree planting scheme

yet undertaken took place in Athy in 1937. The local forester, Mr Timothy McCarthy and school staff, supervised the planting of 400 trees by 140 boys from the Christian Brothers' School. The event was linked with Agricultural Science, a subject on the school's curriculum for the previous three years.

Dundalk Grammar School held an Arbor Day in each year of the scheme. The Headmaster, Rev. A.A. Hanbidge explained that the Government wanted to interest young people in the important work of afforestation, he linked Arbor Day with tree planting in biblical times and contemporary Palestine.

Teachers spoke about various kinds of trees and demonstrated how to plant a tree and spoke of the 'new science' of forestry. In 1938, Messrs Hammond of Shillelagh, Co. Wicklow, supplied the school with oak, fir, beech and *Cupressus*.

Speeches from Arbor Day ceremonies were recorded in the newspapers. In Cahir, Co. Tipperary, a Mr Tarpey, spoke of the worldwide shortage of timber and the monies which left this country to purchase timber. He also said that vacant places in the town planted with trees would be 'worthy of admiration by visitors'. Trees planted the previous year were admired by those present.

In a lengthy speech at Hacketstown, Co. Carlow, in 1935, Mr Cronin B.Sc., urged farmers to plant trees on their own farms on land not suitable for farming, adding it was seldom that 'odd corners' were not suitable for the growth of hardy trees. By planting trees, cattle and crops would be protected from winds and sun, the farm surroundings more picturesque and the products of trees - poles, timber, and firewood available for sale. As reported in the *Nationalist and Leinster Times*, Mr Cronin was brooking no opposition to tree planting.

At Cappaboy Beg school near Bantry, beech, pine, poplar and Sitka spruce were planted on land donated by Mr. John Lehane. Speaking in Irish, the teacher, Mr. Vaughan explained the



benefit of tree planting in unsheltered places and gave examples of tree-linked local place names. Those he mentioned were Kealkill, An Chaolchoill - narrow wood; Derryfadda, Doire Fada - long oak wood; Cullinagh, Cuilleannach - Holly. He continued that the children 'would be good citizens if their actions and conduct were inspired by the motto "For the glory of God and the honour of Ireland"'. That the ceremony took place at Cappaboy Beg, ceapach, 'a plot of land' and bui, 'yellow' is neat synchronicity.

Trees for Arbor Days were supplied from state forestry nurseries and from commercial nurseries, namely Scot's pine, Corsican pine, Austrian pine, Lawson cypress, Monterey cypress, Norway spruce, Sitka spruce, oak, beech, lime, poplar, chestnut and sycamore. It was to be some years before there was an emphasis on native tree planting.

Slackening of Interest in Arbor Day

In April 1937 the Minister for Lands, Mr Boland, reported a 'slackening of interest' in the Arbor Day to the Dail. The numbers of schools involved in March 1937 were Munster 234; Leinster 145; Connacht 131; Ulster (3 counties) 45 and Gaeltacht schools 30.

The Arbor Day scheme was reviewed in 1940. Of the 7,000 notices sent to schools, applications were received from 1,524 schools in 1934/1935; 900 schools in 1935/1936; 690 schools in 1936/1937 and 599 schools in 1937/1938. No official figures were given for 1938/39. The comment 'these reductions were not unexpected in view of the limited facilities for planting' was ominous and the *Irish Press* reported that the scheme was suspended. Though in 1940, one school, De La Salle, Dundalk, held an Arbor Day, courtesy of the Urban District Council.

Do any of these tree schemes remain? In 2019, I visited Dundalk Grammar School, and while there are many mature trees in the school grounds, none could be associated with 1930s Arbor Day tree planting.

Ninety years later, speakers at National Tree Week in March, Tree Day in October or the many Easy Treesie days still emphasise the importance of tree planting.

During National Tree Week 2023 Mary Forrest gave the Augustine Henry Lecture organised by the Society of Irish Foresters, on 'Arbor Day in 20th century Ireland'.



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How I fell for a dastardly trick

Journalist PADDY SMITH recounts how he became editor of Crann magazine

IT WAS Joe Barry who tricked me into taking up this little job! This was in 2007 and the story of how it happened is worth repeating here.

Around that time (and for many years before and after), Joe was one of the handful of people who were the driving force behind Crann the organisation. I had got to know him because I was Editor of a monthly farming magazine and he was a contributor, writing a highly entertaining and knowledgeable article for us each month.

It helped considerably that neither of us were (or are) short of opinions about things, including each other's work. Also, both of us were outspoken and, if I may say so, eloquent about things!

When my magazine ceased publication, I moved to a weekly national newspaper as deputy editor. The Editor, Frank Mulrennan, had always been a big fan of Joe's and got him to continue writing his articles – but this time on a weekly basis. Changing from a monthly column to a weekly column was challenging, especially for a busy farmer like Joe, but he proved to be well able for it. And the rest, as they say, is history.

By the way, the 'trick' I mentioned above was a neat one. Joe asked me to draw up a short list of the skills needed to be Editor of Crann Magazine. I duly did so, and thought no more of it, but he got back to me.

"Paddy, do you know who fits this bill?"

"No, Joe. Who?"

"YOU"

And that's how it happened!

In my very first issue (autumn 2007) I wrote a typical quirky Smith piece as my 'First Word' in which the star was a spider! He had run cheekily over my desk as I was writing my Crann material, prompting me to plead with readers to be more

involved in things, to be as active and single-minded as my 8-legged friend.

Said I: "Of all the organisations I know, Crann is one of the most welcoming. It embraces an extraordinary range of opinions and abilities. And it needs more people involved."

I can't say that a stream of people put themselves forward as a result of my plea. But, then, maybe they did. I don't know because I was afraid to check – in case there was absolutely no response!

That point about the range of opinions within Crann is particularly apt. It struck me from the get go that Crann people were able to operate supremely well on the common ground they had with other people rather than falling out over side issues, as members of some other tree organisations had.

Luckily I figured out from Day One that to be a good and successful Editor of Crann Magazine it was, firstly, a wise move to consult Marguerite. A lot!

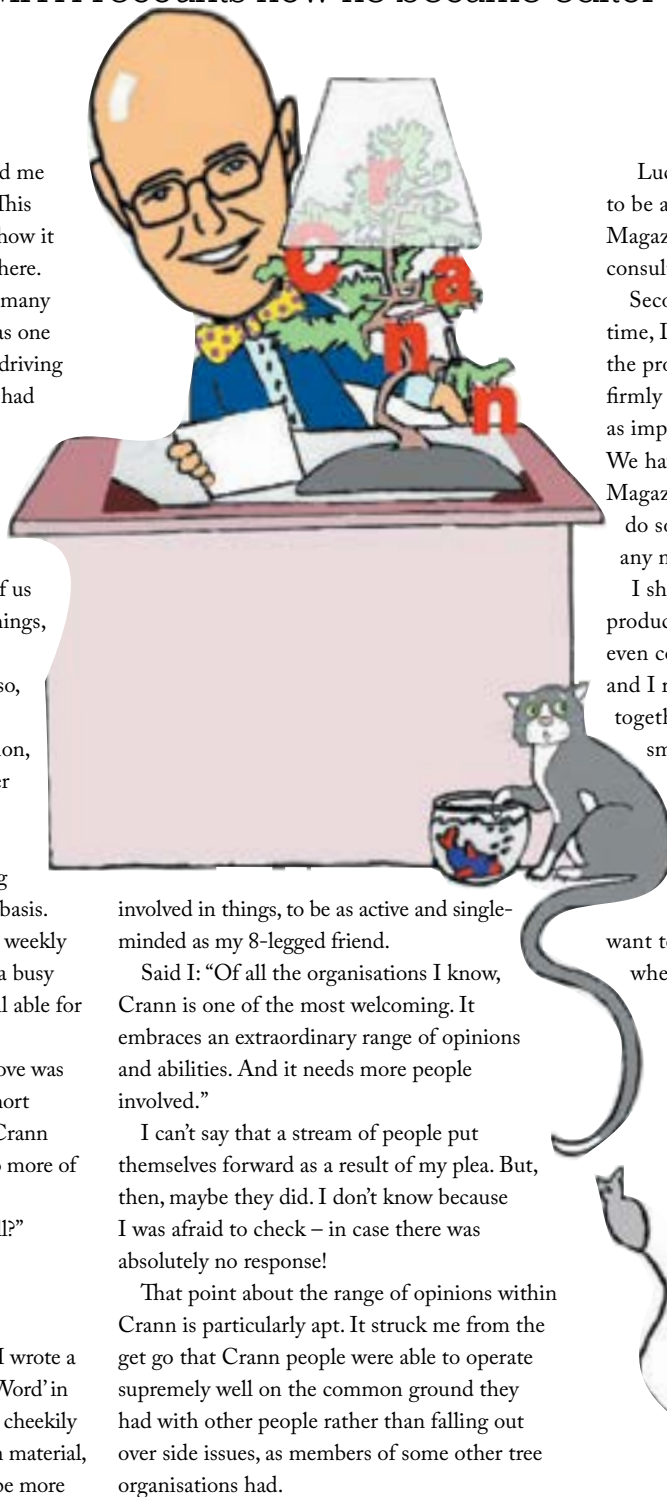
Secondly, our production man at that time, Diarmuid, was an essential element in the process. I, unlike most other journalists, firmly believed that presentation was equally as important as content. Yes, equally, 50-50. We have always had that attitude in Crann Magazine and I'm confident will continue to do so – although I take no part in it any more.

I should explain that some/most production people can be quite grumpy and even contrary, not very flexible, but Diarmuid and I respected each other and worked well together. This, too, helped enormously in the smooth running of the entire operation and, in my opinion, was also reflected in the overall professional look of the magazine.

Don't get me wrong: I can be as contrary as the best of them when I want to be, but deep down I can also be nice when I want to be! (Yes, really!)

In editorial circles, Crann Magazine could easily have been regarded dismissively as 'a trade magazine'. As someone with a wide-ranging variety of experience in print, radio and TV journalism, I was determined that Crann Magazine would rise above such attitudes and be at least three steps over them. I am proud to say that I believe we have achieved this status.

So, thanks Joe and Marguerite and Diarmuid and all the other people who have helped along the way. Let's all take a bow!



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RDS Spring **Agricultural** & Forestry Awards

In June 2023, the RDS Spring Agricultural & Forestry Awards were presented to the following winners:

RDS Sustainability Awards

Sustainable Farming Award
Winner – Norman Dunne, Co. Kildare

Sustainable Agri Start-Up Award
Winner – Woolow, Co. Galway

Sustainable Rural Enterprise Award
Winner – Honestly Farm Kitchens,
Co. Roscommon

Sustainable Rural Innovation Award
Winner – BiaSol, Co. Offaly

Sustainable Rural Social Impact Award
Winner – The Grow Dome Project, Co. Dublin

RDS Forestry Awards

Production Forestry Award
Winner – Desmond and Elaine Drew, Co. Dublin

Teagasc Farm Forestry Award
Winner – Sean Creamer, Co. Leitrim

Community Woodland Award
Winner – Knockranny Wood (Colonels wood),
Co. Mayo



RDS Livestock Awards

Economic Breeding Index (EBI) Award - Best Dairy Cow

Winner – Stamullen Doireann owned by
Brendan Meade, Co. Meath

Euro-Star Index Award - Best Beef Cow
Winner – Gerard Collins, Co. Clare

Dairy Herd Index Award
Winner – Jim White, Co. Tipperary

Beef Herd Index Award
Winner – William McGrath, Co. Cork

LambPlus Breeders Index Award
Winner – William Hutchinson, Co. Kilkenny

These Awards are back in 2024!

For more information:

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