

THE GLENS OF ANTRIM

ISSUE TWELVE WINTER 2016/2017

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE HEART OF THE GLENS LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME

Heart of
the Glens

Landscape Partnership Scheme

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CAUSEWAY COAST & GLENS
HERITAGE TRUST



LOTTERY FUNDED



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Welcome to the twelfth issue



We have already had the first frosts of this autumn at the beginning of November and as we write this the weather forecast says the first snow is not far away.

A lot of our big projects have come to fruition over the last few months. Heart of The Glens Landscape Partnership Scheme are excited to announce the opening up of a number of new walking trails at sites in the northern and mid Glens. These sites include Ronan's Way in Glendun, and Fair Head/Benmore along the coast in Carey.

Over the autumn months we held a number of events including surveying heritage, coastal foraging, foraging for food in Cregagh Wood, and storytelling in The Glens. In September we offered a number of training opportunities including dry stone walling with local expert Johnny O'Loan. This course was followed by a three day hedge laying training programme with expert Robert Birtwhistle at the end of November at Eamon Robbin's farm in Glenariff Glen.

In this edition, we have a feature on local farmer Frank McCarry who we have been working with on a number of ventures including dry stone walling, woodland creation and opening up his land to walkers. See page 3.

We have taken the next step in the creation of outdoor learning zones in local Glens primary and secondary schools which involves bringing teachers together to develop shared learning resources for all teachers that will provide guidance and ideas on how they can integrate the use of their outdoor learning zones into their school curriculum.



We have already had the first two meetings in September and November and we will continue to develop this over the next few months.

We will also tell about the various events and heritage training courses we have coming up over the next few months. These will include traditional cooking and bakery and wild harvesting and cookery. See page 8 for more information on some of these.

Traditional Recipe



INGREDIENTS

- 225g/ 2 cups plain all purpose flour
- Pinch of salt
- 50g butter or margarine
- 50g lard, shortening
- 2 tablespoons cold water
- 900g cooking, tart apples peeled, cored and thinly sliced
- 2 whole cloves
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons milk
- Cream or custard for serving



IRISH APPLE PIE

METHOD

1. Mix the flour and salt in a bowl
2. Rub in the butter or margarine and the lard or shortening using your finger tips until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs
3. Add enough cold water to make the dough firm
4. Roll out $\frac{3}{4}$ of the pastry on a lightly floured surface and use to line a 20 cm/ 8 inch pie plate
5. Cover with sliced apples and place in the cloves
6. Sprinkle on the cinnamon and sugar
7. Roll out the remaining pastry and cover the pie moistening the edges to seal
8. Flute (groove) the edges and decorate with the trimmings of the pastry
9. Cut a vent in the top of the pie and brush the top with milk
10. Bake in a pre-heated oven at 200°C (gas mark 6) for about 30 minutes or until the pastry is golden
11. Serve with cream or custard



INCREASING ACCESS TO THE GLENS

Our most important goal in the Landscape Partnership Scheme is to help maintain and develop sustainable communities throughout the Glens. To do this we need to look at all aspects that make up a thriving, healthy community including economic, social, cultural and environmental issues. Over the last two and a half years we have focused on developing as many opportunities within the Glens to strengthen each of these areas. Where possible, The Heart of The Glens LPS and our parent body, Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust, try to develop projects that deliver on multiple fronts. Access to the countryside is one such way of doing this.

Good off-road access can deliver lots of benefits for the people of the Glens. It adds greatly to the tourism package on offer helping retain visitors for longer, which in turn has economic benefits for the whole community. The Glens of Antrim is fast becoming recognised as a major holiday destination, with numbers of tourists increasing each year. Walks, like those listed below, are supported by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Walk NI, Sport NI and Tourism NI, and are sure to play their part in ensuring that local Glens of Antrim tourism businesses continue to thrive. Stunning experiences like a trek up Ronan's Way or a walk across Fairhead are just what many tourists wish to experience. Many local walking groups from throughout Ireland are also seeing The Glens as a destination, with these walks adding a further reason to spend time in this untamed and wonderful landscape.

Access to the countryside also has proven health and well being benefits for locals and it helps strengthen the bonds between the people and their landscape. There are also many other social, cultural and spiritual benefits for the users as well.

To date, and in partnership with the landowners, local community groups, both local Councils, National Trust and other public bodies, we have developed eight new trails with more to come. These have included; natural trails through woodland, meadows and farmland; boardwalks along coastal sand dunes; and access to historic sites. They have consisted of short easy walks in the villages as well as longer more strenuous walks in more rugged landscape. We have several other access projects lined up over the next two years and in the near future will also be looking at mapping and promoting these wonderful new walks.

We would like to thank all our partners who have worked with us to date. Most of all we would like to sincerely thank the landowners, without whose generosity we could not have carried out these projects.

INTERVIEW WITH FRANK MCCARRY

Tell us a bit about the background to your farm business and your partnership with the Heart of The Glens LPS?

I'm managing a sheep hill farm where the terrain is rugged and mostly unimproved. My main hope with working with Heart of the Glens is to put back shelter belts of trees and hedges for the sheep and rebuild stone walls for added shelter.

What do you enjoy most about farming and what are the challenges you see in the future?

I enjoy the outdoors work-style, it's more than outdoors life-style as you're working with the sheep in good weather and more often bad weather. But you're still out in it, trying to improve the ground and keep the sheep healthy. The biggest farming challenge is brexit, the uncertainty and lack of information on what that means makes it impossible to plan farm developments, without knowing what the farm income will look like.

Do you feel there may be opportunities from rural communities in the Glens with regard to access and tourism?

I think that tourism will definitely become a bigger factor in the Glens. That opportunity is there now and will grow in the future. The local community should make sure it makes the most of the opportunity otherwise others will benefit.

What does Benmore/Fairhead mean to you?

I've spent days in my youth going to swim in the Crannog Lake, exploring the crannog, making rafts, walking down to Murlough exploring all the rocks, boulders and caves. Then there was also the hours spent looking the sheep, gathering them off the hill, spreading fertilizer and topping rushes. It's a working environment that has an outstanding view.

Tell us a little of why you agreed to allow access across your land as part of the Fairhead walk?

I think that fair head can help bring tourists into the local community, it's an outstanding area that has potential to draw large numbers of people in, which hopefully the local community can benefit from. Ramblers and climbers are going to try to access the area so it's best that they do so via agreed paths that are council maintained, and signs informing the public of no dogs, as this is still a farming environment that they are accessing.

Was liability an issue for you and how has it been addressed?

Liability was definitely an issue. As part of agreeing access the council has taken on the public liability.





RONAN'S WAY

On Wednesday 12th October, a crowd of people hundreds strong gathered together to celebrate the opening of Ronan's Way. This new trail offers over 8 kilometres across four different loops of scenic off-road walking in the beautiful Glendun. This stunning walk hugs the Glendun River before winding its way through sheep filled pasture and woodland onto beautiful heather moorland. The walk has spectacular views across the countryside and over to Scotland. This fantastic walk that is Ronan's way is a result of the unique partnership between, the owners, the McAuley family and the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust.

The walk is named after Ronan McAuley who tragically passed away earlier this year. This young man had farmed this land along with his father John. Following his passing John and the rest of the family, decided to continue this public access pathway as a memorial to his son.

The celebration included speeches from Maura Hickey, Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council who praised the family for their generosity and dignity saying that in this wild unspoilt place Ronan will always be with us. Mark Glover from Heritage Lottery spoke of how delighted they were to be associated with this project. Caoimhe McAuley spoke of how much this project meant to the family and that they are so proud to share this wonderful farmed site with the community in honour of her brother.



After the speeches, which were held at The National Trust's Glenmona House, everyone then proceeded to a ribbon cutting event and a walk on Ronan's Way.

We would also like to thank, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council and WalkNI who partnered us in this scheme.

The Walk is now open for you to enjoy.

If you would like to find out more about Ronan's Way, contact Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust on 028 2075 2100 or email brian.gaynor@lps.cccght



CREGAGH WOOD

Ronan's Way is the second new public walk created in Glendun in the last two years, the first was of course the woodland walk in Cregagh Wood. This walk has opened a 1km route through this historic mixed wood for the first time thanks to the generosity of the landowner Katy English. This has also allowed us the opportunity to host several events there including walks, talks and training days. In addition to the new access, there is also a new Red Squirrel Hide that allows the public to catch a glimpse and learn more about these wonderful native mammals. Parking for Cregagh Wood is located beside the chapel, about 250m from the entrance.



CULFEIGHTRIN

This short walk (~0.5km) was opened earlier in 2016 and has allowed access for the first time to this hidden, historic gem. Culfeightrin is the ruins of an old church. The church is associated with St Patrick and the local St Fiachra. It has beautiful views across Rathlin and Ballycastle. Thanks to The Casement Family for permitting access.



FAIRHEAD

Fairhead or Benmore, as it is also known, is one of the most iconic and stunning places in the entire country. It has breath-taking views back across the north coast, to Rathlin Island and over to the Mull of Kintyre and the Hebridean islands of Islay and Jura. On a clear day it is hard to imagine a more picturesque place to be. This location is steeped in folklore and has a rich heritage dating back to the first settlers. It is also a working landscape and has been for millennia. Salt panning, coal and iron ore mining have all played their part in this industrial landscape. Today agricultural practices still dominate land use, as they have for millennia.

At the start 2016 we had the opportunity to talk to the different landowners on Fairhead about creating access for locals and visitors alike to enjoy this landscape. The site was fast becoming a honeypot site for climbers and walkers and with its inherent draw, as well as the recent filming of Game of Thrones on the site it is clear the footfall may continue to increase. The response from landowners was very positive. They were glad that we were directing users along marked routes to maximise the public's enjoyment, but also to limit random uncontrolled access through fields which had implications for their stock. Once issues such as liability and specific routes were agreed the project developed quickly from there. Thanks to match funding from our other colleagues at Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust through a European funded project called Drifting Apart*, we could develop essential trail infrastructure to help guide and inform visitors about the landscape. This included stiles, way-marker posts (watch out for the posts that include pull out panels with information about the area) and five interpretation panels, which cover the cultural and natural heritage of the area as well as the folklore surrounding it. A big thanks to the Carey Historical Society and the landowners for their input and partnership.

There are four looped walks of different lengths starting from the two car parks (Fair head Car Park and Coolanlough Car Park) as well as a connection to Murlough Bay Car Park. The walks take you from these car parks up through rough pasture, past the different loughs and along the cliff edge. These walks are a must-do and are now open to the public.

A special thanks goes to the McCarry's, McNeills and McBrides who have generously allowed public access on their lands.

*Drifting Apart is a project aimed at unearthing and strengthening our understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the fascinating and interconnected geological heritage of the Northern Periphery and Arctic region, and its many links to natural, built and cultural heritage.



BACHELORS WALK

In 2014 we helped secure and safeguard this important cultural walk just outside Glenarm. We are now working with Mid and East Antrim Borough Council to improve interpretation on site and link it in with other nearby trails. We are also exploring other new trails around the village. Watch this space....



WATERFOOT ACCESS UPDATE

Anyone who has taken a walk along the beachfront in Waterfoot recently will have noticed the major new works taking place. These are the different proposals developed in the Masterplan for the area in 2015 in partnership with the local community and the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council. There is now a boardwalk stretching from the Beach Café all the way over to 'The Commons' grazing field where we installed boardwalk in the spring of 2015. There are also several trails snaking through the new wildflower meadows on site. Other features included as part of the plans are the new fencing around the existing playground, a new natural play area beside the Beach Café, bike stands, seating and interpretation.



BONAMARGY

We were delighted to partner the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council in the conservation works carried out at Bonamargy in 2015. This is one of the most important historic sites in the Glens and the new works have improved access and interpretation on site for the public.



WATERFOOT VOLUNTEER EVENT

One nice sunny Saturday in early November we were delighted to team up with Glenariff Improvement Group on their Park Fix Volunteer Programme to help plant wildflower plugs into the new meadows along the beachfront in Waterfoot. The fifteen volunteers made light work of the planting (and the tea and sandwiches kindly provided by the Group). These plants, along with the recent wildflower seed sown there (all of which was harvested and grown on locally by volunteers), will enrich the species diversity of these meadows and will hopefully help ensure the conservation of these special but threatened habitats.



TRADITIONAL BAKING & COOKERY TRAINING PROGRAMME

The Glens of Antrim and the wider countryside have a wealth of wholesome traditional dishes. There is a danger that these long cherished recipes are forgotten and not passed on to the younger generation. Thankfully we at the Heart of The Glens LPS are keen to bring these wonderful dishes back into common usage and create a long lasting legacy. We do this by bringing people together with local experts who have this knowledge and are willing to pass it on. In order to ensure these traditions continue to flourish we have organised a training programme on baking and cookery with local expert Edel Healy from Glenariff.

This 6 week training course will teach you how to make various traditional Irish dishes including Irish stew, colcannon, cottage pie and ham hock. As well as a range of traditional desserts such as, apple tarts, bread and butter pudding, etc. We also look forward to learn how to make breads such as barmbrack, soda bread and much more.

The training will take place at St Marys Parish Centre in Cushendall from 7 - 9pm every Monday commencing on Monday 23rd and finishing on Monday 27th February 2017. There will be a small fee of £10 per person, to be paid at the beginning of the course.

If you are interested in attending this training course please get in touch with Laura on 02820752100 or email laura@lps.ccght.org



COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION AT RETREAT CASTLE

We had another fantastic community archaeological excavation at Retreat Castle in Glenballyeamon just outside Cushendall. Our inspiring partners at the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork at Queens University, as always delivered a fantastic scheme. A special thanks to Donal McIlwaine, Francis McCurry and Gerard O'Neill for allowing us access to this magnificent site.

A number of discoveries were made during this excavation including a well-constructed cobbled yard and a number of artefacts associated with the house.

Retreat Castle is a complex of buildings dating to the late eighteenth century. The site was constructed by Captain George Ewing as an "improvement" enterprise but evidently it was one that failed. He had constructed a very fine house and farm, but these became abandoned and ruinous by the early nineteenth century.

The excavation centred on the remains of the house, located in the eastern side of the complex. The director of the excavation, Brian Sloan, gave a presentation on the preliminary results of the excavation on Monday 21st November in at St Marys Parish Centre, Cushendall.

Overall we had over 420 visitors to the excavation during the school visits and community open days. Thanks to all the local primary schools who took part again this year. Hopefully you are all looking forward to next years excavation!



GHOSTS IN THE GLENS STORYTELLING WORKSHOP

What a great turn out for our storytelling event in partnership with Ghost of The Glens Festival.

We had 12 people of all ages join us to share their local ghost stories and learn techniques and skills on how to tell a story. The highlight of the night was an 8-year-old boy telling the group about his favourite ghost story that was passed down through his family. A great spin off from this is that 6 people from those who attended will be meeting every month at Liz Weirs Ballyeamon Barn for storytelling.

FORAGING IN THE GLENS

Always a popular gathering by Glenn White who led locals and visitors from far and wide on a forage trail around Cregagh Wood. A spin off from this will be our wild harvesting and cookery training which will be delivered in the spring time next year. This training will cover the identification of wild foods. Glenn will let us know what is safe to eat and what isn't, the different foods that can be found during each season, the various uses of wild foods and the history and mythology surrounding them. During this training, you will go out on a wild forage walk around a local forest to collect your own wild foods for cooking. The training will finish up with you cooking the wild foods you have collected perhaps making garlic pesto, nettle soup or cordials.



Upcoming Events...

OUR EVENTS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO EVERYONE! TO ENSURE WE HAVE ENOUGH REFRESHMENTS AND EQUIPMENT PLEASE LET US KNOW YOU ARE COMING. REGISTER WITH LAURA@LPS.CCGHT.ORG OR 028 2075 2100. YOU CAN ALSO GET IN TOUCH THROUGH FACEBOOK AND TWITTER. KEEP AN EYE ON OUR SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES AND ALSO OUR WEBSITE HEARTOTHEGLEN.S.ORG FOR FURTHER UPDATES AND UPCOMING EVENTS.

Archaeological (Free Events)

THURSDAY 23RD FEBRUARY
AT THE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE,
CUSHENDALL AT 7 PM

EXCAVATING THE GLENS OF ANTRIM

Join Archaeologist Cormac McSparron from Queens CAF to find out about all the archaeological excavations that have taken place throughout The Glens of Antrim over the years. You will find out about excavations at Doonmore just outside Ballycastle as well as the excavation at Retreat just outside Cushendall.

Biodiversity (Free Events)

THURSDAY 9TH MARCH 2017
AT BALLYCASTLE GOLF CLUB AT 7PM

RESILIENT LANDSCAPES & COMMUNITIES

Join Réamaí Mathers and Brian Gaynor who will be talking about how re-examining our relationship with landscape we can achieve multiple benefits for sustainable farming, tourism, business diversification, wellbeing and biodiversity.

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FIND US ON: FACEBOOK AND TWITTER

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON OUR OTHER EVENTS PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES.



Training

MONDAY 23RD JANUARY –
MONDAY 27TH FEBRUARY
AT ST MARYS PARISH CENTRE,
CUSHENDALL AT 7 – 9PM

TRADITIONAL COOKING & BAKERY

During this 6 week programme local expert Edel Healy will teach you how to cook dishes such as Irish stew and colcannon and bake treats such as apple tarts and traditional breads. Cost £10pp.



FESTIVE FUN

Can you identify the 2 plants associated with Christmas in the photo and find them in the word search below?

O	U	W	V	U	A	E	A	C	I	A	N	L	T	S	I	R
E	A	E	Y	M	L	D	H	G	R	O	D	W	F	H	T	C
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CHRISTMAS WISHES FROM THE HEART OF THE GLENS LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME

All the staff at the Heart of The Glens LPS would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very merry Christmas and a happy new year!

SCOTS PINE
MISTLETOE
SPRUCE
CHRISTMAS WREATH
REINDEER
CINNAMON
FIR
ROBIN



About the Heart of the Glens

The Heart of the Glens Landscape Partnership Scheme is made up of 21 exciting different projects over five years and covers a large area from Ballycastle to Glenarm. This Scheme is focused on and for the benefit of the communities and beautiful landscape of the Glens.

- TO CONSERVE AND ENHANCE THE BUILT, NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE
- TO ENGAGE AND INSPIRE COMMUNITIES
- TO IMPROVE ACCESS AND LEARNING IN THE AREA
- TO OFFER HERITAGE SKILLS AND TRAINING

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