



An Taisce

The National Trust for Ireland

An Taisce Newsletter

Volume 5 Issue 4

Jun 2013

INDEX OF EZINES SINCE NOV 2012

Welcome to An Taisce's June 2013 ezine

Please share widely! We have improved printing from Netscape or Internet Explorer Browsers but it is over 40 pages long - so please print it double sided or 2 pages per sheet.

We have also provided a magnify facility for some images - if a + symbol appears when you roll over an image - click on it and it will magnify.

Full articles

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An Taisce AGM

Saturday 8 June saw a very successful AGM in Kilkenny. The setting was the city's former Bishop's Palace, lovingly restored to become the headquarters of the Heritage Council.

Welcoming An Taisce to the venue, CEO of the Heritage Council, Michael Starrett, stressed the importance of links with local communities and issued a plea to An Taisce members to advocate for the resumption of its heritage grants programme, which has been completely suspended for the first time since its inception in 1997.

In his statement An Taisce Chairman John Harnett thanked volunteers by name, with a special mention for 'Bloomer' volunteers - who helped recruit 150 new members at "Bloom in the Park" the previous weekend - before thanking the President, Board members, and staff.

The Chairman noted that for each additional 1,000 members An Taisce is able to increase its staff complement by one. If returned to office, the Chair plans to focus on securing a membership officer.

The Chairman was duly re-elected, with Attracta Uí Bhroin returned as Vice Chair. James Leahy was re-elected Honorary Secretary while we have a new Treasurer in Peter Howley, who hails from a south Kilkenny farm and now works on financial regulation in Dublin. A big welcome to Peter and a heartfelt thanks to outgoing Treasurer Stephen Ryan who put in many long hours updating An Taisce's accounting procedures.

Returning to raising An Taisce's membership, the AGM heard that the Cork branch is being rejuvenated under

Kevin Connolly while attention will focus on Limerick and Waterford in the coming year.

An Taisce Confers Lifetime Achievement Award on May McClintock

May McClintock, Glendooen, Letterkenny was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award on behalf of An Taisce by Ian Lumley the National Heritage and Planning Officer of An Taisce. The presentation took place at the AGM of the Donegal Association of the Donegal Association of An Taisce in the Station House Hotel, Letterkenny on May 23rd last.

May McClintock has many achievements to her credit.

- She is a well known and respected historian and an active member of the Donegal Historical Society.
- She is particularly renowned for her scholarship of the Derryveagh evictions and for raising a wide awareness of that sad and traumatic time.
- She has written two books on the subject and made numerous contacts with the descendants of the people who were evicted.
- She is a member of the IFA with a keen interest in country matters.

This Lifetime Achievement Award celebrates her membership of An Taisce over the past 42 years.

An Taisce is a voluntary organisation dedicated to the wise use and conservation of our natural wildlife and places as well as our built environment. May was encouraged to join the local association of An Taisce in 1971 by the late Thomasina Kelly of Kiltoty, Letterkenny.

May and Thomasina, as well as the late Antoin Mac Gabhainn, worked together with other members at the time to lay the foundations of one of the most successful and vibrant associations of An Taisce nationally.

"Think global, act local" is a mantra of the conservation movement. It urges people to consider the health and well being of the entire planet and its people and to take action to achieve that goal in their own communities.

May McClintock lives by that maxim. Her achievements as a member and driving force of An Taisce are many.



May McClintock being presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award by Ian Lumley, National Heritage and Planning Officer of An Taisce.

She continues to use her networking and leadership skills to motivate and galvanise people into action. She wrote the History of the Donegal Association of An Taisce. She is a gifted public speaker, no doubt fostered during her teaching and political career, and has given a multitude of formal and impromptu presentations to many and varied organisations and to all age groups.

Her legacy includes the many trees planted in and around Letterkenny over many years including the oak trees planted during the Millennium. The Butterfly Garden beside the Tourism Ireland offices in Letterkenny that were designed, built and maintained by An Taisce are among her more recent successes of An Taisce under her chairmanship. As are the An Taisce Calendars showing the beauties and nature of Donegal.

May and her friends carried out an extensive survey of some 100 gate lodges throughout Co. Donegal – this is due to be published on the web during Heritage Week next August. The survey she led and co-ordinated of the walled gardens in Co. Donegal is being written up in preparation for future publication.

This Lifetime Achievement Award acknowledges May McClintock's many talents and achievements as a dedicated and energetic member of An Taisce over the past 42 years. In presenting this honour her fellow members and friends and the national organisation pay tribute and admiration to her continuing vitality, wit and dedication.

Out of town shopping centres



The current Government proposal for a Planning Regulator that would have only an advisory role does not meet the Mahon Tribunal recommendations and would bring no change to a planning system which allows local authorities to systematically disregard national policy and their own development plans in decision making.

Since the 1963 Act, the Department of Local Government has had a regulatory role in the implementation of the planning system which it has largely failed to exercise.

The last few years have seen the consolidation of an impressive range of strategic planning and transport policies by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, Department of Transport and National Transport Authority. In particular there is now a convergence of national policy favouring urban consolidation, public transport accessible development and reduction of car dependence.

Unfortunately, local authorities have not translated these national policies into practical action, either in the amendment of Development Plans or day to day decisions and the national authorities fail to intervene.

Local Authority Development Plans continue to have detailed planning policies requiring excessive amounts of car parking spaces in urban edge retail, office park and other development. This, combined with the lack of any change provision for out of town parking, is reinforcing inefficient urban sprawl, out of town retail and car dependence.

Local authorities are continuing to approve car based retail developments, the most recent by Cork County Council for a scheme at Ballyvolane, north west of Cork City with 899 car parking spaces, undermining Cork city centre and Blackpool. This was despite objections from Cork City Council.

Decisions are awaited on An Taisce appeals against major extensions to Liffey Valley Shopping Centre in the Dublin South County area and a doubling of the Kildare Retail Village.

The application of outmoded Local Development Plan parking standards for new employment locations is leading to the targets set by Smarter Travel being disregarded. A prime example was the decision granted by Kildare County Council to the Kerry Group for a research campus entered off the M7 near Naas where a target of only 5% non-car use was proposed.

The National Transport Authority, despite being a statutory consultee for major planning applications with transport impact is making vague and ineffective recommendations and following the same failed policy of the Dublin Transport Office.

The National Transport Authority ' *Toolkit for School Travel* ' is not being properly addressed by consultants lodging planning applications for new or expanded schools or local authorities in attaching planning permission conditions. A notable exception was the detailed ' *Mobility Plan* ' put forward by Navan Educate Together.

An Taisce is now contacting school management boards directly with information on the Toolkit to remedy policy failure by local authorities

An Taisce respond to 43 proposals for aquaculture operations in Castlemaine Harbour

The Natural Environment Office recently appealed Minister Simon Coveney's decision to grant licences to two operators (one clam fishery, one Pacific oyster fishery) as part of a wider grant of licences to 43 aquaculture operations in Castlemaine Harbour, Co. Kerry.



Wild irises and Castlemaine Harbour.
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licensed for reuse under this Creative Commons Licence

The harbour is a site of major ecological importance, designated as a Special Area of Conservation under the EU Habitats Directive and a Special Protection Area for birds under the EU Birds Directive. The harbour is designated to protect a range of threatened species and habitats, and is of special conservation interest for the following bird species: Red-throated Diver, Cormorant, Light-bellied Brent Goose, Wigeon, Mallard, Pintail, Scaup, Common Scoter, Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover, Sanderling, Bar-tailed Godwit, Redshank, Greenshank, Turnstone and Chough.

A test-case for Ireland's new aquaculture licensing system

The Minister's decision to grant these 43 licences is effectively a test-case for Ireland's new aquaculture licensing system in EU protected areas, following an adverse judgment of the European Court of Justice in 2007 which found that Ireland "fails to ensure systematically that aquaculture programmes likely to have a significant effect on [Special Protection Areas for birds], either individually or in combination with other projects, are made subject to an appropriate prior assessment."

Prohibitive costs

An Taisce's appeal of these licences raised numerous issues, include: late notification, the prohibitive expense involved in appealing, and non-compliance with the Habitats Directive in granting the 43 licences. To appeal all 43 licences would have cost €6,551.91. If we were to have requested an oral hearing in each case, this would have bumped up the total cost to €9,827.65. In either case this is clearly prohibitively expensive, in breach of Ireland's obligations under the Aarhus Convention. Moreover, we were faced with the baffling circumstance that "In the event that the [Aquaculture Licences Appeals] Board decides not to hold an Oral Hearing the fee [to request an Oral Hearing, of €76.18 per licence] will not be refunded". Again, this is plainly in breach of the Aarhus Convention, and An Taisce has queried this policy's legality as a matter of Irish law.

The Pacific Oyster is an invasive species

Faced with this barrier to accessing justice, our solution was to appeal two key licences - selected on the basis of their scale and impacts – and to raise the cumulative impacts of all 43 permitted operations as part of our appeals.

To give just one example of potential impacts, the multiple oyster businesses which have been permitted in Castlemaine Harbour rely on the Pacific oyster (*Crassostrea gigas*) in place of Ireland's native oyster, on the basis that the former is faster growing and hence a more profitable proposition. However, the Pacific oyster is an invasive species in Irish waters, with recent research revealing that the species is beginning to establish "self-sustaining feral populations" in Ireland. Worryingly, the Pacific oyster recently caused a "spectacular biological invasion" in the protected Wadden Sea in the Netherlands and Germany.

We hope, therefore, that Minister Coveney will return to the drawing board to reconsider these 43 licences in light of the government's legal obligations and the ecological damage which could ensue in Castlemaine Harbour.

An Taisce Green-Schools Ireland celebrate Bike Week 2013



This week, June 17th-21st sees the return of Bike Week, a week-long national celebration of cycling. Green-Schools who are participating, or have completed, the An Taisce Green-Schools Travel theme will be taking part in cycling events across the country as part of their school's **Bike Week** activities.

On Wednesday June 19th we hope to get 5,000 pupils, teachers and parents out of their cars and onto their bikes for **National C.O.W (Cycle On Wednesday) Day**. In addition to taking part in National COW Day, schools will be holding bike repair workshops, cycle training, group cycles, lunchtime cycles, bike parades, talks with professional cyclists, 'Bling Your Bike' sessions and much, much more.

Green-Schools is also organising a Cross Border Cycling Challenge with Travelwise NI and Sustrans NI which will run during BikeWeek. In total 10 schools from the border counties were asked to participate in the event. Our hope is that they all achieve 100 per cent participation on the day. For more information visit <http://www.greenschoolsireland.org/travel/green-schools-bike-week.1500.html>.

Green-Schools News

In May, schools from every corner of the country attended 20 award ceremonies in eight different locations to receive their new Green Flag from An Taisce Green-Schools. This year an amazing **1092 schools received Green Flags**, with 218 of those flags being awarded for the first time. The Green-Schools programme continues

to grow at a remarkable rate with **over 3,700 schools** now registered, representing 93% of all schools in Ireland!

National Walk to School Week 2013 was a great success. We are pleased to announced that we have passed our target of 20,000 people walking to school on National W.O.W (Walk On Wednesday) Day by 11,000 with a total - so far - of 31,000 people leaving their cars at home on May 15th!

Ciara Norton, Research & Communications Officer

An Taisce Environmental Education Unit, 5a Swift's Alley, Francis Street, Dublin 8

Blue Flag Beach



Suggestions for a caption?

Reminder

Please forward articles, reports and general ideas for the eZine to ezine@antaisce.org

Clare Local Association



Anny and Peter Wise recently visited An Taisce properties in Clare and observed considerable changes in both the Burren land and the Weigh House in Gort. On the Burren land, the turlough is beginning to be reeded up which has never happened to this extent before. We plan to do a survey during the Summer and again in the Autumn.

© **Brian T McElherron**

The Gort Weigh House has been damaged both inside and out and we in the process of listing every item that needs repair and renovation. As Manager, Peter Wise has been asked directly by Head Office to deal with this urgent work and it is hoped that it could eventually be used by local people who are very keen to use it as a tourist office.

Dublin Local Association news

Members of the committee are taking a break for the summer, but will still be reacting to situations as they happen. If anyone knows of any local planning issue (anywhere between Howth and Blackrock) that they feel would be helped if An Taisce took a look at it, please contact us and let us know! Just write to dublincityantaisce@gmail.com and give us a little bit of detail about the site. Don't forget your name and membership number.



Meath Local Association.



On July 6 we are having a picnic at Ballindoolin, Edenderry, Co Offaly at 1.00 pm with tour of house and gardens. Then visit to Ballybrittan courtesy of of Rosemarie and Gerry Healy. Overall cost €15.00 per person.

On August 17, Saturday "Miscellany" entertainment at 3.00pm in Higginsbrook Trim. Tea available. €10.00 per person.

On August 18, Sunday Play "The Village Wooing" by GB Shaw at 6.00 pm in Higginsbrook Trim. Performed by Bewleys Cafe Theatre. 17.00 per person. Drinks available.

All members of An Taisce are welcome to all our events.

Contact meath@antaisce.org for further information

Wildlife Information Panel at the Booterstown Nature Reserve



National Biodiversity Week Unveiling of the newly installed Wildlife Information Panel at the Booterstown Nature Reserve Monday May 20th 2013.

On a cloudy cool morning on Monday May 20th a large crowd gathered at the viewing area of Booterstown Nature Reserve to unveil our long awaited Wildlife Information Panel.

Forming a wide circle around the shrouded wildlife sign, Veronica Heywood, Chairperson of Dun Laoghaire An Taisce's Booterstown Marsh Advisory Committee spoke to the assembled crowd. She explained the history of the Nature Reserve, its European status as a protected area for birds, how oil spills in the past had threatened its very existence and how even more seriously, the threat of a six lane highway known as the Eastern Bypass could have destroyed this, the only salt marsh in south Dublin.

Veronica was ably assisted at the unveiling by Joseph Carroll and James Sheridan second class pupils of Willow Park School in Booterstown.

As the sign's cover was removed to reveal the handsome new Wildlife Panel, a loud cheer and universal applause greeted it. The sign will be a permanent source of public information and interest for all those who stop there or

simply pass by.

We greatly appreciate the assistance of Jerry Sinnott and the Dun Laoghaire Parks Department for erecting the sign. The panel contains photographs and information on the most important bird visitors to the Reserve.

Rebecca Jeffares

Dun Laoghaire An Taisce

National Biodiversity Week Art workshop for 2nd Class at Willow Park School



National Biodiversity Week Art workshop for 2nd Class at Willow Park School, Booterstown, Co. Dublin on Wednesday May 22rd 2013.

As a follow up to our biodiversity walks and talks at the Booterstown Nature Reserve and beach on Monday May 20 we held an art workshop for the pupils based on what they had seen and learned two days earlier.

Second class was divided into two groups, headed by Veronica Heywood, Jo Callanan and Rebecca Jeffares. Veronica and one group discussed what birds, insects and plants they had seen on their walk. From this the class began with the boys drawing and colouring wonderful birds set in blue waters while butterflies danced on marsh flowers. Sea shells crabs and other strange sea creatures graced the lovely pictures which will be displayed in the school library and at the end of term class exhibition.

Jo Callanan's with the second group set about making a giant mobile with materials collected from the marsh and beach. An electric drill was needed to pierce holes in the shells; inevitably this was of great interest to the boys who all wanted to use the drill!!! A long tree branch that has seem many years at sea supported hanging columns of razor fish shells, whelks, cockles and mussels. Seaweed added to the texture of the piece. Enthusiastic boys painted the shells flamboyant colours liberally coated with gold glitter. This beautiful art work will be displayed in the school and will recall their day in biodiversity week.

Rebecca Jeffares

Dun Laoghaire An Taisce

The environment at the heart of health and wellbeing



***Photo of Martin
Cormican walking
with a colleague at
NUI Galway***

A new centre at NUI Galway is based on a recognition of the dependence of health on the world around us.

An article by Michelle McDonagh. In the Health/Lifestyle section of the Irish Times 11th June

We benefit much more from clean air, pure water, good food, exercise and strong communities than we do from hospitals, medicines and clinics. Yet discussion of health in this country and others is mostly about the prevention, detection and treatment of disease.

Consultant microbiologist Prof Martin Cormican points out that an overwhelming preoccupation with disease is an expensive and inefficient way to pursue health.

Health is achieved and sustained not through medicine, he observes, but through our interaction with the world around us – air, water and food, the people, the footpaths, the hurling pitches, night clubs and countryside.

"In recent decades, we have seen major improvements in outdoor air quality through control of emissions from coal and motor vehicles, improvements in indoor air quality through changes in cigarette smoking, improvements in water quality through control of discharges into rivers and lakes and we've witnessed important social changes that promote acceptance of diversity in communities," he says.

The new centre for health from environment (CHFE) at NUI Galway, headed up by Cormican, will work to place sustaining health through environmental stewardship at the centre of public policy through teaching, research and advocacy.

The centre is based on a recognition of the dependence of health on the environment and on the concept of health as the most important resource that human society takes from our environment.

Former secretary general of the UN and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, Kofi Anan, noted that one of the main reasons the world faces a global environmental crisis is the belief that we human beings are somehow separate

from the natural world in which we live.

Disease burden

The World Health Organisation defines health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing, and not merely the absence of disease".

From a global perspective, it is estimated that about one-quarter of the global disease burden, and more than one-third of the burden among children, is due to modifiable environmental factors.

Cormican remarks: "When people talk about the environment, it's as if it's to do with red squirrels, endangered snails and coral reefs. It's as if the environment is something divorced from us, as opposed to something that we live in and that is all around us.

"It's the air that we breathe and the communities we live in. If we want to be healthier people with more fulfilled lives, we need to address the whole space in which we all live our lives, not just Killarney National Park. Some would say the environment is 'everything outside myself' and some would go even further to say the environment is 'everything including myself'."

As a consultant microbiologist at University Hospital Galway and professor of bacteriology at NUIG, Cormican admits he is a "hygiene nut" in the hospital and is all about infection control in that setting.

However, he points out that our homes are very different from hospitals and he is critical of the multinational companies who "cynically manipulate our fear of germs" to sell their products.

"We are told there are germs everywhere and we need to buy this or that product that kills 99.9 per cent of all germs, but there is actually very little evidence to show that these products enhance our health and lives.

"Meanwhile, a lot of money is being made out of them and a lot of chemicals are going into the environment. Not only is this obsession unnecessary, taken too far it can be downright harmful. We are persuaded that we need to disinfect our toilets every day but this is totally unnecessary – unless we intend to drink from them. It would do you far more good to hug your child than disinfect your toilet."

It's hugely reassuring to hear a consultant microbiologist admit to having changed a nappy with one hand while eating a sandwich with the other when his kids were younger. "We all share the same bacteria," he says.

"The perception is that we need to go around killing these micro-organisms that are in us and all around us but most do no harm and the planet could not survive without them. The best way to protect ourselves from infection

and illness is to lead a healthy lifestyle – to eat well, take regular exercise and not smoke. A healthy body is the greatest defence against infection."

Import

The Parma Declaration on Environment and Health endorsed by 53 European states in March 2010 represents an important step towards a policy approach that places greater emphasis on the environment. The importance of health from environment is also reflected in the growing emphasis at EU level on the requirement for health impact assessment in addition to a general environmental impact assessment for major policies and projects. Cormican points out that much of the gain in life expectancy over the past 100 years worldwide reflects improvements in stewardship of the physical environment (sanitary disposal of waste, provision of potable water, management of urban air pollution, improved housing road design) and social environment (reduction of poverty, inequality and discrimination) that reflect changes in political, social and economic conditions.

He notes: "Many contemporary health challenges can likewise be addressed through further improvements in management of the environment at national, European and global level.

"Nationally, the ban on indoor smoking of tobacco introduced in March 2004 represented an outstanding example of how public policy and effective public engagement can improve the environment in ways that contribute to improvement in wellbeing and disease prevention. Government policy, over more than 20 years, to control the marketing and sale of bituminous coal in urban areas is another important example."

However at national, EU and global levels, the challenges that remain are formidable. The WHO highlights that "environmental hazards to human health include climate change, stratospheric ozone depletion, changes in ecosystems due to loss of biodiversity, changes in hydrological systems and the supplies of freshwater, land degradation, urbanisation, and stresses on food-producing systems".

Uphill battle

Based in the Ryan Institute at NUIG, the CHFEE involves more than 20 permanent academic members from five schools and is one of a number of such centres in this area emerging across Europe.

Those involved in this work face something of an uphill battle though as Cormican explains: "There's so much money to be made out of things that are supposed to make us healthy, whether it's toilet cleaner or tablets.

"We're bombarded with messages that the way to fulfilment, health and purpose in life is to buy stuff. I prescribe medication and, in lots of cases, it's great but in lots of other cases, it's not needed.

"Antibiotics are given in many cases when what's needed is rest and fluids. We have become accustomed to

taking pills for all sorts of things, including unhappiness, and are encouraged by people who make a lot of money out of this. I think the idea of the Green prescription which they are doing in Donegal is a great idea, joining a local walking group, for example, might do you a lot better than taking a tablet for certain ailments."

Dublin off-shore wind farms.

An Taisce has received many enquiries about the proposal to site several hundred wind farms along the east coast: most recently an application for around 200 off from Dublin Bay in the Kish and Bray Banks.



The Natural environment Unit are currently preparing to make a submission based on any potential environmental threats that this may raise. Meanwhile for those who may wish to read more, it is recommended that they access the non technical Environmental Statement, produced by the developers which will outline the features of the project and how the developers intend to mitigate against any negative impacts.

See the An Taisce website [Dublin Off shore windfarms EIS-Non-Tech-Summary.pdf](#)

New Municipal Districts

Following up from the article on Local Government reform in the recent An Taisce magazine we can now forward the Local Electoral Area Boundary Committee Report 2013 which has been published with maps of each county showing the boundaries of the new Municipal Districts.



This can be seen on the An Taisce website **Beware this is 19MB** [Local Governmnet reform boundary commission report June 2013](#) **Beware this is 19MB**

Meanwhile, representatives of the Environmental Pillar of Social Partnership, including An Taisce members, have

met with Minister Hogan and members of the Department drafting the bill to introduce radical changes to our system of government. The primary aim of the Pillar's submission is to ensure that the notion of sustainability, including protection of the environment, is brought into all aspects of the new institutions – currently it is woefully absent.

Access to the countryside.



Robert Dowds T.D.

A new Bill "essential for citizens' and visitors' rights"

The Access to the Countryside Bill which goes before the Dail for debate on Friday morning is an essential first step in winning for Ireland the kind of rights that exist in every other European country, according to Keep Ireland Open, the umbrella group representing outdoor users' interests.

The Bill, which would protect access for walkers to hills, lakes, seashores and national monuments, is being presented by Labour TD Robert Dowds.

"Ireland has the most restrictive access legislation in Europe. This Bill would go some way towards protecting the rights of our own citizens to access our physical heritage. It would also give visitors to Ireland the kind of rights already enjoyed in almost every other European country," said Roger Garland, Chairman of KIO.

"As it is, many visitors are being lured to Ireland under false pretences. They have no legal right to be on most of the country's private lands and there are dozens of places around the country where access is blocked by landowners who know that citizens and visitors have virtually no rights," added Mr Garland.

The Access to the Countryside Bill would give county councils the right to identify land to which the public ought to have a right of access and give them the power to secure this. It would also set up an advisory council to help councils in this work.

"In Scotland, the government introduced a Land Reform Bill 10 years ago which gives the public the right to go almost everywhere other than people's gardens, on crops or environmentally sensitive areas. The result has been a bonanza for Scottish tourism and it is now estimated that public access is worth about £2.7 Billion (approx €3.2 Billion) every year to the Scottish economy," added Mr Garland.

"The same sorts of rights as they enjoy in Scotland exist in most Scandinavian countries. Every other country in Europe, including England and Wales, has a better record than Ireland for recording and protecting public access. No wonder we are missing out on a tourism bonanza. No wonder our own citizens have such an obesity problem, when so much of their own beautiful countryside is closed to them."

The private member's Bill will flush out many TDs who have made noises about public access over the years but have done nothing constructive to bring it about, added Mr Garland. "The reality is that the TDs in Fine Gael and Fianna Fail are too scared of the farming organisations to protect the rights of citizens. Farmers now make up only about 3pc of the population of the Republic, yet their threats to target marginal seats at election time have turned most of our public representatives into cowards. It will be interesting to see how many turn out to support this modest measure to restore that very basic right – access to the countryside – to the 97pc of citizens who are not members of farming organisations."

For further information contact Roger Garland (014934239) or Albert Smith (0868758950).

Note. An Taisce is now a group member of Keep Ireland Open

The 7 most threatened landmarks in Europe.



Buffer zone of the historic centre of Nicosia, Cyprus

The Roman amphitheatre in Durrës in Albania, the buffer zone in the historic centre of Nicosia in Cyprus, Vauban's 17th century fortifications in Briançon in France, the Renaissance monastery of San Benedetto Po in Italy, the 15th century monastery in Setúbal in Portugal, the historic mining landscape of Rosia Montana in Romania and the Armenian church of St. George in Mardin in Turkey have been selected as the 7 most threatened landmarks in Europe.

The announcement was made today by the leading European heritage organization Europa Nostra, together with the European Investment Bank Institute, at a press conference in Athens, on the eve of its 50th Anniversary Congress. These gems of Europe's cultural and natural heritage are in danger, some due to lack of funds or expertise, others due to inadequate planning, neglect, natural disaster or even political conflict. Urgent action is therefore required.

"These monuments and sites were selected not only because they tell a fascinating story about our shared past, anchoring the sense of belonging to a European family, but also because they are highly valuable to the local communities who are strongly engaged in saving them. Rescuing these sites would also act as a catalyst for the social and economic revitalisation of entire cities or areas. This is why Europa Nostra calls upon many public and private partners, at local, national and European levels, to join forces with them to ensure a promising future for the selected sites," stated Plácido Domingo, President of Europa Nostra.

"Investment in heritage conservation contributes to sustainable development and ultimately to growth and employment through its positive impacts on the local and regional economies. Support to heritage conservation therefore falls well within the remit of the European Investment Bank (EIB). The EIB Institute, together with Europa Nostra and associated partners, will undertake the necessary efforts to assess the selected sites and to contribute to the development of realistic action plans, in close cooperation with the national and local public and private entities," added Rémy Jacob, Director General of the EIB and Dean of the EIB Institute.

Europa Nostra and the European Investment Bank Institute, founding partner of 'The 7 Most Endangered' programme, will undertake rescue missions to these heritage sites after the summer. More specifically, experts appointed by the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB), an associate partner, will provide analysis and advice on how funding could be obtained, for example, through European Union funds or, in appropriate cases, loans. The initial rescue action plans will be presented at the European Heritage Policy Conference, organised by Europa Nostra, in Brussels on 5 December 2013.

"For 50 years, Europa Nostra has been active in saving endangered heritage all over Europe, from the ancient site of Delphi in Greece in the early 1980s to the historic city of L'Aquila in Italy in the 2010s. We are proud that this year, for the first time, we have launched an advocacy and operational scheme in partnership with such a prestigious financial institution as the European Investment Bank. Our alliance demonstrates the recognition by the EU Institutions of their responsibility towards safeguarding Europe's cultural heritage, as stated in the Treaty of Lisbon (article 3.3). We expect that 'The 7 Most Endangered' programme will encourage others to support our efforts to rescue and promote the unique heritage of Europe," concluded Denis de Kergorlay, Executive President of Europa Nostra.

The 7 Most Endangered for 2013 were selected by Europa Nostra's Board from the 14 sites shortlisted by an Advisory Panel composed of international experts. In this initial year, civil society organisations and public bodies from 21 European countries submitted 40 nominations. 'The 7 Most Endangered' programme was launched last January, having been inspired by a successful project run by the US National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Nominations for 2014 can be submitted until 1 November 2013 by Europa Nostra's country representations. In Ireland this is An Taisce.

Invite to Street Feast

**THE N.E.C. FARMERS HILL
COMMUNITY GARDEN**

**WOULD LIKE TO INVITE YOU TO
THIS YEARS STREET FEAST**



WHEN: FRIDAY, 21ST JUNE 2013. 12pm-3pm

WHERE: N.E.C. FARMERS HILL COMMUNITY GARDEN
RUTLAND STREET LOWER, DUBLIN 1
FIND US ON FACEBOOK - www.facebook.com/neccomstarden

COME ALONG AND MEET OTHER COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND HAVE SOME FOOD AND FUN. AT THIS YEARS STREET FEAST, THERE WILL BE MUSIC, FACE PAINTING, PANCAKES, BURGERS, WRAPS AND HOT DOGS. ALL YOU HAVE TO BRING IS YOURSELF.

Put simply, Street Feast is a chance to:

- Kickstart a new traditional annual feast day of community celebration.
- Brush off the doom and gloom of the recession.
- Help support community initiatives around the country.
- Celebrate how multi-cultural and diverse Ireland's neighbourhoods have become.

Street Feast will also help us to:

- Meet and find common cause neighbours and local community projects.
- Share a simple, creative, self-organised lunch.
- Pickam our time for locally grown food.
- Feel safer around our communities in the future.

-

eZines for Smartphones & Tablets, eBooks and Printing the eZine

It is estimated that very soon there will be as many viewings of webpages using Smartphones and Tablets as the conventional PC/Laptop and that Smartphones and Tablets will become dominant by 2014.

Recent eZines have been designed to work well on all three, PC, Tablet and Smartphone and are now produced using *"HTML 5 and a Responsive CSS layout"*.

There have been some major changes to webrowsers in recent times and we strongly suggest that you get as new a version of your favourite browser as you can - This does not work well in some earlier browsers - but life is too short to make up for their inadequacies. Please use a recent version.

This allows for different layouts to be used depending on the width of the device - it should 'collapse' to one column on narrow devices and it should be such that you get the 'whole item - text and images' in that column, without having to scroll left/right.

The font-sizes and images are automatically readjusted for the width. You will notice on smaller devices and smartphones that the layout is different in Portrait and Landscape mode - but all the articles are there in both.

In this issue to improve things, we introduce navigation at the article level, with links going to the previous and next article as well as to the index at the top. (This has also been retro-actively introduced to some of the previous eZines).

This has been tested and some Android devices and simulated on iPhones & iPads, but we would like feedback as to how they behave on these. ezine@antaisce.org

Some members have indicated that they like to print the eZine - (resource usage? - paper, ink etc) but you cannot take your laptop into the bath - so we have added pagebreaks so that it should print more tidily - however this

only works in Internet Explorer and Netscape, probably works on Safari & Opera but for reasons only known to them does not work on Chrome.

We have also created the February Edition (and will soon create this edition) as an eBook - links to all eZines are here <http://www.antaisce.ie/Publications/eZines.aspx>. The links to the eBook versions are right at the bottom of the page - Again they work on Android devices and we would also like feedback on those from iPhone & iPad users.

The eZine is hosted on our website and although we send it to you as an email, we encourage you to link off to the website version as soon as you can, because very few email applications handle anything other than very basic webpages. If you have got this far and are still in your email please link to the webversion!

Contact Us

Your views are important to An Taisce. Please don't hesitate to send us any feedback on content, format, etc. of this newsletter, and if there are any topics in particular that you'd like to see covered, we'll do our best to get them in.

You are being sent these eZines because you are a member of An Taisce - should you no longer wish to be sent these, please email

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Your views are important to An Taisce. Please don't hesitate to send us any feedback

Preserving our built and natural heritage for future generations