

LELP NEWSLETTER

Message from Elmarie Swanepoel

Programme Manager

During this winter period the LELP team and our project partners have been extremely busy yet again. With the programme in full swing now and all our projects under way it has been a very busy time with the LELP team delivering fantastic events and training courses and our partners undertaking a wide range of activities to protect, restore and conserve the natural, built and cultural heritage of the Lough Erne area.

Although the rain, rising lough levels and flooding did prevent quite a few of our outdoor volunteer events going ahead, a significant amount of progress was still made with scrub clearance and conservation work, archiving of historic records and artefacts, capturing very important oral histories and folklore and passing on the traditions of the past to the next generation.

A special mention to the Lough Erne Wildfowling Council for receiving a 'highly commended' certificate at the very prestigious Purdey Awards for the breeding wader conservation work on Boa Island. Well done to everyone involved in this very important work!

Also, following a successful first round of the LELP Community Engagement and Farming Fund, a further 8 projects have now been selected. We look forward to working closely with our new project partners on these projects, and our next newsletter will have further details on the new projects.

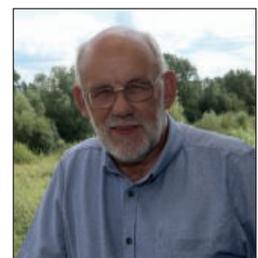
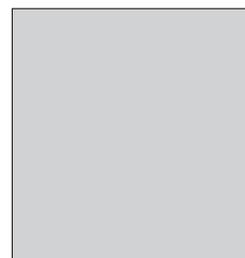


We already know that over the coming months the LELP programme (and our project partners in the heritage sector) will face significant disruption as a result of the Covid19 outbreak. However, we are grateful at this time that our main funder, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, is keen to support the sector during this time (and in the future). To this effect a Heritage Emergency Fund has been launched to provide emergency funding for those most in need.

Significant progress has been made over the last few months with the LELP programme and we are looking forward to regaining momentum once again when we are able to pick up where we left off.

The LELP team will work hard to support our project partners to resume activities in the near future. In the meantime, we hope that everyone will have the opportunity to get out in nature and the beautiful outdoors and enjoy the changing season and the renewal of spring in 2020.

LELP TEAM



L-R: Mary Redmond, Finance & Admin Project Officer Jade Bloomfield, Business Support Apprentice Hazel Long, Heritage Programme Manager Heather Gott, Community Connections & Volunteer Manager Richard Watson, Programme Board Chair

SUCCESS FOR LOUGH ERNE WILDFOWLERS COUNCIL

The Boa Island Breeding Wader Project led by Lough Erne Wildfowlers' Council aims to increase the population of breeding waders through a habitat restoration programme on key sites on the island. Working with the local farming community the project supports the recovery of breeding wader species, formerly common in the area, primarily Snipe, Curlew, Lapwing & Redshank. These birds were once commonplace in the area but in recent time their numbers have decreased annually.

Throughout the year the team have been actively restoring habitat in the area by carrying out scrub clearance and land management. The project covers approximately 80 hectares of land and is professionally monitored each year in order to track the population of these birds. To date the works carried out have been very successful from a starting point of just 5 breeding pairs of Snipe in 2014 to 24 in 2019. This year the site also recorded 5 breeding redshank pairs which had previously disappeared



Members of the Lough Erne Wildfowlers Council receiving Highly Commended Certificate at the Purdey Awards.

from the island. Curlew has also returned to the island which is a clear indicator that the steps taken to restore habitat for these now rare birds is proving hugely successful.

The learning from this project has been shared at two conferences in 2019 - the International Waders Study Group Conference in September 2019 and the Waders for Real Conference in November 2019.

This project's success has recently also been recognised at the

prestigious Purdey Awards for Game and Conservation in London, where the Council received a "highly commended" certificate. The Award's Committee recognised the "far-sighted project which has seen them work with all their stakeholders to deliver benefits for all species driven by a love of wildfowling." This is a fantastic achievement for the Lough Erne Wildfowlers Council and recognition for the work that the council are carrying out on the island

NEW LOUGH SHORE NATURE TRAIL

In February 2020 work began on Stage 1 of a new accessible circular path at Smiths Strand in Lisnaskea with the project being led by Share Discovery Village in partnership with Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and the Lough Erne Landscape Partnership. Funding for the project was provided by the Department of Agriculture Enterprise and Rural Affairs (DAERA), Share Discovery Village, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and LELP.



Cllr Thomas O'Reilly visiting the site of the new pathway

The project was launched in February with Councillor Thomas O'Reilly on site at the beginning of the 1.2km pathway which will begin at Smith Strand parking and picnic area and meander through the adjoining woodland.

The pathway will be fully accessible for all and is due to be completed by Summer 2020. There are many points of interest along the pathway and lots of interesting wildlife and biodiversity to enjoy. Later on in the year we are hoping to also add a wildflower meadow, a giant bird table and a bird hide for all to enjoy the unique wildlife in the area with minimal impact to the habitat. LELP and Share will be working together to further improve the habitat for wildlife in the area and there will be many volunteering opportunities for individuals and organisations – please get in touch with the team if you (your group) would like to help out.

LAUNCH OF THE LELP HERITAGE SKILLS PROGRAMME



Event Speakers showcasing some of the Willow weave baskets produced during training

November saw the formal launch of the Heritage Skills Project hosting a celebratory event 'Connecting with the Skills of the Past' at Enniskillen Museum. The event was very well attended and showcased the heritage of skills from the past once common throughout Fermanagh such as willow weaving, traditional farming, beekeeping, spade making and lace craft.

On the night a range of speakers provided guests with a history of many of the forgotten skills of Fermanagh with many displays of past skills and examples of equipment used. The event followed the first heritage skills training willow weaving workshops, with trainer Tom O'Brien. Tom provided expert tuition to groups from Enniskillen Men's Shed, Lisnaskea Men's Shed and Belleek Women's Shed. The groups produced fabulous baskets but some of the groups also weaved a wild bee skep for use as part of the Fermanagh Beekeepers Association Wild Bee project. Many of the

weavers were in attendance on the night and presented their creations to David Bolton from the Fermanagh Beekeepers Association.

The LELP Heritage Skills Programme will over the coming years aim to engage people in heritage skills such as willow weaving, boat building, thatching and many more. LELP have been hosting Heritage Skills and Training workshops with Lisnaskea and Enniskillen Men's Shed and Belleek Women's Shed some of their finished pieces including baskets and bee skeps which, were on display in the castle.



Guest speaker Mr Tom O'Brien



Speaker Mr Sam Morrow



Representatives from Patterson Spade



Belleek Women's Shed



text text text



text text text

MUMMERS SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

The Mummings Foundation continued their schools programme sharing the heritage of Mumping with the community, by hosting a 10-week programme of workshops in partnership with St Mary's High School, Brollagh. During the workshops pupils learnt about the specific traditions of mumping in Co. Fermanagh and the associated cultures of their local community through an oral history project involving their family and community members. The final workshop saw pupils showcase their learning by performing a play, similar to those that the Mummings would have performed in the past.



St Mary's Brollagh play cast

The Foundation also continue to encourage people to take up traditional skills associated with the tradition of Mumping. A straw craft mask making workshop was hosted at Halloween with two fully booked classes. With attendees from all ages the room was filled with laughter, fun and creativity and some amazing masks were constructed.



Halloween Straw craft Workshop

HISTORIES AND FOLKLORE



Representatives from CDDA, Waterways Ireland and LELP undertaking a site visit to Devenish Island

As part of the Waterways Ireland Spiritual Trail project the Centre for Data Digitisation and Analysis (CDDA) at Queen's University, Belfast were awarded the tender for the collation of archives and histories for specific sites on and around Lough Erne. For this project eleven sites have been identified due to their Early-Medieval and Medieval importance, particularly their religious and cultural significance in relation to the lives of some of Ireland's early saints including St Columbanus, St Sinell, St Molaise, St Ronan, and St Ninnidh. with the project aiming to establish a trail of the hallowed history. These sites include Devenish Island, White Island (North), Davy's Island, Inishmacsaint, Caldragh (Boa Island), Cleenish, St. Ronan's Aghalurcher, Galloon, Killadeas, Derryvullen and Tievealough.

As part of this project CDDA in partnership with Waterways Ireland and LELP hosted an event at Waterways Ireland in January to research and collate local stories and folklore connected to these sites. The event provided those in attendance the opportunity to gain an insight into the project and to share their stories and memories of the islands. On the day participants shared some inspiring tales of folklore and knowledge of the islands, much of which would be lost if not collected.

Following on from this day, where 30 oral histories were collected, a further two bespoke roundtable interview sessions were conducted with key local persons and individual interviews were undertaken with Seamas McCanny, the renowned Fermanagh-based folklorist and storyteller, and Joe O'Loughlin, an authority on Tievealough and the Belleek area and author of several books.

This element of the project was supported through funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Department for Communities Historic Environment Division. If you have any specific tales or memories of any of these sites that you would like to share, please get in touch with our Heritage Project Manager, Hazel Long.



Speakers and members of LELP Programme Board at Information Night

RSPB BREEDING WADER CONSERVATION PROJECT

During the winter the RSPB team completed works to restore the habitat for endangered breeding waders on two key islands on Lough Erne. Works on White Island (South) and Trasna Island involved the removal of trees and scrub and the coppicing of hedgerows to provide an ideal habitat (supported by a summer livestock grazing programme) suitable for Curlew and other waders.

As part of the planned works RSPB in partnership with LELP hosted a public information evening in November to provide an insight into RSPB project plans on the islands. Brad Robson, RSPB NI West Area Site Manager provided those in attendance an insight into the works that were due to take place and set out future plans for management of the sites to restore the habitat for these rare birds. This was followed by a fascinating presentation by Amy Burns, RSPB Warden who has been working on Trasna Island, and intrigued by the history of the island carried out her own research to discover the rich histories of the island. This included the famous story of 'Orange Peggy' who lived on the island until 1891, Peggy was in her time a local celebrity with many stories of her time on the island documented.

In the past the curlew would have been commonplace on the islands, it is hoped that the habitat restoration works will ensure that these birds return to the island once again.

EDUCATION FORUM

LELP hosted the inaugural LELP Education Forum; an initiative which is part of the Young Amateur Naturalists Project. The forum aims to bring together natural heritage education providers, teachers and individuals in order to learn from one another and find ways to work in a more collaborative manner going forward. The event was very well attended, with guest speaker Jodie Ann McAneaney, Live Here Love Here Manager, sharing information about the Eco Schools programme of Keep NI Beautiful. The event enabled those working within the natural heritage education sector to share the work that they were carrying out and develop new working partnerships.

NEW EQUIPMENT FOR THE ERNE PADDLERS

The Erne paddlers had an extremely busy season with a great range of activities for people of all abilities and ages to become involved in paddling. With funding through the LELP project, Erne Paddlers were able to purchase 8 new open top canoes and safety equipment. The open top canoes enable the club to provide greater access for all to the Lough and are ideal for group paddles and individuals who are new to the sport. The boats have had frequent use throughout the year and have ensured that the club continue to provide access for the community to the Lough. Throughout the winter months the club have been hosting indoor paddling pool sessions to develop members skills and provide beginners with the opportunity to learn in a safe environment. Canoeing provides a unique way to experience the landscape and heritage of Lough Erne and with a year round programme organised there are lots of ways to become involved in the sport, if you would like further information please contact the office.



Community members enjoying Lough Erne in new open top canoes

TREES FOR BEES CAMPAIGN

In celebration of National Tree Week Fermanagh and Omagh District Council in partnership with LELP began the Trees for Bees campaign with an aim to plant 50 native apple trees in our region, providing a much-needed food source for pollinators.

To start the campaign, a “Trees for Bees” art competition was launched, to design an inspirational sign to be placed at the planted apple groves.

We were overwhelmed with the number and quality of the entrants, with over 580 pupils entering the competition. Judging the competition was extremely difficult but 5 winners were picked with each pupil winning two trees to be planted on the grounds of their school. The winners were:

- Aron Treacy, St Josephs Ps Donagh P6
- Yao Liang, Ballinamallard Ps P4/5
- Nadya Brannigan, Model Ps, Enniskillen P5
- Musfira Tariq, St Fanchea’s College, Enniskillen Year 9
- Mark Donaghey, St Joseph’s College, Enniskillen Year 10

Following the competition, the 1st Inniskillings Cubs and Beavers also joined us to plant 20 trees at the Round O at the first of our apple groves around Enniskillen.



sample text, sample text

Bees and other pollinators need lots of nectar to survive, so by planting heritage apple trees we can help support them and hopefully provide apples for free too! Trees are amazing; they are home to lots of wildlife, help absorb carbon dioxide to combat climate change, reduce flooding and help prevent soil erosion.

Why not get outdoors this year and help plant trees for wildlife? You can do it yourself in your own garden or why not join us at a local park during one of our volunteer days in 2020 to help do your bit.

Presenting winning pupils with their plaque and trees:



Ballinamallard Primary School



St Josephs Secondary School



Enniskillen Model Primary School



sample text, sample text, sample text, sample text, sample text, sample text



ARCHIVE DIGITISATION COMPLETE FOR INNISKILLINGS MUSEUM

It has been an extremely busy year for the staff and volunteers of the Inniskillings Museum, who worked with Queens University Centre for Data Digitisation and Analysis to complete the digitisation of over 15,000 pre 1900 archives. The archives hold a wealth of information with some fascinating stories being uncovered including details of lives of soldiers and documents from key historic events such as the Battle of Waterloo.

The digitisation element of the project has now been completed and the team are now developing the next stage of the project to develop a usable web platform for people to access the archives.



A volunteer at work to prepare key documents for digitisation

LELP NETWORK

The fourth meeting of the LELP Network took place in December with a morning of seminars entitled “Stories of Our Lough”. 7 guest speakers provided presentations on various aspects of Lough Erne heritage including, boating, waterways and island heritage. The event offered organisation representatives and individuals the opportunity to gain a greater understanding of the heritage of Lough Erne and network with others carrying out projects in the area.

The LELP Network continues to grow and offers a platform for those working in the region to come together and work in partnership. If you would like to join the LELP Network, please contact Heather Gott. Network meetings are held on a quarterly basis.



Some of the key speakers attending Stories of Our Lough

VOLUNTEER TRAINING

LOWLAND LEADER TRAINING

As part of the LELP scheme we aim to increase access the Lough and the landscape, as part of this and following a grant from Sport NI and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, LELP held a Mountaineering Ireland 2-day Lowland Leader training course. This course gave participants the skills and knowledge to lead group walking activities in a safe manner. Many of the volunteers will be leading some exciting natural and built heritage walks in the coming months, so make sure you are signed up to receive the LELP online newsletter for further information.



Volunteers attending Lowland Leader Training

LEAVE NO TRACE TRAINING

In partnership with Sport NI and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, we hosted 2 Leave no Trace Awareness Training courses in the Autumn. The first training course provided participants with the knowledge and understanding of the 7 Leave no Trace Principles, which provide education on enjoying outdoor recreation whilst conserving the landscape that surrounds us. Following the awareness course participants undertook a second course, to become Leave no Trace Trainers, who are now able to host Leave no Trace Awareness workshops in the community. By following these key principles, we can encourage people to enjoy the unique landscape that surrounds us with minimal impact, ensuring that we conserve the landscape, habitats and heritage of the region. If you would like to learn more about Leave no Trace or host a workshop, please contact the team.



Volunteers attending Leave No Trace Training

SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

LELP held the first Safeguarding for Adults and Children training course in December as part of the Volunteer Network project. With volunteers from a range of community groups and heritage organisations, the training provides participants with the knowledge and skills to ensure the safety of all participants in events and community activities.



Volunteers completing Safeguarding Training

GET INVOLVED

Over the coming months LELP has lots of opportunities for people to become involved in our projects and events. For further information please contact Heather:

**E: heather.gott@rspb.org.uk or
T: 028 6632 7109**

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

This programme would not be possible without the support of our formal programme partners, our wider network of partners and our funders.

The Lough Erne Landscape Partnership is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, without the support of the National Lottery players across the UK we would not be able to deliver this fantastic scheme.

We also want to acknowledge funding from our programme partners; RSPB, Fermanagh & Omagh District Council, National Trust and Waterways Ireland. Specific funding towards individual projects have also been gratefully received. Current and previous projects have been/are receiving funding support from Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, Sport NI, Public Health Agency (as part of the CLEAR project), Department for Communities - Historic Environment Division, Department of Agriculture Enterprise and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and Live Here Love Here.

UPCOMING EVENTS

All events have been postponed until further notice in light of government guidelines



LOUGH ERNE
LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP