



Beannachtai na Feile Padraig oraibh go léir
Happy St. Patrick's Day

Guimid la shona aoibhinn diar mathracha ar a la spesialta
Happy Mother's Day

NEWSLETTER NO. 351
Volume 12

Marta
(March) 2006

March: Originally first month of the Roman calendar. Named for Mars the Roman god of war, crops and vegetation

Flower: Daffodil

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Dalkey Community Council will take place on Monday, 6th March in Our Lady's Hall, Castle Street, Dalkey at 7.30pm. This meeting is open to the public and every resident of Dalkey is both welcome and invited to attend.

The Monthly meeting of DCC was held on Monday 6th February

.The Chairperson opened the meeting and welcomed two new members Danny Merrity who is sharing Theresa McDonnell's area of Carysfort Villas and Sister Mary T. Delapp who has replaced Peter McNulty as rep. for the St. Vincent de Paul.

Heritage:

The HC has got the necessary finance from DLRCC to run the Living History program for six days during the summer. The all-in DART ticket to Dalkey will commence again. Phase 1 of the restoration of the old graveyard can get under way as the Heritage Office in DLRCC has given a grant for the work to begin. Walks based on the walks in Dalkey will be taking place in Dun Laoghaire. Details can be accessed on www.dlrcoco.ie

Neighbourhood Watch:

An "F" District meeting was held on Tuesday 17th January in the Garda station Dun Laoghaire. It was well attended and among the topics covered were the Garda's commitment to re-invigorate NW and improve communication with the co-ordinators. There will be more public talks one on Road Safety and another on Child Protection and dates will be publicized. The Gardai reminded us that great care should be taken with callers to the door and watch out for rogue traders.

Tidy Towns:

Tidy Towns had a meeting with John Guckian with a view to how DLRCC could support TT. The usual problems of litter and particularly the rear of Eurospar are to be seriously targeted. The heritage signs will be mended and the stonemasons are working on the remaining two for the town.

AOB:

The support for the reinstated **No.8 bus** is very poor. The timetable will be published in the Newsletter. DCC will check out the traffic plans for the junction of Barnhill/Castle Park Road as residents have received information re improvement work to be carried out in the near future. As there was no further business the meeting ended.

Timetable for the No.8 Bus-Parnell Square				
Mon. to Fri			Saturday	Sunday
08.15	14.30	17.20	No Service	No Service
09.20	16.40			
11.00	17.00			
Journey time - 60 approx. mins. From Parnell Square, Ballsbridge, Blackrock, Monkstown Church and terminating in Dalkey (Ulverton Road).				
From Dalkey (Ulverton Road)				
Mon. to Fri			Saturday	Sunday
07.00	10.35	18.25*	No Service	No Service
08.00	12.15			
09.45	15.45			
* - to Ballsbridge				
Journey time - 60 approx. mins. From (Dalkey) Ulverton Road, Castle Park Road, Glenageary Road, Mounttown Road, Carrickbrennan Road, Monkstown Road, Newtown Avenue, Blackrock, Rock Road, Merrion Road, Ballsbridge, Northumberland Road, Mount Street, Clare Street, O'Connell Street				
The Bus Stops on O'Connell Street are located as follows: Northbound: GPO (set down) Southbound: Outside Sony Shop, near Abbey Street junction				

Have you ever considered why spelling is such a difficult part of the English language? The reason for this difficulty is the fact that some basic sounds have many alternative spellings. Sounds are the units that make up words – they are called phonemes. The real key to learning to read is the development of the ability to identify and manipulate these phonemes.

Different letters and combinations of letters have different sounds. The English language, which is phonetically complex, has over 1,120 letter and letter combinations that produce the 44 phonemes or basic sounds of the English language. (Italian, for example, has only 33 combinations for 25 sounds).

The most varied and confusing of these are the A W EE AY IR AIR sounds. Take the “aw” sound which can be by joining the following letters together – paw, bought, taught, pore, board, talk and warm.

Another equally frustrating sound is “ay” as in cage, clay, prey, weigh, straight, reign, train, great, gauge and bouquet.

It's amazing that any of us have mastered the art of spelling at all! So the next time your child doesn't score 10 out of 10 in a spelling test, think back to this article.

Your child can succeed with spelling by trying a number of strategies such as:

1) Learning using sound families – using rhyming patterns or sound families
e.g. AKE – snake, bake, take, shake, etc...

2) Apply the L.S.C.W.C. (Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check) method. This is really useful for poor spellers, particularly, if spelling lists are practised using repetition prior to testing;

3) Check that it looks right. For example, is it a bird? berd? or burd?

4) Use a dictionary for self-checking; and

5) The "Words-in-Words" method. This is quite a successful strategy for both spelling and reading. Look for smaller words inside larger ones to achieve success e.g. another – an + other or together - to+get+her.

To ensure success with spelling, it is therefore necessary to use a wide range of strategies. If one method doesn't work, try another.

The bad news is that there is no magic formula or potion. Being a competent speller takes a lot of determination, the use of various spelling strategies and lots of hard work!

Fiona McCann can be contacted for a free assessment in reading or maths on 202 4777 or 086 858 1312.

Our Lady's Hall

Community drop in centre is open 9am to 5pm (closed for lunch 1-2).

Teas, coffees and biscuits all for 50c. Served 9.30am to 12.15pm and 2.30pm to 4pm. All welcome.

Monday afternoon 2.30pm to 4.30pm: Whist and card games.

Tuesday afternoon 2.30pm to 4.30pm: Senior Citizens, drop in for a few games of bingo, chat and a cuppa.

Wednesday 2.30pm to 4.00pm: Musical Afternoon. Drop in and join the sing-along.

Friday afternoon 2.30pm to 4.00pm: Drop in and enjoy the board games scrabble, monopoly and lots more.

Why sit at home when you could be enjoying and making new friends.

All are welcome and looking forward to seeing new faces soon!

For more information call Bernie or Mary @ 01-285 8655

50th Anniversary of the Dalkey Sea Scouts

The Troop is flourishing at present with some 40 members (boys and girls aged 11-16) under the leadership of James Martin. We also have a Cub Pack (8-11) led by Pdraig O hIleadha, a Beaver Team (6-8) led by Tiggy Hudson, and a Venture Unit (15-19) led by Simon Hall.

We have two ketch-rigged rowing/sailing boats 'Sea Wolf' and 'Shearwater' moored in Bulloch, as well as Mirror dinghies and a fleet of kayaks and playboats, which we trail down to Bulloch on activity days. Activity afloat starts in late May and continues until September. Over the rest of the year there is some canoeing, but also a greater emphasis on activities ashore - hiking, orienteering, hostelling and camping.

We are planning a number of special events to mark our 50th Anniversary in 2006, including a re-union of past members, a special weekend camp, and the Sea Scouts and Ventures will be travelling to the Netherlands to participate in Nawaka, an international Sea Scout Jamboree for over 5,000 participants.

Our Troop is known as the 41st Dublin (St. Patrick's, Dalkey) and also the 3rd Port of Dublin. A Sea Scout Troop had existed in Dalkey for many years from the 1920's to the late 1940's, also known as the 3rd Port, with a distinguished record of successes in Sea Scout competitions. We would like to compile the history from those early years, and so would be glad to hear from any past 3rd Port Sea Scouts. If you can help you might please contact the under-signed.

The current Troop was formed in 1956, and so celebrates its 50th Anniversary this year. Thankfully we have fairly complete records with copies of nearly all the logbooks and members' names over those 50 years. The first meeting took place on Friday 4th May in St. Patrick's Hall on the initiative of the late Canon Desmond Murray. He had served as a naval chaplain and was interested in offering Scouting with a nautical flavour to young people (only boys in those days) in the Dalkey area. He was the first Sea Scout Leader, with a group of six boys.

Towards the end of that year he persuaded the late Michael Stopford to become involved, and he took over as 'Skipper' as the leader was known. Michael was well known in maritime circles and in the Dalkey area, and he brought many boating skills to the Troop in the early years at Bulloch Harbour.

[Were you a Dalkey Sea Scout?](#)

If you were ever a member of the Dalkey Sea Scouts please send us your postal and e-mail addresses so that we

may contact you with full details of this year's special events.

We currently have waiting lists for new members in most age groups except Venture Scouts. If you can help as a leader or supporter, please let us know as we can always use more adult helpers.

As Group Leader, I act as co-ordinator of the Sea Scouts, Cubs, Beavers, Venture Scouts and Parents' Committee. My name is: Brian Meyer, Esker, 42B Barnhill Road, Dalkey. Mobile: (086) 669 6812. E-mail:

brianmeyer@eircom.net

An Inspector Always Knocks Twice

An inspector's visit is part and parcel of life in a primary school. Generally in my time they were always men and their visits were not always seen as the happiest of occasions.

Back in the 1970's and up to quite recent times the front and back doors of the school were opposite each other! Who designed school buildings then? On a windy day one door could not be open at the same time as the other! If they were, there was an almighty bang as both banged closed together and the wall photos rattled back and forth along the corridor. So it was decided to keep the front door locked at all times.

There was an unplanned benefit to this. I occupied the classroom close to the front door so I could see all visitors as they arrived. An inspector came to the front door which was locked and then knocked twice on my window to 'alert' me to his presence. A boy on my nod had already taken off for the other rooms with a warning cry of "Tá an cigire anseo!"

Every teacher has his or her own experience of these visits. On one occasion we had an inspector's child in our school in the 1970's. This man was at the time an assistant chief inspector and lived in Dalkey. He was frequently in the school and visited each teacher on these informal visits. He visited my room and was talking to me as the pupils did some work. Very suddenly he said to me: "take your hands out of your pockets when you're talking to someone older than you " As I reacted to his demands he said: " don't do it quickly as the pupils might notice! " I was now standing facing him with my hands clasped behind my back and he said: "why don't you buy yourself a suit? " I was wearing a jumper and jeans. His whole approach to me and this was the first time I ever met him, was, to let me know he was an important person and I should be aware of this. In further conversation with me he told me that when he retired he was going to buy a little farm in Meath. He never did and died in Dalkey some years ago.

Another teacher who had a large fungus growing near the ceiling of his room because of dampness was expecting aboard of works inspector to investigate. This gentleman arrived at his door and was invited in. Everyone's attention was focused on the fungus when the gentleman announced "I'm an inspector from the Dept. of Education and not a fungus expert

On another occasion an inspector was in the school. As you entered my room there was a step down of about six inches. He was not aware of this and suddenly the door opened and he crashed forward into the room! He looked back at the step as if it was to blame and his humour was not improved! He decided to take my class to demonstrate his method of teaching maths. He took off his short coat which revealed he was wearing a pair of wide red braces. The boys just burst out laughing! He turned to me and said" discipline in this class is not good " .I didn't explain to him the cause of the indiscipline!

All in all, inspectors were helpful and interested but the knock on the window did add a certain buzz to the day!

Seán Ó Gormán

Dalkey Tidy Towns

The Tidy Towns Committee is resuming again after its Christmas break, (nearly as long as Dail Eireann!!) and is hoping to build on last years successes.

We have commissioned the remaining Heritage Town entrance signs, one on Vico Rd and the other on Dalkey Ave and we hope to have them in-situ before the summer and before the judging for the national Tidy Towns Competition. This will also entail the removal of the present brown Dalkey signs at some of the entrance roads into the town. We are grateful for the support of the Community Council and the Parks Department for the final phase of this project, which will further enhance our town.

Work is on going on the memorial bench for Harry Latham and it is hoped to install this at Archbold's Castle in the next month (further details in our next issue).

The Tidy Towns Committee will be resuming its weekly litter patrols during the summer months when we will be returning to the Castle St area and Dillon's Park. We will be publishing more details of this in the newsletter and on our notice board in the Credit Union window, where you can also see photographs of litter black spots around the town. We hope to see more members of the public assisting us to maintain our town in a litter free state. We are planning a major onslaught on the car park at the rear of Eurospar, which as our readers are aware, is a major black spot in terms of the Tidy Towns Competition. Dumping is systematic and wide scale, by both Dalkey residents and visitors to our town. We have been working closely with the Litter Warden and our thanks are due to him for his co-operation, but dumping is a huge problem in many areas of Dalkey and we urge the public to be vigilant and report cases of dumping to the Warden.

Dumping and littering are anti-social habits with consequent health issues that we as residents, so fortunate to be living in such a beautiful area, should take more seriously and have more civic pride. Remember:

BEAUTY DIES WHERE LITTER LIES
June Barnet

Dalkey Senior Citizens Club (over 60's)

This club meets in Our Lady's Hall each Tuesday afternoon from 2.30pm to 4.30pm.

We are continuing the tradition started at least 33 years ago by Mrs. McDonagh and Mrs. Cleary. The club was then situated in a local hotel and transferred to Our Lady's Hall when this venue came on stream about 30m years ago. The late Mrs. Vera Loughran and her committee then headed it. New personnel are now trying to keep this group together. We have a number of dedicated members who enjoy the bingo, tea and chat plus our twice-yearly outings.

We invite the senior citizens of Dalkey of all denominations, nationalities and social classes to join us on a Tuesday afternoon.

Dr. Rose Shields

St Patrick's Dramatic Society Dalkey.

Local drama group St Patrick's Dramatic Society scooped several awards at the Bray One Act Drama Festival in the Mermaid Theatre, Judith Elmes won best producer for directing John Reason's play Death of a Dummy. The Group also won best group, Seymour Cresswell won best actor and Carmel Mc Crea and Yvonne Smith were nominated for best actress and best design.

St Patrick's next production will be an Irish premiere of the award winning comedy by Charlotte Jones. It will be staged in The Town Hall Dalkey from 5th to 8th of April at 8pm. The play is described as a comedy about broken vows, failed hopes and the joys of bee-keeping. It will be directed by Derek Pullen.

Herbal Cures from the Garden - Nettle

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Spring is in the air and hence it's time for a spring clean! One of the best herbs for this is nettles (*Urtica* spp.). The herb strengthens and supports the whole body and has been used traditionally as a spring tonic and detoxifying remedy.

Nettles are classic weeds of cultivation and easily found in most gardens! It is best to use the young leaves in spring or early summer. To harvest nettles gloves may be recommended, otherwise grasp the nettle firmly from below to avoid stinging! The leaves contain a plant chemical known as formic acid which causes the famous itch and nettle rash however formic acid does deteriorates with time, particularly on drying and heating. Therefore the fresh leaves may be used safely to make a tea! To make a tea from the fresh or dried leaves use one teaspoon of nettle per cup of boiling water and leave to infuse for five to ten minutes.

The high nutrient value of this plant is notable and there is no better way to avail of this than to indulge in a bowl of nettle soup. Nettles may also be used as a cooked vegetable and may be juiced! Partly for its nutritional value nettle has been used traditionally to stimulate and enhance the quality of milk production in nursing mothers.

This is one of the most widely applicable plants medicinally and both the aerial parts and root may be used. *Urtica* is from the Latin 'to burn' referring to the needle like stinging-hairs found on the leaves. It may be used topically for conditions such as osteoarthritis by actively stinging around the affected joint. The inflammation, pain and stiffness will subside for 4-8 days. Such "self-flagellation" may seem too heroic for the 21st century but it works! Nettles may also be taken internally, usually in conjunction with other medicinal plants, as an effective treatment for arthritic conditions generally.

It is a specific in treating skin conditions, including eczema and psoriasis, again usually taken with other medicinal plants. It may also be used for other hypersensitivity conditions including asthma and hay fever. Nettle root has been used with great success to treat various prostate conditions and may improve many of the symptoms experienced with these conditions.

Drying, storage and preparation are as recommended for sage in the February edition. Enjoy!
Always consult a doctor or a qualified medical herbalist if a serious medical condition is suspected.

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Nature Corner Bird Watch

Nature Corner

Although our nearest neighbour and comparatively near as the crow flies the UK has a number of species of birds which are very rare if not totally absent in Ireland. These include the Tawny Owl (the owl that makes the classic 'too-wit too-woo' call often heard on TV programmes), Little Owl, Nuthatch, Nightingale, and their three species of woodpecker, Greater Spotted, Lesser Spotted and Green Woodpecker. Some summer migrants like Redstart and Pied Flycatcher are very common in the oak woodlands of Wales but are very rare breeders in Ireland, just a few pairs breeding in old woodlands in Wicklow where they have a very tenuous hold. There are a number of reasons and theories why these birds are absent here. Some, like the Nightingale, have reached the maximum of their migration range in Britain, some like the Tawny Owl are non migrants which rarely move too far from their birthplace. It is believed by some that the Great Spotted Woodpecker did exist in Ireland but became extinct many

thousand of years ago and it is currently the subject of a proposed reintroduction to Ireland. There is a talk on this subject, hosted by Birdwatch Ireland, in the Kingston Hotel in April. Introductions can be controversial and some people have great doubts about this proposal but in this case the woodpecker may have taken matters into its own 'hands'. Great Spotted Woodpeckers have been seen in Wicklow in recent years, one coming regularly to a garden feeder near Laragh another seen in woodland near the Beehive pub. One spent a week in a garden near Killoughter last September and one is currently a regular to feeders in a garden in Howth. The surprising thing about the Killoughter and Howth birds is that they were juveniles, which would suggest they had been born here. A very experienced birdwatcher heard what he suspected was one in Dalkey last January so who knows, they might have found, like many foreign nationals, that Ireland has become a desirable place to live? Fatal Cut Backs Peak nesting time has the misfortune to coincide with the time when many gardeners are out cutting back bushes and hedges and many nests are accidentally exposed or destroyed by hedge trimmers or shears so be careful if you're cutting. Getting down low and looking up at the bush from ground level you have a better chance of seeing a nest within the bush or hedge exposed against the light.

Hair of the dog

If you have a hairy dog (or even a cat I suppose) that needs regular brushing why not leave out some of its hair on branches or hedges where they can be taken by birds to line their nest. Down from old pillows is very acceptable for avian homemakers as well, particularly for Long tailed tits which can use up to two thousand feathers to line their nest. Keep an eye open for early migrants, Wheatears on the coast, Sandwich Terns at sea, Sand Martins, House Martins and Swallows in the air, all regularly seen in March.

Keep a record of your sightings.

Sheltered Housing - Buy or make that nest box you've always planned to put up in your garden. Plans and diagrams for making varieties of nest boxes as well as a selection of boxes are available at Birdwatch HQ, on their website, in leaflets and in many bird books. Find out the best position to place boxes, high enough and out of intense sunlight or prevalent rain. If you are buying one go for the soundest, most basic box with a hole the diameter of an old 20 pence piece (22mms) for Blue Tits and open fronted boxes for Robins. Avoid elaborate boxes with patios and perches. These only provide access for Magpies, cats and other predators. Birds don't perch on the nest where they might attract unwanted attention. There are also boxes available, which look like medieval Swiss churches and traditional Irish thatched cottages, but these would have no appeal to any self-respecting bird!

M. Ryan

Letters to the Editor

J. C. Scargill,
10, Gosworth Park,
Dalkey
Co. Dublin.

Many of our native songbirds are disappearing and some species have disappeared altogether. Many suburban front lawns have been paved to provide parking places for the family car, thus depriving birds of grassed areas where they would normally find worms and insects. Householders can help by putting out food scraps and by installing bird tables and nesting boxes. Our local gardening centres have excellent stocks of the latter items. It would be tragic if our feathered friends were to diminish or perhaps disappear altogether.

Yours faithfully,
J.C. Scargill

Continuation of last month's article 'My Garden' by Philippa Thomas

I, too, have a 'Big Thing' about orchids. They have their own special way of creeping and stealing into your heart. I particularly love the specials, Masdevilla and Pleurothallis, Their exotic gangly, wispy and sometimes 'eerie' shapes and straggleness appeals to me. In the winter when it is cold and wet to be outside. I can play 'doll's house' with my

and sluggishness appeals to me. In the winter when it is cold and wet to be outside, I can play with my various little pots of Orchids.

I have a thing about badly-finished, bare concrete walls and often think they are screaming out loud for be clad with some type of tracery, or beautiful foliage. I occasionally walk our dog up the Flags and noticed recently that there has been some marvellous planting including Hazel, Blackthorn, Bird Cherry Trees, Scots Pine and Birch. How great they will all look next spring and summer. Even the seedheads of the various grasses there look quite spectacular at present.

The garden is truly losing its overall tones of winter rusts and varied browns, Many shrubs and trees are beginning to clothe themselves in all their shades of soft, spring tones of leaf and bud. Fresh, young, green growth is peeping through with great gusto – everywhere. It almost puts me on a ‘high’. Definitely my favourite time of year. What promise, what hope!

Why not add a group/collection of similar, graduating containers around your hall door in an odd number? They can provide the biggest, warmest welcome to all passers by. En masse planting can work brilliantly i.e. a collection of ferns, grasses – variegated, black, gold, curly, and spiky, - whatever suits your taste. I particularly love evergreen ornamental dwarf shrubs in containers such as dwarf Japanese Williamsianium (china) sitting in a large terracotta pot right at our hall door. It is evergreen and hemispherical in shape. It’s young leaves are rounded and shiny, chocolate bronze, which age to dark green above and blue-grey beneath. It literally jumps out at me when I land on our hall door step saying: “Look how beautiful I am, 365 days of the year and my flowers are clusters of deep red in bud, fading to the softest pearly pink”!

Another wizard beauty is Caprosma R. “Country Park Purple” and it costs about €8.95. An excellent coastal plant which looks absolutely terrific in a container (again, evergreen with tiny glossy olive black leaves). Go on, treat yourself instead of that next Petrol Station bunch of ‘colourful’ flowers.

Remember to use good-sized terracotta pots (they are more porous and keep cooler), line with plenty of broken crockery or broken clay pots. Mix some horticultural grit with some John Innes No. 3, some good general-purpose potting compost and a fistful of well-rotted horse manure. The above will help to achieve good results and will require less watering and feeding long-term.

So, whatever space you have, Treasure It!

‘Till next time

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