



The Skipper

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MACKEREL BOOST

Industry welcomes 41% boost in 2020 mackerel quota but challenges remain.



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41% boost in 2020 mackerel quota welcomed but challenges remain



Mackerel

Irish pelagic fishermen have been given a timely and welcome boost with negotiations around next year's mackerel catch providing for a 41% increase in quota for 2020. That said, several challenges remain for the fishery.

The 41% boost for 2020 was confirmed last month by the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Michael Creed TD, following the conclusion of international negotiations in London between the European Union, Norway, and the Faroe Islands on the management of mackerel in the North-East Atlantic.

Minister Creed said: "The international mackerel negotiations for 2020, at which Ireland was a central participant as the second largest EU quota holder, have been finalised today. The parties involved in the negotiations have agreed to a 41% increase in their Mackerel quotas for 2020 in line with the scientific advice."

The Irish quota for 2020 is 78,054 tonnes, which represents an increase of 22,740 on this year's quota of 55,314 tonnes.

Referencing the importance of the boost in the face of the ongoing Brexit uncertainty facing the Irish fleet, Minister Creed said: "In times of

uncertainty, a mackerel quota for Ireland of over 78,000 tonnes is excellent news for our fleets in what is our single most valuable fishery. Irish fishermen will now have a quota worth over €80m directly to our catching sector for 2020."

The agreement comes following the publication of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea's (ICES) 2020 catch advice on October 1st which, based on recent estimates of the spawning stock biomass and high levels of recruitment in the fishery, recommended a TAC of 922,064 tonnes for next year – representing an increase of almost 20% on that offered in May 2019.

The advice offered in May, which came following a reassessment of the stock and the methodology used to assess the stock, was 770,358 tonnes – up from the 318,403 tonnes advised by the scientific body last autumn.

Given that a midterm quota increase had not been forthcoming at the time, Fianna Fáil fisheries spokesperson, Pat the Cope Gallagher had said that based on the catch advice issued by the scientific body this autumn, Ireland's 2020 quota should increase by some 40%. This increase, he

highlighted, would be worth in the region of €30 million at the first point of sale.

Now that an increase has been forthcoming, the development has been welcomed by Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation (KFO) CEO, Seán O'Donoghue who said the coastal states' meeting in London had resulted in a very satisfactory tripartite agreement reached between the EU, Norway and the Faroe Islands.

"Last year, I was extremely critical of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea or ICES and its scientific advice. That criticism was proven 100% accurate since an ICES review on May 15th last provided for an overall figure of 770,358 tonnes for 2019 instead of 318,403 tonnes and now a further increase for 2020 to 922,064 tonnes, a figure which is an incredible increase of almost 190% on the advice it had offered in September of 2018.

"I'm extremely pleased that the Coastal States have taken on board the concerns of the KFO and others, which I have expressed regularly in numerous fora regarding the lack of quality assurance in the ICES assessment process by including a specific written reference to this in

the final document", said Mr O'Donoghue, who also acknowledged the "pivotal role played by Minister Michael Creed and his officials in delivering this favourable outcome."

Referencing the ongoing quota disputes in the fishery, the KFO CEO said he fully agreed with the criticism levelled at the meeting by the EU, Norway and the Faroes at Iceland, Russia and Greenland for their decisions to increase their unilateral quotas for mackerel for 2019.

Mr O'Donoghue highlighted that, in the case of Iceland, it increased from 107,000 tonnes to 140,000 tonnes and as a result, the share of the Icelandic unilateral quota has effectively increased to 21.5% of the overall Total Allowable Catch (TAC).

Since 2014, they have had an average unilateral TAC of 16.5% – well in excess of the amount set aside for the three parties outside the agreement, namely Iceland, Russia and Greenland, he said.

Mr O'Donoghue went on to say "it is unacceptable that Iceland, Russia and Greenland act in such an irresponsible manner and put the sustainability of the healthy mackerel stock in jeopardy."

"An appropriate set of actions must be put in place to stop this continuing," he said.

Challenges for the fishery were also highlighted by fishermen in the South West, where welcome of the boost was more cautious.

Stating the while any increase in any National fishery is always welcomed, Mr Patrick Murphy, CEO ISWFPO, also said that from the perspective of the Directors and Members of the ISWFPO and their reading of the rules of the CFP any uplift should be distributed in an open and transparent manner, in accordance with their licence and authorisation.

Mr Murphy said that under EU Regulation No 1380/2013 Member States are duty-bound to put in place measures to adjust the fishing capacity of their fleet to their fishing opportunities overtime. However, from the perspective of fishermen in the South West this, in Ireland, has not occurred.

On account of this, Mr Murphy highlighted that,

even for boats in the fleet with the same entitlements and methods of fishing, the boost would not be felt evenly across the fleet.

Mr Murphy used the closure of the Celtic Sea Herring fishery as an example, highlighting that some of the fleet involved in that fishery would now be in a position to balance losses from its closure with the mackerel allocation they would receive.

Other boats with the same licence, however, that could not go and fish somewhere else would not be so lucky, he said. And, on account of this, some fishermen would disproportionately suffer any losses, while others would disproportionately reap the rewards from any gains.

This, he said, could only be rectified "by an equal sharing" of that uplift.

On the ongoing quota dispute with Iceland, Mr Murphy also criticised the unilateral moves taken by Iceland and highlighted that the ongoing MSC issues with the fishery drew attention to a fundamental flaw in the MSC – which has now, he said, become an unattainable goal.

"It is no longer about what you or the people who signed up to MSC can do to ensure the stocks they fish are sustainable, it is NOW impossible because if it can't control people outside of the system and their IUU fishing results in the withdrawal of MSC certification then the system is no longer fit for purpose," he said.

Despite revised estimates regarding the health of the North East Atlantic mackerel stock over the past months, the fishery's MSC certification—which was suspended last March—has not been reinstated. One of the reasons cited for the continued suspension has been the ongoing quota disputes in the fishery.

The decision by Iceland and others to increase their mackerel quotas was also raised at last month's Agrifish Council in Luxembourg by Minister Creed, who said: "The recent unilateral actions by Iceland, and later Russia and Greenland, are extremely regrettable and I will continue to work closely with the Commission on possible measures that can be taken in this regard."



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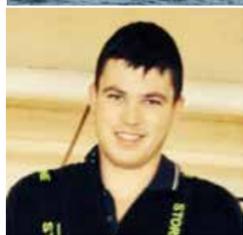
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Dozens of trawlers and local inshore boats assisted in the search for Kodie. Image Andy Gibson



Fishing community mourns loss of young west Cork fisherman, Kodie Healy

A sad month for the fishing community last month, with news of the tragic loss of west Cork fisherman, Kodie Healy.

There were heartbreaking scenes in Dunmanus Bay in the days following the launch of a search for the missing West Cork fisherman, after he failed to return home from a fishing trip on the evening of Wednesday October 9th.

Kodie had gone to sea that morning in his 6m boat and had been due to return to shore at 6pm. When he didn't return by 8.30pm the alarm was raised and an air, sea and shore search launched, involving the Coast Guard, Castletownbere and Baltimore lifeboats and a number of local boats.

Kodie was a young, but very experienced fisherman, who comes from a well-known west Cork fishing family and has fished over the years on various trawlers, sometimes as far north as Rockall.

Sea conditions at the time the search was launched, were described as rough, with a swell of up to two metres.

A massive multi-agency involving the Coast Guard, Navy, RNLI, and An Garda Síochána continued in the days following, coordinated by Valentia.

In an all too familiar fashion, the fishing community also immediately mobilised in the search for the well-known and liked young skipper with dozens of trawlers and local inshore boats taking part in the search.

Volunteers from Schull and Goleen

Coast Guard units also assisted in the search, along with many other volunteers.

After four days of tireless efforts, Kodie's body was found near Carbery Island in the middle of the bay on Sunday October 13th by a team of civilian divers, who were then assisted in the recovery operation by naval divers.

As fishermen from around the coast performed a Guard of Honour, Kodie was laid to rest in Schull Cemetery on the 15th of October.

Everyone here at *The Skipper* would like to express our sincere condolences to Kodie's family, extended family and friends.

RIP

Tepid reactions to the Government's Brexit Budget

The Government's no-deal Brexit budgeting for the fisheries sector, announced last month, has been met with tepid reactions all round.

In his October 8th Budget statement Minister for Finance, Paschal Donohoe announced €110 million would be provided to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine in the event of a no-deal.

"The provision of immediate supports for our beef sector will be a first priority, as will support for our fishing fleet," he said.

"We also want to support food companies to reorient towards new products and markets. To do this, €85 million will be provided for beef farmers, €14 million for fisheries, €6 million for other livestock farmers and the mushroom sector and €5 million for the food and drinks processing industry."

Announcing the Department's 2020 budget, the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Michael Creed stated Budget 2020 aims "to preserve the strong financial supports that assist our Agri-Food sector, while simultaneously providing for the potential of a significant shock to the sector in the guise of a 'No Deal' Brexit."

"Against this backdrop," he said, "my priority has been to support sectoral vulnerabilities that exist".

The provision for the Department's Seafood Programme for the year has increased by €5 million, to a total of €137.8 million. This, according to the Minister's statement, will help fund vital investment in our fishery harbours, most particularly in Killybegs, Howth and Castletownbere, and will allow the Marine Institute to progress the construction of a new €50 million modern research vessel.

The Minister's Budget also included an allocation of €84 million for The Horse and Greyhound Racing Fund.

Outlining the Government's 'No deal' Brexit package Minister Creed said the no-deal contingency funding "to support our most vulnerable sectors" would be activated in "tranches as the full impacts of Brexit emerge."

"While supports cannot fully address the negative effects of a No Deal for the agri food and fisheries sectors, this first tranche of supports will be used to ameliorate the immediate impact on farmers and fishermen, as the full impact of a No Deal Brexit crystallises, and to make some of the adjustments needed to improve resilience for businesses in the face of new market



Killybegs. Image Alan Hennigan

realities," he said.

However, in response to the Government's Brexit Budget, the Chief Executive of the Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation, Séan O'Donoghue said the €14 million fisheries aid package to be distributed in the event of a 'no-deal' Brexit was "welcome but not what's wanted."

Mr O'Donoghue has continuously stated that the fishing industry is the one industry which is "completely and uniquely" exposed to anything other than an orderly transition, deal or no-deal.

"While any funding directed into fisheries would typically be welcomed, this is a horse of a different colour," he said.

"In essence, this is effectively a glorified redundancy payment for many of our members who have put their hearts and souls into developing businesses in the most hazardous and challenging work environment on earth," he said reiterating the magnitude of the threat posed to the industry by a no-deal.

"Moreover, it would be available for a very limited time only thereby ignoring the long-term, grim, commercial ramifications on our industry, of Britain exiting the EU without a deal," he said, stressing the long-term implications a no-deal might have.

In September, highlighting the uncertainties and challenges faced by the industry on account of Brexit and what he sees as a failure to put adequate no-deal contingency plans in place, Pat

the Cope stated preparations for the Marine sector had not given the priority they warrant by Government.

In response to Donohoe's budget speech, Tipperary Independent Mattie McGrath said the Minister for Finance had failed miserably to provide the extra steps needed to take into account the prospect of a no-deal, more generally. Relating to fisheries specifically he said €14 million for fisheries "would hardly look after one harbour and of couple of piers".

Independent, Michael Collins said he had "very serious concerns" the €14 million "is nowhere near what is required." The west Cork T.D also reminded the Government of previous failures to put adequate

compensation packages in place for fishermen or and asked the Government to "remember that year after year and decade after decade, we have handed over every right of our fishermen off our coast."

"Even up to this year while political parties here were falling over themselves to make sure we gave away the zero to six-mile zone, other countries retained their rights. Now we face a difficult position going forward for our fishing sector," he said.

Kerry's Michael Healy Ray said nothing was being done in the budget for fishermen "beyond engaging in small talk."

"There are repairs to be carried out on piers and other infrastructure that are crumbling," he said.

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Commission must stop marginalising Irish fishing communities



Prosperity and Band of Hope. Image: Niall Duffy

Sinn Féin MEP, Matt Carthy has said that the EU nominee for the post of Environment and Oceans Commissioner, Virginijus Sinkevičius from Lithuania has yet to prove that he is up to the job of protecting and supporting fishing communities.

In a hearing with members of the European Parliament last month Mr Sinkevičius defended the removal of reference to fisheries in the new portfolio title.

Speaking from Brussels on October 8th the MEP for the Midlands North West said that he believed that Mr Sinkevičius's replies to questions were too ambiguous which was worrying for the Irish fishing sector. The apparent lack of insight from the new Commissioner, he said, was concerning considering the importance of fisheries to communities across Ireland's coastline.

Carthy stated: "The commissioner designate correctly acknowledges that marine biodiversity is facing a crisis as a result of industrial overfishing, marine litter and climate change.

"However, the choice made by the new Commission to remove fisheries from the title of the portfolio will be seen as a further step in the marginalization of traditional fishing communities.

"Of course, this is more important than titles. Even if we now add the word "fisheries" to the current portfolio the concerns would persist until we see a specific commission portfolio that prioritises fisheries across its three dimensions – social, environmental, economic – and recognises its value to our coastal economy".

Referencing the Brexit related concerns of fishing communities in Ireland Carthy continued: "Fishers from Ireland catch 36 per cent of their total allowable

catch in waters that fall under British jurisdiction. After Brexit, access to these fishing grounds could be blocked to EU vessels, including our own.

"The CFP and quota allocations to the various remaining Member states must therefore be revisited. The quota share of the fish that vessels from Ireland currently catch in waters between Ireland and Britain is of major concern, but the Commissioner-designate has not been reassuring on this matter.

"Ireland, following Brexit, with the largest remaining lucrative fishing grounds in the North Western Waters, will be geographically isolated from Europe. Ireland must be given a special status similar to other periphery regions as set out in the treaties.

"This fact was acknowledged when the European Parliament passed Sinn Féin's amendment to legislation for the new Maritime Fund earlier this year inserting special funding specifically for Ireland's remote coastal areas.

"In order to try to mitigate the damage that the neglect of our rural fishing communities have endured for years and the threat of a no-deal Brexit, the European Commission and Council need to stop marginalising fisheries and endorse the Parliament's position on funding for Ireland. That means addressing the fishing quota and access crisis that Irish fishers will face if Britain leaves with no deal".

NEWS in brief

CREED ANNOUNCES FUNDING TO HELP SEAFOOD ENTERPRISES DEVELOP EXPORT MARKETS

The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Michael Creed, T.D., announced details of a new Scheme to support seafood enterprises to develop export markets and mitigate the potential effects of Brexit, last month.

The Seafood Scaling and New Market Development Scheme is being launched under Ireland's European Maritime and Fisheries Fund Operational Programme 2014-20, co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union. The Scheme is being implemented through a partnership between Bord Iascaigh Mhara and Bord Bia.

Minister Creed made the announcement at a Brexit Preparedness workshop in Cork to help agri-food businesses of all sizes and their logistics and transport companies to take steps now to ensure their goods move efficiently through ports after the UK's departure from the EU.

Details of the Seafood Scaling and New Market Development Scheme and how to apply can be found at www.bim.ie/schemes/

FAREWELL TO MARINE INSTITUTE CEO DR PETER HEFFERNAN

Marine Institute staff, Board members and guests have bid farewell to retiring CEO Dr Peter Heffernan, after 27 years of valued service as Chief Executive Officer of the Institute.

Dr Heffernan has served as the CEO of the Marine Institute since 1993 and has held a highly successful role in building and leading the organisation. The semi-state agency has grown from a staff of one to 230, which now incorporates the Institute's headquarters in Co Galway, the Newport Research Facility in Co Mayo and the Irish Maritime Development Office (IMDO) in Dublin.

Chairman of the Marine Institute Dr John Killeen said, "As CEO, Dr Heffernan has overseen tremendous growth. He has played a fundamental role in developing Ireland's ocean research capacity, increasing collaboration in marine research and innovation in Europe, as well as driving sustainable development across a range of maritime sectors. Dr Heffernan leaves a lasting legacy and has set the Institute on course to become a global leader in ocean knowledge. On behalf of the Board and Marine Institute staff, I thank Dr Heffernan for his dedication, strategic direction and leadership as CEO and wish him all the best as he begins a new voyage.

Dr Heffernan was recently selected as a member of the European Commission's Mission Board for Healthy Oceans, Seas, Coastal and Inland Waters, one of five major research missions of Horizon Europe, the EU Research and Innovation programme (2021 – 2027). Dr Heffernan will be one of 15 experts on the Mission Board which will identify the first possible specific missions on healthy oceans by the end of 2019.

Consumption of seafood in Ireland has trebled since 1961

Consumption of seafood in Ireland has trebled since the 1960s, according to a new Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) report. Today, the average adult in Ireland consumes 22kg each year. Meaning as much seafood is now consumed in Ireland as beef! In 1961 just 7kg was consumed.

Since then, the supply of seafood to the Irish market has seen a five-fold increase, climbing from 20,000 tonnes in 1961 to over 100,000 tonnes in 2013. And while population growth (64% in this period) has been a factor in the increased supply of seafood, higher consumer demand is the main contributor. Current consumption rates place Ireland in line with European Union averages (23kg) and marginally above US and UK rates.

In the 1960s, the majority (80%) of seafood eaten was whitefish with low consumption of pelagic and shellfish species. Some fifty years on, consumption of whitefish accounts for less than half of seafood consumed nationally. Approximately one in four fish species eaten in Ireland today are pelagic (27%) or shellfish (21%) such as tuna, prawns and shrimp.

Speaking of the report, economist Richard Curtin, BIM said:

"Seafood consumption has increased significantly in Ireland over time and this trend has continued since 2013, pushing it above the EU average. Prospects for further growth in the Irish market are good. Demand for organic and sustainably sourced seafood



Fishing trawlers, Killybegs. Pelagic fish species account for one in four fish species consumed in Ireland today.

are among the main trends, especially among younger consumers. Population and economic growth are the main drivers that will help determine the destination of Irish seafood exports in the future."

The increase in seafood consumption rates in Ireland mirrors global trends where a seven-fold increase has taken place, rising from 20 million tonnes in 1961 to 146 million tonnes in 2013, with strong growth occurring in China, Hong Kong and Korea. Growth is stable or increasing marginally in Spain, France, Italy and Ireland, while rates are declining in Portugal, Japan and Ghana.

Regionally, Eastern Asia is the world's

biggest seafood consumer (>45kg per capita) followed by South-eastern Asia (33kg), Southern Europe (29kg), Australia and New Zealand (26kg) and Northern Europe (26kg). Seafood consumption has continually increased in North America, Western Europe and Western Africa. Consumption rates in Russia and Eastern Europe—historically large consumers up until the late 1980's—collapsed after the fall of the Soviet Union, however, since then, they have again increased.

The full report, 'global food consumption patterns of interest to the Irish seafood sector' can be downloaded from the BIM website www.bim.ie.

National Fisheries College of Ireland Schedule 2019



Enhanced Safety Training (Under 15m)

- 13 November, NFC Greencastle
- 05 December, NFC Greencastle
- 10 December, NFC Castletownbere
- 09 December, Cromane, Co. Kerry, contact 087 6837134

Safety Training (3-day)

- 04-06 November, NFC Greencastle
- 05-07 November, Rossaveal, Co. Galway, contact 087 6837134
- 12-14 November, Cromane, Co. Kerry, contact 087 6837134
- 12-14 November, Crosshaven, Co. Cork, contact 087 2334620
- 19-21 November, NFC Castletownbere
- 02-04 December, NFC Greencastle
- 03-05 December, NFC Castletownbere
- 03-05 December, Youghal, Co. Cork, contact 087 2334620
- 10-12 December, Cromane, Co. Kerry, contact 087 6837134

Personal Safety and Social Responsibility STCW-95

- 21 November, NFC Greencastle

Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting (3-day)

- 11-13 November, NFC Greencastle
- 16-18 December, NFC Castletownbere

Advanced Fire Fighting (5-day)

- 25-29 November, NFC Greencastle
- 25-29 November, NFC Castletownbere

Medical First Aid Aboard Ship

- 11-13 December, NFC Castletownbere
- 16-18 December, NFC Greencastle

GMDSS Restricted Operators Certificate

- 09-12 December, Youghal, Co. Cork, contact 087 2334620

GMDSS Short Range Radio Proficiency (Modules 1 & 2)

- 03-05 December, Cromane, Co. Kerry, contact 087 6837134

Surface Supplied Diver (3 weeks)

- 04-29 November, NFC Castletownbere

Passenger Boat Proficiency

- 19-22 November, Cromane, Co. Kerry, contact 087 6837134

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To confirm the mobile training schedule on the west coast please contact 087 6837134 and on the east coast call 087 2334620.

Funding for the course fee and subsistence costs may be available through BIM's Seafood Training Scheme.

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Launch of Ireland's first certified fishmonger qualification hopes to retain and attract talent into industry

Ireland's first accredited fishmonger qualification was launched on October 1st in the fishing port of Howth, Co Dublin. BORD IASCAIGH MHARA (BIM), Ireland's seafood development agency, has developed the Certificate in Fishmonger Skills accredited by nationally and internationally recognised Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI).

Ian Mannix, BIM described how the aim of the training is to retain and attract talent into the industry. He said: "Today's consumer has come to expect their fishmonger to have a broad knowledge of seafood. They want them to be able to advise them when they are at the counter. This new programme will provide solid, fully certified training to anyone working in seafood retailing; practical skills they can then apply in the industry. Moreover, improved skills in the workplace will ultimately lead to better sales and better retention of staff."

The new training combines practical and classroom learning and includes modules on seafood labelling, nutrition and food safety. The programme also includes hands-on demonstrations in fish filleting and culinary skills



Master fishmonger Hal Dawson with Laura Desmond, National Sales Manager at Oceanpath - Julien Behal Photography

and is aimed at existing staff in seafood retailing or those interested in pursuing a career in the industry.

Master fishmonger, Hal Dawson is one of the trainers on the new programme. He has worked in the seafood industry since 1972. He said: "The new course will

provide professionalism within the industry. Having this qualification on your CV will give fishmongers a real advantage."

The value of seafood retail sales in 2018 was €297 million according to the BIM Business of Seafood report. Sales of loose fish experienced the

sharpest increase (+8%) in comparison to pre-packed (+1%). Salmon remains the number one fish species bought by consumers in Ireland. However, there has been a marked increase in demand for lesser-known species owing to a higher awareness of sustainability and provenance.

Laura Desmond, National Sales Manager, Oceanpath, completed the pilot fishmonger skills programme in 2018. She spoke of how the training has given her more experience in grading fish quality and food safety and said: "I started out in sales and engineering and made a switch to the fish business when my mother passed away in 2010. I now manage Reid's Fish Market and Oceanpath.

"I love the freedom of my job. I'm in my car, and get to share my passion and knowledge of seafood to fishmongers working in the different stores. I can go into any of our stores now and ensure we're selling the best quality fish."

The Certificate in Fishmonger Skills is taking place in Dublin and Cork early 2020. To find out more or to request an application form, please email seafoodskills.ie or go to www.bim.ie

Sharon celebrates 20 years with Mara Media

Sharon Boyle, Mara Media Commercial Fishing Manager, today (October 4th 2019) celebrates 20 years with the company, during which time she has helped oversee the continuing success of The Skipper magazine and played an instrumental role in launching three different fishing expos.

"I feel so privileged to have been working in this fantastic job alongside managing director Hugh Bonner for the last 20 years," says Sharon.

She joined the company in 1999 selling adverts for The Skipper and then became directly involved in the launch and running of the Irish Skipper Expo (2005), Scottish Skipper Expo (2011) and English Skipper Expo (2013).

"The best part of the job has been all the amazing people in the fishing industry that I've met, many of whom I now regard as good friends," adds

Sharon.

"By working closely with people within the fishing sector, The Skipper magazine has gone from strength to strength and together we have developed shows that deliver real results for exhibitors and visitors alike. I am very proud to be associated with such a great industry".



Sharon with Hugh Bonner, MD Mara Media and with Bertie Armstrong, SFF at a recent Scottish Skipper Expo in Aberdeen



Celtic Sea Herring Fishery to Remain Closed



Herring

Following exploratory monitoring, the Celtic Sea Herring Management Advisory Committee (CSHMAC) has recommended that the Celtic Sea Herring fishery remains closed for the time being.

A decision was taken at the behest of the industry last month to close the fishery due to the high levels of juvenile fish being landed after the fishery was opened on September 15th.

Following that decision, the CSHMAC put forth a recommendation to the Minister that the situation be monitored via exploratory tows by a small number of vessels so as to decide whether the fishery

should be reopened. It was decided that the results of those tows did not warrant the reopening of the fishery currently.

The closure affects several vessels from ports such as Killybegs, Ros a' Mhíl, Dingle and Castletownbere and could have an impact on smaller vessels operating in the sentinel fishery out of Dunmore this month.

With respect the decision to keep the fishery closed, Mr Patrick Murphy, ISWFPO said that fishermen were leading the closure and doing the right thing for the stocks and fishery by advising the Minister to keep the fishery closed.

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GALLAGHER BROTHERS RECEIVE BRONZE BRAVERY MEDALS FOR RESCUE OF 18 PEOPLE OFF DONEGAL 63 YEARS AGO

By Lorna Siggins

James and Michael or “Mickey Red” Gallagher have been in many situations during a lifetime at sea, but still have vivid memories of an event off the Donegal coast some 63 years ago.

The two men were on their father’s half decker, Irine, and had set out from Rutland island, lying between Burtonport and Arranmore. Weather was good at the time, they were checking lobster pots, and they remembered that their uncle and cousins were also close by – as were several pleasure craft, heading for Roaninish.

The Roaninish skerries had proved to be a particular magnet that summer because a recent shipwreck had become something of a tourist attraction. Five months before, a Belfast-bound coaster named Greenhaven had run aground after its engines failed, and all ten crew on board the ship managed to make it onto rocks.

Sea conditions were too difficult for the RNLi Arranmore lifeboat, which stood off Roaninish throughout a harrowing night. The coaster’s

crew survived with biscuits, gin and whiskey and renditions of Sixteen Tons, Merle Travis’s ode to a Kentucky coal miner.

The following morning, two British Royal Navy helicopters arrived from Eglinton in Derry and winched the merchant seamen aboard in what became the first successful air-sea rescue off the Irish coast. One of the two helicopters subsequently crashed after a breakfast and refuel at Narin strand, but the crew members were unscathed.

Over the following months, the Greenhaven was the talk of the county. That particular morning of August 22nd, 1956, the Gallagher brothers were aware of a punt about 18ft in length arriving into the sound where they were having a cup of tea.

“There were 18 on board the punt, mainly young children, none of them wearing lifejackets,” James Gallagher recalls. One young lad fired a jellyfish at them.

A bit of a breeze was picking up as the punt moved off, and it took wash over the bow. A swift retreat towards the stern by the passengers swamped the outboard engine. Within seconds, all 18 were in the water.

“Our uncle and cousins were close by, we all got onto one boat and we fired ropes and used boathooks to fish them out,” James Gallagher says. His brother, Mickey Red reached out for the hand of a teenage girl around the same age as himself—17—and remembered thinking afterwards that “this is what a death grip feels like”.

“It was the hands I will never forget,” James says. “The hands were the last thing you would see above the surface if you couldn’t get to someone fast enough...”

There was no VHF radio onboard any of the fishing vessels or on a yacht nearby, with three people on board, which had been angling for pollack. The yacht steamed over to help, and two young boys who were still in the water swam towards its stern. However, the yacht’s engine was still in gear, and one of the boys got caught by the propeller and sustained fatal injuries. Without power, the craft was now being blown towards shore.

The Gallagher brothers, who had by then a dozen rescued from the water, managed to get a line on board the yacht and towed it to safety.

“The only option was to

secure the body of the wee boy, who had died instantly in the propeller,” James Gallagher remembered. “We kept counting heads then to be sure we had everyone that we could find... before eventually heading into Portnoo.”

The fishermen rescued 15 in all – 12 from the punt and three from the yacht, which they towed ashore. One of those taken from the water was a 15-year-old girl who had become distraught when she realised her father was missing. The brothers had to restrain her from jumping overboard the Irine to try and locate him.

His name was Desmond Mavitty, a shoe salesman based in Dublin, and his daughter, Jean, would subsequently tell her two children that she had qualified for lifesaving awards only several months before the incident. She had been wearing her father’s overcoat, which had his spectacles in one of the pockets, when the punt went down.

Desmond Mavitty’s body was found by another fisherman on Roaninish three weeks later. Two others who died were George Warren, a solicitor from Enniskillen, who was a friend of the Mavitty family, and Christopher Chambers, seven years old and from Belfast.

As the Gallaghers’ vessel berthed in Portnoo, several local doctors were on the pier but there were no Garda. “Nobody knew...” James explained.

By the time they got home to Rutland Island, it was close to dawn and they remember their mother was beside herself. She had been on her own all day, and had heard a news report on the radio about an incident at Roaninish.

“She really thought it was us...” James says.

The fishermen heard no more after that. The inquest had been held that same night, but they were not notified, and their role was all but forgotten. However, last year, James’s son, Jim Gallagher, long time pelagic fisherman now working in the marine leisure sector, contacted this reporter. He had checked contemporary news reports and found scant mention of the role played by his father, uncle and grandfather.

I subsequently travelled to Burtonport, where the two brothers showed me a framed photo of the Irine, with Jim being the small boy standing on a rock as the vessel lay at anchor.



The brothers told me that the Roaninish event was not the only marine rescue they were involved in. About 15 years later, they were both fishing up near Rathlin O’Beirne in two 65-footers when they spotted a flare. A ship had broken down earlier that day and was awaiting assistance from a tug when the wind shifted, and the master became worried.

The ship’s master turned down the first offer of help from them, but accepted the second after a warning, and was towed into sheltered water in Sheephaven Bay.

“We had a crewman on board who had been with the Royal Navy. He went on board the coaster and gave out stink to the master afterwards,” the brothers said.

Jim Gallagher decided to nominate his father, uncle and late grandfather, also Michael, for State bravery awards, and all three were recognised at the recent award ceremony in Farnleigh House, Phoenix Park, Dublin. Among relatives who travelled east to congratulate them was Robert Morrell, son of Jean Mavitty, who had only learned of the Gallaghers’ role on reading the first newspaper account in The Irish Times.

“My mother remembered being taken out with a boathook, but not much more,” Mr Morrell said. He said that throughout her life, she would talk about the incident, but never knew who to thank. She made a point of teaching Robert and his sister, Jenny, how to swim in the sea off the pier at Portnoo. She died in January 2017, at the age of 75.

“George Warren was a good family friend, and wee Christopher Chambers was put in the charge of grandad as neither of his parents were good at sea and he really wanted to go,” Robert Morrell said.

The Morrells met the Gallaghers in Burtonport several months ago to express their gratitude. “We could tell them that they gave us life,” Robert Morrell says. “Without them, we wouldn’t be here.”

The Gallaghers were among 19 living and one posthumous recipient of 20 State awards this year for 12 instances of bravery – the posthumous award being conferred on their father, Michael.

“I guess it is a bit of recognition after all these years,” James Gallagher says.

“To be honest, we saved a lot of lives at sea, but it was what you did and we thought nothing of it...”

National Bravery awards 2019

The Gallagher brothers received their bronze medals and certificates of bravery at Farnleigh House, Dublin, on October 18th from the Dáil Ceann Comhairle Sean Ó Fearghail on behalf of Comhairle na Mire Gaile – the Deeds of Bravery Council. Comhairle na Mire Gaile was established in 1947 to “provide for suitable recognition by the State of deeds of bravery”, and is chaired by the Ceann Comhairle. Its membership includes the Cathaoirleach of Seanad Éireann, the lord mayors of Dublin and Cork, the Garda Commissioner, the president of the Association of City and County Councils and the chair of the Irish Red Cross.

Also among recipients this year was Gary Kennedy, who was recognised for a rescue conducted 43 years ago. He was the friend of a 14-year-old boy who found himself in difficulties locally in the sea at the Point, Westport, Co Mayo during the summer of 1976.

Mr Kennedy was cycling nearby and saw his friend struggling in the water. After unsuccessfully trying to untangle the ropes of a nearby lifebuoy, he dived into the sea, made his way over to the boy and brought him back to the pier where he made a full recovery.

Two paramedics, James Hennessy and Olive Murphy, from Clonakilty ambulance station in west Cork, were among recipients of certificates of bravery. They took an elderly woman to Bantry Hospital from her home near Ballineen at the height of Storm Ophelia on October 16th, 2017, with a national “status red” wind warning in place.

“The National Bravery Awards give us an opportunity to celebrate the courage of our emergency services and people who risk their own safety to protect their fellow citizens,” Mr Ó Fearghail said at the ceremony.

“It is important to recognise the sacrifices made by people whose selflessness can serve to remind us of our duty of care to one another. It is an honour to present these 20 bravery awards, including the posthumous award, and I thank all recipients for their courage,” he said.

Eight serving Garda, one retired Garda and several paramedics were among those recognised for their valour with six silver and six bronze medals

issued. The full list in order of citation is as follows:

- **Mr Adrian Brennan**, Kilkenny – Certificate of Bravery
- **Retired Garda Desmond Brennan**, Dublin – Certificate of Bravery
- **Garda Pauric Deery**, Sligo – Certificate of Bravery
- **Mr Basil Harte**, Sligo – Certificate of Bravery
- **Mr James Hennessy**, Cork – Certificate of Bravery
- **Ms Olive Murphy**, Cork – Certificate of Bravery
- **Mr Aonghus O’Brian**, Dublin – Certificate of Bravery
- **Mr Michael Hепенstall**, Dublin – Certificate of Bravery
- **Garda Donal Tully**, Dublin – Certificate of Bravery and Bronze Medal
- **Garda David Curriuan**, Dublin – Certificate of Bravery and Bronze Medal
- **Garda Cathal McGeoghan**, Dublin – Certificate of Bravery and Bronze Medal
- **Mr James Gallagher Senior**, Donegal – Certificate of Bravery and Bronze Medal
- **Mr Mickey ‘Red Michael’ Gallagher**, Donegal – Certificate of Bravery and Bronze Medal
- **Mr Michael Gallagher Senior** (RIP), Donegal – Certificate of Bravery and Bronze Medal (Posthumous)
- **Garda Seán Breheny**, Dublin – Certificate of Bravery and Silver Medal
- **Mr Gary Kennedy**, Mayo – Certificate of Bravery and Silver Medal
- **Garda Darren Blackwell**, Dublin – Certificate of Bravery and Silver Medal
- **Sergeant Gavin Coleman**, Dublin – Certificate of Bravery and Silver Medal
- **Garda M.J. Carroll**, Dublin – Certificate of Bravery and Silver Medal
- **Garda Jason Walsh**, Dublin – Certificate of Bravery and Silver Medal

LIFE JACKETS SAVE LIVES



By right little oyster the world should be yours, you're doing that much to save it and provide it with all its cures

By Alec Reid

This article tells the story of a few remarkable oysters doing some incredibly important environmental conservation on the other side of the Atlantic as part of the New York City Billion Oyster Project. It is hoped this article can shed some light on the invaluable contribution oysters provide to the coastal environment as a remarkably effective mollusc filter feeder. Accordingly, this article is meant for the fish, not the farmer, and it serves as an appreciation for all the good work the little oyster does to maintain the pristine coastal environment that both human and fish so greatly rely on.

THE BILLION OYSTER PROJECT

The Billion Oyster Project is an ongoing community effort in New York Harbour to restore the harbour's natural reef system and marine ecology, by placing a billion oysters back into the City's estuary. In the face of the insanely complex challenge of trying to improve water quality and restore marine ecology in an estuary so industrial and concentrated in human activity as New York Harbour, the New Yorkers have identified the reintroduction of oysters as being essential for achieving the desired healthy marine environment.

New Yorkers have done this is because the oyster is an indispensable species for achieving effective nutrient recycling in the coastal environment. An oyster can filter as many as fifty litres of water daily, and in doing this it grazes on microscopic marine algae which exist in huge quantities in the coastal environment. These microscopic plants are the base of the food chain on which all marine life ultimately depend on. Having oysters take the nutrients from the algae and turn it into flesh that can then be consumed by other marine life is essential in ensuring the nutrients from these phytoplankton are effectively recycled into the coastal environment.

The nutrients the oyster doesn't put into his flesh he puts into



Oysters from Meitheal Trá na Rinne Teo. Image: David Clynych Photography

his completely biodegradable calcium carbonate shell and using this resourceful shell the oyster actively engineers the environment that coastal marine communities live in. After the oyster dies, his shell becomes a fixed structure for spawning mollusc bivalves and seaweeds to attach to. Over time, the accumulation of many oyster shells becomes a solid natural reef supporting a diverse and rich community of marine life. Everything the oyster takes from the marine environment he gives back tenfold, and this is why he is so deservedly titled a 'championed crustacean' for sustaining marine ecology and ensuring coastal conservation.

THE IRISH PERSPECTIVE

In New York City, the aptly named Concrete Jungle, they have skyscrapers for forestry, gutters for rivers, drain pipes for waterfalls, subways for caves, and 8.6 million humans living in an area smaller than County Louth. Within this artificial landscape they have managed to find space for a billion oysters, and overtly acknowledge the invaluable contribution the oyster makes to the City's harbour as an indispensable nutrient recycler and natural reef creator. The blunt question to ask now is why in Ireland can we not share the coast

with the oyster in the same way?

Unlike our distant Atlantic neighbours, who are endlessly grateful for the championed crustacean, in Ireland, the oyster is regularly persecuted and routinely insulted. The first Irish assault on the oyster came in the form of gluttony and greed. There once existed native oyster reefs in great quantities on the Irish coast, however, crude overfishing caused the native oyster population to dwindle dangerously low, and the covering of his nurseries in sludge arising from human waste and agricultural activities, effected the native oyster's almost complete extinction.

Some non-profit organisations such as the Irish Native Oyster Fisheries Forum, the Tralee Oyster Fisheries Society and Cuan Beo are actively working to restore and sustain the native oyster reefs in Ireland, however, the sad reality is that for the extensive majority of the Country's coast, oysters exist only as a farmed species on cultivating trestles. And like the native oyster, the farmed oyster is not without his own human challenges. However, it is our politics, not our overindulging appetites that he suffers.

The farmed oyster's residence along the Irish foreshore is repeatedly condemned as a public nuisance. His antagonists argue that his trestle beds require too

much of the shore to house, his coarse shell is too hazardous to the human foot, his black bags are too irritating to the tourist's eye. Sadly, the great affection that exists in the Irish public for sustainable food production and farming, does not extend as far as the regularly ridiculed farmed oyster.

Appreciation for the little oyster in Ireland, be he a wild oyster or a farmed one, is limited. The recovery of the native oyster beds back to their former size is an enormous endeavour and will likely require a substantial amount of time and a serious change in human behaviour to rectify. And against the lingering negative public perspective of the farmed oyster, it is unlikely any significant area of the foreshore will be allocated to him any time soon. Accordingly, the Irish coast is currently suffering a significant oyster deficit.

This bleak reality raises the serious question as to whether that important practice of nutrient recycling in the Irish coastal environment is being achieved? The need for Ireland to ensure proper nutrient recycling in the coastal environment is perhaps even greater than that of the New Yorkers, as Ireland has the added challenge of limiting the amount of pollutants ending up in our coastal waters arising from the substantial agricultural fertilizing

"like the native oyster, the farmed oyster is not without his own human challenges. However, it is our politics, not our overindulging appetites that he suffers."

that the Country engages in. Irish Naturalist Dr Cillian Roden provides the best arguments for why the lack of filter feeding molluscs on the Irish coast is of a particular concern to an agricultural Ireland in his article 'Disrupting what we do not see, human impacts on coastal plankton communities'.

Dr Roden outlines "in the last thirty years, the single greatest change in our understanding of the sea has been the realisation that the sea is not uniform, instead it is divided into sharply defined and separate regions, each with a distinct ecology". This revelation is quite alarming as it disproves the popular belief that nutrient runoff originating from agricultural fertilization and sewage treatment are washed away from the coast and are diluted into the open Atlantic. What in reality occurs, is the nutrients from these activities stay in the immediate coastal environment for a considerable period of time, and in substantial quantities. This excessive nutrient enrichment feeds huge algae blooms, which greatly disproportions nutrient recycling in the coastal environment. It is here where the little oyster with his ravenous hunger for plant-based algae could play a vital role in ensuring these nutrients are naturally recycled back into the marine environment.

The impact of excessive nutrient enrichment of the coastal environment arising from human activities could be significantly reduced if we had dedicated oyster beds in place to control the exponential growth in algae populations through grazing, and to naturally recycle the nutrients absorbed from these algae back into the coastal environment. As Dr Roden notes; "The most radical improvement in the health of our coastal

ecosystem would be the restoration of the once vast populations of bivalve molluscs. The re-introduction of a massive filtering and grazing capacity would return the whole ecosystem, including the algae, to the state that appears to have existed before the destruction of the shellfish beds began. It is at least possible that such a functioning ecosystem could more easily absorb the increased nutrient loading now placed on coastal waters".

If anything is to be learnt from the Billion Oyster Project, it is that the oyster does far more for the world than simply acting as an up-market appetiser. He goes further to provide indispensable services in nutrient recycling, coastal conservation, natural reef creating and algae bloom eliminating. Services that we in Ireland are slow to realise that we cannot afford to do without.

RESPECTING THE GENUINE CONCERNS

This is not to argue that oyster farming is completely without harmful effects on the marine environment. We as an industry have to acknowledge that there are scenarios when oyster farming should rightly be restricted when it can be proven it will have a harmful effect on the coastal environment. The public debate on oyster farming should be one of mutual recognition, where alongside the benefits of oyster farming, we also accept the genuine concerns. Perhaps through this mutual recognition, we can start to change the negative public perception of oyster farming, and foster a public debate on aquaculture based on reasoned arguments, as oppose to the sensationalist claims argued by two vehemently opposed sides.



Rows of trestles tucked in the sheltered, shallow bay in An Rinn. Image: Davind Clynych Photography

Response from Dr Cillian Roden

I agree and don't agree with Mr Reid! That we need more oysters to balance our coastal ecosystems is beyond question. The debate is how we achieve it. The first approach should be the native oyster, for years this was a non starter because of Bonamia disease but something is changing, I am seeing more and more native oysters in Galway Bay and spatting ponds built in the '80s are being dusted down and put back to work, so it is possible that we could rebuild our native oysters. One problem will be persuading people not to overfish once a few tonnes are found. I can see no way of doing this except real no fish zones and no-nonsense about maybe just taking a few!!

That brings me to my basic worry – we lack most of the data we need to know where to place oyster farms or regenerate old beds, we also lack the political or social will to make the hard decisions, just as in climate change and so on. At present, I am appalled at the existing aquaculture licensing system as it first failed to give any licences and now is handing out licences like confetti, without adequate site surveys. To take two examples I know of, in one case it is proposed to allow trellising on an area of native spat fall, in the other to allow trellising on sea grass beds which act as fish nurseries. This is happening because no one is obliged—as one is on land—to do adequate ecological site surveys and inspections before a development proceeds.

There is a role for gigas production, especially if they use triploids to prevent breeding and farms are sited carefully (and the farms are closed down if they dare buy cheap untested spat which introduces disease or alien invaders like the "sea vomit" sea squirt we have in Kinvara!), but do we have the will or budget to do that? If we don't, I suppose we will follow the French with overstocking followed by habitat destruction and introduced diseases and end up doing more harm than good.

The American project is wonderful but the scale needed far exceeds anything a Gigas farm could contribute so the connection between the two approaches isn't very strong. I think we need to separate out ecological objectives of habitat restoration and economic objectives of creating wealth and employment. They need not clash but often do because either debt, or if you want greed, pressures people into decisions which are disastrous, after all it was an oyster farmer who succeeded in bringing Bonamia into Ireland, thereby destroying the role of native oysters in our coastal ecology (how's that for smart business sense?). In the US it is prohibited to use gigas on the east coast in order to protect the Virginia oyster.

What I am getting at is we need very tough enforced laws to allow both ecological restoration of oyster beds and commercial aquaculture. Consequently, I don't really think that a general complaint that people don't like oyster farming works – oyster farming if not regulated will destroy itself and the environment by disease and introduced species, not to mention tonnes of waste plastic! I have no problem with well-sited, well-managed trestle farms with penalties for those which are badly managed, but oyster farming has already introduced the Saragassum weed, Bonamia disease and the sea vomit. Farmers can't be surprised that they encounter opposition. Interestingly, native mussel farming appears to cause very little ecological impact-mainly because it uses a common native species.

Local concern rising regarding proposal to build the world's largest offshore wind farm off Waterford coast

Concern among Waterford's coastal residents, including local fishermen and women, at the sheer scale of the proposed site off the Waterford coast for the potential development of one of the largest offshore windfarms in the world has become increasingly apparent over the past month.

According to the recently formed community group, *Waterford Offshore Wind Awareness*, the application for a survey licence submitted earlier this summer by Energia for the investigation of a proposed site off Heilbhic could, potentially, see the world's largest offshore wind farm built 5km from the shore, running along the entire Waterford coast.

The foreshore survey licence application submitted by Energia indicates the total energy generated from the site, if developed, would be 600MW to 1000MW. Currently, the world's largest offshore wind farm, the Walney Extension (UK), generates 659MW.

The group have also highlighted that, according to Energia's application, in the event the site

is deemed suitable, the developer is proposing to build either 125 x 8MW turbines (195m tall) or 50 x 12MW turbines (260m tall). These, if built, would be the tallest structures in Ireland. For perspective, Croke Park is 44m high & Helvick Head is 50m high. The turbines would stand up to five times taller.

And in line with concerns that have been raised regarding the Energia application by the National Inshore Fishermen's Association and National Inshore Fishermen's Organisation (reported in the September issue of *The Skipper*), the group have highlighted that no consultation with local residents or fishermen was sought by the developer prior to the submission of their survey application.

At 5km the Waterford project will be the closest 600MW+ wind farm to shore in the world.

According to a 2009 EU Environment Agency Report, for an area up to 10km from the coast, the visual impact of wind turbines is significant – so significant, in fact, that in some countries, such as the Netherlands, it is prohibited to

build wind farms within 12nm of the shore. In 2017, the average distance to shore for wind farms in Europe was 41km. Currently, Ireland's only offshore turbines in Arklow stand at 124m high and are 13km from the shore.

Further in line with objections submitted to the application by fishermen, women and their representatives, concerns have also been raised by the group regarding the potential impact such a development, as currently proposed, would have on commercial fishing, an activity that has been central to many Waterford communities for centuries.

Indeed, fishing has been identified by many as the industry most likely to be affected by the development of offshore wind – with concerns regarding displacement of fish and fishermen on account of such developments, especially if unsuitably sited, at the forefront.

The proposed Energia site overlaps significantly with traditional fishing grounds, say local inshore fishermen, though there is little mention of this in the developer's

application. It has also been highlighted that the proposed site overlaps with important migratory routes, spawning and nursery grounds.

According to the existing peer reviewed scientific literature on the topic, locations that overlap with sensitive habitats such as spawning grounds or migration routes, as the application for a site off Heilbhic does, should be avoided where possible with such developments.

The proposed site is also in close proximity to a number of SACs.

The group, who wish to promote inclusive discussion on the development of offshore wind off the Waterford Coast, have also drawn attention to the separate application by SSE Renewables for a similar mega site (800MW) 25km off the Waterford coast.

For more info contact:
watfordoffshorewindawareness@gmail.com
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/watfordoffshorewindaware>
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Achieving a safe and just future for the ocean economy

The economic potential of the oceans is expected to double from US\$1.5 trillion in 2010 to US\$3 trillion by 2030. Yet managing this growth should be undertaken in a safe and just manner caution a team of international researchers.

In a climate of environmental change and financial uncertainty, much attention has been given to the growth of the "Blue Economy" – a term which refers to the sustainable use of ocean and marine resources for economic growth, jobs, and improved livelihoods. Ocean resources are viewed as lucrative areas for

increased investment, including in fisheries, aquaculture, bio-prospecting, renewable energy, oil and gas, and other businesses. Ensuring that socially equitable and sustainable development occurs should be the mandate of governments and industry, maintain an international group of researchers, led by University of British Columbia's (UBC) Nathan Bennett and Rashid Sumaila.

"Coastal countries and small island developing states have the most at stake when it comes to increased economic activities in local waters," said Nathan Bennett, research faculty

member in UBC's Institute for the Oceans and Fisheries and lead author on the paper. "It is important that this not be like a Gold Rush scenario, where unbridled ocean development produces substantial harms for both the marine environment and the wellbeing of the populations who depend on it. In this paper, we provide solutions to proactively address the potential harms produced by ocean development.

The five recommendations in the recently published paper, *Towards a sustainable and equitable blue economy, focus on managing for sustainability, benefit sharing, and*

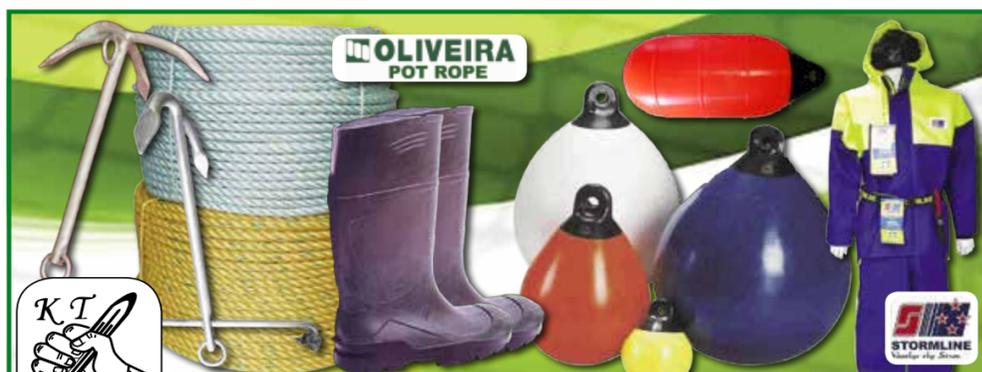
creating inclusive decision-making processes at local, national and international levels:

1. Establish a global coordinating body and develop international guidelines;
2. Ensure national policies and institutions safeguard sustainability;
3. Promote equitable sharing of benefits and minimization of harms;
4. Employ inclusive governance and decision-making processes; and
5. Engage with insights from interdisciplinary ocean science.

"There are currently no set of guidelines, or even an obvious international coordinating body, which focuses on the Blue Economy," said Dr Rashid Sumaila, senior author, professor at UBC's Institute for the Oceans, and Director of the OceanCanada Partnership. "Nothing exists in many nations either".

"The blue economy is already growing. But, we have an opportunity and responsibility to shape future growth so that it is sustainable and equitable," said Bennett. "Including civil society, such as small-scale fishers, women and Indigenous people, in the decision-making and management processes will help to ensure that benefits are shared.

This paper, which was recently published in *Nature Sustainability*, was released ahead of the Our Oceans international conference, which took place in Oslo Norway on October 23-24, 2019, where one of the focal themes was "sustainable blue economy". These topics will also be discussed at the World Ocean Council's Sustainable Ocean Summit being held in Paris, France on November 20-22, 2019.



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Review of the implementation of ILO Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (C188)

By Declan Dixon,
Irish Marine Safety

To improve safety and related issues in the fishing industry, in 2007 the International Labour Organisation (ILO) adopted a new Convention – The Work in Fishing Convention (No.188) and accompanying Recommendation (No. 199). The Convention came into force internationally on the 16th of November 2017 and places emphasis on the need to improve occupational safety and health standards for workers in the fishing sector, with a focus on an evidenced-based, risk management approach when dealing with safety matters.

In January of this year, Thailand became the first Asian country to ratify the Convention and will officially enter the ILO's Work in Fishing Convention (C188) on 30 January 2020, joining 13 other countries including the United Kingdom (where the Convention will enter into force on 11 Jan 2020), France, Norway, and South Africa.

Ireland has yet to ratify the Convention, however, the related EU Directive concerning implementation of the Convention is, according to Marine Notice 42 of 2019, due to be transposed into Irish law by November 15th. Currently, work is progressing on a package of Regulations in order to transpose the Directive.

As part of this process, late last year, Marine Notice No. 42 of 2018: "Consultation on ILO Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (C188) and EU Directive 2017/159 on the implementation of the social partners' agreement on the Work in Fishing Convention" requested submissions on the implementation of the Convention here.

A total of seven responses were received and published on the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport in April of this year, detailing the questions and concerns submitted by the Irish fishing industry and their representatives.

But how could the implementation of C188 effect the owners and operators of fishing vessels in Ireland, once transposed?

In relation to the management of Safety, Health & Welfare it states the responsibilities of fishing vessel owners, skippers and fishers:

1. The fishing vessel owner has the overall responsibility to ensure that the skipper is provided with the necessary resources and facilities to comply with the obligations of this Convention.
2. The skipper has the responsibility for the safety of

the fishers on board and the safe operation of the vessel, including but not limited to the following areas: (a) providing such supervision as will ensure that, as far as possible, fishers perform their work in the best conditions of safety and health; (b) managing the fishers in a manner which respects safety and health, including prevention of fatigue; (c) facilitating onboard occupational safety and health awareness training; and (d) ensuring compliance with safety of navigation, watch-keeping and associated good seamanship standards.

3. The skipper shall not be constrained by the fishing vessel owner from taking any decision which, in the professional judgement of the skipper, is necessary for the safety of the vessel and its safe navigation and safe operation, or the safety of the fishers on board.
4. Fishers shall comply with the lawful orders of the skipper and applicable safety and health measures.

In a review of the costs and benefits of implementing the European sectoral social partners' agreement concerning the implementation of the Work in Fishing Convention, 2007, a number of comments were made relating to Article 6 – minimum age, Articles 7, 8, 9 medical certificates, Article 10 safe manning, Article 14 on fisherman's work agreement (Annex II) and Article 16 requirement to carry the work agreement on board the vessel, Article 26 (a) right to medical treatment ashore, Article 29 and Article 31 social security provisions, and Article 36 risk assessment.

Marine Notice 42 of 2019

And according to Marine Notice 42 of 2019 a number of changes will take effect from 15 November 2019, subject to the finalisation of the draft

Regulations relating to: Minimum Age, Medical Examinations, Manning, Safe manning documents, Hours of work and rest, crew lists, Work agreements, Logbooks, Onboard resolution procedure, Duty to repatriate a fisher, Food and Accommodation, Right to seek Medical Attention, Fishing vessel owner duty to make provision for fisher's health protection and medical care and Provision of Financial Security.

Two areas here are especially worth highlighting (1) the implementation of the medical certificates and (2) Work Agreements. Though there remains much room for clarity, the notice issued states:

Medical Examinations

Fishers on Irish sea-fishing vessels (other than Category C vessels which remain at sea for 72 hours or less, or which are less than 15 metres length overall), will be obliged to have a medical certificate from 15th November 2019. Details of the medical assessment scheme will be set out in a subsequent marine notice.

A fishing vessel owner or master shall not employ or continue to employ a fisher on board a sea-fishing vessel to which the Regulations apply, unless the fisher is the holder of a medical fitness certificate that records the fisher as fit to carry out the work for which he or she is to be employed, and that is in force.

To obtain a medical fitness certificate, a person must be medically examined by an approved doctor to ascertain if he or she is fit, having regard to the medical standards and eyesight and hearing standards specified by the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport. The list of approved doctors and details of the medical assessment scheme which currently applies to seafarers are available in Marine Notice 38 of 2014. This Marine Notice will be updated to reflect the

introduction of a scheme for fishers. For fishers under the age of eighteen, the medical certificate is valid for a period not exceeding one year. For fishers over the age of eighteen, the medical certificate is valid for a period not exceeding two years.

Fisher's Work Agreement

The owner of an Irish sea-fishing vessel, who employs a fisher, shall ensure that an agreement is prepared which provides the fisher with decent work and living conditions. Amongst other things, the Fisher's Work Agreement should include the fisher's family name and other names, date of birth or age, and birthplace; the place at which and date on which the agreement was concluded and the name of the fishing vessel.

A Marine Notice will issue shortly, detailing the format to be used for an agreement and the minimum contents of Fisher's Work Agreement. Annex I of the Directive provides details on the information which should be included in the Fisher's Work Agreement.

ILO-Working Paper No. 315

Also worth noting is, ILO -Working Paper No. 315 - The flexibility clauses of the Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188). This sets out how member states could implement a flexible approach to the article implementation, it states: "The use of "flexibility" and flexibility clauses is not unique to Convention No. 188. Most ILO Conventions contain provisions that allow for progressive implementation of certain requirements, permit exceptions from the material or personal scope of application or afford the possibility of accepting only certain parts of a Convention. These allow for member States to adapt the application of the Convention to national circumstances, as may be necessary, and gradually achieve...".

Eyesight Standards

Category Of Seafarer	Distance Vision (unaided)		Distance Vision (aided)		Near Vision (aided)	Visual Fields	Diplopia	Colour Vision
	One eye	Other eye	One eye	Other eye				
Masters, deck officers' ratings and fishing vessel deck officers required to undertake lookout duties	6/6	6/60	6/6	6/12	N8	Normal fields	No significant condition evident	Ishihara. Confirmation requires Lantern

The maximum fee that may be charged for a full seafarer medical examination (ENG11) and issue of a certificate is €150.00.



The Seoid na Farraige nearing completion

launch. The 18m *Seoid na Farraige* is a repeat order for the yard from MOWI. A sister vessel, *Croi na Farraige* was delivered to the company in 2017. Indeed, over the past five years, the yard—who are also the Irish agents for the Danish manufactured high-quality Meckanord gearboxes—has been busy. In that time, Arklow Marine Services have delivered a diverse range of vessels both for the home and UK markets, including a number of trawlers, 3 high-speed aluminium vessels for the UK Offshore renewable industry, a 27m passenger ferry for the UK Government, and 3 fish farm vessels. Earlier this summer the yard delivered the impressive 19m crabber, *Amberlisa* UL30 to MacMar Fishing Ltd.

Some respite in sight for Arklow Marine Services

Arklow Marine Services are busy completing work on *Seoid na Farraige* for MOWI (formerly Marine Harvest), reports Billy Tyrell. Once complete the vessel will operate out of Castletownbere Haven, where MOWI's Southern operations are based. At the time of going to print, the vessel was soon to be launched and, all going to plan, will be handed over within two weeks of the

Zamakona awarded maintenance contract for Killybegs based Vigilant



Vigilant at the Zamakona Yard

Zamakona Yards has been awarded a new contract for the maintenance of the Killybegs based MFV *Vigilant* and have been working on her since the boat arrived in the yard this autumn. The busy shipyard in Spain has also recently been awarded the contract to retrofit the *Ramon Margalef* for the IEO (Spanish Fisheries Research Institute). The RSW mid-water trawler *Vigilant* arrived to Pasajes at the end of September 2019. During the overhaul, the hull underwater areas were blasted and painted. Main Sea Water inlets valves were exchanged and new seawater pipes were fitted to avoid vessel lay off during catch season, as they were found to be far beyond economical repair. Controllable Pitch Propeller was fully inspected and overhauled, including the CNC machining of the blades discs. The shaft line was reassembled with new stern tube seals. To enhance the manoeuvrability of the boat, a complete overhaul was done to the rudder installing a new rudder flap. After completion, Skipper Mark Gallagher will trial the new look *Vigilant* at the winter mackerel season in northwest waters. "The Zamakona team wish Mark and his crew good fishing, we hope you have enjoyed your time here and see you very soon."

Much anticipated launch of Dignity D 727 at G Smyth Boats Ltd



Dignity D727 back after sea trials, Image Leslie Campbell

Busy times for Kilkeel based G Smyth boats Ltd who recently saw the successful launch and delivery of their first Maxus 12 Cat. Since creating their own Catamaran mould (Maxus 12m Cat) in 2018, the yard began moulding the first ones in July 2018. Less than 16 months later the yard, whose goal is to build the best boat on the sea, is currently busy moulding number 6! Luckily some of these have just been a set of mouldings for owners to fit out. Last month, saw the much-anticipated launch of the first Maxus 12m Cat, *Dignity* D 727. Built for Ivan Toole from Greystones, after successful sea trials,

Dignity D727 left the yard mid-month and made her way home to the south-east coast. Not just kept busy with the Maxus Cats, currently, the Kilkeel boatbuilder also has several other fit outs on the go, with a Cygnus Cyclone and a Catapult Catamaran waiting in the queue for the shed and a Buccaneer 46 almost complete and ready for launch. Alongside builds and refits, G Smyth Boats also still does repair work for the Kilkeel fleet and the team can regularly be found creating chill/fish rooms or overhauling the layout of wheelhouse and galleys.

Tilly Tilly WD3, Admiral Granville PH550 & Our Miranda BM27 at the yard in Den Oever



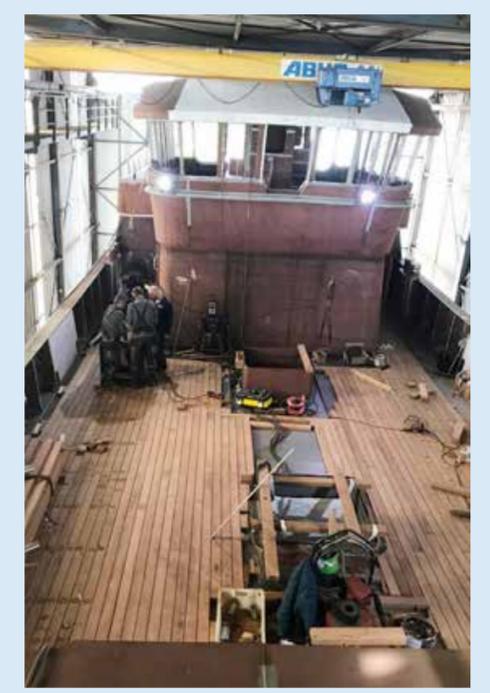
Tilly WD3 being launched at LUYT yard at Den Oever



New beamer for the O'Flaherty brothers launched at LUYT

The O'Flahertys new beamer, *Tilly* WD 3, named after their mother, was launched at the LUYT yard at Den Oever (Holland) on the 7th of October and craned into the water for the final fit out stages in preparation for sea trials. LUYT is acting as the main contractor, responsible for the entire build from design to completion, on the 26.05 metre LOA, 6.75 metre breadth beamer. *Tilly* WD 3 is the yard's own design, developed in collaboration with Gaastmeer Design. LUYT is also supplying the Mitsubishi main engine and gensets, as well as the six-drum LUYT winch – the thousandth LUYT winch produced by the yard over its 60-year history! The yard is working with suppliers in the Wieringen region to fit out the new beamer. The Kilmore Quay O'Flaherty brothers and the LUYT yard have a long shared history, and the yard has been looking after their vessels for some years. O.F. Fishing's *Emer Jane* DA 37 called at Den Oever recently for maintenance and a new winch. *Saltees Quest* WD 38 is scheduled to be fitted with a new six-drum winch at the yard. The yard is also busy with several other vessels, including a new 35.25m beamer for Devon company, Waterdance Ltd. Now in the final stages of hull fabrication, the new beamer, *Georgina of Ladram*, will follow in the wake of *Tilly* WD3 to Den Oever, to be finished by main contractors Luyt BV. Busy with refit work too, LUYT are also currently working on refitting the fish hold on

the beamer, *Our Miranda* BM 27 for Seafalke Shipping Co. Ltd. Work is also ongoing at the yard on the *Admiral Grenville* PH 550 for Interfish Ltd, which includes the installation of a new wooden deck and refit of the fish hold on the beamer.



Work ongoing aon Georgina of Ladram

Irish Skipper Expo SHOW NEWS



UL ARENA, LIMERICK - MAR 13-14, 2020

Sustainability – key focus for BIM at Irish Skipper Expo 2020

Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Ireland's seafood development agency is returning as main sponsor to Irish Skipper Expo 2020 next spring. The trade show, being held in Limerick next year, is set to be the biggest yet. More than 3,000 members of the fishing sector attended last year's show in Galway.

Sustainability will underpin BIM activities at the trade show next year. Last month BIM was announced as one of 12 champions for the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The UN SDGs, launched just over three years ago, have been established as a call to action for world leaders to address the global issues to reduce hunger, poverty and climate change by 2030. Other SDG Champions include the GAA, An Post and the Women's Council of Ireland.

Jim O'Toole, CEO BIM said: "The environment, economic and social sustainability of the Irish seafood sector is central to BIM's strategy. BIM is proud to be among 12 leading and quite diverse organisations in Ireland take on the role of SDG in the first year of this exciting programme to

drive sustainability."

A team of BIM staff will be on hand to provide information and advice on the latest developments with net gear technologies, Clean Oceans Initiative activities, including fishing for litter and the circular economy of fishing gear and grants and funding specific to sustainable fishing practices.

Live demonstrations of the new interactive fisheries management chart online will also be given throughout the two day event.



Hugh Bonner, The Skipper, Caitlín Uí Aodha, Jim O'Toole, CEO BIM at last year's show



Ian Lawler and Ronán Cosgrove, BIM talk to visitors at last year's Irish Skipper Expo.

A SELECTION OF ARTICLES FROM NEW EXHIBITORS

Irish Marine Safety working with skippers and owners



Limerick exhibitor Irish Marine Safety offer marine focused health and safety consultancy services, and are currently working with owners and skippers to produce the required documentation in relation to the Council Directive 2017/159 on the implementation of the social partners' agreement on the ILO Work in Fishing Convention C188-(MN 42 of 2019).

These requirements will then be included into their current range of safety audits for fishing vessels that are based on the relevant legal requirements, industry guideline and best practice.

Irish Marine Safety provide a live safety management system for your vessel that creates a safety action list for the year ahead, assigning tasks to the appropriate person. This can be backed up with vessel visits for galley table safety talks with the crew and emergency drill reviews.

They also offer task specific risk assessments to record and implement the required control measures to reduce the risk.

Under the EMFF safety scheme, it states the equipment eligible for grant aid includes Safety statements / manuals. For more information visit www.marinesafety.ie

Triskell Seafood – first time exhibitor at Irish Skipper Expo

Twenty years after setting up her shellfish trading company Triskell Seafood, Sligo-based Frenchwoman Marie-Aude Danguy is looking forward to exhibiting for the first time at Irish Skipper Expo 2020.

Today the company has expanded to offer an extensive range of specialist aquaculture equipment as well as a choice of protective clothing including top international brands Guy Cotten, Le Chameau, Dunlop, Maprotec, DAM, NorthWays, PROS Extreme among others. Marie-Aude and her team will be demonstrating this line of professional fishing clothing and equipment at the show.

"Our trading activities were originally focused on oysters" says Marie-Aude "but obviously our retail range comprising waders, oilskins, gloves, boots, is also suitable for fishermen. What's more our warehouse in Sligo can arrange overnight delivery anywhere in Ireland."

The company is also working with partners overseas to develop a brand-new oyster growing system which will be through patent and ready for display in March.

Marie-Aude again: "Innovation is important to us; ours can be a traditional industry, but we're focused on anything that can reduce labour and increase quality for our growers."

You can catch up with Triskell Seafood on our website, www.triskellseafood.com.



Inshore fishing groups looking forward to Irish Skipper Expo

Among the first time Irish Skipper Expo exhibitors are the National Inshore Fishermen's Association (NIFA) and the National Inshore Fishermen's Organisation (NIFO).

Established around two years ago and growing in size steadily

since then, these relatively new, dedicated, Inshore fishing representative groups are actively growing their membership.

Full membership is open to owners of fishing vessels of less than 18 metres in length, with honorary membership available to

others involved in inshore fishing. NIFA and NIFO say they are really excited about this Expo, as they feel it presents an opportunity for them to set out their stall to the wider inshore sector and for inshore operators to find out what the groups are about and also

about the benefits of membership. Already representing well in excess of 100 inshore vessels, having a stand at the Expo also gives existing members an opportunity to meet up with both the board directors and each other.

Comprehensive winch range from Spencer Carter

Limerick exhibitor Spencer Carter is the UK's market leader in the manufacture and sale of marine winch equipment to the fishing industry, port and harbour authorities and other marine related businesses.

No matter how individual your requirements are, Spencer Carter is able to design and build the winch to suit your needs.

When you buy from Spencer Carter, you're not just buying a product - you are getting service, high quality, unbeatable reliability, and assistance throughout the buying and

ordering process. They take every care to make sure that you get the right part and product to match your requirements.

Through their network of agents and support personnel, they are able to provide service and support to all our customers throughout the world.

Spencer Carter is also the UK suppliers of Hydroslave pot haulers and Rotzler winches.

Richard Carter and Derek Noble look forward to seeing you in March.

Contact Tel: 01326 373423, Web: spencercarter.com, Email: reception@spencercarter.com



Virhydro to display quality range of haulers at Limerick

First time exhibitor at Irish Skipper Expo, Virhydro, is a French manufacturer of professional hydraulic and electric fishing gear (pot haulers, net haulers, fishing reel, hydraulic power pack, etc) with nearly 40 years of experience in the inshore fishing industry.

The company is based in Saint Malo and their products are used all over the world, including French West Indies, Australia, Maldives, Canada, China, and Chile.

Their products are aimed at small fishing boats (6.5m up to 10m) and are all created in-house. With a focus on quality, efficiency and durability,

these hallmarks have helped the company build a strong relationship with their customers.

Cont act: Isabelle Blancard, Email: contact@virhydro.com, Tel: + 33 (0)2 99 82 54 02, Web: www.virhydro.com



Ruane Maritime raising standards in seafaring



Mike Ruane at the helm of the AK Ilen during her epic voyage to Greenland July 2019. Photo: Gary MacMahon

Limerick exhibitor Ruane Maritime is in the business of marine education, training and safety towards raising standards in seafaring. Our Training Centre and Marine Radio Courses are approved by the RYA and Dept. of Transport, Tourism and Sport respectively.

Ruane Maritime provide the following learning

opportunities; Marine Diesel Engine, RADAR, Navigation, Marlinspike Seamanship, Astro Navigation and Marine Radio. They also offer own-boat tuition whereby boat owners may avail of one-to-one confidence building sessions on their personal boats. Ruane Maritime have many years' experience in the design and delivery of custom courses for individuals, groups and corporates, along with prescribed courses where needed.

Mike Ruane, Principal and Chief Instructor, has over twenty years' experience in the area of marine heritage and traditional boat culture, including associated knowledge in safety, training, maintenance and operation.

Currently, Ruane Maritime is a marine consultant and training provider to the Ilen Project and its wooden sailing ship The AK Ilen. This is a national and marine-focused community project with a mission of reintroducing the nation to the joys of traditional sailing, vessel operation, competent crewing and experiential learning through hands-on work both on and offshore.

13-14 MARCH 2020
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NORTHERN IRELAND NEWS *By Dick James*

THE FISHERY

October blues! Between protracted iffy weather and a seasonal downturn in the availability of prawns, the month has been poor, to say the least. For a time, there was some sort of fishing off the southern Co. Louth coast, but in the Co. Down local water there was little to be had. The Clyde proved an alternative of sorts, but again the fishery there was not great. Some of the Kilkeel boats took to the English Channel after the Cuttlefish but other options were few. Then came news from the North Sea that the Autumn prawn fishery off North Shields was a booming one and a sizeable fleet frantically geared up with the specification of gear needed to participate in that fishery. A procession of boats made their way around the north of Scotland to join the growing fleet of Scots and English boats already there and the several Co. Down boats which had taken an early chance on going there. Hopefully, that will see them through to Christmas and possibly beyond.

The Pelagic season came to an end in the Irish Sea with the Voyager getting in a trip on the Douglas Bank and a fleet of smaller pelagics from Ireland working to the west of the Isle of Man and landing into Ardglass or Howth for transport onward to Killybegs. The Mackerel is now due to start with the Voyager steaming north to start the early winter fishery.

On the whitefish front, as usual, the Haddock fishery off Balbriggan attracted the regular fleet with few of the dual-purpose boats joining this year possibly due to the North Sea prawn option being so viable. The North Channel fishery also attracted a few boats but generally was quiet enough.

The inshore fleet in Co. Down worked away at the Brown Crab where the condition at this time is prime. But this year has been disappointing with volume down and prices poor. The consultation period for the promised management proposals is now over but as yet there is no indication of what the Department of Fisheries are considering.

There is significant activity on the quayside with crew gearing up for the Scallop

season opening on the first of November with pallets of dredges newly rigged and towbars being readied. Some crabbers are bringing gear ashore in anticipation but, as yet, there is no indication of what quota or regulation will be imposed in the Manx fishery. The level of interest this year is not as high as it has been in the recent past but no-one knows what the season will bring. Reports from the English Channel are that the local scallopers working there are getting a bonus of cuttlefish in the dredges which boosts the

grossing. The Maracestina continues to work the prawns on the Porcupine Bank but the Apollo has finished for the year heading for more northern grounds.

FURTHER BREXIT PREPERATION

The Northern Ireland fishing fleet has recently been subject to a flurry of inspections by local public health authorities to ensure that their catch handling and storage facilities are up to standards required by the EU (and other?) authorities

should exit from Europe and the CFP become a reality. Fish room linings and ice storage pounds were the main focus of inspection and upgrade requirements and work was supposedly to be completed by Brexit day (currently 31 October).

Upgrading varied from a simple paint job to fibreglass or sheet aluminium linings.

Most vessels are now compliant with IMO registration to allow the Marine Management Organisation issue licences for operations outwith United Kingdom waters.

St JOHN'S POINT LIGHTHOUSE



St John's Point lighthouse, Co. Down.

A meeting was called in mid-September by the Irish Lights Authority at the Ardglass Golf Clubhouse to put proposals to the local community for the upgrading of St John's Point lighthouse. The meeting was well attended by some 60 people which attested to the local feelings over the issue.

Some 4 years ago Irish lights put proposals on the lighthouse to the local people involving the use of updated LED lights and abandoning the rotating beam in favour of fixed direction lights. At that time a campaign opposing the proposals was launched under the banner of "save our beam" So, 4 years later Irish

Lights put forward plans revised to retain the beam and the Fresnel lens but to replace the Burdel rotating system using a mercury bath. Overall, the plan involved:

- Retaining the rotating beam and existing lens
- Change the power from diesel generator to mains electric with battery back up
- Remove the mercury system
- Replace the 1000watt filament lamps and replace with 90 wall LED lamps
- Reduce the range of the lamp from 25 to 18 miles
- Make available the buildings associated

- with the lighthouse for alternative use
- Restore the lighthouse interior to original state

The effects of the above would reduce costs and maintenance whilst retaining the navigational benefits of the light, albeit at a reduced range which was now the norm on most lighthouses.

These proposals were opposed by all at the meeting in favour of retaining the present system. The objectors included local politicians and given that planning permission would be required due to the listed status of the facility would result in this being a non-starter.

REMEMBERING MIKE CRAINE

This month, it is with a heavy heart that we report we are carrying our final reports from our friend and long time Isle of Man correspondent, the late Michael (Mike) Craine (68), who died suddenly last month in a fatal accident whilst on holidays.

Heartfelt tributes flooded *The Skipper's* social media page on news of Mike's sudden departure, with people who knew and had worked with him expressing deep sadness at the news and sharing stories recalling the Onchan man's 'encyclopaedic knowledge' of fishing and fishing boats – a testament to Mike's multiple roles within the Isle of Man's fishing community.

Described by his wife— with whom he had an extremely happy marriage and since retiring travelled the world with—as a caring and loving family man, Mike had a deep-seated love of boats, fishing and the sea. As an expression of that, he dedicated his life to helping hundreds of fishermen around the Isle of Man and, no doubt, further.

Inspired from a young age, Mike would watch boats from his bedroom window at the Imperial Restaurant on Peel Promenade using his father's binoculars, logging their names, registrations and taking photos of them.

Following his interest, Mike joined the Merchant Navy and worked as a radio officer on several vessels, including the *Othello* – one of the supply vessel sent to protect Britain's fishing trawlers during the third Cod War between Iceland and Britain. By listening and reporting shipping information and weather, he kept boats safe.

After retiring, Mike worked part-time in the chandlers in Peel for the Fish Producer's Organisation – a job, according to his wife, he truly loved, placing him as it did at the very heart of the fishing industry and in daily contact with the fishing community on the island.

Not a man for rest, Mike



Mike with the Isle of Man Newspaper's Awards for Excellence 2014

was also a co-founder of the 40+ Fishing Boat Association, which he founded in 1995, along with the historian Mike Smylie against the backdrop of the CFP's harsh, mandated decommissioning schemes of the time.

Aimed at "rationalising" the European fleet, the Association highlighted that, from a maritime heritage point of view, the policy not only succeeded in scrapping fishermen but also scrapped many wooden boats that would otherwise have been an integral part of Britain's maritime heritage.

"Enforced vandalism" the Association called it. And with the aim of protecting what fishing heritage remains by encouraging boat restoration and research into fishing history, over time, its membership would grow to over 500.

For decades, Mike also worked tirelessly with the Fisherman's Mission Isle of Man, in their efforts in support of fishermen and their families. Oftentimes the reports he wrote for *The*

Skipper included a briefing on the work of the Mission or an event that had been held in support of the organisation.

Mike began his work with the charity after he saw the Northern Irish pelagic trawler, *Amber Rose* sinking off the coast of Port St. Mary in 1998. It was Mike who alerted the emergency services and guided the Coast Guard from the shore to where the trawler was. Though the skipper of the vessel was sadly lost, 5 men were saved that night.

It was through that tragic event that Mike met Erik White from the Mission, who trained him as an honorary agent. Mike was rightly proud of his position with the Mission and the work he did in the role helping hundreds of fishermen, retired fishermen and their families over the years.

As many fishermen and fishing families know, it's hard to overestimate the work people like Mike and the Mission do – the kind that goes on after the lifeboat crew have done

their work, the camera crews have gone home and everyone else have stepped back into their daily lives.

True to form, Mike also campaigned for safety at sea and was instrumental in getting personal flotation devices for fishermen on the island. On account of his efforts, he was awarded the prestigious Isle of Man Newspapers' Award for Charity, Cultural and Social Enterprises in 2014.

A true gent who dropped everything for his children, grandchildren and wife, and who, if he wasn't with his family was out taking photographs or with fishermen was how his daughter Sarah Smythe described her father.

Over the years Mike carefully documented—chronicling and photographing—the fishing industry, writing articles for various fishing publications at different times. With several letters and reports published with us long before that, Mike's reports have been a monthly feature in *The Skipper* since 2014.

You could always count on Mike for some 'skeet' and plenty of wonderful photos to go with it. But more than that, in his reports, Mike lovingly documented and championed the Isle of Man's fishing industry. Skeet's easy, real passion for an industry is something else. And that passion and commitment is evident in his life and the reports, photographs and memories he leaves behind.

All of us here at *The Skipper* would like to offer our condolences and deepest sympathies to his wife Lynn, daughter Sarah, son Robert, grandchildren Adam and Kaelan, brothers Andrew, Stephen, David, sister Anne, his extended family and many friends.

Mike and his monthly contributions will be greatly missed by all of us here at *The Skipper* and, no doubt, our readers across Ireland, the UK and further.

RIP Mike.



Kilkeel queen trawler Determination N 39. Image: Mike Craine



Guard vessel Heather Belle N382 berthed in Douglas. Image: Mike Craine



Kirkcudbright queen scallop dredger Arcturus BA862. Image: Mike Craine



Liam Joseph PL9, one of the recent additions to the Manx fleet. Image: Mike Craine

ISLE OF MAN NEWS

By Michael Craine



Former Manx Nobby Aigh Vie entering Peel at this year's Peel Traditional Boat Weekend. Built in 1916 she moved to Howth in 1920.

FISHERMEN'S MISSION ISLE OF MAN - £616 RAISED

■ The Fishermen's Mission Isle of Man had a fantastic day at the Royal Manx Agricultural Show, held at Patrick. This was all down to the generosity of Isle of Man Seafoods who gave up part of their marquee to allow the Fishermen's Mission Isle of Man to promote its work and raise funds. Even though it was a very muddy day £303 was raised.

Isle of Man Seafoods gave out samples of cooked queenies and whelks in various sauces, which were appreciated by all those attending. They also sold a variety of fish products, displayed information and photos which were enjoyed by everyone – especially the children. Also on the same day, the Fishermen's Mission Isle of Man

had a bucket collection following a matinee performance of "Sing in the Rain" which raised another £313. All the money raised will stay on the island and support the fishing community.

PEEL TRADITIONAL BOAT WEEKEND

■ Around 24 traditional boats attended this year's Peel Traditional Boat Weekend which was held over the first weekend in August. Among the craft were three former fishing boats – Scotch Lass, built in 1953 by J N Miller, St Monance; Master Frank, built in 1896 by Clucas & Duggan, Ramsey and Aigh Vie, built in 1916 by Neakle & Watterson, Peel. Aigh Vie's owner Paddy Murphy is a remarkable gent who took seven days to single-handedly sail Aigh Vie from Connemara to Peel.



Master Frank RY 95 & Scotch Lass SY597 at this year's Peel Traditional Boat Weekend.



UK NEWS

Allocating quota in the UK post Brexit

One of the big questions in the UK, should Brexit ever become a reality and the UK finds itself with additional quota to allocate is how that quota will be distributed.

The National Federation of Fishermen's Organisation (NFFO) have argued over the past months that FQAs have worked to deliver sustainable fisheries in the UK and should remain the basis for allocating quota going forward. This position has recently been reiterated in response to a recent consultation by DEFRA on the question of how any additional post Brexit quota should be allocated.

Last month, in response to the same question, the New Under Ten Fishermen's Association (NUFTA)—which represents vessels in the UK ten metres and under, a sector which makes up 80% of the overall UK fleet by number—released a paper on its position on the question of quota allocation in the UK.

Rejecting claims made by the NFFO in support of the existing FQA system, in their response, NUFTA calls for a fundamental overhaul of the existing system and a post Brexit reallocation—if one ever materialises—on social, environmental and economic grounds.

Critiquing the existing system, NUFTA highlight the concentration of quota that has occurred under the existing system (under tens today only have access to 2% of the quota) and state there is little evidence to suggest the existing system, and management approach more generally, is either socially or environmentally sustainable.

According to the paper, one of the main concerns expressed by their members relate not only to quota but a lack of fish on the ground. Current management approaches, they say, have resulted “in the current and ongoing changes

that we are seeing on the grounds and consequently on the economic viability of inshore fishing.”

Highlighting the dramatic decrease in fishermen employed in the UK over time, and the decrease in landings that has also occurred (while, conversely, catching efficiency has increased massively), they state that until the current approach changes this situation will only continue to get worse for small scale fishermen.

They say a culmination of a tiny proportion of quota, the impact of climate change, increased fishing effort by larger vessels on stocks, coupled to “the fact that the vast majority of under tens are tethered to their local areas, together with the ‘too little, too late’ approach to current fisheries management have led inevitably to the situation where the inshore fleet, together with many coastal communities is struggling to survive.”

“Add to this the very significant increase in the employment of foreign based crews, where much of the returns from fishing are sent back to the home country, reducing the economic viability of coastal communities even further, together with the consolidation of fishing quota into fewer and fewer hands via the ITQ system, it can then hardly come as a surprise that the potential benefits of access to a public resource are not coming back to the public in the way that they should in order to maintain the inshore sector and the many deprived coastal communities,” they say.

Highlighting the fundamental inequities underpinning the existing system, NUFTA argue that many of the challenges that exist are intimately related to the existing FQA system NFFO have defended. Drawing on evidence, they argue such systems allow for those with the financial resources to do so to buy up access to a public resource, marginalise owner operators, leads to a disconnect between fishing



Inshore boats in Whitby. Image by Mick Bayes Jr.

operations and quota ownership, and result in a new investor class of quota owners.

“So not only is it clear that the ITQ system significantly favours the ‘haves’ over the ‘have nots’ but vitally, it removes access to fishing opportunities and the related economic benefits from fishermen and their coastal communities and makes them increasingly reliant on the ‘investor class’ that has little or no interest in anything other than a return on capital,” they say.

In terms of developing a “fair and equitable” system then, NUFTA argue that a gradual move towards a revised system, especially if it was underpinned by additional quota as a result of Brexit, would make everyone a winner.

And in the event any addition quota does actually someday materialise, they say there are a number of relevant points to consider “all of which are or should be based on a consideration of why we fish, who fishes, where the economic and social benefits should be focused, on the basis that we fish on a public resource, and what environmental benefits can be encouraged and supported through the allocation of fishing opportunities.”

They argue that developing such a system would require granting inshore Producer Organisations,

such as the already recognised Coastal PO, the equivalent rights afforded all other POs, alongside the provision of adequate support to the collection of data regarding inshore stocks of importance to the inshore fleet.

They also highlight that provision of quota to encourage and support new entrants will be vital if the sector is going to survive in the long term and argue there should be no auction of fishing opportunities, at least for any species that may be of value or interest to the inshore sector, as this would exclude those without significant financial resources – often smaller-scale interests.

They also state MMO quota management for the under-10 sector should at least be undertaken in a co-management partnership with the Coastal PO.

Highlighting a range of other issues facing the sector that the provision of new quota could address, in short, they state: “Additional post-Brexit quota will give opportunities to address social, economic and environmental aspects of an activity that utilises a public resource, and the one-off opportunity to right the wrongs of decades of unfairness of allocation.”

Seafish to withdraw from marine survey services

Seafish will be withdrawing from providing marine survey services in July 2020 following a decision by its Board to terminate its agreement with the Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA), according to a joint statement released by Seafish and the MCA last month.

Seafish has been surveying and certifying fishing vessels on behalf of the MCA for sixty years and currently employs a small team of marine surveyors to deliver this service throughout the UK. However, Seafish

considers that over the years the size of the service has been reduced to a level that it now lacks the ‘economies of scale’ to support such a service. Organisations delivering a similar service (MCA and Lloyds Register) have ‘surveying’ as a core function alongside all the necessary support services, such as risk and audit teams and in-house legal expertise.

The decision to withdraw from this service also reflects a growing recognition that the work of Seafish is evolving and that its marine survey

work is significantly different from its more regular knowledge-based services.

Seafish will continue to carry out inspections on new fishing vessels (under 24m in length) that are being built to its construction standards and to certify them for commercial use in the UK, until July 2020. Seafish is currently notifying all boatyards and existing contract holders of these changes.

Seafish and the MCA are working collaboratively to transition the

service to the MCA and are focused on ensuring that the fishing industry continues to receive a robust and consistent service. Further details of these transition arrangements will be communicated in the coming months but in the meantime vessel owners and boatyard operators should continue to work directly with Seafish.

Both organisations remain committed to improving safety for fishermen at sea and will continue to work in partnership on other projects.

Unworkable regulations prove ‘death knell’ for Brixham trawler race

After fifty-five years, the annual trawler race in Brixham has come to an end on account of unworkable regulations.

In a statement released last month, the organisers said:

“For over fifty years the Port of Brixham Trawler Race has been the most significant annual event in Brixham. It has been a popular activity for thousands of people and raised significant sums of money to support local charities and activities. This year’s race has raised over £24,000 and this will, sadly, remain an unbroken record as there will be no future Trawler Races.

“In this world of increasing Health and Safety legislation, the committee must announce the end of the annual Brixham Trawler Race. It is no longer possible to legally run the race; it has been impossible



Brixham Trawler Race

to comply with newly imposed constraints and regulations.

“The committee would like to take this opportunity to thank the organisers, skippers, crews and owners of the vessels who have generously given their time and attention over generations to

make race days such notable events for some fifty-five years. We would also like to thank the tens of thousands of people and organisations who have supported the race.

“The end of an era.”

No change to fisheries in Johnson’s ‘new deal’

A ‘new’ withdrawal agreement reached between Johnson and the EU was reached last month. In terms of fisheries, the deal contained no amendments and remained, to the letter, the same.

As per the details of the declaration, the EU and UK would aim to reach an agreement on fisheries by July 1st 2020, with the objective then of agreeing quotas for 2021. Any agreement made would be made “in the context of the overall economic partnership”.

At the time *The Skipper* was going to print, however, the House of Commons has yet to ratify the deal and an extension request has been submitted to the EU by Johnson in the interim.

Bursary funding supported over 50 fishermen to attend major inshore conference

Companies and organisations from across the seafood supply chain provided financial assistance to support working fishermen to attend the Future of Our Inshore Fisheries conference, which took place in London last month.

The move was part of an effort to ensure strong representation from active fishermen at the event, which considered the future management of the UK’s inshore fisheries and over 50 bursaries were awarded. Retailers Co-op and M&S; processors Macduff, Seachill and Youngs; and charities Trinity House and Seafarers UK all provided bursary funding. Seafish also provided funding through its advisory committees in Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and South West England.

Aoife Martin, Director of Operations at Seafish, said: “On behalf of the project steering group I would like to thank the donor organisations for their financial support. The success of the conference depended on active fishermen being in the room to contribute their vital expertise and experience as possible fisheries management solutions were

discussed.

“By providing bursary funding to cover out-of-pocket expenses such as travel and accommodation, Seafarers UK, Trinity House, Co-op, M&S, Macduff, Seachill, Youngs and our regional advisory committees helped to ensure that fishermen were able to take time away from fishing to be part of ensuring a sustainable future for their industry.”

Deborah Layde, Grants Director at Seafarers UK said: “Seafarers UK had no hesitation in funding the bursaries as our Fishing for the Future research was only possible thanks to the involvement of fishers UK wide. We absolutely believe it is vital to hear the authentic voice of fishers in deciding their own future and welcome this major inshore event.”

Aisla Jones, Fish Sustainability Manager for Co-op, said: “At Co-op we are committed to sourcing our seafood responsibly. We were pleased to be able to give bursaries to support fishermen catching inshore species – from langoustine in Scotland to mackerel on the south coast – to



Bursary recipients Seafish NI Advisory Committee with Aoife Martin Operations Director

attend this conference and play their part in shaping a successful, sustainable approach to the management of these fisheries in the future.”

The conference is part of the wider Future of Our Inshore Fisheries project, which was established in January 2019. This ambitious and collaborative project is bringing together industry leaders, policymakers, regulators and researchers to focus on ensuring that both the marine environment and coastal communities are sustainable and thriving into the future.

The input of attendees at the conference will now be collated into a report capturing the views expressed and the common themes and the project’s steering group, which is industry-led and facilitated by Seafish, will plan the next steps. Conference attendees and the wider industry will be kept closely informed of progress and the pathway forward with further updates before the end of the year.

Further information can be found on the Seafish website: www.seafish.org/article/future-of-our-inshore-fisheries-conference



SCOTLAND NEWS

Scottish fishermen trial app to avoid unwanted catches

A pioneering collaboration between Scottish fishermen and scientists will allow state-of-the-art technology to be deployed to avoid unwanted catches of cod and whiting.

Between now and the end of 2020, fishermen on the west coast of Scotland will be trialling a bespoke software system to report hauls of these species in 'real-time'. If catches are too high, an automatic alert will be triggered to inform other participating vessels in the vicinity so they can avoid these areas.

The project is led by the Scottish Fishermen's Organisation (SFO), the University of Aberdeen and Fisheries Innovation Scotland (FIS), with support from the other Scottish POs, the Scottish White Fish Producers' Association, Seafish and Chordata LLC, a US-based IT company.

It follows the European Union's zero-catch advice for cod and whiting on the west coast due to a decline in these stocks. To allow fishing for healthy stocks such as haddock and monkfish to continue in what is a mixed fishery, by-catch measures for cod and whiting have been introduced.

Speaking of the project, John Anderson, SFO Chief Executive, said: "Faced with zero catch advice for West of Scotland cod and whiting and a ban on discarding, this ground-breaking real-time reporting initiative demonstrates that Scottish fishermen are actively taking the lead in developing new and innovative ways of hot-spot

avoidance that should ultimately improve both the sustainability and viability of their fishing operations."

Referencing the importance of involving fishermen in such projects, Paul Macdonald, SFO Fisheries Analyst, said: "We are working with fisheries experts from around the globe to develop a system that works for our fishermen and our fisheries. An essential element of this initiative has been getting the fishermen involved in the project from the offset – this innovative approach simply won't work without their buy-in or expertise."

Echoing this, Tara Marshall, Senior Lecturer at the University of Aberdeen said: "This project is a first for the UK, and indeed Europe. Sharing data for the common good is the real innovation here. The cooperative approach reflects the industry's shared commitment to avoiding bycatch. The software is being co-designed by experienced IT specialists and Scottish fishermen to ensure that it meets requirements data security and confidentiality."

Kara Brydson, Executive Director of Fisheries Innovation Scotland, said: "This project is a great example of innovative and trusted collaboration between industry and science. Reducing the catch of unwanted species is a major challenge for us all, so this partnership can lead to positive change on the water as well as to a better understanding of fishermen's motivations for engaging with new technology."

ICES mackerel advice indicates stock in good shape

The publication on October 1st of the scientific advice for the 2020 catch of North East Atlantic mackerel by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) has confirmed that the stock is in good shape, making mackerel an excellent sustainable purchase choice for consumers, according to the Mackerel Industry Northern Sustainability Alliance (MINSNA).

The assessment by ICES puts the spawning stock biomass at a very high level of 4.4 million tonnes. This is more than 2.4 million tonnes above the limit reference point. The advice also shows that the 2016-2018 recruitment (the amount of young fish entering the fishery) is also at its highest level since records began. As such, ICES is recommending a total allowable catch of 922,064 tonnes in 2020 – a 20% increase on the last catch advice issued in May 2019.

Ian Gatt, MINSNA coordinator and chief executive of the Scottish Pelagic Fishermen's Association, said: "This advice confirms that the mackerel

stock is in good shape and it is particularly pleasing to see healthy recruitment levels. This means that consumers can continue to purchase mackerel safe in the knowledge that the stock is healthy and being sustainably fished.

"Hopefully, this scientific assessment will result in a re-scoring of the fishery against the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) standard which could ultimately result in the current certificate suspension being lifted. To aid this process, we call on all coastal states involved in the fishery to work towards a comprehensive mackerel agreement.

"All members of MINSNA are committed to a sustainable future for the fishery and are involved in a range of scientific measures relating to data collection to help improve our knowledge of the mackerel stock."

SFF welcomes Johnson's Brexit agreement

Though at the time of going to print, no deal has been passed in the House of Commons, the Scottish Fishermen's Federation have welcomed the agreement reached between the UK and European Union to secure the UK's exit from the EU. Three years since the referendum, they say, this agreement provides the gateway to the UK's exit from the Common Fisheries Policy, and the UK becoming an independent coastal state.

Elsbeth Macdonald, CEO of the SFF, said: "More than three years after the referendum, we hope that Saturday marks the turning point when we can move to the next stage – working towards the Sea of Opportunity that exists outside of the EU's Common Fisheries Policy, and being able to re-dress the imbalance where 60% of fish caught in UK waters are not caught by the UK fleet.

"As an independent coastal state the UK will control access to waters and fishing opportunities, meaning that we will be able to determine for ourselves who catches what, where and when in our waters."

Referencing the significant



Elsbeth Macdonald & the Prime Minister in Scotland last month.

work still needed to securing any agreement on fishing she said: "Reaching agreement on the terms of the UK's withdrawal from the EU represents the end of this phase, but there is much still to do to secure the opportunities that exist for the Scottish fishing industry.

"It is imperative that the implementation period does not extend beyond the end of 2020, and that negotiations on the future free trade agreement between the UK and EU do not make any concessions on access to UK waters. We have made these points at every opportunity to government, and will continue to hold the government to account on the commitments made to the fishing industry in Scotland."

NEW DEPUTY HARBOURMASTER APPOINTED AT LERWICK

Lerwick Port Authority's new Deputy Harbourmaster, Captain Neil Arthur, has added to his marine qualifications hard-on-the-heels of his appointment.

Having successfully gained his Pilot's certification, Neil will contribute to the overall management of marine operations at the port which handles over 5,000 vessels in, out and around the busy Shetland harbour annually.

Originally from Whalsay, Shetland, Captain Arthur (33) was recruited to succeed Captain Alexander Simpson who was promoted to Harbourmaster.

Port Authority Chief Executive, Captain Calum Grains, said: "We are delighted to welcome Neil and the contribution he will make to our operations across the various industry sectors."

Captain Arthur began his career as a cadet with Clyde Marine in 2003, with sponsorship from the specialist geared cargo company, Gearbulk, later gaining a BSc in Nautical Science from Strathclyde University and qualifying as an



Captain Neil Arthur

Officer from Glasgow College of Nautical Studies. Following employment by Gearbulk as a junior officer, he moved into the offshore industry with Subsea 7 for 10 years, rising through the ranks and gaining his Chief Officer's Licence from Glasgow College of Nautical Studies and Master's from Glasgow Maritime Academy.

New Parkol build, Virtuous, arrives home to Fraserburgh

After completing sea trials, Alexander and Sandy West's new Virtuous FR253 left the yard in Parkol last month, and recently arrived home in Fraserburgh and will soon start fishing under the watchful eye of Sandy West and his crew.

Built by Parkol Marine Engineering and designed by SC MacAllister, the 24-metre steel-hulled trawler has a 7.8 moulded breadth and a 4.25 metre moulded depth. With a round bilge hull, transom stern, bulbous bow, soft nose stem, a full-length shelter deck and a stern ramp for handling catches, the new Virtuous is sure to stand out.

Arranged for single and twin rig trawling, the vessel is powered by a Mitsubishi S6R2 T2 main engine, connected to a Reintjes

WAF 474L 7.476:1 reduction gearbox, driving a five-bladed, 2500mm diameter propeller.

The main deck hosts a deckhouse for galley and mess, oilskins and washroom offset to starboard, hopper and catch handling to starboard side. Aft side has a steel shelter and integral gallow arrangement, over net drum space, stern ramp to shelter.

Alongside a weathertight shelter catch handling and winch space, the Virtuous is fitted with 2 x Zeigra ice machines capable of producing 1 tonne of freshwater ice per day. Three 15 tonne split winches and twin 2300mm diameter double net drums were supplied by EK Marine.

Below deck is subdivided by three watertight bulkheads into aft accommodation with steering gear, engine room, fishroom and forepeak tank.



The new Virtuous arriving home in Fraserburgh for the first time. Photo: Eugene Rutter.

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SHETLAND NEWS *By Peter Johnson and Hans J Marter / Shetland News*

Life jackets should be mandatory for fishermen, fatal accident inquiry recommends

'Selfless bravery' of crewmate also recognised following 2016 King Challenger accident

ALL FISHERMEN should wear life jackets at all times while working on a deck of a vessel, a fatal accident inquiry into the death of a fisherman off Shetland in 2016 has recommended.

Sheriff Ian Cruickshank said he hoped that the findings of the inquiry—launched following the death of Scott Rennie from Newton Stewart after he fell overboard from the King Challenger—will “assist in the future education and training of fishermen” and encourage a “cultural change” in the wearing of life jackets.

The sheriff also praised the “incredible selfless bravery” of crewmate Darren Rennie—no relation—after he took to the water on 23 June 2016 in an attempt to recover his colleague.

Thirty one year old Scott Rennie drowned after he fell from the 21-metre long scallop dredger King Challenger (BA 87) while the vessel was fishing to the southwest of Scalloway.

Lerwick Sheriff Court heard during a fatal accident inquiry that while standing on a tipping door to repair a dredge bag, Rennie was struck by an unsecured tow bar after the boat rolled.

This caused him to lose balance and fall into the sea.

Rennie went overboard at 9.40 am and the time between him falling into the sea and being recovered was around 10 minutes.

He was not wearing a life jacket or a personal floatation device, nor was he secured by a safety line or harness. No crewmember had

fastened the safety chains onto the port side tow bar.

A man overboard alert was sounded by crew when Rennie was seen falling into the water. A lifebuoy was thrown towards him but it could not reach him. A man overboard recovery harness was also thrown to Rennie but he lost grip of it.

Crew member Darren Rennie, with the “reluctant permission of the skipper”, put on a life jacket and jumped into the sea.

He managed to put the man overboard recovery harness around Rennie, who was at this time apparently unconscious, and crew members lifted the stricken fisherman on board with the assistance of a crane.

During this time a mayday call was sent to the Shetland coastguard, with the search and helicopter arriving on scene 15 to 20 nautical miles north-west of Sumburgh at around 10.08 am.

CPR was carried out by winchman Alistair Drummond and although an oropharyngeal airway and hypothermic strops were administered, Rennie was “unresponsive to any stimulus”. Rennie was airlifted to the Clickimin landing site and transferred to the nearby Gilbert Bain Hospital.

Further treatment was issued but at around 11 am hospital staff “concluded there was no prospect of recovery”.

The inquiry heard that Rennie had been a strong swimmer but was incapacitated within four

minutes of falling into the cold water.

It was said that the crew of the boat worked “regularly” on open tipping doors without wearing a lifeline or a life jacket. They were also said to be “unprepared for the rescue of an unconscious casualty from the water”.

A Marine Accident Investigation Branch report stated that the vessel’s owner, Kirkudbright based West Coast Sea Products Limited, had prohibited crew on its vessels from climbing onto the tipping doors without the use of a harness and lifeline immediately after the incident.

It also instructed their skippers to conduct man overboard drills on a monthly basis and it purchased specialist equipment and implemented a fleet-wide procedure for recovery of an unconscious casualty from the water.

The company also made the wearing of lifejackets mandatory for its crewmen.

Sheriff Cruickshank said in his determination that no member of the King Challenger was wearing a personal floatation device (PFD) at the time of the incident.

“There has been a culture whereby fishermen have elected to work without wearing life jackets or PFDs,” he said, with some evidence heard that fishermen found life jackets difficult to wear in certain working conditions.

At the date of Rennie’s death, the wearing of a lifejacket or PFD whilst working on the deck of a



Sheriff Ian Cruickshank also recognised the ‘selfless bravery’ of crew mate following accident on the King Challenger in 2016

fishing vessel was not a mandatory requirement.

New guidance published in 2018 stated that “the MCA requires that, unless measures are in place which eliminate the risk of fishermen falling overboard, all fishermen must be provided with and must wear PFDs or safety harness”.

Sheriff Cruickshank concluded that there was “no dispute that reasonable precautions could have been taken which might realistically have resulted in the death or accident being avoided”.

He said West Coast Sea Products Limited accepted they had failed to assess the dangers of working on a tipping door whilst at sea, while they also acknowledged that they failed to assess and identify safe working practices relating to the repair of dredge bags whilst at sea.

“The evidence, in my judgement, overwhelmingly supports the fact that it is necessary for ongoing efforts to be made to help effect cultural change amongst fishermen in relation to the wearing of a lifejacket or PFD,” the sheriff wrote.

“Whereas I cannot conclude that Mr Rennie’s life would have been saved had he been wearing a PFD, evidence gathered from the many tragic accidents which have occurred at sea supports the fact that there is a markedly greater likelihood of survival when a casualty is wearing a PFD.

“A PFD substantially lessens the risk of drowning.”

He said given the efforts of the vessel’s owners to overhaul their working practices, no formal recommendations needed to be made in relation to the company.

However, the sheriff issued five recommendations with regard to fishing practice.

He said that fishermen involved

in this type of scallop dredger fishing should avoid standing on the tipping door of the vessel whilst at sea to carry out repairs to dredge bags or for any other reason.

The sheriff also recommended that if fishermen involved in this type of scallop dredger fishing should require to stand on a tipping door, either at sea or in port, then they should wear a safety harness or safety line.

He added that all fishermen should be aware of the relevant terms of Marine Guidance Notes.

The court also recommended that all fishermen, being involved in scallop dredging or involved in commercial fishing more

generally, should wear PFDs at all times when working on the open deck of a fishing vessel.

The sheriff further recommended that, in so far as it has not already been implemented by statute or regulation, the wearing of a life jacket or PFD, whilst working on the deck of a fishing vessel, should be a mandatory requirement throughout the fishing industry.

“From a local perspective, it is hoped that this determination will assist in the future education and training of fishermen,” the sheriff concluded.

“The fishing industry is the most valuable industry in monetary terms that the

Shetland Islands has. Through ongoing education and training, it is hoped that there will be a cultural change in the industry to one where the use of PFDs on the decks of fishing vessels is the norm, and accepted by all as a mandatory requirement. Promoting such culture change is to be encouraged.

“In those circumstances, given the fact that Shetland plays an important part in the education and training of fishermen, I consider that a copy of this determination should be given to the North Atlantic Fisheries College (NAFC) Marine Centre based at Scalloway.”

The sheriff also said he would

“wish to record the fact that, in my judgement, all members of the crew of the FV King Challenger did all that they could to recover Mr Rennie from the water as quickly as possible”.

“In particular, the actions of Darren Rennie are to be acknowledged,” Sheriff Cruickshank continued.

“Mr Darren Rennie displayed incredible selfless bravery in the action he took in order to try to save the life of Scott James Rennie.”

Sheriff Cruickshank concluded his determination by recording his condolences to the family, friends and former work colleagues of Scott Rennie.

Whitefish landings at record high

A RECORD amount of whitefish was landed in Shetland last year with just under 25,000 tonnes brought ashore. The cod, haddock, plaice, monks and other whitefish species were worth some £50 million, and were one-fifth of all the finfish landed in Scotland or one-sixth of that landed in the UK. Overall, a total of 69,000 tonnes of fish and shellfish of all species, worth £88 million, were landed in Shetland in 2018, an increase of 10 per cent from the weight landed in 2017 and of 14 per cent in value.

Just under half of those landings were made by local fishing boats. Shetland Fisheries Statistics 2018, published by the NAFC Marine Centre UHI, provides a detailed breakdown of fish and shellfish landings in Shetland and by Shetland fishing boats during last year. The publication by Dr Ian Napier is based on official Marine Scotland fisheries statistics. Shetland’s prominent position in the UK fishing industry continued with more fish and shellfish landed in the islands than in any other port in the UK, except Peterhead, and more fish landed in Shetland than in all of

England, Wales and Northern Ireland combined. The weight of whitefish landed in Shetland increased by more than one-sixth in 2018 and has more than tripled since the electronic fish auction was introduced to the local fish markets in 2003. Landings’ value has meanwhile shot up by seven times over the same period. Lerwick, Scalloway and Cullivoe were all in the top 12 UK ports for whitefish landings in 2018, and in the top 10 Scottish ports. The value of landings in Shetland in 2018 was the second highest ever; exceeded only in 2011 (£91 million). Shetland fishing boats

landed about 111,000 tonnes of fish and shellfish in 2018, worth some £117 million. Shetland boats continued to land more than twice as much fish abroad 79,575 tonnes (£64.5 million), as locally, 31,609 tonnes (£52.9 million). Non Shetland boats landed 37,554 tonnes (£35.4 million) in the isles. The full report is available on the NAFC website at: www.nafc.uhi.ac.uk/fish-stats.

There are a total of 215 fishing vessels registered in Shetland with 44 over 10m long employing 456 fishermen, just under four per cent of the local workforce.

Fishing boat debris cleared from west side beaches

DEBRIS on a handful of Shetland beaches thought to have come from the grounded fishing boat Coelleira was cleared up by volunteers earlier in October.

A group of around 10 local volunteers removed rubbish from beaches on Papa Little as well as Vementry and Muckle Roe.

Around four tonnes of debris, the equivalent of 20 cubic metres, was collected in total.

The clean-up was overseen by Jimmy Smith, whose marine surveying business has been involved in the insurance proceedings.

He said there was “no doubt” that the bruck came from the UK registered but Spanish crewed Coelleira.

The clean-up came after it was revealed that numerous pieces of debris had washed up on the island of Papa Little following the grounding of the Coelleira on the Vee Skerries near Papa Stour in August.

Among the items were pieces of wood, pieces of insulation, lumps of hard nylon and rubber boots.

A spokesperson for the Maritime and Coastguard Agency confirmed that monthly monitoring of the 30m vessel and the surrounding area began in early September.

Efforts were made to refloat the vessel in the days after its 15 crew were airlifted to safety, but they failed.

“Only debris that is proven to originate from a vessel would be the owners’ responsibility to recover,” the coastguard spokesperson said.

“If the source of the debris cannot be proven, debris which ends up on land becomes the landowner’s responsibility for disposal.”



Debris from the Coelleira ©Keith Nicolson. Inset: **The Coelleira on the Vee Skerries in early October** ©JLB Surveys_Shettland News



King Challenger



ORKNEY NEWS *By Craig Taylor*

Orkney Gin donation make major contribution to Orkney RNLI stations

Special gin raises £1560 for saving lives at sea



L-R Erin Watt, Graham Campbell (Kirkwall RNLI) Gary Watt, John Budge (Longhope RNLI) John Davidson (Stromness RNLI) and Andrea Watt.

A SPECIAL limited edition gin made in Orkney has raised over £1500 for RNLI stations here in the islands.

The special edition Navy

Strength Old Tom gin was produced by the Orkney Gin Company. A percentage of the profits from each bottle has now been donated to Orkney's three RNLI Lifeboat Stations.

The stations in Kirkwall, Stromness and Longhope each received £520 as well as a special Johannstag gin gift set, which will be used to raise even more money in the future.

The Johannstag gin was released to mark the 100th anniversary of the scuttling of the German Fleet in Scapa Flow.

The Orkney Gin Company said: "We would like to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone who purchased a bottle of our Special Edition Navy Strength Old Tom from both batch one and/or two, and to everyone who has helped along the way in the creation of this very special gin."

"We have greatly enjoyed this unique commission which marked the centenary of the scuttling of the German High Seas Fleet in Orkney's Scapa Flow. It's helped us learn even

more about Orkney's wartime history, and we have met some great people along the way. Each bottle was made with love, hand labelled (right down to tying the little swing tag on to every bottle) by a member of our small team.

"We can't thank the RNLI enough for the hard work they put in at sea, and we'd like to thank each of the lifeboat stations in Orkney for taking time out of their busy days to meet with us and collect their donations and gift sets which will be used in the future to make money for the cause."

Kirkwall RNLI is holding a fundraising gin night in the Masonic Club in Kirkwall on Saturday, October 19. There are a very limited number of tickets available from Kirkwall Lifeboat Station.

BOAT SINKS ALONGSIDE KIRKWALL HARBOUR

THE Nimrod, whose condition had been of concern, sank and partially capsized at Kirkwall Harbour recently.

Despite the efforts of pier staff and Leask Marine, nothing could be done to refloat the vessel, said Orkney Islands Council. Fuel has therefore been removed from the Nimrod, and harbour staff have put an anti-pollution boom in place around the vessel.

The boat is sitting on the seabed, and has been pulled upright to prevent it from capsizing fully, but is largely underwater at high tide.

Orkney Islands Council says that it has informed the owners to give them the opportunity to take action. Should this not happen, the harbour authority will take its own action to remove the vessel, an OIC statement added.

SUCCESSFUL OPERATION TO FREE HUMPBACK WHALE

A SPECIALLY trained group of volunteers from British Divers Marine Life Rescue (BDMLR) were mobilised to free a humpback whale entangled in fishing gear off Westray in early October.

The report was received from a local fisherman who discovered the animal caught in creel ropes.

BDMLR's Large Whale Disentanglement Team (LWDT) is a group of volunteers who have gone through extensive training in how to approach stricken animals

and use specialist equipment to free them from any ropes, netting, or other materials that they may be caught in.

Volunteers travelled overnight from Glasgow, Dundee, Moray and Ullapool to Kirkwall, and then on to Westray to meet with local BDMLR team members.

The fishermen who reported the entanglement remained on hand to assist, and along with support from a local fish farm, sailing club, and chartered vessels, the disentanglement team were able to approach the whale in their specialised RIB to first assess the animal and identify the entanglement configuration.

Once a plan had been made on which cuts needed to be made and where, the team returned to the animal, which remained relatively calm throughout. They then began cutting and removing all the entangling lines that were twisted around the tail. The whale was anchored by its tail to the seabed, but using specially designed cutting tools, the team were able to quickly free the animal before daylight faded.

Once the animal had been freed, the Westray community welcomed the team safely back to shore and provided overnight accommodation for the whole team.

BDMLR are part of a collaboration called the Scottish Entanglement Alliance (SEA), which was initiated in 2018 after the inshore creel sector raised concerns over entanglement within their industry. To date over 150 creel fishermen have contributed to

SEA's work by sharing information on their marine wildlife encounters, experiences of entanglement, and their ideas of ways to reduce the risks of these incidents occurring in the future.

"This is already leading to some exciting developments which would not be possible without the industry's continued support and participation working alongside conservation organisations," added the BDMLR spokesman.

If you are a fisherman and you encounter a live animal entangled in your gear, please report it to BDMLR's hotline on 01825 765546 for assistance from their Large Whale Disentanglement Team.

The SEA project will also gratefully receive any information you have to share on entangled animals and can be contacted on entanglement@sac.org.uk or 01463 246048.

Your help in recording these

incidents would be very much appreciated and any information you share will be treated positively, sensitively and confidentially.

KINGS CROSS CALLS IN

THE Peterhead registered 79m purser/trawler Kings Cross, PD365, is pictured coming alongside Hatston Pier on October 16.

The vessel was fishing east of Orkney when a crewman took unwell, and so the decision was made to take him into Kirkwall for medical treatment at the Balfour Hospital.

The Kings Cross then headed back to the fishing grounds, where mackerel season is well underway.

It was back in 2016 that the vessel was handed over to owners Lunar Fishing Co Ltd and Wiseman Fishing Co Ltd, Peterhead, builders Karstensen Shipyard, Denmark.



Kings Cross. Image Craig Taylor



ICELAND NEWS *By Gudjón Einarsson*

NORWAY LOBSTER STOCK COLLAPSES



Norway Lobster

THE Norway lobster stock in Iceland is in dire straits. Almost no recruitment has been detected during the past nine years. Such a long period of poor recruitment is without precedent. The stock is estimated at a historically low level and now only very limited fishing is allowed for monitoring purposes.

LOWEST CATCH IN HISTORY

The Norway lobster catch doubled between the years 2004 and 2010 when it reached 2,500 tons. Since then the catch started to decrease and dropped to 728 tons in 2018, the lowest since the start of a Norway lobster fishery in Iceland in the 1950s.

Early this year, The Marine and Fresh Water Research Institute (MFRI) in Iceland advised that the fishing of Norway lobster in 2019 should be limited to 235 tons for the sole purpose of sampling and mapping the distribution of the stock. The MFRI has researched the stock for decades and the authorities have always followed scientific advice on the total allowable catch. Overfishing is therefore ruled out as a cause.

CLIMATE CHANGE LIKELIEST CULPRIT

The scientists at the MFRI admit that climate change is the likeliest culprit for the deterioration of the lobster stock but stress that more research is needed to fully

explain the present situation. They point out that sea temperature and salinity have been unusually high off the south coast of Iceland in recent years. Poor recruitment has also been detected in several other species habitated there, such as blue ling, witch and anglerfish. The juveniles of species such as cod, which grow up along the northern coast of Iceland, have fared much better.

SAME SPECIES AS IN IRELAND AND SCOTLAND

The Norway lobster in Iceland is of the same species as the Norway lobster off the coasts of Ireland and Scotland. The fishing grounds in Iceland are at the northernmost part of the species' distributional range. For females, it has been shown that there is a biennial reproductive cycle and, therefore, slower postmaturity growth than in, for example, Scottish, Irish, French and Portuguese waters of mostly annual spawning. That has implications for the productivity of the stock and warrants a lower exploitation rate than applied in other Nephrop stocks. The scientists are, therefore, not hopeful that the Icelandic Norway lobster lobster stock will recover any time soon.

A BLESSING OR A CURSE?

When sea temperature started to rise around Iceland twenty years ago due to climate change, it was generally considered to be a positive thing for the growth



On board a research vessel monitoring the Norway lobster stock

and recruitment of fish stocks. Now scientists are not so sure anymore.

Species like haddock, anglerfish and blue ling, which before were mostly confined to the sea off the southern coast of Iceland, started to stretch their distribution to the west and eventually to the sea off the northern coast of the country. Now half of the haddock stock is registered off the north coast of Iceland, the species having previously been labelled a "southern one".

The cod, Iceland's most important species, does not, however, seem to have been much affected by global warming. As before, it can be found around the whole country and its distribution is roughly

the same as before.

CAPELIN IN DECLINE

While the influx of mackerel is considered the most positive effect global warming has had on Iceland's fisheries, the development of the capelin stock is causing the greatest concern. The capelin has been moving further up north and west away from Iceland in the summertime and its migration pattern around the coast of Iceland during the winter is furthermore constantly changing. The stock, which before gave up to one million tons or more annually in catches, is now reduced so greatly that during the last season no fishing was allowed.



Norway Lobster prepared for export

ZEPHYR

Zephyr headed to Lerwick to take on gear after all the arrival celebrations were over



NEW BOAT

ZEPHYR IS LATEST PELAGIC GIANT TO JOIN WHALSAY FLEET

THE ZEPHYR, Whalsay's latest pelagic trawler, having completed fishing trials, has headed to the fishing grounds to join the mackerel season.

By Peter Johnson

ZEPHYR (LK 394) arrived back in Shetland on 28 September following fitting out at Norwegian Yard Larsnes AS. Her hull and superstructure were built at Marine Projects in Poland with completion in February.

The 75.4m long ship was designed by Skipsteknisk AS and

towed from Poland to Norway on a barge, with winches and engine installed. The Polish yard builds a wide variety of craft including fish carriers, yachts and even tall ships as well as fishing boats.

Skipper Allister Irvine said that the £27m build had gone pretty much to plan and all that remained was to start catching fish when the mackerel season begins for UK boats.

ZEPHYR is owned by Zephyr

Fishing Company Ltd with the shareholders being Allister Irvine, Johnny Simpson (mate), Brian Irvine (engineer), John Arthur Irvine (Allister's brother) and Andrew Irvine (father to Brian) – the latter two of whom are now retired.

The rest of the crew include Callum Irvine (Allister's grandson), John Lowrie Irvine (John Arthur's son), Maurice Arthur and his son Richard Arthur, Allister Pearson, Willie John Jamieson and cook Sean Simpson (Johnny Simpson's son).

John Arthur Irvine was the skipper of ZEPHYR for many years and Allister only took over as skipper three years ago after 50-odd years at sea.

IMAGES BY IVAN REID



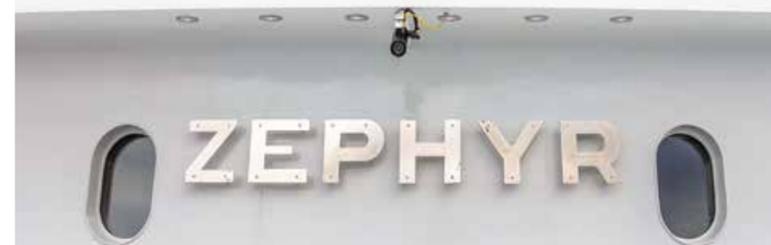
The Wartsilla Main Engine



The Zephyr Messroom



The Zephyr crew at Symbister



Jarle Gunnarstein from the Larsnes Mek Verksted shipyard in Norway shakes the hand of Skipper Allister Irvine after the arrival to Symbister wishing them well for the future.



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QUALITY THROUGH EXPERIENCE

Best wishes to the Zephyr Fishing Company. Safe fishing for the future to all the crew from LARSNES.

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www.larsnes-mek.no



FACT FILE

NAME: Zephyr
REGISTRATION: LK394
SKIPPER: Allister Irvine
CREW: 10
COMPANY: Zephyr Fishing Company Ltd.
HOME PORT: Lerwick
DESIGN: Skipsteknisk AS
TYPE OF VESSEL: Pelagic trawler
LENGTH: 75.4m
BEAM: 15m
RSW CAPACITY: 2500m3
MAIN ENGINE: Wartsilla 12V32

Now 70-years-old (or young) he feels he has a bit to go yet before hanging up the sea boots. "I'll get two or three years yet, if I'm able," he said.

ZEPHYR is the fifth vessel to bear the name owned by the Irvine family. Allister's father Lowrie bought his first boat, the Mary Jean, from Fraserburgh in 1948 and the first ZEPHYR came in 1959 and went to the drift net for herring as well as white fish seine, this was the first boat Allister was on, joining the crew in 1964.

The next ZEPHYR was a larger 90ft dual purpose boat that fished mackerel and herring with purse seine and also white fish. The next steel-hulled ZEPHYR was bought in 1980, and lengthened five years after that, as was the Antares skippered by another Irvine brother Lowrie, with a fourth brother – Bobby – also in the crew.



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE ZEPHYR FISHING CO. & CREW WITH YOUR NEW VESSEL. WISHING YOU SAFE & SUCCESSFUL FISHING.

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Brian Irvine (engineer) in his Engine control room



Zephyr wheelhouse equipment

The two vessels rigged up for pair-trawling in Ireland in 1986, with the purse seine very much of secondary importance and used mainly for herring.

The purse seine has been eliminated entirely in the new boat, which used white fish trawl units to amalgamate onto the licence in order to build the bigger vessel. The purse seine was "hard work on the crew anyway," said Allister.

"The difference between this boat and the older ones is no real," he added. There were some "poor runs" in his father's first, 65ft long, ZEPHYR, where the lack of a decent market in Shetland meant boats heading to Aberdeen with their catch.

With the pelagic trawl, a massive "net stacker" crane on the stern of the vessel does most of the hard work. Another crane on the port corner is solely for lifting the fish pump.

The next ZEPHYR and ANTARES started off pair-trawling but had more than enough power for single trawling and each "went their separate ways" as a result.

The same is, of course, true with the latest generation of boats and the new ZEPHYR has a 9,300hp Wärtsilä V12 main engine, essentially the same engine as the old boat but a more modern iteration with more power.

In new money, the main engine generates 6,960kW @ 750 rpm driving through a Wärtsilä 5.22:1 reduction gearbox driving a four-metre diameter four-bladed controllable pitch propeller in a fixed nozzle.

1,300 kW fore and aft Brunvoll thrusters provide extra manoeuvrability coming alongside or when fishing if needed.

ZEPHYR will fish with all ten men in the crew and usually lands to Pelagia either



Crowds go onboard at Symbister after the ships arrival to welcome and have a look around the new boat

in Lerwick or Norway, with the hope being most can be landed to the former Shetland Catch factory. The Pelagia contract does not apply outside of Norway, and the ZEPHYR will be free to land to any factory.

Allister said: "We will be going to the mackerel about the end of next week. The markets will be cleared up a bit and we can maybe get the chance to land. There are a lot of Norwegian boats just now landing everywhere and the mackerel is better for trawling a peerie bit later on – a bit firmer.

"We still have a bit of herring left and when the mackerel is finished there might be a bit of herring then. Just now the factories are full up with mackerel."

The 15m beam ship has a top speed of about 17.5 knots and a RSW (refrigerated sea water)

tank capacity of 2,550 cubic metres, enough for 2,200 – 2,300 tonnes of blue whiting.

Constant communications with the factories nowadays, with tow by tow updates being provided on WhatsApp, and vessel movements tracked on the AIS (automatic identification system), means the pelagic trawlers can pretty much fish to order, with the cut off being what the factory can handle over a couple of days.

ZEPHYR's wheelhouse is of course fully linked to the Internet and communications. Five big displays, the centre one being touch-screen, can show all manner and combination of information from vessel systems to net and catch information via sensors, to weather forecast, radar and AIS, to name a few applications.

The vessel's crew are

handsomely accommodated in 11 single-berth en-suite cabins and there are a further two 2-berth en-suite cabins plus a hospital cabin. There is an onboard gym and two lounge rooms. One of the lounges is separated from the messroom by a real stone wall complete with an embedded "natural look" electric fire.

The vessel is rigged to pump fish on board from the stern via the MMC pumping system, the same firm supplying the separator. The catch can be discharged from either the port or starboard side, depending on what the factory set up needs.

Sea water refrigeration is by Johnson Controls and SeaQuest supplied two fish pumps.

A 3,100kW shaft generator powers all the winches, cranes and systems at sea and there are no less than five auxiliary Caterpillar generators for when



Looking aft from the wheelhouse



One of the Catt auxiliary generator engines



The old Zephyr

the vessel is landing or otherwise requiring extra power.

A 170kW Caterpillar harbour generator is also installed for power when she is tied up and not using shore power.

Two 91 tonne trawl winches were supplied by Karmøy Winch AS along with a Karm computer autotrawl system; 2 x 41m³/110t net drums; and various mooring, outhaul, topline and netsounder cable winches.

Two midwater herring trawls were supplied by Swan Net Gundry of Killybegs: 2 x 900m midwater herring trawls as were two larger midwater mackerel

trawls and a blue whiting net. Vónin of Faroe supplied a further three blue whiting nets. Trawl doors are two Vónin Tornado 11m² 4200kg doors.

ZEPHYR's electronics were supplied by H Williamson & Sons Ltd, Scalloway including mostly Furuno fish detection and plotting equipment and various Furuno radars and navigation aids were among the navigation electronics.

The Skipper team wish Zephyr Fishing Company, the Zephyr crew and their families every success and safe fishing with the new ZEPHYR.

VÓNIN PACKAGE

ZEPHYR rigged with full Blue Whiting package from Vónin

Skipper Allister Irvine and his crew looked carefully at the fishing gear options for the new 74.50 metre, 2250 cubic metre capacity pelagic trawler ZEPHYR.

Having used Vónin Blue Whiting gear on the old ZEPHYR, they knew they wanted the complete package – the tried-and-tested 2304 metre Blue Whiting trawl, with a pair of Tornado doors and a couple of heavy-duty Blue Whiting codends.

Vónin's Blue Whiting trawl has been a consistent performer for pelagic vessels in the Faroe Islands, Iceland, Denmark, Norway, Russia, the Netherlands and France, as well as a number of UK vessels.

In fact, a substantial chunk of each season's Blue Whiting catch is taken in trawls and the heavy-duty codends that come from Vónin's net loft.

ZEPHYR's trawl is made with its forenet meshes spliced from the company's Capto rope to give the gear the strength and flexibility it needs for coping with

the demanding Blue Whiting fishery that takes place west of Ireland in the early part of each year. This is a fishery characterised by frequent heavy weather and big bags of fish taken from the dense marks of migrating Blue Whiting, so a robust set of fishing gear is essential.

The Vónin trawl gear is matched with an 11 square metre pair of the Tornado doors – doors that have been shown to be remarkably versatile, capable of performing from just below the surface to close to the seabed. They can be rigged for a variety of trawl gears and towing speeds from 1.50 knots to more than 5 knots, and they take both parallel and V-rig configurations in their stride.

Innovatively designed, with five foils and a patented Flow Booster generating exceptional lift, pelagic skippers have repeatedly mentioned that they see the doors square away as soon as they hit the water, spreading rapidly as the Flow Booster kicks in.

VÓNIN
TORNADO

PATENTED

FLOW BOOSTER

5 FOILS

TORNADO
BEST SPREAD ON THE MARKET
GENERATING THE HIGHEST LIFT

Wishing every success to Zephyr Fishing Company with your new vessel.

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MORE THAN 30 YEARS OF KNOWLEDGE



Eystein Elttor, Larsen Fishing Gear

Founded in October 2019, at Larsen Fishing Gear we bring with us more than 30 years knowledge and experience of delivering products & services to the fishing industry worldwide.

One of the Larsen Fishing Gear founders is the legendary Helgi Larsen who revolutionized the concept of trawl doors back in 1997 with the introduction of

the Shark model to the fishing industry. The rest is history. Today, all trawl doors produced and used in the fishing industry are based on the same principle Helgi Larsen introduced 22 years ago!

Our goal at Larsen Fishing Gear is to find the right solution to meet your needs, no matter where your company is located, where your vessel is operating, or what your size. No company and/or vessel is too small to be ignored in our service book.

As part of our service, we aim to give you the strongest, most durable product available and, of course, the best price too. With no limitations in terms of delivery – from Alaska to East Russia, Greenland to New Zealand, Argentina to the Faroe Islands and every country in between, we will deliver our products to you.

With us at Larsen Fishing Gear, quality is always our top priority when producing our products. In terms of our

steel production, we only use certified and Hardox steel. With our production teams of experienced welders and assemblers, and our vast expertise working with the fishing industry, we will work with you to achieve positive outcomes. And from our array of products, we will help you find the best suitable trawl door for your vessel.

Among the variety of doors we offer are:

HL-8 BOTTOM TRAWL DOOR TYPE: The HL-8 type is a bottom trawl door specially designed for, but certainly not restricted to, smaller vessels. Without compromising on quality, this design can be produced very light, which is important for some vessels. With long sweeps, the HL-8 works extremely well and is stable in shallow waters.

HL-9 BOTTOM TRAWL DOOR TYPE: The HL-9 type is an all-round bottom trawl door. The egg-shaped design and special curved foils make the HL-9 the most efficient low aspect ratio bottom trawl door on the market today.

HL-33 & HL-53 BOTTOM / SEMI-PELAGIC TRAWL DOOR TYPE: Typologically the same, but with different height ratios, both the HL-33 and HL-53 are suitable as bottom trawl doors and/or semi-pelagic trawl doors. As these models are taller than traditional bottom doors they have more spreading power, which means the vessel can go down a size and still maintain the needed spread on the trawls.

HL-78 PELAGIC TRAWL DOOR TYPE: The HL-78 model has taken the pelagic trawl door to the next level. The HL-78 has an extremely high lift, with more spreading power and low resistance all at the same time. The cleverly designed outer foils, together with the placement of the inner foils, makes it very easy for the vessel to turn and turn fast while towing, without losing precious fishing time. As the HL-78 model is so powerful,

compared with other models on the market, it is easy and safe for us to offer smaller sizes of HL-78.

For further information on any of our products or to get in touch please visit: www.lfg fo/.



Gallagher Brothers celebrate a century in business

The Gallagher Brothers recently celebrated their 100th anniversary and have thanked everyone who joined them in celebrating their massive milestone.

Established by brothers Jack and Phil Gallagher in 1919, over the past century Gallagher Brothers has grown into a business that today employs 200 people.

Their secret? A reliable and loyal staff, say the Gallaghers. Thankful for their continued support, four of the staff at Gallagher Bros—Fred Smith, Seamus Haughey, Donald Campbell and John Bernard Boyle—have been with them with over 40 years.

No doubt also important in their success story, over the years the company has continuously evolved – expanding on their core businesses and diversifying into new activities, which today includes fishing and aquaculture.

From their beginnings in Teelin a century ago, when Jack Gallagher established a retail business and his brother Phil Gallagher entered the fish business with the purchase of 50 herring curing barrels around the same time, the Gallagher Bros. have gone from strength to strength.

Partners in all activities, from there the Gallaghers would go on over the next decade to purchase a 50-tonne trading boat and a fleet of three Model T trucks would soon follow. With Phil focused on herring curing, three Zulus were also acquired and the herring, which was cured mainly in Teelin, Downings, Burtonport and Killybegs, was exported mostly to Britain and Germany.

Surviving the rationing of the wars years, in 1938 the brothers went on to acquire a property in Killybegs, establishing a second retail outlet. By the end of the 1950s, a kipping plant had been established and eventually a 20-tonne cold storage



The extended Gallagher Family pictured at the celebration on Saturday night.

plant was installed.

Over the next decades, the business would progress from hand filleting whitefish, smoking and freeing for the domestic and British markets to the formation of a limited company in the 1970s and moving into freezing pelagic species for markets in Africa, Asia, Russia and the Far East. In 1984, a salmon farming company, Ocean Farm Ltd. was established and a fishing company, Ocean Trawlers Ltd would follow in 1999.

Today, in Gallagher Brothers, these three companies work together as a group producing superior seafood, ranging from frozen pelagic fish and marinated herring to organic Atlantic salmon, which they supply to markets across the globe.

Speaking of their centenary celebration, the

Gallaghers Brothers thanked Seamus Gallagher and all the management and staff of The Bay View Hotel for a fabulous meal and night. They also thanked everyone who had made the night what it was, with special thanks to their accountant Shona McClafferty and assistant Tina, the party planners, whose detail and planning ensured the night went off without a hitch.

“It was fantastic to celebrate the occasion with everyone from past and present. Thank you all so much for coming and sharing our special celebrations and we look forward to our future together,” the Gallagher family said.

All of us here at The Skipper would like to congratulate the Gallagher Brothers on their success and wish them every success for the future.

Atlantic Treasures Fish Stop Official Opening

Crowds turned out in their hundreds for the official opening of Atlantic Treasures Fish Stop's official opening in Killybegs on the afternoon of Saturday, October 12th last.

Music by local musicians, Brandon Shoylin and Tiernan Boyle, entertained the crowds before RTE chef, Brian McDermott officially opened the shop.

There was plenty of wine and seafood for tasting, including oysters and Guinness to wash them down, and gin and tonics made with Slieve Liag distillers famous An Dúlmán Gin (with plenty of bread from Gallagher's bakery to soak them up) served throughout the day to keep the guests fed and watered.

Supplying an extensive range of quality fresh fish from boats in Killybegs, Greencastle, Dublin and Castletownbere, alongside with a range of frozen seafood, The Fish Stop—with its unmissable colourful mural outside, designed and painted by Ciaran Dunleavy—opened in early September.

Also available instore are their own award-winning smoked and marinated products and a range of “Wild Atlantic Produce” which is dedicated to promoting producers in Donegal and along the Wild

Atlantic Way. Produce available includes Shines Tuna, Quality Sea Veg, Algaran Seaweed beauty Products and Filligans Jams – all of which have been picked to complement various dishes.

The concept behind the Fish Stop is Hooked and Cooked, and the idea is to take the hard work out of seafood. Ronan, the singing fishmonger, takes that on instore instead, preparing each species in ovenable bags with a range of delicious glazes and seasonings to tempt the senses of the customer.

Demonstrating that concept on the day and showcasing pan-fried fish, the official opening was followed with a cooking demonstration by Brian, whose books are also available instore. Raffle prizes on the day were generously supplied by Herron Auto.

The Fish Stop has been supported by Donegal County Council's Town and Village Renewal Scheme with help from the Killybegs Regeneration Group & Killybegs Community Council as part of an overall town regeneration project.

For those who haven't had a chance yet pop down to the shop, open Tuesday to Friday 10-6 and Saturday 10-4, and say hi. You can also follow Atlantic Treasures Fish Stop on facebook and Instagram.



Fishmonger Ronan Cunningham, Killybegs Mayor Ann-Marie Bourke, Michael O'Donnell, Mick O'Donnell



Michael O'Donnell, Fishmonger Ronan Cunningham, TV Chef Brian Mc Dermott, Mick O'Donnell, TV & Radio Personality Noel Cunningham



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Marine Institute welcomes appointment of new CEO

Dr Paul Connolly has been appointed as the next Chief Executive Officer of the Marine Institute, Ireland's state agency for marine research, technology development and innovation.

Michael Creed TD, Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine announced the appointment last month. The appointment follows the upcoming retirement of Dr Peter Heffernan after 27 years as CEO of the institute.

Dr Connolly is the current Director of Fisheries and Ecosystems Advisory Services (FEAS) at the Marine Institute, leading world-class staff to provide scientific advice on the sustainable exploitation of Ireland's fisheries resource and marine ecosystems.

Welcoming the announcement, Chairman of the Marine Institute Dr John Killeen said, "On behalf of the board, I congratulate Dr Connolly on his new appointment as CEO. He brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the role, and will be dedicated to positioning the Marine Institute as a global leader in ocean knowledge and empowering Ireland to harness our marine

resource."

Dr Paul Connolly said, "Over the next five years, I will be deeply committed to supporting a culture of high performance driven by our people, whose skills, experiences and passion for the marine are central to the work of the Marine Institute. These are very exciting times for ocean science, with the UN Decade of the Ocean beginning in 2021, and the need to address the challenges posed by a changing climate."

Dr Connolly is a former president of the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES); a network of 20 countries, which aims to advance scientific understanding of marine ecosystems and provides impartial scientific advice for meeting conservation, management, and sustainability goals.

He has chaired the quarterly meetings of the Irish Fisheries Science Research Partnership (IFSRP) since it was established by the Minister in 2008. The IFSRP discuss the latest scientific advice and research gap areas related to sustainable fisheries. Dr Connolly also co-chairs quarterly meetings with the environmental



Dr Paul Connolly

NGO's which discuss ocean sustainability issues.

Dr Connolly led the development of the ICES Strategic Plan (2014 - 2018) which was adopted by 20 member countries, and worked closely with government, agencies and the Marine Institute team to develop Ireland's integrated marine plan, Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth. He also led the executive in developing the Marine Institute's Strategic Plan, Building Ocean Knowledge Delivering Ocean

Services (2018 - 2022). Dr Connolly has also led the development strategy for the Marine Institute's Newport Research facility which has led to an increase in research programmes in fisheries, aquaculture, genetics, climate and ecosystem science.

Dr Connolly has a PhD from UCD (1986), a Masters in Business Administration from NUI Galway (2006) and completed the Timoney Advanced Leadership Programme in 2016.

World's first shellfish traceability tool launched by research consortium

Studies carried out by a multi-Institutional research team led by Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) and supported by the Marine Institute, have resulted in the development of the world's first scientific-based shellfish traceability tool.

The research was led by Dr Conor Graham of the GMIT Marine and Freshwater Research Centre in collaboration with Dr Liam Morrison of Earth and Ocean Sciences and the Ryan Institute at the National University of Ireland, Galway. The research was also conducted in association with the Marine Institute, the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, the European Food Safety Authority and University College Dublin.

This unique tool used trace elemental fingerprinting of shellfish soft tissues and shells to identify the harvest location of blue mussels and scallops with 100% success, including mussels reared from two sites located just 6km apart within the one bay. The trace elemental fingerprinting approach not only correctly identified the site of harvest of scallops but was also able to distinguish between harvesting events just six weeks apart, both with 100% success.

The Marine Institute provided scientific advice and input into the initial stages of the research project, as well as providing samples of mussels and scallops for these studies. The Marine Institute is the National Reference Laboratory in Ireland

for the monitoring of marine biotoxins and microbiological/viral contamination of bivalve shellfish, and provide this information to the competent authorities under legislative and statutory requirements.

Lead scientist Dr Conor Graham of GMIT said, "In recent years consumers have become more food conscious seeking traceability of produce and while such tools exist for agriculture, until now no scientifically based system existed to trace both farmed and wild shellfish produce to their source.

"The aquaculture of shellfish such as mussels and oysters and the wild fisheries for scallops, razorfish and clams is a multi-million industry in Ireland supporting thousands of jobs in rural maritime communities around our coasts. This research aimed to create the world's first bivalve shellfish scientifically based traceability tool for Irish produce to promote this ecologically sustainable food."

Trace elemental fingerprinting is somewhat similar to genetic analyses except instead of identifying the variation in a number of genes to create a unique genetic identifier, trace elemental fingerprinting analyses how large numbers of trace elements contained naturally within the flesh and shells of shellfish vary uniquely according to growing sites. Although the shells of mussels and scallops are composed primarily of calcium carbonate,



Oyster. Image Fionn O'Fearghuil

other elements are incorporated into their shells at relatively low levels as they grow, which is determined by the bioavailable concentrations of these elements in the surrounding water column in which the shellfish live.

The details of this project was recently (October 8th) presented by Dr Conor Graham at the Marine Institute's 11th Shellfish Safety Workshop at Radisson Blu Hotel, Athlone. The event also included presentations from representatives from a variety of state agencies, academic and research institutions and the shellfish industry.

This research was recently published in two scientific papers in the international peer-reviewed journal, *Science of the Total Environment*.

ROV-ing Ireland's offshore reef habitats



Octopus 1000m below the surface

A team of Irish led international scientists onboard the RV Celtic Explorer have completed the third and final leg of an extensive offshore reef study, after a 21-day expedition investigating sensitive deep-sea habitats at the outer extent of the continental shelf off the southwest of Ireland.

The three year project,

called SeaRover (Sensitive Ecosystem Assessment and ROV Exploration of Reef) is led by the Marine Institute and INFOMAR, the national seabed mapping programme, and funded by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) and the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). During that time at sea, the survey team have mapped

154 separate locations within Ireland's marine territory, in one of the most significant deepwater benthic habitat assessments undertaken in this country. The data and findings will contribute to good fisheries practice and the sustainable management of Ireland's marine biodiversity. The survey utilised the Marine Institute's Remotely Operated Vehicle, ROV Holland 1 to capture high-definition footage of reef habitats up to 3000 m deep, and to recover biological and sediment samples from 52 locations along the continental margin.

"Sensitive reef habitats form fragile ecosystems and attract a variety of marine species, such as sea pens, sponges, fish and crustaceans. Surveying these habitats enables us to better understand Ireland's deep sea territory so that we can protect and monitor our marine biodiversity and sustainably

manage Ireland's marine resources effectively," said Yvonne Leahy, National Parks and Wildlife Service, survey Chief Scientist.

Scientists from NUI Galway and University of Plymouth also joined the expedition to gather a range of biological samples to enable further research into population genetics studies, ecological modelling, and the harvesting of sponges for potential novel compounds for use in bio-medical applications. Sediment samples will also be utilised for micro-plastics studies by NUI Galway and Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT).

The three surveys SeaRover surveys between 2017-2019 involved a combined 63 days at sea, recorded 332 hours of high-definition video from the seafloor, almost 14 days of footage, and have undertaken detailed studies of 350 km of

seabed along a shelf extent of nearly 2500 km. The surveys have explored 154 different locations along Ireland's continental margin, including the Rockall and Porcupine Banks, the Goban Spur and the Whittard Canyon.

The first SeaRover Survey in 2017 included the discovery of the deepest known occurrence of the cold-water coral *Solenosmilia variabilis*, forming reefs in Irish waters at depths of 1600m. In 2018 the team discovered a rare shark nursery, 200 miles west of Ireland. A large number of egg cases were filmed on the seafloor at depths reaching 750m, and a large school of blackmouth catshark (*Galeus melastomus*) were present at the site. There were also numerous recordings of different coral species observed in Irish waters for the first time.

"After three years, the survey team has created an extensive data set which represents one of the most comprehensive assessments of Ireland's marine

biodiversity. The success of these surveys is thanks to the coordination and collaboration across many organisations and government departments, and will benefit national policy development as well as researchers and scientists exploring our marine territory in the future," said Leonie O'Dowd, Marine Institute Section Manager and EMFF Programme Co-ordinator.

"It is fantastic to see the underlying INFOMAR seabed mapping data being used to strategically identify and target such vulnerable marine ecosystems for detailed studies in support of future marine management plans. In funding INFOMAR, the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment are supporting key evidence based investigations of our ever changing marine environment", said Thomas Furey, Marine Institute's joint INFOMAR programme manager.

The SeaRover (Sensitive

Ecosystem Assessment and ROV Exploration of Reef) project was commissioned and jointly funded by the Irish Government and the EU's European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). The cross-government initiative was supported by the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine, Department of Culture, Heritage and Gaeltacht, and Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment as part of the Marine Institute's

implementation of the EMFF Marine Biodiversity scheme. Survey operations were led by the Marine Institute, INFOMAR and National Parks & Wildlife Service, accompanied by scientists from NUI Galway and Marine Biology and Ecology Research Centre, University of Plymouth, and supported by scientists in Geological Survey Ireland and the Norwegian Marine Institute.



A Grenadier

VOICES OF WOMEN IN FISHERIES

The Skipper is interested in providing more coverage to the stories and experiences of women in their varied roles in fisheries. In order to do so, we'd like to hear from women from a range of backgrounds from across the fishing community – whether that is as a fisherwomen working at sea, a partner on land engaged in the day to day operations of fishing, a wife, sister, mother, daughter, or someone engaged in any other activities related to fishing (e.g., downstream activities such as processing, business, administration, management, science, research etc.). These stories could be historical or contemporary, big or small – either way, we would love to hear from anyone willing to share their story with us. To do so, contact the Editor at, editorial@maramedia.ie or 00353868239608.



Last month, a networking event was held by The Commissioners of Irish Lights celebrating women working in the marine sector to mark this year's World Maritime Day, which had the theme "Empowering Women in the Maritime Community." The event, which had a registered attendance of 160, was a great success and heard speakers from across the marine sector. Among them was **Trudy McIntyre** who spoke of her experiences as a fisherman's daughter, a fisherwoman and the work she does today onshore with respect to her family's business and as a fishing representative. This month, *The Skipper* is delighted to share Trudy's story.

"I would really like to see more Irish caught fish on our plates and more women at our national tables."

I am the current chairperson of the National Inshore Fisheries Forums and selected to represent the Forums on various national strategic committees. I am the representative at the national quota management advisory committee and The Celtic Sea Herring Management Advisory Committee. I also attend meetings on behalf of NIFF such as the Brexit Consultative Committee and the EMFF Monitoring Committee. I find the job personally rewarding but by no means easy, it has its challenges.

Let me tell you a bit about my background and how got to where I am today. As one of five siblings and the daughter of a fisherman, hopping on the fishing boat was the best way to spend time with him, going as often as I was allowed. One of the earliest memories I have is being lifted from bed and being put into the car with a pillow and blanket in the very early hours of the morning to drive to the boat. It was



this bond with my dad that hooked me with the love of the sea.

Summer holidays were spent fishing for lobsters, crabs and salmon, the thrill of seeing the silver flashes in the water of salmon, or the very rare occasion that a crayfish was in a pot met with cheers from the crew. The fresh air, peace and quiet, and sitting on the bow of the boat looking into the water, are still special memories.

However, in secondary school, that love I have for fishing and all things marine made me a bit of a target for teasing and bullying. I wasn't impressed by the taunts and comments, such as "oh there's

"It made me realise how valuable my role was within the industry and the contribution I make."

an awful smell of fish.... Here comes fishy" – adding in the ridiculous comic gold "fish face" for special effect. While it was upsetting to me, I was still extremely proud of my dad and his career. As my dad would say, "the fish might smell but the money doesn't!"

The only woman I knew of, in the late '90s, that was fishing was Cliona Conneely from the Aran Islands. I was

fascinated that she was doing this as her career and thought why can't I? I completed my deckhand course with BIM in Greencastle, being placed second overall, and as the only girl on the course, I was very proud of that achievement. Having gained valuable and enjoyable experiences on trawlers, and doing some work with BIM on trials for tuna, herring and pilchards, I took a break to

have my first child.

Today, I run the shore side of our family business with my husband Shane who fishes our boat the JUEAST from Dunmore East.

2014 brought extraordinary adverse weather conditions that prevented most of the Irish fleet from fishing for nearly 9 weeks. Being self-employed and without any income, didn't leave us with many options. Small fishing boats don't have much disposable income, as money has to be reinvested into the safety and maintenance of the vessel and replacing gear. And so this circumstance prompted me to go to the Minister of the Marine of the time, Simon Coveney.

I refer to a quote I used then and still use now when faced with a difficult situation: "Start by doing what's necessary, then do what's possible and suddenly you are doing the impossible."

So I did what was necessary. I literally camped outside the minister's office, to try and get a meeting with him to discuss the issues that affected not just my family but those of the entire industry. I got that meeting. I felt that he not only listened but heard what we had to say. Our problems were not solved that day, but I felt that the issues facing the sector were acknowledged. Later that year the Inshore Fishery Forums were established, by Minister Coveney. These forums bring the issues facing this sector to the national table and give us a voice. What was necessary had become possible.

In August 2017, three women, Leoni Noble, Jenny Shaw and Jayne Gallagher, from the seafood sector in Australia took time out en route to a meeting in Iceland to meet other likeminded women at Dublin airport. That day was life-changing for me. It made me realise how valuable my role was within the industry and the contribution I make.

Listening to those three ladies and what they have achieved in their home country was so inspiring! They pointed out to us, that the work we did in



Fishing industry representatives with the Government

the running the home and managing the family business encompassing finance, accounts, and general shore management, basically enables the fishers to do what they do and that's catch fish.

Similarly, my peers in the Irish fishing industry also inspire me—Catherine, Monica, Siobhán, Caitlín, Caitlín de Mhora—each with their own truly amazing qualities and dedication to the marine industry. Collectively we are involved with the running of the only Irish charity supporting the families of commercial fishermen that have been lost at sea. That charity is called Lost at Sea Tragedies or L.A.S.T We provide, a network of emotional and financial support in the immediate aftermath of a tragedy to the bereaved families.

My eldest daughter Stephanie, who volunteers when possible with L.A.S.T, is in her final semester studying Nautical science in the National Maritime College of Ireland – another career that is breaking the stereotypical.

Thinking in terms of the future of the industry, I would like to see more promotion and domestic consumption of Irish caught fish. We all like our crab's claws and lobsters in garlic butter and our seafood chowders but do we stop to ask where this fish comes from? As a small island, we need to support our Irish seafood producers to ensure continuity of our top-class product. And I would really like to see more Irish caught fish on our plates and more women at our national tables.

"the work we did in the running the home and managing the family business encompassing finance, accounts, and general shore management, basically enables the fishers to do what they do and that's catch fish."



Trudy on the L.A.S.T stand at Skipper Expo Int. Galway 2019



Deirdre Lane Dunmore East harbour master catching up on Fishing For Litter with Catherine Barrett, BIM and Trudy McIntyre at last month's Women in the Marine networking event

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cameras out, and send us your hi-res photos by email to editorial@maramedia.ie and don't forget to mention your name and details, as well as a brief description of the scene depicted. The photos must be taken by the person sending it to us, and it is understood that they are free of copyrights.

PHOTO THE MONTH WINNER: IAIN WEST (7) WITH THE WARRY CODLIN SHE CAUGHT WHEN OUT HAULING CREELS OFF GARDENSTOWN WITH HER DAD ON THE JENNY LOU.

THE MONTHLY PRIZE

The winner will receive a Sotra Fleece by GUY COTTEN

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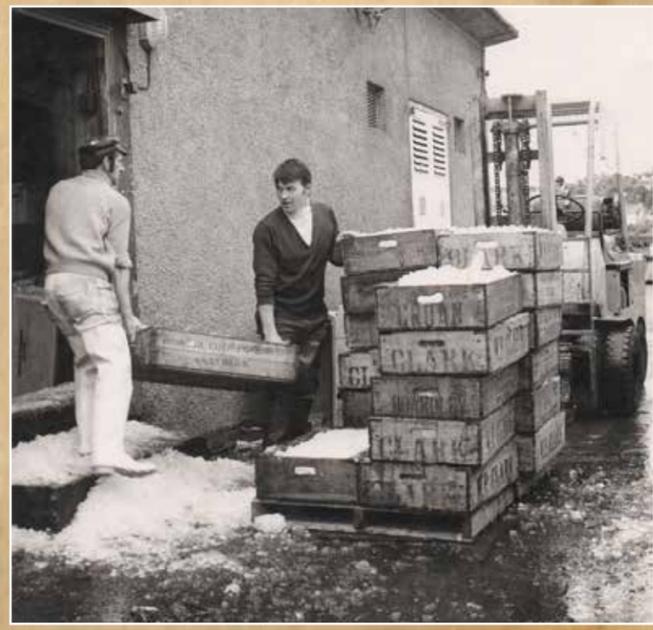
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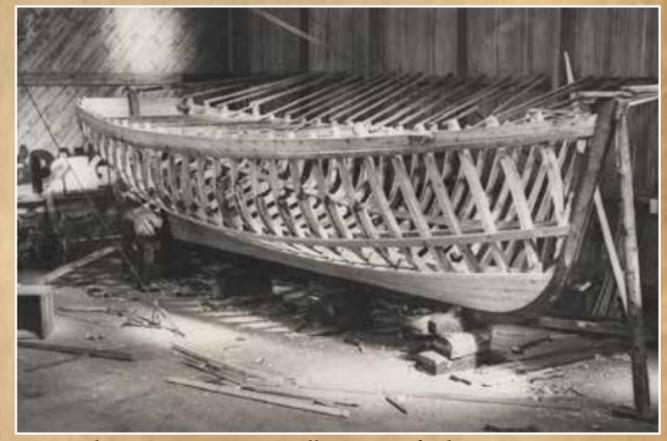


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Joey Murrin and Manus Boyle, Killybegs, Co. Donegal



Boat under construction in Tyrells, Co. Wexford



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MV Valour and MV Silver Strand towing astern of the Trudella off Gormanstown.

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The Archives - NOVEMBER 1967

PAGE 4

THE IRISH SKIPPER

NOVEMBER, 1967

FISHERMEN IN ISOLATED AREAS CAN GAIN FROM UNITY

Many problems are common to all, says ARTHUR REYNOLDS

ALTHOUGH all the main ports have their local fishermen's associations, and many of the small ones too, there are still thousands of fishermen in the more isolated places who could benefit by unity. Much work has been done in the past two years by the Irish Fishermen's Association to give local groups a central organisation where the common interest of all can be discussed and protected, but there are still many local fishermen who receive no benefit from the existence of the national body because they themselves have not formed a local association.

The points I want to make here especially concern those people. Just because a stretch of coast does not yet have a centre for its fishing operations there is no reason why the fishermen should not come together at one point for meetings. A good example is the Cleggan (Co. Galway) Fishermen's Association, which has members ranging over a wide area. True, organisational work is more

difficult under such conditions, but it is possible and well worthwhile. Burtonport Fishermen's Association was a difficult organisational job to get going, but now it is one of the best in the whole country. WHY THE TROUBLE? Why is such organisation worth all the trouble, you might say, if a fisherman can sell his fish at a fair price and has somewhere to tie up his boat? Why should he go to the incon-

venience of attending meetings and the expense of subscribing to an association's funds? The answer is that only a very small percentage of the fishermen outside the bigger ports have, in fact, got decent berthing facilities, and in many cases they have to take what they are offered for their lobsters or fish because the buyers threaten to get their supplies elsewhere. And when such a small group of men look for a pier repair or the laying of a road to a landing place their voice is small compared with the businessmen and big farmers who want council funds set aside for other projects. No, there is no substitute for unity, as people of every occupation in the world have discovered for themselves. Do not think, because your stretch of coast has no decked trawlers that it would be futile to form an association. The reason why you may be still confined to the currach or half-decker when you want a bigger boat is because you have no harbour, but you'll never get a harbour until you have the organisation to campaign for it.



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Another point worth keeping in mind is this. Recommendation No. 4 in the report on the Irish fishing industry prepared by the American survey team 3 1/2 years ago is as true to-day as it ever was. It says: "There are areas where a relatively minor expenditure might be of great benefit to local fishermen. Such projects should not be overlooked or discouraged simply because of their small size. The return for the funds expended may in some cases be greater than from major development work." To press home to the responsible authorities the truth of that recommendation organisations are essential, first on a local basis and then through a national body. LOCAL AFFAIRS Some of the newly-formed local associations may consider that their problems are too local to get the attention of a national body, and therefore there would be no purpose in affiliation. In fact, local associations, because they deal in fewer types of fish, and sell (although they may not know it) their lobsters or salmon in many instances to the same buyer, have more in common than the big ports. Therefore they stand to gain more through unity than the bigger ports whose bargaining power is greater.

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Sorting the catch
Photo: Eugene Rutter



Séan Máir making her way into Rossaveal recently
Photo: Aodan McDonagh



Fraserburgh at night Photo: Eugene Rutter



Ocean Spray SH 94 in Whitby
Photo: Mick Bayes Jr.



Townley Bay Kilcar, Co. Donegal at sunset.
Photo: Shane Meehan



Calum Polson, Shetland

OUT & ABOUT
GOT A GREAT PHOTO? SEND IT TO THE SKIPPER
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Busy Castletownbere in October
Photo: Aodan Griffin



Croíadh Carroll (2 mths) on her first visit to the Monica II with her Dad, skipper Aaron Carroll in Castletownbere last month



Aidan O Callaghan, Monica II, mending nets with his 3 kids Danny, Robbie and Ailbhe on Dinish Island, Castletownbere.



Sean Timon, Peter Lynch's nephew, delighted with his new Skipper jacket! Sorry, Peter but we're working on it!



Edward Gallagher, Hugh Gallagher, Micky Eddie Gallagher, Christopher Boyle, Hugh Early and Neily Kavanagh...all working hard in Aphort Slip, Arranmore Island!! Photo: John McCafferty

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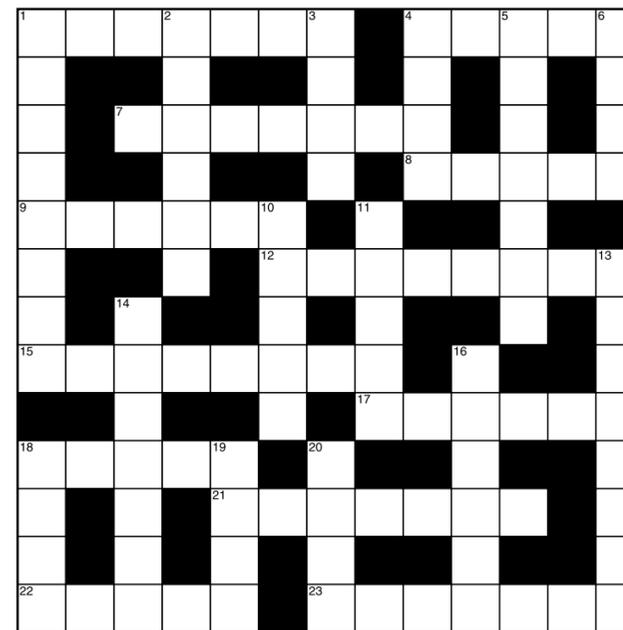
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ACROSS

1. Wandering
4. Fourth, ..., sixth
7. Impart knowledge
8. Jewelled headdress
9. Type of beard
12. Joyous
15. Cuddled
17. Facilitate
18. Actor, ... Bridges
21. Posted via the Web
22. Whetted
23. Invalidated

DOWN

1. Plot a path
2. Reviews (ledger)
3. Large shellfish
4. Relax, put your ... up
5. Absent-minded (look)
6. Grass skirt dance
10. Evict
11. House
13. Dried with cloth
14. Belly
16. Shutterbug's tool
18. Luxuriant
19. Title document
20. Farm building



OCTOBER SOLUTION

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Smart Net Management focus of BIM and ISWFPO workshop in Castletownbere

Smart Net Management focus of BIM and ISWFPO workshop in Castletownbere. Photography: Cathal Noonan

Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) and the Irish South and West Fish Producers Organisation (ISWFPO) co-hosted a net management workshop in Castletownbere, West Cork last month.

The aim of the day-long event, which was attended by a cross-section of the Irish seafood sector and auxiliary industries, was to track the 'journey' of fishing gear from its initial entry into the market to its end of life or 'retirement'. The workshop also looked at ways to better analyse and understand the source of marine litter brought ashore by the Irish catching fleet today.

New plastics and circular economy policies underpin emerging trends in sustainability. They require member states to minimise the impact of plastics on the environment and to increase the opportunities for used plastics to be recycled and retained instead of ending up on a landfill.

As of October 2019, a total of 224 fishing vessels are registered to Fishing For Litter (FFL). The national programme, where fishing vessels voluntarily collect and take ashore all marine litter they collect during normal fishing activities at sea, forms part of the wider Clean Oceans Initiative. The application of circular economy principles is key to the new national initiative to reduce marine waste so that fishing vessels can develop new ways to record, log and make an inventory of gear and marine waste. To date, 49 vessels are registered to Fishing for Litter

in the port of Castletownbere. This represents one-fifth of the national fleet.

Commenting on the commitment of local fishermen to the initiative, Patrick Murphy, CEO ISWFPO said, "The local determination to demonstrate their fishing gear management is outstanding. Other key stakeholders such as the harbour management, net makers are also behind the objective and are keen to help communicate and validate the responsible approach taken by the large majority in Castletownbere".

The EU Commission is currently developing new ways to monitor and report fishing gear, from being placed on the market to its retirement. The Commission is also exploring ways to better analyse marine litter. The final report will be available in July 2020.

BIM's establishment of the Fishing for Litter programme in 2015, supported by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, has given Ireland a head start. BIM is also working on ways to improve the characterisation of waste and marine litter. Current international research indicates around 80 per cent of marine plastics, the most common source of marine litter, comes from land-based sources. However, according to BIM, progress in this area will ultimately lead to stronger insights about marine waste. And though BIM has also been handling end of life gear aspects since 2006, the new EU directives and policies on plastics will give new impetus to

addressing end of life gear.

"Demonstrating the responsible management of our gear at its end of life is a priority. A full trawl gear could have up to a 10-year life span and is an expensive key piece of equipment. We are keen to work with BIM to identify how best to monitor and record our gear efficiently and to demonstrate this objectively," said ISWFPO chairman, Damien Turner, signifying the willingness of the fishing industry to address any contribution their activities might have in terms of adding to the marine litter issue. Current estimates indicate around 10 per cent of all marine litter comes from fishing activities.

In September 2015, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It comprises 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). BIM was recently appointed an SDG champion for four of the goals, two of which are particularly relevant where plastics and marine waste

are concerned; SDG 14 (Life Below Water; a target of which is to help prevent and reduce marine pollution) and SDG12 (application of environmentally sound management of all waste through their life cycle).

"The aim of the Champions programme is to raise awareness of the SDGs and to show through the example of the Champions that everyone in society can make a contribution to achieving the 17 Goals. The catching sector is a key contributor to ensuring that we can improve the outcomes for Life Below Water and maximise the lifecycle and recoverable costs of plastics used by the catching sector, the Clean Oceans Initiative will be instrumental in delivering on these SDGs," explained Catherine Barrett, BIM.

Representatives from two EU funded projects, 'Blue Circular Economy' and 'Circular Seas', tasked with creating opportunities for end of life fishing gear, also attended the workshop in Castletownbere.

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