

Ellen Hutchins Festival

Annual Report 2021

It's been another busy year for the Festival team, with a diversification of events in the Festival itself and exciting new ventures outside of it. The Festival organisation now offers an increased range of ways for both adults and children to explore, enjoy and appreciate an aspect of botany, try botanical or nature art, or learn more about Ellen's story and her world.

Environmental Research Institute: UCC

The big news in 2021 was that the Environmental Research Institute (ERI) at University College Cork (UCC) is to name their HQ building on the Lee Road in Cork City the Ellen Hutchins Building. The ERI is a flagship UCC institute dedicated to generating research to facilitate a transformation to a zero carbon, resource efficient, and sustainable society. The Festival is delighted with this decision and a long term tie-in between ERI and the Festival. A naming ceremony, delayed by COVID restrictions, is due to take place in September 2022.

Oceanic Lichens: an Introductory Guide to Glengarriff Woods & Harbour

We published our fifth book this year. This delightful publication with text and photos by Paul Whelan and design by Jenny Dempsey, provides an introduction to lichens, and explains how they live and their habitats. It then gives descriptions, identification tips and stunning photographs of over 40 lichens found on trees and the rocky seashore at Glengarriff. It was funded by National Parks & Wildlife Service. <https://www.ellenhutchins.com/online-shop/>

Cruinniú na nÓg (youth creativity): Creative Adventures with Leaves and Paint

Saturday 12th June is Cruinniú na nÓg – a day of free creativity for children and young people in Ireland. With a grant from Cork County Council Library & Arts Service, the Ellen Hutchins Festival contributed online materials, Creative Adventures with Leaves and Paint, by talented nature artist and experienced teacher, Sue van Coppenhagen. Sue lives in Co Cork and ran these activities in-person for the Festival on Wild Child Day in 2019. Now there are three nature art journeys online with video tutorials that can be enjoyed by those aged 5-8, 9-12 and 13+ (includes adults.) See <https://www.ellenhutchins.com/creative-adventures/>

Festival 2021

The theme of Heritage Week this year was getting as many people to enjoy heritage as possible, and for the Festival we had in-person events, online workshops and self-guided or

DIY Festival days. The DIY days are now on the website and can be used whenever and wherever you choose. Each has a theme – two botanical, one nature-art and one on Ellen's Letters. A short video introduces the theme of the day and gives self guided / DIY activity ideas and free resources. See <https://www.ellenhutchins.com/diy-festival/>

Outdoor Furniture, Shelters, Microscopes, Voice Amplifiers and display case

The Festival was awarded a grant of €6,000 from the Heritage Council for outdoor furniture, shelters, two microscopes, two portable weatherproof sound amplification systems, and an archives storage and display case.

One shelter is a huge teepee style tent made from a recycled parachute, and the other a conventional pop up gazebo. Both were put to good use during the Festival. The colourful and sturdy children's tables and chairs were wonderful for Wild Child Day and the adult furniture and sound amplifiers were used at all the appropriate Festival events. See the photos on our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/EllenHutchins200/photos>

The Ellen Hutchins Archive is a beautiful four drawer cabinet made in oak and ash by furniture maker, Matthew Burt. It has an ingenious, flexible system of drawers and handling frames to display Ellen's letters, drawings, books and other archives. The cabinet will appear at events and exhibitions, and inbetween, live at the ERI's Ellen Hutchins building in Cork.

She Gathered Seaweeds on the Seashore and We Filmed Her

A Festival event on collecting seaweeds in the early 1800s with period costume and appropriate baskets was held at Ardnagashel (thanks to Rent an Irish Cottage) and featured historical re-enactor, Carrie O'Flynn, as Ellen, and Frances Gallagher as a woman collecting seaweeds for food and fertiliser. Frances talked about seaweed collection and ran a practical session making seaweed specimens. Frances' basket was a traditional West Cork creel, made for the Festival by local basketmaker, Martin O'Flynn. The event and the making of the creel were filmed by Colm Rooney and the short films can be seen at: <https://www.ellenhutchins.com/the-early-1800s/>

The films received funding from FLAG – Fisheries Local Action Group South who also funded the research into and making of the costumes, boots and baskets. The films, the creels, and two events in the 2021 Festival received funding under the County Cork Heritage Grant Scheme 2021, supported by Cork County Council and the Heritage Council.

Ann Casson and a cameraman from RTÉ Nationwide filmed She Gathered Seaweeds and Ellen & Dawson: Seaweed & Sealing Wax (see below) and the piece is expected to be aired this Spring (2022).

Wild Child Day

A very successful Moss Hunt and Tree Trail for families was run by the Conservation Rangers in Glengarriff Woods. There were mossy activities and hand lenses available. It was funded by Cork County Council / Creative Ireland.

Join our Moss Hunt

Aimed at children aged 6 -12, Join Our Moss Hunt inspires them to explore a miniature world through artistic and scientific activities. With overall design by Jenny Dempsey, illustrations by botanical artist Shevaun Doherty and scientific input by bryologist Joanne Denyer, this is a pioneering project to engage children in an aspect of nature present in both urban and rural settings that often goes unnoticed. Funding was from Creative Ireland County Cork, Environmental Research Institute (ERI) UCC, and Bantry Credit Union. The free online materials are suitable for all Ireland, see: <https://www.ellenhutchins.com/moss-hunting/>

Ellen & Dawson: Seaweed & Sealing Wax: Correspondence 1811

Part performance and part talk, this new departure for the Festival began as a live event under the parachute shelter on the lawn at SeaView House Hotel, Ballylickey in the Festival in August. It was then given as a Zoom webinar in December (postponed a week because of the ferocity of Storm Barra in West Cork), and the recording is now available on the website. See: <https://www.ellenhutchins.com/current-upcoming-events/>

The story of the friendship between Ellen and DawsonTurner is told through extracts of their letters from summer 1811 read by performers, Karen Minihan and Mark O'Mahony (at SeaView) and Robin McLoughlin (in Norfolk, on Zoom) with introductory notes by Finola Finlay (Roaringwater Journal) and an explanation of letter writing, the postal system, costume and customs of the day by historical re-enactor Carrie O'Flynn (in Cork City). Madeline Hutchins shows some Ellen archives and period pieces relevant to the story.

Linked to this performance, all the 24 letters between Ellen Hutchins and Dawson Turner from 1811 have been transcribed and typed, and are available on the website. See: <https://www.ellenhutchins.com/2022/01/03/correspondence-from-1811/>

Researchers, artists and writers

Members of the Festival team have met and shared information with a number of individuals studying Ellen, or making art or writing about her. A valuable link was established with the Crespo Foundation, which has a base for artists / scientists residencies in West Cork,

Madeline Hutchins

An organiser of the Ellen Hutchins Festival

9th February 2022