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Get back on board for 'Port-paddle-trae'

THE second annual 'Port-paddle-trae' event will take place this Saturday in and around the harbour of Portballintrae.

Run in aid of the RNLI, it is billed as 'a charity fun day of paddle boarding races and activities for all the family.'

But there is also a serious side with organisers keen to promote sea safety and awareness of dangers inherent in all water sports.

Paddle-boarding is probably the fastest growing watersport on the North Coast.

But the surge in popularity has brought extra work for Coleraine Coastguard over the last couple of summers.

Cheaper, inflatable boards that are much easier to transport have made the sport accessible to almost anyone.

To help raise awareness the RNLI will be in Portballintrae on Saturday giving talks on sea safety.

But the emphasis is on family fun. Activities include paddle board races and swimming races across the bay.

You can learn about surfing from the Wave Project or wildlife around the North Coast from Gary Burrows of The Coastal Zone.

On land, Urban Soul Yoga will be offering taster yoga sessions or, if you'd prefer to just sit back and watch the fun, you could do so with a coffee from Crumb & Beyond.

The event is organised by Deborah Kinder from 'Get Up, Get On' Paddleboarding.

She said: "Paddle boarding is a fantastic sport and with a bit of knowledge and the right equipment there's no reason why it can't be incredibly safe."

"The main aim of Port-paddle-trae event is to

have fun and everyone is welcome whether they take part or not.

"You can try the sport in as safe an environment as possible."

The one-day Port-paddle-trae charity event is on Saturday, June 24 running from 10am until 4pm.



Alan Simpson interviews one of the participants in last year's 'Port-paddle-trae' event.



Fun on the boards from last year's Port-paddle-trae event.

The pheonix is still rising for popular Portstewart writer

COLERAINE Library provided the venue for the launch of Portstewart writer Mary Farrell's third collection 'A Phoenix Still Rising.'

The collection contains a varied selection of pieces as talented grandmother Mary continues to challenge herself to experiment with many different techniques and formats in an effort to hone her writing skills.

She trusts that by constantly striving for improvement, she, like the Phoenix of the title, continues to rise.

Like her first and second Collections- 'It's like walking a Tightrope' in 2021, the new collection and 'Out of the Chrystalis' in 2022 - her new collection is published by Lincoln-based Impspired Press.

During the launch on Tuesday, June 6, members of the three groups which Mary facilitates each week - North Coast Writers, Words Inc and Sanderlings - picked their favourite pieces from the book to read to an enthusiastic audience.

Other readers included members of other NI Creative Writing Groups with whom Mary has strong links, from Portrush, Ballycastle, the Foyle area and Portglenone.

She told The Chronicle: "I can't thank the members of all these groups enough for their encouragement, support and advice in helping me to produce these collections."

"I would also like to thank Northern Ireland Libraries, Coleraine Branch, for all the help and support I have received in providing such a welcoming background for this event."

Also a writer of short stories, Mary's first book in her 'The Circle' trilogy, called 'The Kingdom' was published in November 2022, at the same time as 'Springboards: a Creative Writing Manual for Beginners through to Facilitators'.

Her second book of short stories, 'The Maybury Tales', will be published this coming November, 2023, also by Impspired Press.

To encourage writing and foster the publication of the work of Northern Irish writers, Mary and the Steve Cawte, the Editor of Impspired Press, initiated 'Soundwaves' in March 2023, an annual competition open to all writers on the coast from Ballycastle to Donegal town, as well as to any who live in the rest of Northern Ireland.

The prizewinner, to be chosen at a Showcase event in Portrush Town Hall on Saturday, November 18, is guaranteed the publication of their winning entry by Impspired Press, both online and in book format.

There is also a dedicated section, with one guaranteed winner, for writers under 18.

All Mary's previous publications are for sale in No 6 Queen Street, Coleraine, and in Causeway Books, Main Street, Bushmills. They can also be purchased online from Amazon.



Mary Farrell, Portstewart author with Joe Henderson and Hazel Siberry pictured during the launch of her third Collection 'A Phoenix Still Rising' at Coleraine Library. WK24-10TM



Maxine Hasson, Hannah Campbell and Karen Burr, Coleraine Library pictured with Mary Farrell, Portstewart author during the launch of her third Collection 'A Phoenix Still Rising'. WK24-11TM

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Sunday 25th June - ON STAGE
Curtis Magee, Johnny Fingers McHugh, Gary Gamble, Elaine Boyle, Alastair Coyle & Compere: Gary Wilson

Monday 26th June - ON STAGE
Curtis Magee, Hugo Duncan, Shawn Cuddy, Johnny Fingers McHugh & Compere: Gary Wilson

Tuesday 27th June - ON STAGE
Curtis Magee, John McNicholl, Andrew McMurdie, Country Harmony, Johnny Fingers McHugh & Compere: Gary Wilson

Wednesday 28th June (Farewell Party Night) - ON STAGE
Curtis Magee, Declan Nerney, Boxcar Brian, Country Harmony, Johnny Fingers McHugh & Compere: Gary Wilson

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