Joint Irish Forest School Association and Northern Ireland Forest School Association

Autumn Gathering

‘Weaving Our Connections and Sharing the Harvest of our Practice'

Celebrating 10 years of NIFSA

9.30am - 5.00pm
Saturday 6th October 2018
Clandeboye Estate, near Bangor, Co. Down
Welcome to Clandeboye

Clandeboye Estate nestles in 2,000 acres of land. It has a working dairy farm and Yoghurt Company. There are over 1,000 acres of broadleaved woodland, making it one of the largest native woodlands in Ireland. Lady Dufferin, the custodian of the estate, has always been passionate about education, the environment and the arts and has been a huge supporter of them all over the years. She wants to see children, students, teachers, academics and others using Clandeboye Estate to become inspired and reconnected again to our natural world.

Shared Education is another key strand of her vision. The chance for communities from different backgrounds to learn and play together at Clandeboye will help to forge a more tolerant and respectful society in Northern Ireland. Lady Dufferin was instrumental in getting the Woodland Trust to operate in Northern Ireland. Now the Woodland Trust have over 52 publicly accessible native woodlands covering over 1,000 acres. Conservation Volunteers (TCV) have an established tree nursery on the Estate as well, growing over 100,000 native trees every year.

Northern Ireland Forest School Association (NIFSA) was established in September 2008. Since that time has developed its own accredited Forest School Leader Level 3 qualification, trained over 100 teachers and youth leaders and delivered Forest School sessions to over 30,000 children. We want to celebrate not only what we have done but also a new chapter in our history – the development and delivery of the Learning Without Walls initiative. This is a formal partnership between Lady Dufferin and the Dufferin Foundation and NIFSA.

The Irish Forest School Association (IFSA) was founded in 2016 and we are delighted to be partners in this celebration and to jointly share our experience and build our connections on the island of Ireland.

We are looking forward to meeting you all at this Gathering and to weaving our connections and sharing our practice together.

Joan Whelan and Brian Poots
# Autumn Gathering Programme

**Saturday 6th October 2018**  
**9.30am – 5pm**

**Registration**  
Workshops selected on a first come, first served basis.

**9.50 AM**  
**Opening Circle in The Courtyard**  
Ciara Hinksman and Lucy O’Hagan

**10 AM**  
**Welcome (The Ballroom)**  
Lady Dufferin, Clandeboye Estate, Brian Poots Chair of NIFSA and Joan Whelan, Chair of IFSA

**10.30**  
**Weaving our Connection in Willow (Parkland)**  
Facilitated by Lucy O'Hagan and Ciara Hinksman, Woven in Willow by Lucy Bell

**11 - 12.30**  
**Workshops Session 1**  
Participants can attend two workshops during the day - one in the morning session and one in the afternoon session, all workshops will be repeated.

**12.30 - 1.30**  
**Lunch**  
Soup and sandwiches with Tea & coffee (included)

**1.45-3.15**  
**Workshops Session 2**  
Participants can attend two workshops during the day - one in the morning session and one in the afternoon session, all workshops will be repeated.

**3.30-4.30**  
**Tours (Choose One):**  
Seed processing workshop and tour of the nursery at Clandeboye with Jeremy Turkington  
Tour of Clandeboye Gardens Estate with Brian Poots

**4.30**  
**Closing Circle**  
Co-facilitated by Ciara Hinksman and Lucy O'Hagan, with support from Lucy Bell

**5 PM**  
**End of Conference**

**7.30 PM TIL LATE**  
**Celebrations!**  
To celebrate 10 years of NIFSA there will be music and a bar in the ballroom from 7.30pm please join us in our celebrations. Bring along your instruments and your voices!
Workshop 1
Lucy O Hagan: Lighting the way of the ancestors: Exploring prehistoric light

Come take a seat around the hearth and make the ancient in you sit up and listen.
During this workshop, we will explore different methods of prehistoric lighting techniques to guide your way into the darker months ahead. There will be space for discussion on how we can learn from our shared ancestral heritage, and the importance of passing on this flame to future generations.
Come with an open heart & don't forget to pack your stories, songs & smile.

Lucy O'Hagan is the founder of Wild Awake & Phoenix Forest School, based in Dublin's iconic Phoenix Park. As well as being a Forest School practitioner, Lucy is also a certified ethnobotanist, wildlife tracker & Bushcraft instructor. This year, she has spent 4 months living wild with ancestral skills teacher Lynx Vilden. From the ancient caves of the Dordogne, to the northern lands of the Sami, she has deepened her love & understanding of ancestral wisdom and cultural repair. She is very excited to be presenting at the conference this Autumn, back near her home town of Belfast.

Workshop 2
James Hunter:
Indian Potato Bread!
Irish Pizza Bread!
and a Clay Oven!

We have been hosting outdoor gatherings and Bushcraft workshops, at our wee camp in Clandeboye Estate for the last 2 years. Come on up and have a cup of tea and maybe some spicy potato bread, and hear the story of the Clay oven!

James Hunter has been working and volunteering at Clandeboye Estate since the 1980's, as well as being a drystone waller and stonemason for the estate, James has continuously been involved in environmental education - developing both conventional and other alternative workshops that help others to connect to each other and their environment.
Workshop 3
Maree Hensey: To Be. To Wallow. To Wonder

An invitation for participants to engage in an immersive, process-based experience led by artist Maree Hensey. Within the natural environment participants will explore, question, feel and enquire. There will be no instructions or rules as to how we will work. Through collaborative play and exploration these decisions will be made. There will be no beginning or end allowing for movement to and from the space. We will share and learn new skills in a mutually supportive environment.

Maree Hensey is a visual artist. Her practice encompasses drawing, sculpture and installation. At the heart of her artistic practice is the engagement and participation of community. She has completed several Public Art Commissions, Site Specific Installations, Artist in Residence programmes and Community Based Participatory Art projects. Material is an integral component in her practice. She uses materials that are rich in associations and investigates ways to transform them, often projecting new identities and layers of meaning onto the work in doing so. http://www.mareehensey.com

Workshop 4:
George Lyttle Paper-making in the Forest

Using waste paper, water, bottles and a simple frame, participants will learn a basic paper making technique suitable for children and adults. Autumn leaves, flowers and other natural materials collected from the forest can be incorporated into the paper to give colour and texture. Once dry, it can be used for a range of craft activities including card making.

George Lyttle has worked in environmental education for over 20 years, in NGOs and the public sector. In this time he has developed and delivered talks, workshops and activities on a wide range of environmental issues including biodiversity, energy, build heritage, litter and recycling. George believes that getting kids outside is a vital part of developing a long term appreciation for the natural environment. He has been on the board of the Northern Ireland Forest School Association for ten years.
Seed processing workshop and
Tour of the Nursery at
Clandeboye
with Jeremy Turkington

Jeremy Turkington is Senior Project Officer at TCV’s Tree Nursery in Bangor. Jeremy has been working in the arboriculture and urban forestry sector for 10 years. His focus is to increase native woodland cover, whilst preserving the local genetic character of trees localised to our northern temperate seed zone. He is passionate about fostering Ireland’s indigenous woodland culture in our young people, a culture deeply forgotten, but not entirely lost.

Tour of Clandeboye Gardens
Estate with Brian Poots

Clandeboye Estate nestles in 2,000 acres of North Down countryside. It has nearly 1,000 acres of natural woodland, a dairy farm and parkland. This year sees a formal partnership between NIFSA and The Dufferin Foundation, called Learning Without Walls. Brian will take a leisurely tour of some of the areas that are going to be involved in the Learning Without Walls initiative and a chance for people to find out more about it and the work of NIFSA.
Lucy Bell

Lucy Bell is co-founder of GROWing Gardens, a Kildare based environmental education company. Lucy is an organic horticulturalist, a horticulture tutor, environmental educator and a trained Forest School Leader, with years of experience facilitating in a variety of outdoor skills. Lucy is co-author of ‘The Year-Round School Organic Garden’. Lucy is a Heritage Specialist for the ‘Heritage in Schools’ scheme. Lucy is a member of the IFSA ACORN.
www.growinggardens.ie

Ciara Hinksman

Ciara Hinksman formed her outdoor learning company Earth Force Education in 2009. Ciara coordinates, and is one of the trainers for, the Certificate in Forest School Programme Leadership training in Co. Wicklow with UK trainers Circle of Life Training. Ciara is a Heritage in Schools specialist for nature connection, biodiversity and sustainability. She runs both children’s and family forest camps in Co. Wicklow and the Irish National Heritage Park. Ciara Hinksman is founding Chair of the IFSA. See www.earthforceeducation.com