

International Women's Day

Inspirational Paths...

International Women's Day (IWD) takes place tomorrow, Tuesday 8 March 2022, with activities taking place nationally and internationally throughout the month.

International Women's Day is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. This day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity. To mark IWD, significant activity is witnessed worldwide as groups come together to celebrate women's achievements or rally for women's equality.

This year's theme is #BreakTheBias and looks at how we can all live in a gender equal world.

In conversation with Pauline Dowling, Foreperson at Altamont Gardens, Co. Carlow

This year, the OPW is sharing a snapshot of the inspirational career path taken by one of our colleagues, Pauline Dowling, to learn about her experience as a woman pursuing a career in the domain of gardening.





What are you working on at the moment?

At present we are working on Snowdrop Month, which is a month dedicated to snowdrops, as we have the largest public collection of 150 named varieties in Ireland. The collection was left to the OPW by former owner, Mrs C North, who left the estate to the Irish Nation. We have guided tours every Monday, Wednesday & Friday @ 2pm for the public. We did a small interview with Eleanor Mannion from the RTÉ news website for the event, & RTÉ Radio 1 for St. Valentines Day.

How did you get started on your chosen career?

I was always interested in working outdoors as I grew up on a Farm in Co. Carlow. We grew our own vegetable, grain, & sugar beet, as the Beet Factory was in Carlow town. We also had a dairy herd, and looked after livestock on the family farm, and kept sheep, & horses. My parents were great gardeners and always encouraged us to plant trees and look after wildlife on the farm, as well as the livestock.



Severe Weather Alert



What has been your biggest career challenge so far?

Biggest career challenge so far has been climate change, trying to get work done in the gardens, & storms coming in more frequently. It is very difficult to plan work and stage events for the public. Recently, we had 3 named storms & had to close the entire site on 3 different days, for Health & Safety reasons.

What influenced your choice to work in your chosen field?

Influence on choice of work would have been working closely in harmony with nature, and the seasons, As the world becomes more removed from nature, I wanted a job, where I could work closely with it, and bring nature to the visitors who come on site to visit the gardens, to give them back peace and restoration, that they find here.



Were you impacted by gender bias along the way?

Sometimes; I have experienced gender bias during my career, and had to persevere and get the job done, that I am employed to do.

Have you seen a change in the way society perceives gender and gardening?

I *have* seen a change in the way society perceives gender & gardening. I think as a female, you have to work harder, to be in a position of management. I was first female Head Gardener in St. Stephens Green Park, in 1988.

I was one of the first female Forepersons in OPW Craft Gardening area since 1995, & I transferred to Altamont, in Carlow in 1999 as it was a new OPW site, and still under development.

I think if it is the career you want, gardening is a great career path to take, as every day there is something new to learn & experience, nature never ceases to amaze me.



“ Women belong in all places where decisions are being made. It shouldn't be that women are the exception. ”

- Ruth Bader Ginsburg



Kilkenny Castle Online Talk: Women in the Letters of the First Duchess of Ormonde

Tuesday, 8 March, 8pm

This year, to mark International Women's day, OPW-Kilkenny Castle is delighted to host a free talk by Dr Naomi McAreavey on the "Women in the Letters of the First Duchess of Ormonde".

The first duke and duchess of Ormonde were the ultimate power couple of seventeenth-century Ireland. But while James Butler (1610–88) is well known to Irish history, his wife Elizabeth Butler, née Preston (1615–84) is not. Yet Elizabeth's 300-odd surviving letters – the subject of a forthcoming exhibition in Kilkenny Castle – reveal her importance in the social, cultural, and political life of seventeenth-century Ireland.

In this talk, Dr Naomi McAreavey will demonstrate the importance of the duchess's female friendships and alliances to her activities, arguing that the mobilisation of her female network helped optimise her family's political position and ensure their adaptability and survival during periods of crisis. The talk will show that female alliances were key to the political agency of women like the duchess, and that our understanding of seventeenth-century Irish history must take into account the activities of women.

Click on [this link](#) to learn more and book your place.

Dr Naomi McAreavey is a lecturer of Renaissance literature at University College Dublin. She is the editor of Elizabeth Butler, the letters of the first Duchess of Ormonde - this volume is the first to bring together the entire extant correspondence of one of the most significant women in early modern Ireland.



Mná na hÉireann

In 1990, Mary Robinson was elected as Ireland's first female president. RTÉ infamously broadcast her victory speech instead of the angelus.

Civil Service Women's Network online event, Tuesday 8th March at 11am

Theme : 'Break the Bias'

The Civil Service Women's Network will celebrate International Women's Day with an online event on Tuesday 8th March at 11am on the theme of 'Break the Bias'.

Dr Orlaigh Quinn, Secretary General at the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Jacqui McCrum Secretary General at the Department of Defence and Julie O'Neill former Secretary General at the Department of Transport will share their experiences of breaking the bias and will outline some of the challenges and successes throughout their careers. Information on how to register and the invitation for the online event will follow.

The CSWN continues to build its cross-civil service, cross-grade women's network, and hopes the discussion will be an opportunity to learn more about how the Network, as the civil service, can forge women's equality and collectively break the bias.

Click on [this Webex link](#) to find out more.

What is the Civil Service Women's Network (CSWN)?

The CSWN is a voluntary, cross-civil service network. The mission of the CSWN is to connect women, and supporters of women, across organisations, grades and roles, as empowered contributors to the Irish civil service. The network was set up in March 2019 by a small group of cross-Department cross-grade colleagues.

To join the Civil Service Women's Network please email CivilServiceWomensNetwork@gmail.com

Department of Public Expenditure and Reform webinar, Tuesday 8th March at 3pm

'Bridges and Beliefs, Not Blame'

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform are supporting the goals of International Women's Day by celebrating women's achievement, raising awareness against bias and taking action for equality.

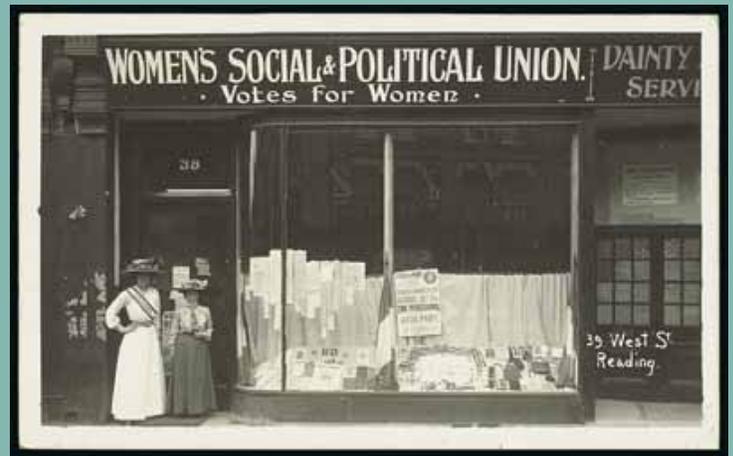
This talk will explore the issues for both men and women, and how we might break the bias by learning how to challenge our beliefs and seeing our responsibility as bridges between the generations before us and the ones that follow us.

Speaker: Alana Kirk, The Midlife Coach www.themidlifecoach.org

Alana Kirk is an author, journalist, speaker and life and executive coach. As The Midlife Coach, she encourages and empowers women to redefine what midlife can mean for them today. You can follow her on Instagram [@midlifecoach](https://www.instagram.com/midlifecoach).

Alana has spent many years supporting women through workshops, events, talks, TV and radio interviews including BBC Women's Hour, RTE 1 and TV3 shows, speaking at the M-Word event, webinars coaching women in business through Dublin LEO (Local Enterprise Office) Women in Business Network, and her own MidLife Coach webinars and resources. www.themidlifecoach.org

Spaces for this webinar event are limited. If you would like to register please email mary.corrigan@opw.ie in the Equality & Engagement Unit and you will be provided with the link.



According to UNICEF ...

An extra year of education can help a girl earn 15-25% more as an adult.

Origins of IWD official colours

Purple, green and white are the colours of IWD, according to the International Women's Day website.

"Purple signifies justice and dignity. Green symbolises hope. White represents purity, albeit a controversial concept. The colours originated from the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) in the UK in 1908," they say.

Laura Whitmore Talk for International Women day

During a live interview - broadcast from Dublin - Laura Whitmore will share learnings and reflections from her career journey to date.

This Bray-born television professional has broken through many a glass ceiling on her career journey. Laura has had to overcome (in her own words) lots of self-doubt, imposter syndrome, and ongoing online harassment along the way. Learn more about her approach to overcoming obstacles by attending this live webinar.

Registration by invitation only. The event will be broadcast live from 14:00 - 14:45 on Tuesday the 8th of March.

Click on [this link](#) to register.

Lord Mayor of Dublin and the National Women's Council

Wednesday 9th March at 2pm

Join SOS for International Women's Day 2022 where three incredible guests chat about their roles in Irish life, mental health issues facing women today and more.

This webinar is free to attend thanks to funding from the National Office for Suicide Prevention and will be approx. 1hr in length. Collectively we can all #BreakTheBias.

[Click here](#) to register.