

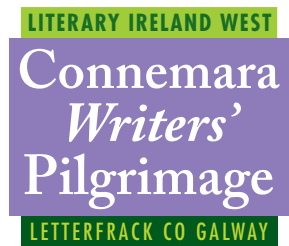
PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

1st February 2022



Launch of Connemara Writers' Pilgrimage and the Buck Mulligan mid-week break in Renvyle House Hotel.



Over the past three years - and despite Covid and its many restrictions - Artisan House/Books at One in Letterfrack has been actively involved in a new tourism initiative supported by the Western Development Commission under the EU NPA Programme. The aim of the Spot-lit (www.spot-lit.eu) is to assist SMEs and local communities to develop new literary tourism products in peripheral regions.

'Despite the difficult circumstances we faced in delivering this programme, we are delighted to report that the six partners in the west of Ireland have managed to develop exciting and innovative projects as you can see from the programme Artisan House have drawn up and which we are confident will develop further now that we are operating in less restrictive times' stated Ian Brannigan, Western Development Commission.

Writers have long been drawn to Connemara. W.B. Yeats with his new wife, Georgia, spent their honeymoon in Renvyle House Hotel, the country house of the poet Oliver St John Gogarty. Gogarty himself a writer, poet, politician and raconteur is probably most celebrated now as Joyce's model for Buck Mulligan in *Ulysses*. Indeed, the novel's very first four words 'Stately, plump Buck Mulligan' refer to Oliver St John Gogarty. February 2022 marks the centenary of the publication of *Ulysses* so we will pay homage to that significant date in Irish and world literature and it will be the occasion of our inaugural literary tourism event.

Omey Island was home to the father of Louis MacNeice and nearby Claddaghduff is where his mother, Elizabeth Clisham, was born. Cleggan was home to Richard Murphy for twenty years; Oscar Wilde's parents, Sir William and Lady Jane Wilde, had a hunting lodge close to Rosroe, the small fishing village where Wittgenstein wrote some of his seminal philosophical work and referred to the area 'as the last pool of darkness' - subsequently used as a book title by Tim Robinson. Rosroe is also where Richard Murphy spent his first period in Letterfrack, although he is now associated more strongly with Cleggan, Inishbofin and High Island.

'Our inaugural literary tourism event, entitled 'Mid-week break with Buck Mulligan' will take place over a two-night retreat in Renvyle House Hotel on Wednesday, 23rd and Thursday, 24th March, 2022. Such events will be on offer and we are also developing a literary trail reflecting the rich literary heritage of Connemara' said Mary Ruddy.

The 2-night break will include B&B on both nights and a full 5-course dinner on the evening of 24th March; a performance of 'Nora' by Curlew Theatre Company on the 23rd March, a workshop led by Ray Burke, author of *Joyce County*, and a full 5-course meal on the evening of 24th March.

Hosts will be Mary Ruddy & Vincent Murphy of Artisan House and Books at One bookshop, Letterfrack.

For more information, visit our website www.artisanhouse.ie

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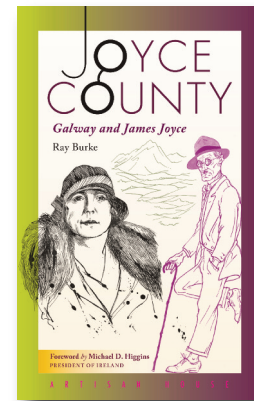
PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release



continued...

Launch of *Connemara Writers' Pilgrimage* and the *Buck Mulligan* mid-week break in Renvyle House Hotel.



Notes for editor

Ray Burke

Ray Burke is a Galwegian and a graduate of NUI Galway. A journalist for over 40 years, he was news editor of the *Irish Press* and chief news editor of RTÉ News. He has written about James Joyce for RTÉ News, the National Library of Ireland, and the *Connacht Tribune*. He is the author of *Press Delete: The Decline and Fall of the Irish Press* (2005) and has contributed chapters to four books on Irish newspaper history, author of *Joyce County* published by Artisan House. He was keynote speaker at the 2016 Lady Gregory–Yeats Autumn Gathering. Since retiring from RTÉ, Ray has written for the *Irish Times*, *Connacht Tribune*, and the *Century Ireland* website. He is the chair of the Newspaper and Periodical History Forum of Ireland.

Artisan House Publishers, Letterfrack, Connemara, Co. Galway.

Artisan House is a specialist publishing company creating beautifully illustrated high-quality books and bespoke publications on a richly diverse range of subjects. Food and lifestyle, photography and the visual arts, music and poetry, and all things quirky appeal to us.

Previous publications include *Sea Gastronomy: Fish and Seafood of the North Atlantic* by Michael O'Meara which won the Best Seafood Cookbook in the World Gourmand Award in 2016; *Connemara & Aran* by Walter Pfeiffer, shortlisted in the Irish Book Awards 2017; and *Tapestry of Light* by Tina Claffey, International Photography Awards (IPA) 2019. Also published in 2022 is *Joyce County* by Ray Burke and *Binnion Road* a poetry collection by Des Kavanagh.

Books at One, Letterfrack, Connemara, Co. Galway.

Books At One in Connemara opened in December 2020 in a Quaker workshop, formerly a forge. Owned by Mary Ruddy & Vincent Murphy, the bookshop is the second in the **Books At One** collective of locally managed community bookshops, founded in 2016 by a benefactor who felt that everyone should have access to bookshops. The first was established in Louisburgh, County Mayo; a third will open in Dublin in 2022.

Support is gratefully acknowledged from the following:

