

Waterford Marina Goes Green St Patrick's Day 2021.



Founded by Viking “Ostmen” - men from the east, in 914 AD, Waterford is Ireland's oldest city. ‘Vadrefjord’ being Norse for ‘windy haven’ suggests why it was the perfect location for these seafaring people and how it progressed to become a bustling port, remaining as such for a millennium. The port has since relocated eight kilometres downriver to Belview where it continues to thrive as a vibrant commercial entity. Waterford Marina is what remains. Whilst anticipating the rather ambitious redevelopment of the city’s north quay ‘Waterford Goes Green’ was the perfect opportunity to shift public focus back to the river, the quay and the estuary and provide a timely reminder as to what our natural assets can and should be.



St Patrick's Day appeared on the horizon with a subdued sense of irony in 2021, under normal circumstances this would be the occasion that we Irish would gather together for a day of festivities but instead we found ourselves at the anniversary of when we began to stay apart. In lieu of the usual parades and community celebrations an ambitious greening project was undertaken. The aim was to create visual spectacles that could be enjoyed while adhering to public health guidelines and to provide a demonstration of community resilience and civic pride in what was proving to be a very difficult time for many.



Playing our part in 'Waterford Goes Green' the City Marina provided one of the showpiece spectacles with a novel display of green rope lighting and sail rigging creating a string of inverted v-shaped illuminations along a one kilometre stretch of Waterford's South Quay. St Patrick's Day owes its origins to Waterford and so the sense of duty was naturally incumbent. Berth-holders were enlisted more so than conscripted, many were inspired with a giddy sense of patriotic enthusiasm, others were simply curious as to what the outcome might look like. None were disappointed for there truly is something special about the colour green. Green, it is said, supposedly signals envy! It is the florescent and essential life-colour of the natural capital that abundantly surrounds us and has long been culturally significant to Irish people. Pitched against the rock and stone of historical monuments it profoundly evokes the spirit, character and mystical identity of our ancient Celtic heritage. Yet despite the many associations attached to the colour green it still retains its own streak of vibrant independence, sheer electro magnetism that against the changing light of dusk is both captivating and mesmerising. Against the backdrop of the fallen night sky it is electrifying, scintillating and utterly seductive.



Three kilometres upstream from Waterford Marina, on a westward heading, is the Thomas Francis Meagher Bypass Bridge. Linking counties Waterford and Kilkenny it is perhaps the finest compliment to modern infrastructure in the region. This cable stayed suspension bridge has the engineering signature of being the longest single span bridge in Ireland. Named after Thomas Francis Meagher who is best remembered as the man who introduced the tricolour to Ireland and flew it first right here in Waterford. The greening of this structure was nothing short of stunning and added further focus to the river Suir. Our rivers are the reason as to why our cities emerged where they did, they ought to be central to city life not just for the geo-historic element but as cultural focal points, civic amenity hubs, their ability to create attractive urban aesthetics and of course the abundance of leisure and recreational opportunities that they can provide. Everyone at Waterford Marina was thrilled to take part in this event, public imagination was captured like never before and not since the Tall Ship races in 2005 & 2011 has such a spectacle been seen on our quays, on our river, or in our city.





Johnny Codd

Waterford Marina