

A Day in the Life

this week:
Auriel Robinson



■ Auriel Robinson, who set up Seatrails.

Blazing a trail by the sea

EMMA GALLAGHER

AURIEL ROBINSON established Seatrails last October. The maritime archaeologist from Meath fell in love with county Sligo and decided to set up home here.

She said: "I was coming here for many years to surf. I fell in love with the coastline of Sligo and Donegal.

"I had been working for years in the public and private sectors as an archaeologist.

"Then, last October I started doing guided walks and see how they would go."

The guided archeological tours bring people to ancient sites in the area.

Auriel explained: "I tell them about the maritime history, environment, geology and flora and fauna of the various trails."

The new business is flourishing.

"I also do horse riding, stand up paddling (SUP) and cycling - it's the same thing as the walks but by bike.

"I'm hoping to start doing coastal SUP soon."

The horse riding trails go along by Streedagh beach onto nearby Connor's Island. Auriel added: "I talk about the Spanish Armada shipwreck, which is very important."

Group sizes vary depending on the activity. "Ideally, I can accommodate up to 30. The tour times vary too. Some are around an hour and a half in length, while the longer trails are three hours."

Seatrails can also bring children and elderly on certain expeditions.

Auriel added: "The Rosses Point historic shipwreck and famine walk is relatively short and easy.

"It is more laid-back.

"The trickiest one is probably the trail on the Bricklieve mountains, going up to the Carrowkeel tombs."



She has plans to add more trails in the near future.

"I'm hoping to have an Inismurray trail next year, to include a boat tour and a guided walk on the island."

Another idea is a castle tour in the Northwest.

Here people will visit three castles in the area, on a bigger scale, including an overnight stay.

Auriel said of the trails: "It is an unusual experience. People can learn about the environment and being more eco-friendly.

"I don't know anyone that is doing something similar to what I do in Ireland."

Culleenamore, Carrowmore, Coney Island and Calry are among the other interesting trails.

Auriel operates Seatrails year round.

She said: "I am one of Sligo's ambassadors for the Wild Atlantic Way.

"The Wild Atlantic Way is going to be of great importance next year once it is fully launched by Fáilte Ireland.

It will greatly increase tourism business in Sligo, and I am proud to be one of the chosen ambassadors," she added.

On Saturday, November 30th, Auriel is hosting an 'art and archaeology' workshop in Rosses Point alongside photographer Frances Muldoon.

"This will be the first in a series.

"I will take people on a maritime heritage walk and they will go back to Frances' studio and draw up what they see."

■ See www.seatrails.ie