



In-port racing during the 2009 Galway stopover

Photo: G Mills

All eyes on the City of Tribes for a world-class maritime event



Compiled by Gillian Mills

Despite its short distance of 485 nautical miles, this final passage is fraught with obstacles to be negotiated: commercial shipping lanes, rocky outcrops, headlands and major tidal gates.

The final leg of the 2012 Volvo Ocean Race starts from Lorient on July 1 and will take the fleet of six boats on a predominantly coastal course northwards along the shores of western Brittany, across the English Channel and westward to the finish line in Galway.

As the boats sprint for the finish line, the stage is set for a grand finale to welcome the boats, the teams and tens of thousands of visitors to this week-long maritime festival.

Central to the festival is Global Village 2012 – a business-to-business initiative based on a trading post concept of open and free showcasing and trading of goods and services to a global audience.

The 17 acre site will comprise conferences, seminars, exhibition space and networking hubs under four themes: Marine, Green, Food and Innovation.

An interactive showcase of marine resources will focus on seafood; marine environment; ecosystems & water quality; marine technology; marine research; education and training; shipping; tourism and leisure and ocean energy.

Ocean Wealth Showcase

The weeklong event will include exhibits demonstrating the scale and diversity of Ireland's ocean resources and their economic, social and environmental value to our island nation.

- » find out about the status of our fisheries and their importance to our coastal communities; developments in the fishing, processing and aquaculture industries and the major potential of seafood as part of our thriving Irish food sector internationally.
- » developments in the shipping industry: training, new technologies, e-navigation, safety.
- » the latest technology being used to manage and monitor our ocean resources; why and how do we monitor our marine environment and can we improve?
- » INFOMAR – The world's first survey to target total coverage of the seabed. What have we learned and how much more have we left to do? Research Vessel, *RV Keary* will be in the harbour to give a hands-on demonstration of the mapping techniques and systems to visitors.
- » Ireland has the best ocean energy resources in the world and some of the most innovative technologies are being developed and tested here. Is this the next big industry of the future?
- » Weather and climate change: what is happening in our oceans and how will it affect our lives as an island nation?
- » We have the most spectacular coasts, beaches, rivers and lakes - all very much in demand by nature lovers, adventurers, anglers, sailors, watersports enthusiasts and international tourists. How can we ensure that these valuable resources are developed and protected for the enjoyment of all?

Ocean Wealth Events Programme

June 30-July 1: Family fun: Earn a Pirates Higher Diploma (PHD) at Black John Cartoon Workshops where the secrets of the ocean will be revealed; learn about the BIM Lobster V-notching conservation scheme and other marine creatures; Follow the Fleet – and come and see a world premier animated children's film; captain your own ship and lots more for kids of all ages...

July 2: 3rd Annual SmartOcean Conference: 'Getting more from our Marine Resources through Technology' will take place in the Marine Institute, Oranmore. Over 120 national and international delegates will gather to hear presentations from the marine and ICT sector; State Agencies and Research Institutes.

The discussion will focus on the challenges and lead opportunities to translate innovative technologies into business solutions focused on developing aquaculture, security and logistics and offshore energy. Details: www.smartocean.org

Tuesday 3rd July: SmartOcean Innovation Exchange: The central objective of this inaugural event is to support companies to innovate in the marine sector & excite the investment community and the public about the potential of new technologies and opportunities now opening in emerging or established marine sectors. The Innovation Exchange is open to companies (Irish and international) to demonstrate both their technology solutions and their ability to successfully exploit marine resources in a commercial and sustainable manner. An expert panel of judges will short-list 15-20 companies against innovation criteria and three winners will be selected for recognition awards sponsored by multinationals who are members of the SmartOcean Cluster. To nominate a company visit www.smartocean.org

July 4: SmartOcean Innovators: SMEs and multinationals will continue to exhibit alongside their R&D partners in the third level and State agency sector.

July 5&6: Marine careers & recruitment. Two day recruitment drive (see Oceans of Opportunity on opposite page). Alternatively if you're interested in training or research opportunities in the third level sector, BIM's Coastal Training Unit will be on site to advise on available courses in the seafood sector.

July 6: Deep Sea: Focus on the marine environment, deep-sea ecosystems and climate change.

The oceans cover 70% of the earth's surface and our very survival depends on them. Over the past 20 years, Ireland has taken its place among international leaders in the field of ocean science and has produced exciting and revealing research on our marine environment.

Presentations:

Mapping Ireland's Seabed – Why & How? Koen Verbruggen, Geological Survey of Ireland

How Climate Change is Bringing About Amazing Changes In Our Marine Life; Dr Ken Whelan, author, international researcher and lecturer with UCD

Deep Water Coral Reefs: Ireland's Hidden Treasures. Dr Anthony Grehan, NUIG

The Challenges Of Managing and Protecting Ireland's Water. Michéal O Cinnéide, Director of Environmental Monitoring, Environmental Protection Agency.

July 7&8: Stay Safe at Sea: Safety is a key consideration for anyone involved in sailing or working at sea and in order to highlight the importance of staying safe at sea, Ocean Wealth showcase exhibitors will be offering safety talks and advice to visitors including 'lifejacket health checks' and stay safe at sea practical workshops.

Keep M-informed: Keeping a close watch and reporting on all things marine will be the Galway twitter Buoy located in Galway Bay for all Volvo Race, Ocean Wealth Showcase, navigation, environmental and meteocean information. Details: www.twitter.com/GalwayBuoy or www.facebook.com/GalwayBuoy.

A busy schedule ahead for the INFOMAR team



INFOMAR began its 2012 survey season in April with *RV Keary* and *RV Geo* being mobilised from Clogherhead and working simultaneously in the Dundalk Bay area. The vessels, which are managed by the Geological Survey of Ireland, were acquiring data from 2m-30m depth as part of the INIS-Hydro project which is funded under the INTERREG IVa programme.

May saw the Marine Institute managed vessel *RV Celtic Voyager* being deployed on May 17 for a three week survey. The survey focused on acquiring data near the Codling Bank; East and South of the Arklow Bank – all of which form part of the Eastern Priority Area.

DEEP WATER GRAB SAMPLES

Operating in waters ranging from 16m-80m a total of 10 shipwrecks were mapped as well as large sandwaves with amplitudes of up to 15m. During this leg, grab samples were taken which will be analysed as part of the Water Framework Directive.

Over the coming months, in addition to the areas that will be surveyed as part of the INFOMAR 2012 plan, the team will provide support in various formats to other projects. These include work off the Copper Coast GeoPark as part of the Atlanterra project and finalising assistance on deep water aquaculture projects at Inisbofin and Inisturk.

Following on from the successful collaboration last year with the National Monuments Service in Donegal, *RV Keary* will again provide vessel support for the Underwater Archaeology Unit for shipwreck diving and surveying off Burtonport, Co Donegal.

VOLVO AND TALL SHIPS FESTIVALS

INFOMAR will also have a strong presence at the finale of the Volvo Ocean Race 2012, and will welcome visitors onboard *R.V. Keary* in Galway Harbour where she'll be berthed throughout the festival.

INFOMAR will also be exhibiting at the Ocean Wealth Showcase in the Global Village to provide more details on their work programme, as well as displaying some of the survey results from the programme. The team will also give a presentation on July 7: *Mapping Ireland's Seabed - How & Why?*

Back in Dublin, INFOMAR survey vessels will be in the city during the Tall Ships Race finale August 23-26, when the public will be welcomed on board to see how the technical operations of a typical survey work. Up to 100 vessels are expected in Dublin for this spectacle of sail.

Further plans for 2012 will see the survey vessels continue to survey in the Irish Sea, Celtic Sea and further mapping in Cork Harbour.

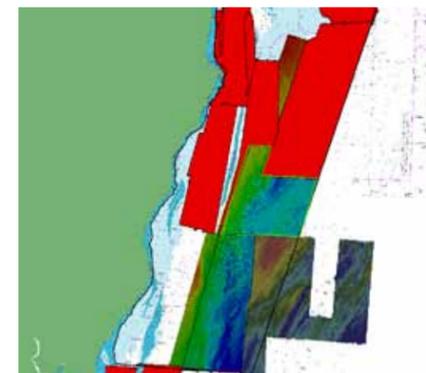
The project's annual seminar takes place in University College Cork, running back to back with the EC FP7 GeoSeas Project final conference. This project, involving INFOMAR staff, has linked Irish marine data centres to their equivalents across Europe. The INFOMAR seminar will showcase both the work completed to date and future plans, as well as associated projects and research supported and funded by the programme.

INFOMAR – the facts

The INFOMAR (INtegrated Mapping FOR the Sustainable Development of Ireland's MARine Resource) programme is a joint venture between the Geological Survey of Ireland and the Marine Institute and is the successor to the Irish National Seabed Survey (INSS).

INFOMAR is producing integrated mapping products covering the physical, chemical and physical habitat features of the seabed. The surveys are carried using a range of platforms, including the MI's *RV Celtic Explorer* and *RV Celtic Voyager*; the GSI's inshore launches *RV KEARY* and *RV GEO*, and airborne LIDAR.

The programme uses ship-mounted acoustic multibeam sonar and geophysical technology to provide vital information on water depth for safe shipping, as well as analysing the properties of the seabed for information that can guide fishing, ocean renewable development, environmental protection, and marine archaeology. Further information: www.infomar.ie; www.gsi.ie and www.marine.ie



INFOMAR mapping in south Irish Sea, apart from the 'U' shaped area in the SE which was mapped by a previous project but verified during current mapping.



RV Keary and *RV Geo* sheltering in Clogherhead during a recent summer storm



Oceans of Opportunity



SmartOcean Ireland and the Marine Institute are hosting 'Oceans of Opportunity' – a marine careers, education and training event as part of the Ocean Wealth Showcase on July 5&6.

Many marine jobs will be on offer as well as information on opportunities for training in the marine sector. A range of companies across shipping, technology, research, energy sectors will be actively recruiting on July 5 with experienced HR specialists on hand to provide advice on preparing for a career in the marine sector.

The Marine Institute and the Irish Maritime Development Office (IMDO) will also be offering marine career advice, job opportunities, CV workshops and clinics to support and advise job seekers looking to work in the marine sector.

A series of short talks will also run throughout Thursday on 'a day in the

life' to provide insight into the variety of careers available in the marine sector. Visit www.marinejobs.ie for details of the opportunities on offer.

The Marine Institute is the national agency responsible for Marine Research, Technology Development and Innovation (RTDI). It seeks to assess and realise the economic potential of Ireland's 220 million acre marine resource; promote the sustainable development of marine industry through strategic funding programmes and essential scientific services; and safeguard our marine environment through research and environmental monitoring.

The Irish Maritime Development Office (IMDO) is an office of the Marine Institute dedicated to the development, promotion and marketing of the shipping services sector.

SmartOcean Ireland is a cluster of SMEs, multinational companies and research organisations working together to apply new and developing technology to create products and services for the marine sectors.



RNLI lifeboat lying at anchor at Achill.

Photo G Mills

Saving lives 24/7

RNLI Galway is served by three lifeboat stations at the Galway docks; the Aran Islands and at Clifden. But with the expected huge number of visitors to the city, the RNLI will provide an additional Atlantic class lifeboat, available 24/7 in case of emergency.

The RNLI will also have a shop in the Global Village and the charity will have a special Flag Day collection in Salt Hill on July 6.