



www.limerickleader.ie

SATURDAY, APRIL 13, 2024

ALL IN THE SAME BOAT

Limerick breast cancer survivors find camaraderie and fitness through dragon boat paddling, writes **Manon Gilbert**

SEE NEXT PAGES FOR FULL STORY



Limerick Dragons was founded in 2016 by a group of breast cancer survivors



It's lights, camera, action!

Film festival shines a light on diversity

[▶▶](#) Page 4



Con & Annie Kirby Memorial

Semi-finals set for this Saturday night

[▶▶](#) See Sport



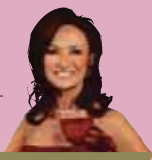
Best supporters in hurling

Huge turnout for U20 championship

[▶▶](#) Pages 20-21

Fashion

Celia Holman Lee



You are guaranteed a laugh when TV personality and influencer, James Patrice, is about. He decided I was 'fashion royalty' on this day when I wore a gold, satin headband which resembled a crown!

A 'Banner' day for spring style

IHAD such a fun time when I joined the wonderful James Patrice on the RTÉ Today Show, the man who lights up every room he enters!

I couldn't wipe the smile from my face when I was joined by host James for the special episode, where some of the Holman Lee Agency models and I stepped out in style for the TV.

We showcased some beautiful spring/summer looks from Joanne's Boutique in Killaloe, so close to Limerick and such a splendid spot that is truly spectacular in the summer!

The models shone as they wore rig-outs suitable for an array of events, including that of summer weddings, communion and confirmations and, indeed, racing events which are creeping up on us.

Joanne's Boutique in Co Clare has been in business for over 20 years. She has so many accessories and clothes to choose from, all of which can be combined and mix-matched.

I paired patterns and neutral colours which I thought suitable for best dressed ladies at racing



James and I joined the Holman Lee Agency models who showcased outfits on the day by Joanne's Boutique based in Killaloe

events or, indeed, any upcoming event on your social calendar!

We had greys, whites, blacks and creams, which suit all skin tones and body shapes. Light textures ooze timeless and classiness, as well as comfort, which is always the most important factor.

Jackets, belts, handbags, hats - you name it, we had it featured in this special episode which aired on April 2. It is available to watch back

now on the RTÉ Player, just in time for the beginning of the summer season.

Exuberance and laughter always spill from the fun-loving influencer and TV personality James Patrice, whose company I so dearly enjoy. I am delighted to have met him again!

I look forward to making a return to TV screens soon and I hope you will all tune in once again for more fashion inspiration.

- Xx Celia

Out on the water

As part of an international movement, breast cancer survivors take up a unique sport to raise awareness

ALONG the River Shannon, breast cancer survivors have found camaraderie and fitness as they paddle out on a dragon boat. On the water, Aileen Murphy and Amanda Jordan have found a "safe space" with the Limerick Dragons - one where breast cancer does not define them.

A 2,000-year-old ancient Chinese water sport, dragon boat racing was trialled as a treatment for breast cancer survivors by Dr Don McKenzie in 1996. After introducing 24 breast cancer volunteers to dragon boats and paddling techniques, McKenzie found that the movement required for paddling prevents the risk of lymphedema.

In Limerick, dozens of survivors come together in paddle dragon boats to improve their wellness and raise awareness.

One of the members, Aileen Murphy was diagnosed with breast cancer in August 2019, after finding a lump on her right breast.

"It felt different. I was actually working on BreastCheck at the time, so I spoke to one of my colleagues. She brought me down for an ultrasound and straight away, she could see that it was cancerous. I got really upset, it was only her and me there. I hadn't brought anyone with me, I didn't think there was a need to have anyone," Aileen recalls.

After a triple assessment, she was told she had invasive ductal carcinoma grade 3, an aggressive type of breast cancer.

"For the next appointment, I brought my parents with me," Aileen says. "I was told I had to have surgery to remove it. They took the lump out, a big area

in my breast and all my lymph nodes. I had 16 chemo sessions with four AC and 12 taxols, then I had 24 sessions of radiotherapy."

After that, Aileen was on a chemo drug for three years.

"I go in once a month to have an injection to suppress my ovaries and then I take a hormone inhibitor every day, it's just to increase my chances of my cancer not coming back."

Aileen joined the Limerick Dragons in 2020. Among other survivors, she has found a safe place where she can be herself.

"It helps you if you've had your lymph nodes removed, you're at risk of lymphedema. So this exercise helps with the whole issue. That's why I said I'd go for that. Plus, I just love the water, it's a happy place for me," Aileen says.

After treatment, she experienced a lot of pain in her joints. On the dragon boat, Aileen feels the same as everyone else.

"If I'm getting in and out of the boat, it's a little bit awkward, my body might not work the way you want it to work. If I was to go to a class where people weren't affected by any illnesses, I'd stand out a little bit. Whereas



when I'm on the boat, I'm the same as everyone else. There's a camaraderie, we care for one another. I don't feel awkward, I can just be myself."

According to Aileen, all her worries go away when she is out on the water.

"You're having a laugh, having a chat, seeing the city from a different perspective. It's great for your headspace. It's very hard to describe it, but you could go out there with all the worries in the world on your shoulders and when you're out in the water you forget about them. You'd be tired, but mentally you're refreshed," she says.

Despite what she has been through, Aileen remains positive - and counts herself as "extremely lucky".

"I just look at it as something that I have to get on with. I'm extremely lucky,



The Limerick Dragons celebrating after the Cork Regatta



The Limerick Dragons training in O'Brien's Bridge

I have this chance at life that not everybody is granted. It gives you a new appreciation for life and it all makes sense."

Amanda Jordan was diagnosed with breast cancer on September 1, 2021.

"There had been no history of breast cancer in my family. I was getting a bit of a pain in my left boob and I was like 'What is that?' I checked and I could feel something. I kind of ignored it for three weeks and then, it was playing on my mind, so I went to the doctor.

"When they confirmed the diagnosis, it wasn't too much of a shock, but the day I was there for the mammogram was very shocking.

"Once I had the diagnosis, it was really a whirlwind," Amanda says.

She had a mastectomy on September 29, 2021. Then, she had to go back for a second operation.

"It was on November 9, which was my birthday. The nurses immediately wished me a happy birthday," Amanda recalls.

After starting chemotherapy in January 2022, she had radiation. Now, she's on hormone tablets.

"Hopefully that's everything taken out and sorted," she says. "The whole breast cancer thing is a bit of a shock to the system. You get into fight or flight mode. You

don't want people around you being upset and stuff, it's manageable, but it is quite scary."

Amanda felt the dragons would know what she had been through. Now, she is one of 39 members.

"I wanted to push myself out of my comfort zone, I wanted to put a bit more life into my years and I wanted to meet people who had an understanding of what I'd been through," she explains.

She says that while out on the water with her fellow dragons, she has learned a valuable lesson.

"I've learned that everybody is going through something. A lot of people have been affected by breast cancer, whether they themselves have had it or known of somebody who had it. I've learned that it's only a part of us, it doesn't define us," she says.

On April 13 at noon, the Limerick Dragons will meet future members at the shipyard at O'Callaghan Strand. On April 20, they will be organising a flower ceremony, to remember anybody who has passed due to breast cancer.



The Limerick Dragons after doing the 3for3 Breast Cancer Walk

GLENEAGLE

HOTEL & APARTMENTS



GREAT ENTERTAINMENT COMING THIS APRIL!



ROY ORBISON REBORN

20 APR | TICKETS FROM €36.45 | GLENEAGLE BALLROOM

HOTEL 67	1 NIGHT DOUBLE B&B FROM €165
GLENEAGLE	1 NIGHT TWIN/DOUBLE B&B FROM €210

COUNTRY MUSIC WEEKEND 26TH - 28TH APRIL



CASH RETURNS - TRIBUTE SHOW 26TH | TICKETS FROM €29.05

HOTEL 67	1 NIGHT DOUBLE B&B FROM €165
GLENEAGLE	1 NIGHT TWIN/DOUBLE B&B FROM €210



MIKE DENVER IN CONCERT 26TH | TICKETS FROM €35.00

HOTEL 67	1 NIGHT DOUBLE B&B FROM €165
GLENEAGLE	1 NIGHT TWIN/DOUBLE B&B FROM €210



DEREK RYAN DANCE 27TH | TICKETS FROM €20.00*

HOTEL 67	1 NIGHT DOUBLE B&B FROM €165
GLENEAGLE	1 NIGHT TWIN/DOUBLE B&B FROM €210



MARGO 60TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT 28TH | TICKETS FROM €30.00

HOTEL 67	1 NIGHT DOUBLE B&B FROM €145
GLENEAGLE	1 NIGHT TWIN/DOUBLE B&B FROM €155

BOX OFFICE TICKETS: 064 6671555 | INEC.IE

ACCOMMODATION RESERVATIONS AND TICKET PACKAGES:

064 6671550 | WWW.GLENEAGLEHOTEL.COM

All ticket prices exclude service charge plus facility fee.

Please note: B&B price does not include show ticket.

JAPANESE FILM FESTIVAL 24

BRAY
CORK
SLIGO
DUBLIN
GALWAY
LIMERICK
DUNDALK
WEXFORD
WATERFORD

BELLTABLE

SAT APR 13	Lonely Castle in the Mirror	14.30
	Ryuichi Sakamoto Opus	17.00
	Evil Does Not Exist	20.00

13 APRIL JFF.IE

