

## Celtic Imbolc Festival at the Hook Lighthouse

The Hook Lighthouse is set to celebrate Ireland's 'Fire Goddess' through the Imbolc traditional festival marking the beginning of spring from February 1st to 3rd. It is also the feast of St Bridget - in ancient Irish mythology, Bridget was a fire goddess - she is also the patron saint of boatmen, sailors, and mariners.

Celebrated annually by the ancient Celts, Imbolc was one of the four important festivals in the Celtic calendar.

Opening the festival weekend is an evening concert in the medieval lighthouse tower with acclaimed and multi-platinum selling singer and songwriter Brian Kennedy.

Brian will host two evening concerts on the monastery level of the world's oldest operational lighthouse on the consecutive dates of February 1st and 2nd - and tickets to this intimate and exclusive gig are available at [www.hookheritage.ie](http://www.hookheritage.ie). On the morning of Saturday, February 2nd a sunrise tour of the ancient lighthouse is on offer at 7.30 am. Guests will be treated to the dawn breaking over the spectacular South East coast while enjoying a bespoke lighthouse tour and savouring bucks fizz, prosecco, fresh tea, and coffee along with a selection of breakfast canapés made from the finest local produce, including Ballyhack smokehouse smoked salmon on homemade brown bread.



Participants tied Spring wishes on the Imbolc tree sculpture at the Hook Lighthouse during last year's festival.

During the weekend enjoy a photography exhibition, a Food Tasting Table featuring local produce, talks with a Herbalist, Waterford-based Senator Grace O'Sullivan and New Ross Grown Your Own (GYO) group, a Wishing Tree Imbolc Ceremony and family fun and entertainment, plus there will be Art workshops with resident artists Rose and lots more. From 1pm on Saturday talks will take place with Grow It Yourself New Ross, talking about growing your own vegetables, followed by Herbalist Bernard Harris talking about the awakening of the 'Temple' (Body) from Winter hibernation mode to the lighter energy of Spring.

'The Meaning of Imbolc' is a talk which will be offered by Baya Salmon-Hawk, followed by a visualization, at 4pm a Poetry Slam and spoken word event with ModWords Waterford will be shared by candlelight. This event offers an open invitation to storytellers, poets, rappers and all wordsmiths to join.

On Sunday at 12.30pm, visitors are invited into the cobbled maze at the lighthouse to tie Spring wishes on the Imbolc tree sculpture and enjoy a talk on Imbolc with Baya Salmon-Hawk. At 2pm Senator Grace O'Sullivan will give a talk and a demonstration on Eco Sustainability, which will be followed by a talk with New Ross GYO group talk about how to grow vegetables easily and an Imbolc closing ritual at 4 pm.

On Sunday afternoon from 12 to 4 pm children's entertainment fun and games will be on offer with Captain Hook and Cafe specials will include Pancakes filled with seasonal berries and sweet sharing plates. All weekend Art with Rose including special Bridget's Cross Celtic goddess art will also be on offer.

All Imbolc Festival events at Hook Lighthouse are available to enjoy free of charge apart from the evening concerts with Brian Kennedy, the Sunrise Tour and Art Workshops with Rose.

The Sunrise tour is adults only and tickets are €45 per person. The concert tickets are €40 and Art with Rose is from €5. For further details and ticket booking see [www.hookheritage.ie](http://www.hookheritage.ie) or call 051-397055.