

Dingle: old brick and new experiences

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but the couple has developed a vendetta against Dingle dwellers, especially the younger generation.

As Rosie says, "I think they see us as a threat to 'their little piece of paradise' because we tend to arrive in relatively large groups and they don't necessarily recognize everyone who turns up."

A few years ago Rosie was staying there with some of her friends, and they accidentally left the garden gate open. On the same night, the sheep from the common ended up in Russell's garden.

Russell marched into Dingle's kitchen the next morning and demanded that they remove the sheep from his property.

"I was a bit flustered and very apologetic," Rosie says. "And so we all left our breakfast half eaten and chased the half-dozen sheep from his land. This was no mean feat. In retrospect, I doubt the sheep actually got into his garden through the Dingle garden."

Because Dingle belongs to so many people, there are organized Dingle meetings which take place once a year. Family members request the weeks they'd like to stay at Dingle, and discuss new developments with regards to the property.

Having one house belong to so many people is a risky proposal. When we left, Rosie ensured that the house was spotless. We swept, returned all of the candles back to the closet, remade the beds, tidied the ashy fireplaces, disposed of all the empties and recycling.

It seemed a little extreme, I thought as I watched Rosie mopping the floor, but their system works.

Dingle remains in excellent condition for everyone because of the careful work the entire family takes to maintain and organize the cottage. Rosie says: "It's still the responsibility of the generation above me but it works in the way you might expect a small community to work."

The different responsibilities, such as writing up the meeting minutes, taking late bookings and being our contact with the local wildlife organizations, are rotated between different family members."

Solar power was installed several years ago, but was a controversial move in modernizing the old cottage.

One of the many charms of Dingle is getting to sit around a table bathed in candlelight, cooking and eating and reading. It's like travelling back in time.

But the reason for the candles is not in order to maintain the quaint, romance; the house is too

remote to run power lines to.

The limited amount of solar power enables visitors to use the lights in the kitchen in the event of an emergency, and occasionally heat the water for showers.

According to Rosie, "Ignoring the advances in technology in order to pretend that Dingle is back in the Dark Ages would be trivializing what Dingle really is, a beautiful house in a beautiful setting, full of our family's memories."

We walked the winding path, through dried-up marshland, to the beach. It spans as far as the eye can see, and between strips of sand lay polished rocks and pebbles, shells, beach glass and fragments of wood.

But instead of the typical Canadian beach experience—lying in the sunshine, relaxing, reading, soaking up the heat until your skin sweats and lunging into the chilly waters of various Great Lakes—the Suffolk beach is freezing.

We went to the beach several times, and each time we'd arrive, armed with towels, bathing suits ("swimming costumes" to the English), magazines, some drinks and sunscreen. And an hour later we'd leave, shivering and wind-swept, never having plunged into the water. The Brits laugh and explain that "going to the beach" in England means just that; showing up and pretending to have a good time until you finally cave and head back inside where it's warm.

One of the days we walked to Southwold, a small village nearby. It took about an hour to walk through the dried marshland, past an old windmill and into the village.

For 80 pence we crossed a river in a ferry, which took the shape of a large rowboat, rowed by one woman with her dog sitting beside her.

The pier in Southwold houses an eclectic mix of souvenir shops and an arcade of unique games created by one man in his house. One game, "Mobility Masterclass," tests your ability to cross the street with a walker, while another, "The Bathyscap," attempts to simulate an underwater sea adventure.

Dingle is a far cry from the shag carpeting and wood paneling, with its centuries old brick and stones housing a growing family's summer lives.

For Rosie, a big part of why Dingle is amazing is that it is a shared, communal place: "[It's] a positive thing, I think. I love turning up and discovering that some previous Dingle has left behind 15 sombreros or has painted some of the trees at the back to look like totem poles."

SEX & THE STEEL CITY

Sex appeal is literally skin deep

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In this day and age we've grown quite familiar with the term "skin is in". The modernity of this phrase is, however, not new. For centuries, unlike any another physical attribute of the human body, skin has denoted sex appeal. There's something about the sultry seduction of skin that elicits eroticism and perpetuates a passionate yearning for X-rated behaviour.

Skin is continuously exploited in our consumer culture. How many times have we heard the over-popularized slogan "sex sells"? Evidently this holds some truth as sex is generally represented by an outward display of skin that regularly rouses excitability. I'm not speaking of the fervent attitudes that are emitted from anti-establishment aficionados. I'm speaking of the excitability that stimulates the senses, often resulting in a sharp increase of blood flow, particularly in the nether-regions of the human body. Skin, whether consciously or subconsciously, teases and pleases our senses and leaves us with a heated desire to get busy beneath the sheets.

Skin, as the largest organ of the human body, performs numerous functions, most notably that of sensation. Containing a variety of nerve endings that react to, most obviously, temperature and touch, skin is easily stimulated in such a

way that may arouse a multiplicity of emotions. Often, the very sight of skin is enough to trigger surges of testosterone and estrogen, which arouse sexual fervour. Without a doubt, skin stimulates a sexual appetite like none other.

Discovery Channel's *Science of Sex Appeal* describes skin as intrinsically linked to sexual

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attractiveness, claiming that "our inbuilt antenna for good genes don't stop at symmetry". Studies indicate that people most often base the attractiveness of skin on healthfulness. Healthier skin is usually associated with being blemish-free, evened tone and radiance. For those well-versed in the scientific hypotheses of the sexual attractiveness of skin, experts also claim that "our instinctive responses to [skin] are deeply rooted in human evolution."

It's been claimed that parasites have been one of the

most basic pressures of evolution, so parasite resistance is a primary mating signal. The differences in masculine and feminine skin are rooted in the sex hormones testosterone and estrogen which can stress our bodies thus resulting in skin infections. In other words, the over-production of sex hormones often conflicts with our immune systems which may result, therefore, in unhealthy looking skin. Evolution, however, has strengthened our immune systems thus aiding in the resistance of parasites and the balance of sex hormones thereby allowing our bodies to produce healthful skin that is most sexually appealing.

Aside from the sexual appeal of skin it's been said that sex, in turn, may help with skin healthfulness. Sex acts as a sort of beauty treatment in that sweat, often accompanied during those blissful sessions in the bedroom, may reduce the chances of various skin flaws such as dermatitis, rashes and blemishes as it is sweat that naturally cleanses pores. But it's been fairly obvious for quite some time that sex has a multiplicity of healing properties, needless to say.

Let's face it, skin and sex are two sides of the same coin. So in a time where morals take a back seat to pleasure, why not indulge in some skin-to-skin loving? From the animalistic conclusions to the more logic driven explanations of the sex appeal of skin, the truth is, well, naked.

Eco-living exhibited in Van city

Green products, education on display at event

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As people in Canada and countries around the world begin to discover the importance of changing our carbon footprint, the topic of sustainable living has grown in popularity.

An example of this trend is an exposition, occurring in Vancouver, which has started to take the first steps towards evolving public awareness of sustainable living.

EPIC!, the *Vancouver Sun* Sustainable Living Expo, is Western Canada's only green consumer trade show and eco-friendly marketplace. In other words, it's a place for Vancouverites, including a unique cross-section of businesses and other organizations, to progressively encourage and challenge each other to make green

choices. The three-day event, held at the end of May, showcases the latest styles and advances inspiring the vision that consumer products can be earth-friendly and practical.

"Sustainability is about maintaining quality of life," says Annette Yang, founder of Fill Your Own Inc. "By using disposable or one-use products, we are robbing tomorrow to pay for today's excess."

Yang, like many other exhibitors participating in this showcase carry a core value of creating environmental change through the promotion of sustainable consumer products. These are choices and activities which, according to *PlanetFriendly.net*, can help sustain your health, your spirit, and the planet.

People come to EPIC! to learn about products that allow them to live greener on a day-to-

day basis and to learn about how they can to be more environmentally friendly. According to *EpicVancouver.com*, the Sustainable Living Expo drew a total of 16,482 attendees this, its third year, surpassing last year's attendance by 22 per cent. The growing numbers would suggest that the need to protect ourselves and our world is becoming a popular trend. It is certainly one worth getting into.

Although EPIC! occurs in Vancouver, the message that the exposition sends should not be limited to Vancouver alone. Rather, it should transcend to each city across Canada.

So, next time you are thinking about changing our environment, remember that access to sustainable living is easier than you think. After all, we only have one earth, so why not protect it?