

SCILLY FLOWERS SUBJECT OF EUROPEAN DOCUMENTARY

Award winning Churchtown Farm, home of Scilly postal flower delivery business Scent from the Islands, is to be featured in a 50 minute documentary on German/French TV channel ARTE.

The programme's German director, Heiko De Groot, had heard and read about the family-run company based on St Martin's and also about the beauty of the islands and the many flower growing businesses, which are an important part of the Islands' economy.

Heiko's programmes focus on people whose lives are centred around Scilly's natural environment, overcoming the challenges they face on a daily basis with the help of family, friends and the local community. Before visiting the Scillies he had completed programmes featuring the world sheepdog trials in Wales and one on the interactions of alligators and humans in Florida.

Heiko said: "I had been reading about the Isles of Scilly, its nature and its unusual flower production, I had also read about the impressive work of the Julian family and their awards.

"The Churchtown Farm documentary is a snapshot of the family's daily life featuring Keith who has been at the farm since it was founded 25 years ago stepping down from his role as Field Manager. We follow the Julians - Ben, Zoe and their two young children, Rosie and Piran - during Keith's last days on the job as he prepares the handover. Seeing him pass on his knowledge and skills helps the audience understand the true nature of flower farming in such a remote place.

"Filming on St. Martin's was a wonderful experience. We learned so many exciting things about island living and it was an honour to be there for the last working days of Keith Low as the field manager of Churchtown Farm. We are very thankful to all the people we filmed and all the others who were very supportive."

The film crew stayed on St Martin's and followed the Julians for the three weeks leading up to Easter - one of the busiest times of the year for Scent from the Islands.

"We were concerned that we wouldn't be able to commit to the amount of time Heiko and his team needed to spend with us to complete their project and also worried that they might, unintentionally, slow us down during a peak time for deliveries," said Zoe Julian.

"We needn't have worried, they were great fun. We thoroughly enjoyed their visit and although we cannot deliver our flowers to France or Germany we're hoping that as the programme will show off the beauty of a Scilly spring it will boost the tourist industry."

The programme will be broadcast on the joint German/French ARTE - a

channel set up in 1992 to overcome cultural differences and support a peaceful Europe - on Sunday, September 20.

The story will also be featured in GEO magazine which is reputed for its coverage of cultural, wildlife and scientific topics.

Ends

CAPTION: Enjoying the beauty of St Martins are (L to R) Heiko De Groot, sound man Florian Illing and cameraman Patrick Brandt.