

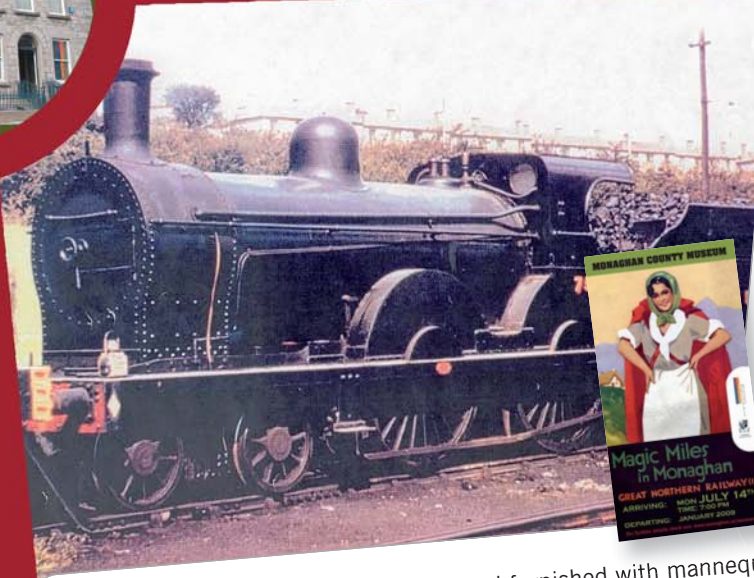
# newsletter

## Monaghan County Council Museum



### Inside this Issue

- 1 Magic Miles in Monaghan
- 1 Magic Miles Workshops
- 2 Friends of the Museum
- 2 Monaghan & Down Joint Exhibition
- 2 Nixon Montgomery
- 3 Closure of Army Barracks
- 3 Military Donations
- 3 Recent Acquisitions
- 4 A Snippet from our Archive
- 4 Upcoming Exhibitions



### MAGIC MILES IN MONAGHAN

Our current exhibition, 'Magic Miles in Monaghan - The Great Northern Railway' was launched in July 2008 and since then has attracted great interest. The exhibition recreates the atmosphere of a bygone age by relating the history of the railway in Co. Monaghan.

A replica platform has been erected and furnished with mannequins dressed in clothes from the 1950s, when trains last rumbled through the county. Signs, tickets, postcards and some of the goods regularly transported by train evoke nostalgic memories for those old enough to remember, while younger generations glimpse a slice of local history that perhaps they never knew existed. In addition to giving the history of the railway, text panels are used to explain the impact the coming of the railways had on both the urban and rural landscapes and on the everyday lives of the people. A model train set which winds its way along a rural track and into a miniature station helps to set the picture and large murals add colour and interest. Due to 'popular demand' the exhibition, which was originally due to finish its run in January, will now remain until the middle of June. School or other groups can avail of workshops which have been designed to complement the exhibition. Prior booking is necessary and can be made by telephoning the museum.

### WORKSHOPS MAGIC MILES

The workshops which accompany all of the exhibitions have proved very popular with school groups.

The three designed for the Magic Miles in Monaghan exhibition have been very successful. They are Puppet Making, Working on the Railway and one entitled Tour of Exhibition. Depending on the workshop selected, children can dress up in replica uniforms, practise hand signals, work on a jigsaw or on an activity book. All workshops must be booked in advance. Contact Pauline on 047 82928 or email [ptilson@monaghancoco.ie](mailto:ptilson@monaghancoco.ie)



St Marys Boys' National School pupils dressed up in replica uniforms



St Louis Girls' National School involved in the activities of the Magic Miles Workshop

### FURTHER INFORMATION

**CONTACT DETAILS**  
 1-2 Hill Street, Monaghan  
 Telephone 047 82928  
 Fax 047 71189  
[comuseum@monaghancoco.ie](mailto:comuseum@monaghancoco.ie)

**OPENING HOURS**  
 Monday - Friday 11am - 5pm  
 Saturday 12pm - 5pm





**The Friends of Monaghan County Museum are planning a mini outing in May (date yet to be arranged) to take in the village of Rockcorry or, as it was once known, Ghrabby.**

Beginning at Swann's Cross, we will hear a detailed history of the village and its environs. There is even talk of a windmill!!! Seems Rockcorry was green before it was fashionable!! The tour guide for the occasion will be June Brown

June will be assisted in her tour guiding duties by Noel Carney for the second outing which takes place on Saturday 29th August. Still in the general Rockcorry area, The Friends, in conjunction with the Clogher Historical Society and as part of the Monaghan/Rockcorry Heritage Week, are planning a tour of the Rossmore Mausoleum and the Lady Anne Dawson Temple at Dartry. The tour starts at 2.00pm and afternoon tea is provided.

**For further details contact the museum**



Liam Bradley, Curator and members of the Museum Advisory Committee including Chairman Tony Murphy being welcomed to Down Museum by Down District Chairman Cllr. Eddie Rea and Curator of Down County Museum, Mr. Mike King.

## MONAGHAN AND DOWN COUNTY MUSEUMS JOINT CROSS-BORDER EXHIBITION

**In a joint collaboration Monaghan and Down County Museums secured funding from the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism to develop an exhibition of interest to both counties.**

Following discussions it was decided that the cross-border exhibition should celebrate the rich farming traditions of the two counties. Mervyn Watson and Jonathon Bell, both retired from The Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, were commissioned to research and collate the agricultural collections held by the participating museums which will form the backbone of the exhibition. They will also produce a catalogue. Work will continue throughout the year and the exhibition, due to be launched in December 2009, will initially be staged in Down County Museum. The date for its arrival in Monaghan has not yet been set. The exhibition will eventually travel to other venues on both sides of the border.

Agriculture changed very little over the centuries until the relatively recent past, when the changes have been quite dramatic. This exhibition will chart the history of farming in Monaghan and Down and will highlight similarities and differences in the methods and equipment used in both counties. The types of crops grown, the sizes of farms and the people who worked and lived on the land will all feature. So too will the literature and art inspired by the landscape and by farming.

This exhibition will appeal to everyone, whether or not involved in agriculture. For children and young people it will be educational, for those a little older it will recall a previous age but most of all it will be interesting and entertaining for everyone.

## NIXON MONTGOMERY

**The curator and staff of Monaghan County Museum were deeply saddened to learn of the sudden death of Nixon Montgomery recently.**

Nixon, together with his brother George, had been a valued member of the Museum Advisory Committee for many years.



Nixon Montgomery

A past president of Clogher Historical Society, Nixon fully appreciated the importance of promoting and preserving local history and heritage and that informed his work on the Advisory Committee. He was generous with his time and experience and rarely, if ever, missed a meeting.

His pleasant nature and ready smile endeared him to all who knew and worked with him and his loss leaves a huge void. We offer our sincere condolences to his brother George, his colleagues on the Advisory Committee and to his many friends.





## CLOSURE OF ARMY BARRACKS

The recent closure of the army base at Knockaconny on the outskirts of Monaghan town signalled the end of an era; an era which spanned the belt-tightening seventies and eighties, the affluent nineties and 'noughties' and back again.



The troubles in Northern Ireland and the subsequent peace process formed a constant backdrop to these years. It was decided in the early 1970s that because of its proximity to the border, Monaghan town should have an army presence. Any local apprehension there may have been about the plan was dispelled at a stroke by the May 1974 bomb which caused such destruction and devastation.

The new building at Knockaconny, which was officially opened in 1976, itself made history as it was the first new army barracks built by the state. Army personal very quickly became part of the local community and contributed greatly to the social, cultural, sporting and business life of the town and news of the impending closure of the base was greeted with alarm. However, despite protests the flag was lowered and troops marched out of the town for the final time on 23rd January.



## MILITARY DONATIONS

At a civic reception to mark the occasion the Officer Commanding, Lieutenant-Colonel Murray, promised that the "bonds of friendship will continue to endure."<sup>1</sup> As a token of those "bonds of friendship"<sup>2</sup> Monaghan County Museum was presented with a large donation of military items to add to the collection. Uniforms, dress and combat, helmets, boots and many more pieces were received. Staff members in the museum were delighted to accept so many items of local military interest and in particular a female soldier's uniform (see picture above) - a first for the collection. Today's news is tomorrow's history and in making this gesture to the museum, and through it to the people of the county, the army is ensuring that its 33 years in Monaghan town and its environs will not be forgotten.



At present Noel Breakey and Andy Hogg are working to conserve some pieces from this donation prior to exhibiting them in the window of the Motor Tax office in Market Street, Monaghan.

<sup>1</sup> Northern Standard 19th February 2009

<sup>2</sup> IBID

Liam Bradley receiving military material from Quartermaster Sergeant Joe Lenane & Pte Liam Stirrat formerly of Monaghan Military Barracks



## Recent Acquisitions ...



Some recent acquisitions currently on display in the Motor Tax Office, Market Street, Monaghan.



## Historical Walking Tours of Monaghan Town

These popular tours are available with prior booking and weather permitting



- Guided Tours by prior arrangement.

- It is advisable for schools or large groups to pre-book.

If you wish to book a tour or enquire about an exhibition, event or workshop please contact us at **047 82928** or by email: [comuseum@monaghancoco.ie](mailto:comuseum@monaghancoco.ie)

All exhibitions and events will be advertised in the local press, or if you require further information check out Monaghan County Council Website at [www.monaghan.ie/museum/](http://www.monaghan.ie/museum/)

### OPENING HOURS

Monday - Friday 11am – 5pm

Saturday - 12pm – 5pm

### ADMISSION FREE

We would value **your comments** about this newsletter and would appreciate **any suggestions** for future editions. Email Eileen at [emckenna2@monaghancoco.ie](mailto:emckenna2@monaghancoco.ie) or telephone the **museum**

## A SNIPPET FROM OUR ARCHIVE

**Charles Gavan Duffy died in France in February 1903. These 'snippets' are taken from his Will, which was drawn up in November 1898**

"This is the last will and testament of me, Sir Charles Gavan Duffy of Latnamard in the County of Mornington in the colony of Victoria, Knight Commander of the order of Saint Michael and Saint George now for several years, a visitor to Europe but domiciled in Australia. I desire to bequeath all my real and personal estate situate in Australia to my sons, John Gavan Duffy and Charles Gavan Duffy ... I bequeath to my three daughters, Susan, Harriet and Geraldine the sum of one thousand eight hundred pounds". (He also made provision for "my infant daughter Louise and (to) my infant sons George, Bryan and Thomas".) ... "Signed by the Testator Sir Charles Gavan Duffy as and for his last Will and Testament in the presence of us present at the same time who in his presence at his request and with the presence of each other have hereunto set our hands as witnesses. John Fitzpatrick, Clerk in Holy Orders 22 Place Croix de Marbre, Nice. Stannus Jones, Gentleman, 53 Rue de la Paix Nice."

## UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS ...



### Joint Exhibition

Monaghan County Museum is staging a joint exhibition by award winning lace maker Theresa Kelly and textile artist, Bernie Gallagher.

Theresa combines the art of the traditional Carrickmacross lace with other elements such as silk fibres, gold leaf, glass and coconut paper. The resulting pieces are truly unique. Although Theresa has shown her work before in the museum, this will be Bernie's first exhibition here. Bernie lives and works in Sligo and her work is inspired by and reflects the textures, colours and atmospheres of the local landscape. Like Theresa, she uses a variety of unexpected materials which enhance her textiles, for example, glass, felt and fleece. The work of these two artists will complement each other and their exhibition will definitely be worth a visit. The exhibition will run from July 9th until September 11th.



### Creatures Great and Small

Photographer Roger Hale has been interested in wildlife all his life and is a founder member of the UK Wolf Conservation Trust.

As the title of his upcoming exhibition in Monaghan County Museum suggests his subjects range from tiny insects to the big cats and include dragonflies, damselflies, foxes, deer, leopards and many more. The photographs portray the animals in great detail in their natural habitat. The images of insects are in vibrant colour and are truly spectacular. Although born in England Roger now lives in Newbliss, Co. Monaghan. The exhibition will run mid-September, date to be confirmed.

### Borderlines Exhibition

Monaghan County Library Services and Monaghan County Museum have mounted an exhibition in the County Library, Clones which will run until 24th April.



The exhibition, which is described as "An Archive Project recording the personal stories and experiences of life in the Border Counties", is accompanied by a beautifully produced, and beautifully photographed, book. The exhibition will travel to the workhouse in Carrickmacross in May. This exhibition and the book 'Borderlines, Personal Stories and Experiences from the Border Counties' will be of interest to everyone, whether or not they live close to the border. Admission to the exhibition is free and the book is selling for €40.00.