

# newsletter

Monaghan County Council Museum



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## HERITAGE DAY

In keeping with its policy of accessibility for all, Monaghan County Museum hosted a major outreach event to mark Heritage Week this year. As the exhibition *Down to Monaghan – Farming in Two Counties* was still in situ in the museum gallery it was decided to theme Heritage Day around it.

Peter and Ciaran Cassidy demonstrate the blacksmiths skills

On Wednesday 25th August the staff moved into Gavan Duffy Park for the day. The display table containing a number of farm and farmhouse related objects from the museum's collection proved very popular with the crowds. The sun shone and hundreds of people enjoyed a variety of skills associated with the farming life of times past. There was something for all the family to enjoy. Some watched in admiration as William Steenson turned pieces of wood into lovely decorative items; Johnny Fee simultaneously kept his audience entertained with tales of long ago as he demonstrated the skill of threshing. Blacksmith Peter Cassidy and his son Ciarán worked together to produce some lovely items in wrought iron. Peter is quoted as saying "I would be delighted if Ciarán kept the tradition of the blacksmith going when I decide to hang up my hammer and tongs". There is no doubt that the onlookers agreed with his sentiment! Sam Moore was in attendance with a selection of animals from his open farm and Colin Walker kept the younger visitors entertained with face painting and balloon modelling.

The work of the farmer's wife wasn't forgotten as anyone who tasted Rose O'Boyle's delicious griddle bread (baked on the open hearth fire) will agree. It is not so long ago that in addition to baking, the farmer's wife would also have made the butter and a demonstration of churning was given by Mona Gilsean. Other skills that the lady of the house would have possessed were highlighted i.e. weaving by Liz Christy, knitting by Eileen Morgan and the local craft of Carrickmacross Lace making was demonstrated by Mary McMahon.

Pauline Tilson, Education and Outreach Officer with Monaghan County Museum who was heavily involved in the planning and organisation of the event, was both surprised and delighted with its success. She, and all the museum staff members, now hope to make the Heritage Day an annual event. Pauline, together with the curator and staff, would like to sincerely thank John Harden and the committee of Gavan Duffy Park for the use of the premises and for all their assistance throughout the day; Brendan Buckley and his crew from Civil Defence, and Monaghan Town Council for facilitating parking. Finally a big thank you to all the participants and visitors who made the event such a success.



Above, a young visitor at the loom and below William Steenson, woodturning.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

### CONTACT DETAILS

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[www.monaghan.ie/museum/](http://www.monaghan.ie/museum/)  
[www.bordermuseums.ie](http://www.bordermuseums.ie)

### OPENING HOURS

Monday - Friday 11am – 5pm  
 Saturday 12pm – 5pm

## HANDLING COLLECTION

Thanks to a successful application to the Department of Tourism, Culture and Sport, Monaghan County Museum is now in a position to update its handling collection.



Although a limited number of selected pieces had been available for loan to schools and special interest groups for many years, the advances in technology and education now demand access to a more comprehensive collection. It is also the policy of the museum to ensure access to the widest possible audience.

This funding will enable us to increase the number and variety of objects in our handling collection. The collection will be made available to schools, community groups, lifelong learning groups and special interest groups. It is hoped to have this completed early in the new year and to have an official launch later on.



## A CENTURY OF CHILDHOOD EXHIBITION

A travelling exhibition celebrating childhood in Ireland over the 20th century was launched by the Mayor of County Monaghan, Jackie Crowe on Wednesday, 10th November in Monaghan County Museum.

The exhibition is entitled *Seen but not heard, feictear ach ní cloistear - A century of childhood in Ireland...*

Main photo: Liam Bradley Curator, Mayor Jackie Crowe and Acting County Manager David Fallon at the opening of the exhibition.

It celebrates some of the many lifestyle changes experienced by successive generations of children growing up here over the course of the past 100 years. The exhibition was organised by the Local Authority Museums' Network (LAMN) which is comprised of thirteen local authority museums. This is the LAMN's first national exhibition.

Childhood is something with which everyone is familiar. Over the last century Ireland has undergone unprecedented changes in every aspect of life and this can be illustrated in the lives of children. While it is no longer an economic necessity for children to work, the pressures of modern life can often inflict hardships of a different nature. This exhibition promises a 'look at the story of childhood in Ireland over the last one hundred years and how it has changed in terms of schooling, play, health, money and punishment in today's modern society'. Wall panels, which contain personal reminiscences and photographs depicting children's lives throughout the century, take the visitor through 'an enchanting collection of images and memories documenting many aspects of growing up on the island of Ireland'. Toys and playthings from the museum's own collection, including a 1930's locally crafted, fully furnished doll's house and a number of (now) politically incorrect 'golliwogs' enhance the exhibition.

*Seen but not Heard* has travelled all over the country in the course of the last few years and has attracted a great deal of interest everywhere it has been. We know it will be just as successful in Monaghan County Museum! The exhibition will run from the 10th November until the end of February 2011. Monaghan County Museum is grateful for the sponsorship and support of The Heritage Council and The Department of Tourism, Sport and Culture. For details of educational packs and workshops contact the museum on (047)82928 by email at [comuseum@monaghancoco.ie](mailto:comuseum@monaghancoco.ie) or visit our website at [www.monaghan.ie/museum](http://www.monaghan.ie/museum) for further details.

## LECTURES



As part of the Hidden Heritage Project Peace III Programme Monaghan County Museum has organised a lecture series for Secondary Schools.

**Monday 7th March**

Dr Terence Dooley of NUI Maynooth will present a lecture entitled *Sources for the Study of Land, War and Politics in County Monaghan 1879 – 1923*.

**Wednesday 23rd March**

Dr Fearghal McGarry, lecturer and author, from Queen University will give a talk on the Easter Rising.

**Tuesday 29th March**

Mary Lynch will discuss her book *The Long Road Home*. Mary Lynch's idyllic life in rural Fermanagh was shattered the night she awoke to find a gun to her head and a British Soldier ordering her out of bed. *The Long Road Home* is the story of her journey back to acknowledging the pain and terror of her youthful experiences.

This project is part financed by the European Union's European Regional Development fund through Peace III Programme and funded through Monaghan Peace III Partnership.



### 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/) or [www.bordermuseums.ie](http://www.bordermuseums.ie)

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#### 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

**In May 1964 the All Ireland Fleadh Cheoil was held in Clones. As it was anticipated that in excess of 50,000 people would attend the need for accommodation was highlighted.**

A form was circulated in which householders indicated the number of people they could cater for. In addition, the County Librarian, Mr Martin McCabe, one of the organisers received a number of letters from people offering to accommodate some of the visitors. One lady wrote, "I have 2 double beds in separate rooms. I have a bathroom, hot and cold water and flush toilet. ... I would prefer men TT if possible as country people have a busy time in the spring..." Another letter writer said, "I would be able to accommodate 16 altogether, that is if I can get 10 army beds". The army was indeed requested to provide bedding as this letter to Mr McCabe indicates "Mr E Childers T.D. Minister for Transport and Power, has asked me to inform you that he recently made representations to the Minister for Defence regarding the possibility of supplying bedding in connection with the Fleadh Cheoil to be held in Clones in May 1964.

I enclose the reply which the minister has received in the matter." (Signed - Private Secretary)  
The enclosed letter promised the following

- 77 sets of bedboards and trestles @ 5d per set per day
- 77 mattresses @ 9p each per day
- 400 hundred blankets @ 1d each per day
- 104 pillows @ 1d each per day
- 97 pillow cases @ 1d each per day

## COMMEMORATIVE STAMPS

To mark the bicentenary of the Chilean War of Independence and to honour the two Irish men who were crucial to that struggle, commemorative stamps have been issued simultaneously in both Ireland and Chile.



The Mayor of County Monaghan, Jackie Crowe, Curator, Liam Bradley and staff members Theresa Loftus, Noel Breakey, Pauline Tilson and Andy Hogg pose beside an image of the commemorative Stamp

The two men were Bernardo O'Higgins, the son of an Irish father and a Chilean mother and John or Juan MacKenna who was a native of Monaghan. A portrait of Juan MacKenna, a carved wooden bust and a replica of his sword is on permanent display in the museum. The winners of a competition run by Monaghan County Museum and The Northern Standard Newspaper received first day covers of the stamps. The winners were: Patrick O'Reilly, Maura Coyle, James Kelly, Peadar McKenna, Stephen Carragher, Peter McKenna, Patrick Connolly, Brenda McKenna.

## UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

### Hidden Heritage Exhibition

The Hidden Heritage Exhibition will run from the end of March 2011 until August

#### OUTREACH EXHIBITION



### Railway Exhibition

The GNR exhibition in the Patrick Kavanagh Centre, Inniskeen

#### OUTREACH EXHIBITION



### Agricultural Exhibition

Staff at Broomfield look at the Agricultural Exhibition.

### Music Exhibition

The Music Exhibition will be opening early September 2011 (to coincide with the Blues Festival in Monaghan Town)