

MONAGHAN COUNTY MUSEUM

NEWSLETTER

Issue 19 • Spring 2020

MONAGHAN
Músaem Chontae Mhuineachain
COUNTY
MUSEUM

Noel Breakey 1959 – 2019

Monaghan County Museum Conservator

Everyone associated with Monaghan County Museum was deeply saddened and shocked to learn of the untimely death of our friend and colleague, Noel Breakey. Noel had worked at Monaghan County Museum for 41 years. Over his remarkable career, which was defined by a dedication and love for the history and heritage of County Monaghan, he was an integral part of the literal and figurative building of the service to what it is today. He was the heart and the memory of the museum. His loss has left a void which will never be filled but also a memory, which will always be cherished by those who knew and loved him. His legacy is not words on a page, his life touched us all. We will carry his memory and the collection at Monaghan County Museum will carry his signature, one of diligence and passion.



INSIDE:

'The Monaghan Spitfire'
Exhibition wins National
Award for Professional
Excellence

Lightning P38 finds

Rossmore Castle Rebuilt

Bealtaine Festival

The Uilleann Pipes of Lord
Rossmore

Monaghan War of
Independence Files
Launched Online

Online Linen Exhibition

Young Social Innovators
Project

Friends go Behind the
Scenes at the National
Museum of Ireland

New Education Resources

Upcoming Museum Events



'The Monaghan Spitfire' Exhibition wins National Award for Professional Excellence

The Monaghan Spitfire – Life on the Border with a World at War has become Monaghan County Museum's most successful exhibition in its 45-year history. The success was added to recently when Monaghan County Museum was recognised for its ground-breaking exhibition at the Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards. The museum won in a category which was loaded with excellent projects from around the country focussed on our national heritage. Museum Curator, Liam Bradley, spoke of the personal as well as professional impact of this national award for excellence; 'We at the museum are a team, first and foremost. We recently lost a key member of that team in our long serving friend and colleague, Noel Breakey. This exhibition was the last that Noel ever mounted in the museum and we want to honour his memory with this award'.



Left to right: Patricia Barbour, Theresa Loftus, Helen Doherty, Liam Badley, Pauline Tilson and Denise Henry.

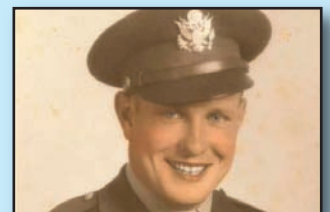
Lightning P38 finds added to 'The Monaghan Spitfire' Exhibition

Following the recent excavation to locate the remains of a US Air Force P38 Lightning that crashed in 1942 near Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan, new artefacts were added to the Monaghan Spitfire exhibition. The dig happened in collaboration with Queen's University and Aviation Archaeologist Jonny McNee. Helping at the dig for the day were students from Foyle College, Derry and Ballybay Community College, Co. Monaghan. This was the first ever licensed excavation of an American warplane in the history of the state and garnered national media coverage including BBC News NI, Sky News, and the RTÉ Nine O'clock News and the Irish Times.

Following conservation, on October 30th the finds from the dig went on display at a lively launch night. The speakers at the event were; Curator Liam Bradley, Aviation Archaeologist Jonny Mc Nee, Air Marshall Sean Reynolds of the RAF, Defence Attaché Lt Col Robert Skopec of the US Air Force and some of the students who participated on the dig.



Right to Left; Curator Liam Bradley, Aviation Archaeologist Jonny Mc Nee, Air Marshall Sean Reynolds of the RAF, Councillor Sean Conlon, Defence Attaché Lt Col Robert Skopec of the US Air Force and Professor Alastair Ruffell, Queens University.



Second Lieut Milo E Rundall (22), who bailed out of his P38 Lightning aircraft near Castleblayney in 1942.



Students from Foyle College, Derry and Ballybay College, Co Monaghan assist at the dig.

Rossmore Castle Rebuilt

During last year's summer camp fifteen very talented young people worked on a project led by Monaghan County Museum to rebuild Rossmore Castle in a virtual reality world. Using the original plans of the castle, which was built near Monaghan town in 1827, the participants worked over four days to create a Minecraft virtual world scaled replica. As well as working in the virtual world the group made real world site visits to the original site of where Rossmore Castle stood until its demolition in 1975. On completion of the Minecraft model the young participants were able to explore the castle through virtual reality technology and to take home detailed 3D print outs of their finished work. This project was run in collaboration with AmmA - Multimedia and Creative Learning Centre, Armagh with funding from Creative Ireland.



Participants of the Minecraft Summer Camp sit on the original entrance steps to Rossmore Castle while on a site visit.



Rossmore Castle.



Virtual Minecraft image of Rossmore Castle.



Adult creativity was also catered for when the Bealtaine Festival was celebrated in the Museum during May with a series of jewellery-making workshops. Over a period of two weeks, local jewellery maker Lorraine Colleran, guided the class towards the creation of their own unique, stunning pieces of jewellery. Every year the Bealtaine Festival celebrates creativity and the arts for people as they age.



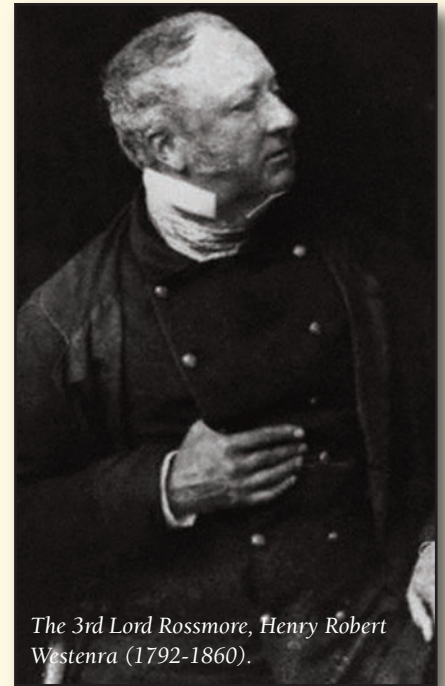
Participants in the jewellery making workshop.

Culture Night

The Uilleann Pipes of Lord Rossmore



The Gallery was packed with Culture Night revellers



The 3rd Lord Rossmore, Henry Robert Westenra (1792-1860).



Tiarnán Ó Dhuinnchinn playing the 3rd Lord Rossmore's uilleann pipes.

Culture Night, in its fifteenth year in 2019 saw the Museum present an evening of 'The Music of the Rossmores'. Central to the evening's entertainment was the unveiling of the restored set of uilleann pipes that once belonged to the 3rd Lord Rossmore, Henry Robert Westenra (1792-1860).

The job of restoring the pipes was undertaken by Eamonn Curran who did an incredible job of bringing them back to life. Finally, after 150 years of silence, the sound of the 3rd Lord Rossmore's uilleann pipes was heard through the Museum's gallery

skillfully played by Tiarnán Ó Dhuinnchinn. Along with the evening's music, the fascinating story of the Rossmores in Monaghan was recounted by historian Seán McElwain.



Eamonn Curran proudly displaying the uilleann pipes he restored.



Left to right: Liam Bradley (Curator, Monaghan County Museum), Tiarnán Ó Dhuinnchinn, Eamonn Curran, Charlotte Westenra (daughter of the current Lord Rossmore), Shirley Clerkin (Heritage Officer), John Touhey, Senator Robbie Gallagher and Seán McElwain.

Monaghan War of Independence Files Launched Online

A significant occasion in the museum calendar in 2019 was the launch of the Monaghan War of Independence Files. This online resource was collated from statements collected in 1966 and are the personal recollections of former members of the IRA who were active in County Monaghan during the War of Independence. The statements were gathered by Fr Laurence Marron, Fr Peadar Livingston, Fr Joseph Duffy (later Bishop Duffy), and Owen Smyth. On the launch night Bishop Emeritus Joseph Duffy, one of the original collectors, joined relatives of the other three collectors to witness

the unveiling of this fascinating online resource

The Museum is most grateful to Minister Heather Humphreys for launching the Monaghan War of Independence Files. The event received national coverage, with RTÉ Six One News airing a piece featuring extracts from letters and accounts written by Eoin O'Duffy and Dan Hogan. The digitisation project which was carried out by Theresa Loftus, Monaghan County Museum makes it accessible to everyone and brings the extraordinary stories of ordinary Monaghan people within easy reach of all.

MONAGHAN
Músaem Chontae Mbuíneachain
COUNTY
MUSEUM



*War of Independence
Files Online*



Pictured at the launch of the Independence Files Online Archive were front (L-R) Bishop Emeritus Joseph Duffy (one of the original collectors), Minister for Business, Enterprise, and Innovation Heather Humphreys TD, Jimmy Livingstone (Brother of collector Peadar Livingstone), Fr Lorcan Lynch (nephew of collector Fr Laurence Marron) and Owen Smyth (son of collector Owen Smyth). Behind are (L-R) Cllr David Maxwell, Cathaoirleach of Monaghan County Council, Theresa Loftus, Exhibitions and Research Officer, Monaghan County Museum, Liam Bradley, Curator, Monaghan County Museum, Cllr Pat Treanor and Eamonn O'Sullivan, Chief Executive, Monaghan County Council.

©Rory Geary/The Northern Standard.

Online Linen Exhibition

In May 2019 the Museum launched an online exhibition that charts the course of the importance of the linen trade in County Monaghan. This online exhibition showcases some of the artefacts relating to linen and its production in our collection. Linen making was a labour-intensive process that particularly suited the small size of farms in county Monaghan. The weaver-farmer system was very common until the 1830s, when spinning mills became established and the spinning of linen thread at home slowly declined. This project was brought together as part of the Linen Biennale Northern Ireland and once again supports the aim of the Museum to make collections available to a wider audience.



3-pronged cast iron drag (handle missing) used for removing drowned flax from flax holes when retting flax and a piece of raw flax for linen making.



Linen was used in military uniform. Seen here is a tunic from the Royal Irish Fusiliers made of red linen cloth. In the domestic sphere, linen was used for many articles including this apron.



Launch of Largy College Young Social Innovators Project

In early May the Museum was happy to host the launch of the Largy College Young Social Innovators project for 2019. This imaginative project aimed at raising awareness of the plight of people forced from their homes by war and persecution. The Transition Year students not only developed an app but also produced a book and several board games aimed at easing the transition of refugees as they settled into new communities. Such was the regard towards this project, the work of these young innovators featured in an article in the Irish Times.



Caitlin Connolly and Lilav Mohamed of Largy College, Clones, who helped create an app and board games for refugees. (Permission for use of image granted by Sascha Cumiskey, Largy College).

Friends go Behind the Scenes at the National Museum of Ireland



During a visit to the National Museum of Ireland the Friends of Monaghan County Museum were treated to a guided tour of our archaeological past by the Keeper of Irish Antiquities, Maeve Sikora and to a behind the scenes visit to

the conservation labs. Here they learned about the conservation techniques connected with everything from ancient bog butter to Spanish Armada siege cannons. This tour was part of a range of events organised by the

Friends through the Monaghan County Museum. For more information on joining the Friends of Monaghan County Museum, contact the museum at (047) 82928.



Photos of Friends of Monaghan County Museum's visit to the National Museum of Ireland.

Education Resources



Handling Collection

The Museum's Handling Collection is now viewable on the Monaghan County Museum's website. These collections are available to loan to schools, community groups and special interest groups. It is essential to make a booking for all loans from the Handling Collection through the Education and Outreach Officer To view the Handling Collection go to <https://monaghan.ie/museum/handling-collection/>



Visiting with children?

Visiting with children? Checkout the new Kids' Activity Trail booklet which will help guide them in a fun way through our Collection while they learn. Pick one up at reception!

Upcoming Museum Events

The Black Pig's Dyke –
Thursday March 26th,
8pm



Archaeology Summer
Camp – Monday July
13th – Thursday 16th
9.30am – 3.30pm
(Age 6 – 12)



The best man in Ulster?
Eoin O'Duffy and
Monaghan's War of
Independence –
Monday April 6th, 7pm



National Heritage Week –
Saturday July 15th –
Sunday 23rd



Easter Arts & Crafts –
Tuesday April 7th &
Wednesday 8th, 10am –
12pm & 1pm – 3pm
(Age 5-12)



Culture Night – Friday
September 18th, 7.30pm



Dan Hogan's War –
Monday April 20th, 7pm



Halloween at the
Museum – October TBC



Bealtaine Festival 2019
celebrating creativity as
we age – Basket
Making by Eddie
McGrath – Wednesday
May 6th & Friday 8th
10am – 4pm



Winter Craft Workshops
Calligraphy – Saturday
November 7th
1pm – 2.30pm (Age 10+)



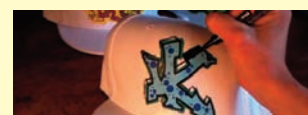
National Drawing Day –
Saturday May 16th 1pm
– 3pm (Age 8+)



Card Making – Saturday
November 14th 1pm –
3pm (Age 6 – 12)



Graffiti Caps – Saturday
November 21st 1pm –
3pm (Age 7-12)

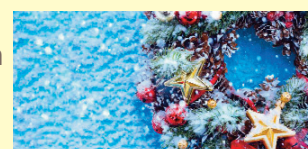


Cruinniú na nÓg – June
TBC



Winter Craft Workshops at the Museum

Christmas Theme –
Saturday November 28th
1pm – 3pm (Age 5 – 12)



Science Festival –
Saturday November
7th – Saturday 21st



Christmas at the Museum – December TBC

Please note, some events may be postponed due to the National Covid-19 restrictions.
Check Museum website: www.monaghan.ie/museum/ and Facebook page or call us on 047 82928.

OPENING HOURS

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

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

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/