

Taoiseach Micheál Martin visits Monaghan County Museum

On 5 November 2021, An Taoiseach Micheál Martin was welcomed to the “Experiences of Border Minority Communities – Historical Perspectives” hosted by Monaghan County Museum. The conference which took place as part of the State’s Decade of Centenaries Programme featured lectures by keynote speakers including historians Dr Daniel Purcell and Dr Margaret O’Callaghan who delivered historical assessments of partition. The following panel discussion was moderated by Dr Éamon Phoenix.



Staff of Monaghan County Museum at “Experiences of Border Minority Communities” L – R front row: Liam Bradley, Curator Monaghan County Museum; An Taoiseach Micheál Martin; Cllr. Aidan Campbell, Cathaoirleach of Monaghan County Council; L – R second row: Pauline Tilson, Education and Events Officer; Patricia Barbour, Office Administrator and Marketing; L – R back row: Denise Henry, Registrar; Theresa Loftus, Exhibitions & Research Officer; Anna McCann, Collections Officer.

The afternoon programme was introduced by a lively panel discussion on the different perspectives of the effects of partition on border communities. This was followed by presentations by border museum curators on the work undertaken by individual museums during the Decade of Centenaries.

The conference was a great success and An Taoiseach thanked the curator Liam Bradley and all his staff for their hard work in organising the event. The event was live-streamed and is available to view on the Monaghan County Museum YouTube Channel (available at Monaghan County Museum YouTube Channel).



L – R: Liam Bradley, Curator Monaghan County Museum; An Taoiseach Micheál Martin; Ian Crozier, CEO Ulster Scots Agency, Cllr. Aidan Campbell, Cathaoirleach of Monaghan County Council.



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Comhairle Contae Mhuineachain
Monaghan County Council



Peace Campus Updates

Anyone driving across the North Road or down Glaslough Street in Monaghan couldn't fail to notice the advances in the construction on the site of the new Monaghan Peace Campus. It is exciting to see what has been, until recently, a vision on paper or a computer screen emerging in the Monaghan landscape. Here at the museum, preparations for the big move have been ongoing but our excitement has gone up another level as our new home emerges from behind the hoarding. Despite Covid-19 necessitating closure of the site from 8 January 2021 - 4 May 2021 great progress has been made with construction. As well as becoming the new home for the museum, the Peace Campus will also house the library, a youth facility, a shared community multi-use space both inside and out and underground parking. This sensational addition to Monaghan town has been supported by the EU's PEACE IV Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB)



In anticipation we would like to share some images below of the new campus from September 2021 that show the vast footprint of the new development and some beautiful aerial shots of Monaghan Town. Hopefully, they will whet your appetite for things to come!

For more information please see www.monaghan.ie/monaghan-peace-campus



Monaghan Peace Campus (September 2021)



The Museum end of the Peace Campus (May 2022)



Monaghan Peace Campus (September 2021)



The Museum end of the Peace Campus (Computer Generated Image)

Preparation for the Big Move

Condition Audit

As part of the preparations for the big move to the museum's new home in the Peace Campus in early 2023, a condition audit of the collection has been undertaken. This has meant going through objects in storage, shelf by shelf and box by box.

Condition audits involve examining each object and detailing the condition, stability and whether future treatments are required. Museums use condition audits as part of conservation planning and are incredibly useful as they provide information about the condition and stability of the objects which helps museum staff prioritise actions such as preparing objects for display and making improvements in storage conditions where necessary.

Condition audits provide an overview of the health of the collection and allows museum staff to ensure standards are being met as part of our continued commitment to collections care as part of our Accreditation to the Museum Standards Programme for Ireland.



Assessing a large collection of printer's blocks.



Examination of mixed archaeological objects as part of the condition audit.

Photographic Record of Collection

The audit has also provided the opportunity for us to create a photographic record of the thousands of fascinating and beautiful objects in the museum's collection, which are the physical memory of the county's history and heritage. Here is a small selection of images from our collections store that have been recently photographed.



1994 Ireland Supporters World Cup USA Mug.



Cast aluminium "No Waiting" sign. This sign was used in Glaslough Street, Monaghan Town (1960s and 1970s).



Morion Helmet, from Spain c. 16th to 17th century.

After objects have been checked for the audit and photographed, they are being safely repacked, ready for the move to the new Peace Campus building when the museum relocates.

The Clones Affray: Death of Matt Fitzpatrick

The 11 February 2022 marked the centenary of the death of Matt Fitzpatrick in an event that has become known as The Clones Affray. To acknowledge this anniversary, the museum launched a new exhibit on the incident that

occurred at Clones Railway Station just one month after the transfer of power from the British to the Provisional Government of the new Irish Free State.



Matt Fitzpatrick, middle row centre 1919



Clones Railway Station (Courtesy of Charles Friel)

Matt Fitzpatrick's involvement in the War of Independence in County Monaghan is well documented in our nationally acclaimed exhibition Monaghan's War of Independence 1919-1921. In February 1920 Matt is believed to have taken part in the raid on Ballytrain RIC Barracks, and in 1921 he played a role in the IRA raid on Roslea where he was wounded and captured. The subsequent rescue of him from the heavily guarded Monaghan Infirmary has become known as 'the epic of the War of Independence in County Monaghan'.

Despite surviving his injuries and epic rescue, Matt's life was cut short during the Clones Affray. On 11 February 1922 Matt was alerted by members of his IRA battalion to the presence of armed Ulster Special Constabulary (USC) on a train stopped in Clones. In the ensuing battle of gunfire Matt Fitzpatrick was shot and killed and four members of USC also lay dead. The aftermath of the Clones Affray led to outrage in Northern Ireland, igniting violent sectarian attacks and prompting calls from Winston Churchill for an investigative tribunal.



Mr. Gerard Fitzpatrick, nephew of Matt Fitzpatrick and Liam Bradley, curator display some of the artefacts in the new display.

The new display on the Clones Affray has drawn attention to this sometimes-forgotten flashpoint in the early history of the Irish State and has itself garnered national coverage. The exhibit includes the rifle that reportedly killed Matt Fitzpatrick, as well as his Mauser handgun and a wooden crucifix display including the small metal crucifix he had in his pocket when he died. The museum is very grateful to Matt's nephew Mr Gerard Fitzpatrick for his assistance and loans of objects for this exhibit.

What's the Story? The Buzz about the Blue Bottle!

Objects in the museum all have their unique story to tell, and recently an old Guinness bottle in our collection aroused our interest. It was blue, making it stand out from the hoard of more familiar brown stout bottles.



A selection of beer bottles in the museum collection



Blue Guinness Bottle in the museum collection

On close inspection it became clear that while the stout that originally filled this bottle started life at the Guinness Brewery, St. James's Gate, Dublin, but the bottle certainly didn't. The label shows this beer had been bottled locally in Scotstown, County Monaghan.



Guinness bottled by Michael Moyna, Scotstown, Co. Monaghan. The label dates it to 1953-55.

Research reveals that Guinness did not start bottling its own product until the 1950s. Until then, Guinness sold stout in casks only. The stout left the brewery at St. James's Gate in wooden casks and was subsequently bottled by individual publicans, hoteliers and wholesalers. Each of these individual bottlers were responsible for sourcing their own bottles and corks - accounting for our blue Guinness bottle!

Bottling was achieved using a syphon bottle-filler that drew the Guinness from a trough into a series of syphons that fed the beer into connected empty bottles. Publicans could sign up to use an official personalised Guinness trademark label showing their name and address and provided by the brewery, but in turn had to agree not to sell any other brown beer. Those who didn't enter this agreement could produce their own, known in the trade as 'white labels', but these had to be approved by the Guinness brewery.

Following the decision of Guinness to begin bottling their own product in the 1950s the practice of individual publicans in Ireland bottling declined and died out completely in the early 1970s. This tradition may be gone but has left a trove of unique bottles with labels that tell their own story.

(Many thanks to the archivist in Guinness Archive for research assistance for this piece)



The bottling process in action. The photograph shows the last retail bottling of Guinness Extra Stout by the Park Hotel, Cardiff, Wales, and dates from (1970). (Image courtesy of Guinness Archive)

Minecraft World of Rossmore Update

Following the museum's successful launch of the Minecraft World of Rossmore to schools across the country last year, from the end of October 2021 it became available to the general public to download and enjoy for free. This innovative Game-Based Learning experience has rebuilt a virtual version of the once magnificent Rossmore Castle and its grounds to be explored through fun, history and other curricular activities.

Some of the fun and educational activities to be explored in the Minecraft World of Rossmore



The original Rossmore Castle



The actual Rossmore Castle, sited just outside Monaghan town, had fallen into disrepair during the mid-twentieth century and was eventually demolished during the 1970s. This recreation of the building through the Microsoft Minecraft game by Monaghan County Museum and their partners Amma Creative Learning Centre in Armagh has allowed access to this magnificent building and surroundings again.

Children enjoying the Minecraft World of Rossmore Programme

To support schools in the region the museum and our cross-border partners Amma Creative Learning Centre in Armagh, have been busy delivering a successful in-school programme to 16 schools in the County Monaghan area.



6th Class students from Scoil Mhuire na m Buachailli, Castleblayney enjoy the in-school programme of the Rossmore World of Minecraft.



3rd 6th class students from St. Joseph's National School, Knockatallon - enjoy the in-school programme of the Rossmore World of Minecraft.

Monaghan County Museum along with Amma are excited to see schools continue exploring The Minecraft World of Rossmore! Find out more at ammacentre.org/rossmore or visit our website www.monaghan.ie/museum

Museum Events

With Covid-19 restrictions relaxed Monaghan County Museum has been delighted to welcome people back to attend the Museum for some events. We have also been continuing our online activities that allow us to reach a wider audience.

St Brigid's Day 2022

To celebrate St. Brigid, the national female patron saint of Ireland the museum teamed up with Wicklow Willow. On 1st February, to mark her feast day, the history of St Brigid and the traditions associated with her were explored through a series of 3 short videos, made available through the museum's You Tube channel. These informative videos also told how to collect the materials needed, and how to make your own St Brigid's Cross.

Traditionally made from rushes, it is believed that the crosses protect the home from fire and disease. The crosses would be blessed before they were put in the house and byre.



International Women's Day 2022

To celebrate International Women's Day, Monaghan County Museum and Cavan Monaghan ETB teamed up to host a Flower Arranging workshop in the museum gallery. Those who attended used a variety of materials to make their own Easter floral arrangement to bring home with them.



Easter

We are so happy to have events taking place in the museum again and our recent Easter Workshop for children was a huge success. Creativity 'eggcelled' and our young artist produced some wonderful 3D Easter decorations.



MONAGHAN
Múseam Contae Mhúineacháin
COUNTY
MUSEUM



UPCOMING EVENTS 2022

June

Storytelling in Shadow Art Saturday 11th 1pm – 3pm (6 – 12 year olds)

To celebrate Cruinniú na nÓg Annie June Callaghan will facilitate a playful workshop where participants will explore three story themes; **bravery, monsters and joy**. Story cards, drama techniques and cut out artwork will be used to tell a visual story in silhouette. **Booking Essential.**



July

Archaeology Summer Camp Monday 18th – Friday 22nd & Monday 25th – Friday 29th 9am – 12pm (6 – 9 year olds) & 1pm – 4pm (10 – 12 year olds)

Is your child a curious explorer with a thirst for the past? Why not let them try the School of Irish Archaeology. Enjoy a hands-on experience of excavation, replica artefacts, clothes, weaponry and games. All young archaeologists should check it out.



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Booking Essential.



For further details on any of our
events, or to make a booking,
please contact us on 047 82928



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Programme
2017-2021



MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL
COMHAIRE CONTAE Mhúineacháin



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!



@MonaghanCountyMuseum



Twitter: @museum_county

Website: <https://monaghan.ie/museum/>

Please check Museum website for information and updates
www.monaghan.ie/museum/ and Facebook page or call us on 047 82928.

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/