

MONAGHAN COUNTY MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

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MONAGHAN COUNTY
MUSEUM
Músaem Chontae Mhuineacháin



NEW HORIZONS 2024

2024 is an auspicious, exciting year for Monaghan County Museum. Not only are we shortly moving to the new Peace Campus building, but we will also celebrate our museum's 50th anniversary.

This aerial view of Monaghan town, taken from above our future home, illustrates how the museum has been, is, and will continue to be physically central to our community. For nigh on half a century, Monaghan County

Museum has been collecting, conserving, recording, and displaying the history of this region. Our relocation will allow us new opportunities to innovate and share the stories of our objects whilst continuing our passionate care of the collection. Our purpose-built museum space also offers us the scope to develop dynamic new exhibitions for our visitors, which we look forward to welcoming you to later this year!



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Campas Síochána
Mhuineacháin

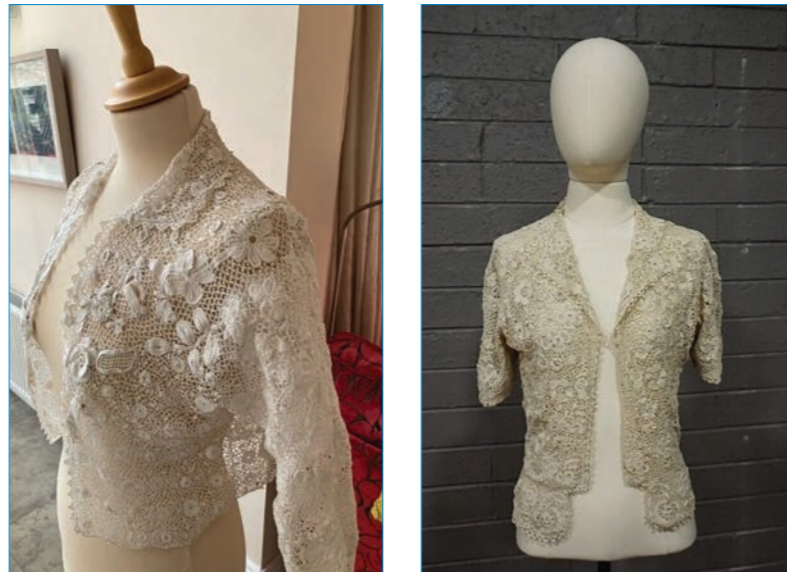
Monaghan
Peace Campus

Peace
Northern Ireland - Ireland
European Regional Development Fund

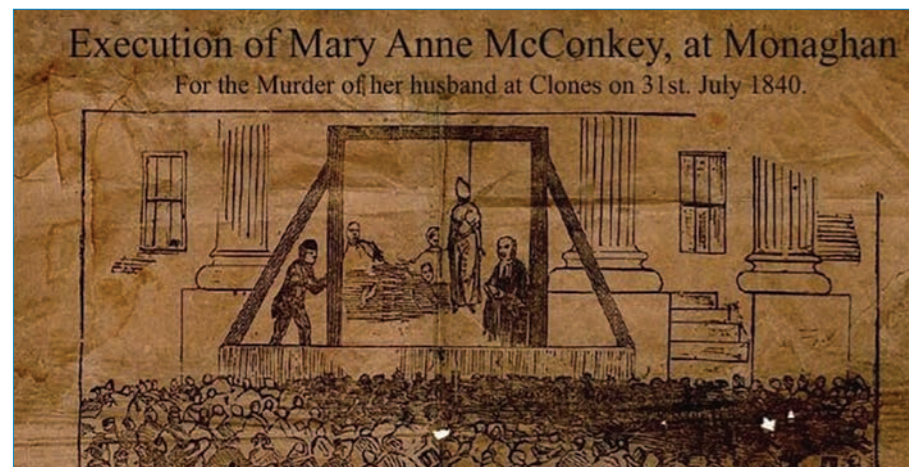
NEW ACQUISITIONS

The museum has been fortunate to recently receive some new donations into our collection. These include two stunning 'Gibson Girl style', Irish crochet lace jackets. County Monaghan has its own crochet lace that began as a relief project in Clones, County Monaghan during the Great Irish Famine. This Clones Lace initiative aimed to create income for families suffering hardship. To speed up production, Clones makers adapted sewing needles into crochet-style tools named 'famine hooks' moving away from the Italian technique that had inspired it. The resulting lace was highly prized and exported across the world.

In complete contrast to the elegant, delicate jackets, our other recent donation is a robust wooden gaol door. This door once kept prisoners at bay in the Monaghan Gaol that stood where the present Monaghan Hospital is located. Built in 1824, the semi-circular gaol contained 75 single person cells, and 11 multi-bedroom ones. The gaol yard included a treadwheel used for raising water for the prison. One of the most infamous inmates was Mary Ann McConkey, who was accused of poisoning her husband. In May 1841, she became the only woman to be publicly hanged in Monaghan Gaol. If doors could talk! **The museum is exceedingly grateful to our generous donors.**



The two exquisite lace jackets recently donated to the museum.



Artist sketch of the hanging of Mary Ann McConkey in May 1841. (Drawing by Kevin McHugh).



Nineteenth century map showing the semi-circular Monaghan Gaol on the site of the present hospital.



The door from Monaghan Gaol, recently donated to the museum.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Moving the museum collection to a new location is not an easy task and work continues busily behind the scenes getting objects ready for the move.

As well as preparing the whole collection for the move, we are also preparing objects that will be going on display in our new *Bordering Realities* exhibition.



Surface cleaning of bone needle prior to packing for the move

Some objects require conservation treatment before they can be moved safely, and some will also need bespoke packaging to protect them while in transit during the move.

With over 442 objects to install in new display cases, we are moving the objects into a designated area, so they can be efficiently transferred into their new cases once the exhibition spaces in the Peace Campus are ready.



Polished stone axe heads packed in foam support in archival box.

MOBILE SHELVING STORE FOR NEW MUSEUM

Those objects in the collection that are not going on display in the new museum will find their home in this state-of-the-art mobile shelving unit. Recently installed in the new museum building, this system will offer up to 70% more storage capacity than the static shelving that we have in the current museum store. This mechanically operated system works by a hand-crank that allows an aisle to open where access is needed within the storage unit. Due to needing only space for one aisle this system allows for more storage and utilises less floor space.



The new mobile storage and retrieval system has shelving, drawers, and space included particularly suited for the picture and costume collection.



An aisle opened in the storage and retrieval system.

HOMAGE TO OUR MUSEUM HOME AT 1-2 HILL STREET



Numbers 1 and 2 Hill Street, the Museum's home for nearly 40 years.

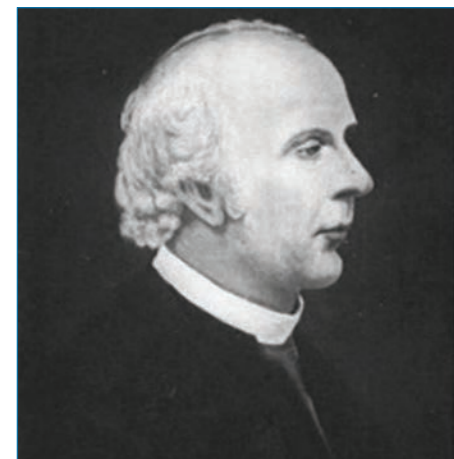


No's 1 and 2 Hill St. on OS Map (1860)

As excitement mounts for the move to the museum's new home at the Peace Campus it is perhaps a good time to pay homage to the home we are leaving. The beautiful buildings of Numbers 1 and 2 Hill Street have been our base for over three decades and have provided a wonderful backdrop for our exhibitions and displays. Monaghan County Museum moved to Hill Street in the mid-1980s when the buildings were vacated by the Co. Council, and the display gallery and stores were added in 1986. Internal modifications were made, and the museum was officially opened by President Hillery in 1990.



At the opening of Monaghan County Museum at 1-2 Hill Street in 1990 (L-R) Mr. Patrick Long (then curator), President Patrick Hillery and Mr. Aidan Walsh (former curator).



Dr James Donnelly, Bishop of Clogher from 1865 – 1893.

ECCLESIASTICAL ECHOES

Given that numbers 1 and 2 Hill Street are some two-hundred years old, they have experienced many changes, both of inhabitants and uses. According to the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage the present buildings date from 1820-1840. However, a prior building existed on the same site that was home to a Walter Young in 1796. Future residents included the Presbyterian minister Rev. John Bleckley who, according to Eamonn FitzSimons research, may have used the building as the location of his classical academy. Charles Gavan Duffy (1816-1903) was the only Catholic pupil of this school. Bleckley is said to have designed the First Presbyterian Church in Monaghan in 1827. In 1873 the buildings acquired other clerical residents when they were sold to the Catholic Bishop of Clogher, Dr. James Donnelly. In 1902 the representatives of Bishop Donnelly sold the properties to Monaghan builder Patrick Nolan, maybe as the new Bishop's Palace neared completion, the Hill Street buildings became surplus to requirements.

IMPALEMENT TRAGEDY

Prior to Bishop Donnelly's purchase, No. 1 Hill Street served as the offices of Monaghan solicitor Thomas Wright. In 1872 tragedy struck when a man working on the roof fell and became impaled on the railings below. The unfortunate man, who later died, had earlier been safely removed from the roof where, somewhat worse for wear from drink, he had fallen asleep!

23	John Holmes,	Forbes Young,	House, offices, and yard,	0 2 13	2 5 0	24 0 0	24 0 0
-a	John Holmes,	Lord Rossmore,	Garden (in rear),			2 5 0	2 5 0
24	Thomas E. Wright,	Same,	House, offices, and yard,			12 0 0	12 0 0

The Griffith Valuation from the early 1860s refer to 1 and 2 Hill Street as 23 and 24. Thomas Wright's first wife Jane Eliza Morphy was a first cousin of Oscar Wilde's mother).



1-2 Hill Street in the 1970s when used as offices for the County Council.



The building undergoing renovations showing the entrance hall with tiled floor.

LATER OCCUPANTS

In 1927 No. 2 was bought by Eileen Mallen of Dublin Street as a family home and in 1932 No 1, then called Hope House, was acquired by Patrick McEntee, a dentist. In the 1970s the buildings were used as offices for Monaghan County Council and subsequently, until now, as the home of our museum.

Monaghan County Museum's chapter in these buildings now draws to a close. It is as yet unknown whom the next tenant may be, but the story of these wonderful houses and their diverse uses will undoubtedly continue long into the future.

STAFF VISIT TO THE PEACE CAMPUS

During last summer the whole Museum team donned hard hats and safety boots to tour their new home at the Peace Campus. It was a fantastic opportunity for everyone to see in reality the amazing spaces that would soon be home to the

displays that they are working on. The visit served to increase our excitement for the big move and our reopening to the public this year.



Staff of Monaghan County Museum visit the Peace Campus site.

MONAGHAN MURALS

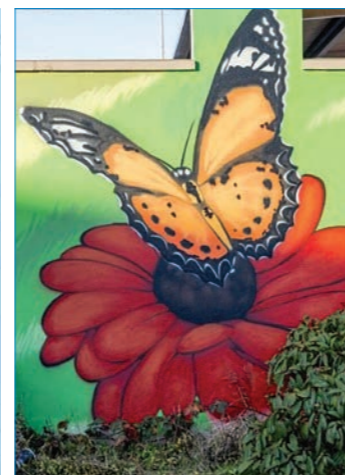
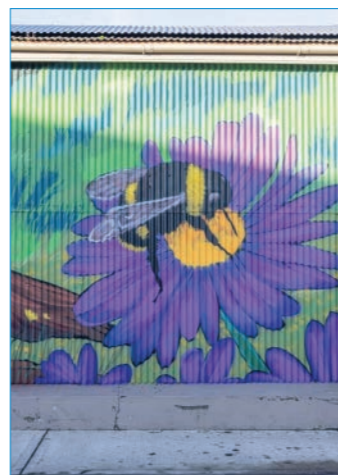


Left to Right: Mural Artist Friz and her assistant Gerry, Liam Bradley (Monaghan County Museum) and Emer Brennan (Monaghan Tidy Towns). Photo by Sky Rocket – Digital Marketing Agency

This beautiful mural is the work of the artist Friz and celebrates the biodiversity of Monaghan County. This latest addition to the townscape was developed by Monaghan County Museum in partnership with Monaghan Tidy Towns. It is the second mural for Monaghan Town and joins others already completed in Carrickmacross, Ballybay and Castleblayney.

The mural stretches along the road and colourfully showcases some of the rich wildlife of the Monaghan area. The Monaghan Murals project aims to support creativity in the community, pride in place, and reflect various aspects of the history, heritage, and folklore of the county.

Thanks to Bus Éireann Station, Monaghan for the use of their walls.



WHAT'S THE STORY?

Lights Down and Sitting Pretty: Seats from the Magnet Cinema, Glaslough Street.



Seats from the Magnet Cinema, Glaslough Street.



Commemorative Key from Magnet Cinema opening.

Every object in the museum has a unique story to tell, very often connected to where it comes from and what it was used for. If this object could talk, these cinema seats might give an impressive account of the many movies screened before them at the Magnet Cinema, Glaslough Street, Monaghan between 1938 and 1976. Alternatively, they may tell tales of who sat there and what they may have got up to!

Manufactured during the era of great Irish cinema construction in the 1920s-30s, the seats were upholstered in a rich, red velvet and assembled from beech and plywood on a cast iron frame. The Magnet Cinema opened in October 1938 when Lady Leslie of Glaslough officially unlocked the doors. She was presented with a commemorative key, now in the museum's collection.

'Going to the Pictures'

Going to the pictures, as a trip to the cinema was commonly known, was a popular entertainment in Ireland during much of the twentieth century. The first cinema in the country opened in Dublin in December 1909. Named the Volta, it was the venture of author James Joyce and had a short existence. Nonetheless, cinemas became widespread throughout the country and by the 1950s, prior to widespread television availability, Irish cinema audiences peaked with an average attendance of 18 cinema visits a year!

Early cinema trips included a mixed programme. As well as the star-studded feature film, the viewer would have expected short comedies, such as those starring Charlie Chaplin and newsreel footage of current social or political events. This image of the Magnet's first programme, demonstrates how the cinema goer expected a 'Full Supporting Programme' together with a regularly replaced feature film.

The Magnet Cinema eventually closed its doors in the mid 1970's. Cinema suffered a general decline in attendances during this period with the advance of home videos. Since then, cinema audience numbers may have waxed and waned but here in Ireland, people continue to love 'the pictures' and are credited with being the most frequent cinema goers in Europe.



Architect's impression painting of the Art Deco style Magnet Cinema, 1938.

MONSTER OPENING PROGRAMME		IF IT'S A GOOD PICTURE THE MAGNET WILL SHOW IT	
<p>Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday Oct. 10, 11, 12 DICK POWELL, TED HEALY, PRICILLA LANE, LEE DIXON and FRED WARING and his Penanghans in "THE VARSITY SHOW" Spectacular Settings, delightful Songs, Seventy Minutes of Relucting Fun. Coloured Cartoon—Comedy—Sports Feature "Hullin"; Fats; Goats.</p>	<p>Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Oct. 13, 14, 15 IRENE DUNNE and CARY GRANT in "THE AWFUL TRUTH" With RALPH BELLAMY, ALEXANDER D'AMICO and CECIL CUNNINGHAM The most enthralling screen comedy ever made. For sheer film fun nothing else can be compared with it. LAUGH! SCREAM! A picture you MUST see! Full Supporting Programme.</p>	<p>SUNDAY, MONDAY, 23rd, 24th OCTOBER JACK BUCHANAN, ELSIE RANDOLPH in "SMASH AND CRAB" A Gentle Crime Chase with Thrills and Laughter all the way. Also "RIDE IN COWBOY" with Buck Jones. TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, 25th, 26th OCT. "Beg, Borrow or Steal" With FRANK MOSKALA, JOHN SEAL, and FLORENCE STICE The gay romance of a charming rogue. Full Supporting Programme.</p>	<p>Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Oct. 27, 28, 29 The Grandest Story Ever Made— RONALD COLMAN in "LOST HORIZON" With JACK EWELL, JOHN HENRIED, EDWARD EVERETT HORTON, GABRIEL BYRNE, H. B. WARRIER. This film left me speechless. You may talk of from me that is certainly superb entertainment. —Sandy Christie. "Never in my life have I seen more hair-raising photography than the stupor of the flight over the mountains." —Daily Telegraph. FULL SUPPORTING PROGRAMME.</p>
<p>SUNDAY, MONDAY, 16th, 17th OCTOBER— ARTHUR LUCAN and KITTY McSHANE in "OLD MOTHER RILEY" ALSO "SHIPMATES O' MINE" With Mark Daly, Joan Adair, Frank Atkinson, Richard Maynard, Wallace Lupin. A stirring story of the backbone of our Merchant Service—the Cargo Steamer.</p>		<p>SUNDAY, MONDAY, 30th, 31st OCTOBER— ALICE FAYE in "YOU'RE A SWEETHEART" With GEORGE MURPHY, ANDY DEVINE, WILLIAM GARGAN. He sings to gladden the sun-glamour girls to brighten the eyes—Romantic comedy to tickle your funny bone—gay romance to warm your heart. Full supporting programme.</p>	
<p>THURSDAY, FRIDAY, SATURDAY, OCT. 19, 20, 21 "BLACK LEGION" With FRANK MORGAN, JOHN SEAL, FRED WARING, JOAN ADAIR, ANDREW BISHOP, JIMMY LAWRENCE, ANDREW BISHOP. The greatest of all thrillers. No picture could be more suited to these times. A thrilling, dramatic, heart-racing story. FULL SUPPORTING PROGRAMME.</p>	<p>THURSDAY, FRIDAY, SATURDAY, OCT. 20, 21, 22 "Marie Walewska" With FRANK MORGAN, JOHN SEAL, FRED WARING, JOAN ADAIR, ANDREW BISHOP, JIMMY LAWRENCE, ANDREW BISHOP. The greatest of all thrillers. No picture could be more suited to these times. A thrilling, dramatic, heart-racing story. FULL SUPPORTING PROGRAMME.</p>	<p>THURSDAY, FRIDAY, SATURDAY, OCT. 20, 21, 22 WILL MARONEY & WILL FYFFE "SAID O'Reilly To McNab" With JACK WYLLIE and JILL BOWEN. MUSIC BY JACK WYLLIE. "Said O'Reilly To McNab" by JACK WYLLIE. "Said O'Reilly To McNab" by JACK WYLLIE. Full Supporting Programme.</p>	
<p>PRICES 9d., 1/4 and 2/4</p>		<p>PRICES 9d., 1/4 and 2/4</p>	

Opening programme from the Magnet Cinema, October 1938

THROWBACK THURSDAYS



The removal of the canal bridge near Clones c. early 1960's



Fleadh Cheoil, Clones, 1964



The Monaghan Community Brass Band in 1981. In the background is a hunger strike demonstration.

During 2023 the museum partnered with the Northern Standard, to publish an image every Thursday from our vast photographic collection. These images were not only enthusiastically enjoyed by the public but brought about new information on some of the people, the events and locations captured in them.

For those who may have missed them, here is a sample of the Throwback Thursday images. They were also posted on Facebook and are there to be viewed on the Monaghan Museum page.

Amongst many people identified in these photos, one viewer suggested the young man on the extreme left of the image of the Fleadh (looking straight to camera) is Michael Harding, the writer.



Putting up lights in Monaghan Town, late 1950's

PLEASE CHECK MUSEUM WEBSITE FOR INFORMATION AND UPDATES

www.monaghan.ie/museum/ and Facebook page or call us on 047 82928

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