

IMA CONFERENCE



Monaghan County Museum Curator, Liam Bradley speaking at the Irish Museum Association conference at the Peace Campus.

From the 5th –7th of March 2026, the Peace Campus buzzed with activity as Monaghan County Museum hosted the Irish Museum Association's Annual Conference, *Shared Futures – Museums as Spaces of Belonging*. Delegates and speakers travelled to Monaghan from museums across Ireland, the UK and from international locations including Italy and Malta. Across presentations, workshops and discussions, delegates explored the museum as a shared space where diverse voices are represented, challenged and brought into dialogue.

The programme traced a journey from structural frameworks to lived, collaborative practice, asking vital questions about inclusion, representation and the museum's role in shaping shared futures. The conference concluded with a practice in place visit to the Tyrone Guthrie Centre, offering space for reflection, connection and networking.



**Campas Síochána
Mhuineacháin** | **Monaghan
Peace Campus**



Comhairle Chontae Mhuineacháin
Monaghan County Council

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A selection of images from the IMA conference held in conjunction with Monaghan County Museum.





MAJOR NEW EXHIBITION IN CARRICKMACROSS

Monaghan County Museum launched *Wish You Were Here – Carrickmacross: Greetings from the Past* on Wednesday, 15 April at 6.00pm in Carrickmacross Civic Centre, marking an exciting new phase in the Museum's outreach programme.

The exhibition explores Carrickmacross through postcards and photographs spanning over a century, capturing busy market days, historic shopfronts, early transport, and everyday life. Highlights include 'Drama in Carrickmacross', which looks back at the town's long tradition of amateur dramatics, and the story of 'Dr. Anne "Carmel" McKenna', a Carrickmacross native whose pioneering medical career continues to inspire.



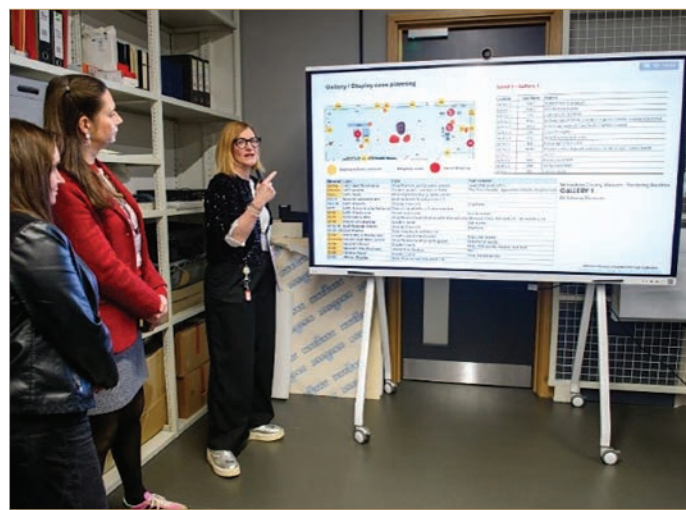
This exhibition ran until the end of August.

Members of the public enjoying the exhibition Wish You Were Here – Carrickmacross: Greetings from the Past.



At the opening of Wish You Were Here – Carrickmacross: Greetings from the Past, (Left to Right) Monaghan County Museum Curator, Liam Bradley; Monaghan County Museum, Patricia Barbour; Councillor, Colm Carthy; Monaghan County Council Chief Executive, Robert Burns; Cathaoirleach of Monaghan Co. Council, P.J. O 'Hanlon; Pat Byrne'; Councillor, Noel Keelan; Monaghan County Museum, Denise Henry;

BEHIND THE SCENES IN MONAGHAN COUNTY MUSEUM



Denise Henry (LHS), Museum Registrar and Anna McCann (RHS), Collections Officer present to delegates at the Irish Museums Association (IMA) Conference

During the IMA Conference, the Collections Care Team—Anna McCann and Denise Henry—led a tour and gave a presentation titled *Behind the Scenes: Collections Store* to conference delegates. They described how approximately 30,000 objects were safely moved from the original museum building to the new purpose-built galleries and store in the Monaghan Peace Campus.

Before the move began, a condition audit was carried out on the collection. Working with storage specialists, the museum used these findings to develop a functional, adaptable design that can grow with the collection. By combining custom shelving and racking we maximised space, improved access, and ensured safer long-term storage for the collection.



The bespoke textile storage area in the new museum store at the Peace Campus

PROTESTANT ASSOCIATIONS OF MONAGHAN, CAVAN AND DONEGAL EXHIBITION

In February, the museum was delighted to host an exhibition that included the history of Protestant Associations of Co. Monaghan. This exhibition looked at the fascinating history of the Protestant Associations of the three Ulster counties that remained outside Northern Ireland after partition. These associations flourished following the implementation of the Anglo-Irish Treaty in 1922 as the Protestants in these areas adapted to the new political environment.



(Left to Right) Monaghan County Museum Curator, Liam Bradley, Cathaoirleach of Monaghan Co. Council P.J. O'Hanlon, Dr Sam Beckton and Councillor Alan Johnston.

At the opening launch, the exhibition curator Dr Sam Beckton gave an informative talk on his research into the display 'A voice of their own: Protestant Associations of Cavan, Donegal and Monaghan 1920-2016'. The exhibition ran for two weeks and brought a perspective on the unique history of these associations.



Documents on display in the exhibition.



The audience listen to Dr Sam Beckton at the exhibition

MONAGHAN MURALS

The latest Monaghan Mural has appeared on Dawson Street in Monaghan Town. This striking mural, by the artist Friz, is inspired by a 1970s photograph of a worker in the Montex Jeans Factory that operated from the Mall Road in the town. This artwork celebrates the entrepreneurial spirit that has driven Monaghan County for generations.

A massive thank you to our partners in this mural — Monaghan Tidy Towns, the wall owners Mall Road Design, and Monaghan Shopping Centre for providing access to the site. This project is proudly funded by Creative Monaghan through Creative Ireland.



'NOT SO SERIOUS BURNS NIGHT' AT THE MUSEUM



Our first Burns Night proved to be a fantastic celebration. On 29th January the museum hosted an evening of Scottish tradition that featured energetic Highland dancing, live music and a taste of the traditional Burns supper. Celebrating Robert Burns, the world-famous Scottish poet and song writer, the evening, titled 'Not so Serious Burns', saw the Bready & District Ulster Scots Development Association perform some of Burns' work. Through song, dance and drama the audience learnt about the life and work of the man behind the famous words of Auld Lang Syne. The audience even got to sample the iconic Scottish favourites - haggis flavour crisps and Iron Brew soft drink!



ST. PATRICK'S DAY TRIP TO BOSTON

Monaghan County Museum was represented on St Patrick's Day in Boston, Massachusetts when Curator Liam Bradley visited as part of a delegation from Monaghan County Council. The rest of the delegation that travelled to Boston as part of the 2026 St. Patrick's Day celebrations were Cathaoirleach Cllr. PJ O'Hanlon, Leas Cathaoirleach Richard Truell, Chief Executive Robert Burns, and Director of Services Olga McConnon.



State Senator Nick Collins' Annual St Patrick's Day Breakfast March 15th (L-R) Monaghan County Council Chief Executive, Robert Burns; Leas Cathaoirleach, Richard Truell; Director of Services, Olga McConnon; Cathaoirleach, Cllr. PJ O'Hanlon and Curator, Liam Bradley.

On March 15th the delegation attended State Senator Nick Collins' Annual St Patrick's Day Breakfast. This long running breakfast tradition took place in the Ironworker Local 7 Union Hall in South Boston. For over seventy years, the St. Patrick's Day Breakfast in Boston, has served as an opportunity for cultural leaders and the community to come together in celebration of Irish heritage in Boston.



Visiting Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) are (L-R) Monaghan County Council Chief Executive, Robert Burns; Leas Cathaoirleach, Richard Truell; Professor Phil Budden; Cathaoirleach, Cllr. PJ O'Hanlon; Curator, Liam Bradley; Director of Services, Olga McConnon, Eamon Kearns.

On March 16th Eamon Kearns, a Monaghan native welcomed the delegation to Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and coordinated a tour of the campus. The tour focused on innovation, enterprise and collaboration with County Monaghan. The delegation also received an engaging lecture from Professor Phil Budden, Senior lecturer in Technological Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Strategic Management

On St. Patrick's Day itself, the delegation joined the Irish American Partnership St. Patrick's Day Breakfast.

There were a number of guest speakers at the event including the former American President Joe Biden, Minister for Foreign Affairs & Trade and Minister for Defence, Helen McEntee, TD and Irish aeronautical engineer, STEM advocate and soon-to-be first Irish person in space Dr. Norah Patten.

The Irish American Partnership celebrates their 40th Anniversary this year and has raised more than \$63 million for young people and communities across Ireland.

At the Irish American Partnership St. Patrick's Day Breakfast (L-R), Leas Cathaoirleach, Richard Truell; Minister Helen McEntee, TD; Cathaoirleach Cllr., PJ O'Hanlon and Director of Services, Olga McConnon.

PROJECT CHILDREN SCHOOL WORKSHOPS



Monaghan County Museum in conjunction with Annan's Arch ran a series of workshops during March based on the current exhibition 'Project Children Stories' for school children in fifth and sixth class. The workshops were divided into two sections: The first was Take Me With You, a lively, hands-on workshop led by Anann's Arch Artists. Through movement, physical theatre, and collaborative junk-art making, children explored ideas of journey, identity, and the unknown - working together to imagine and build a vessel that could carry them forward.

The second part of the workshops involved a special screening of the film *How to Defuse a Bomb: The Project Children Story*. The documentary tells the remarkable true story of how ordinary people changed young lives during The Troubles through kindness, courage, and human connection, inviting students to reflect on themes of empathy, belonging, and friendship.

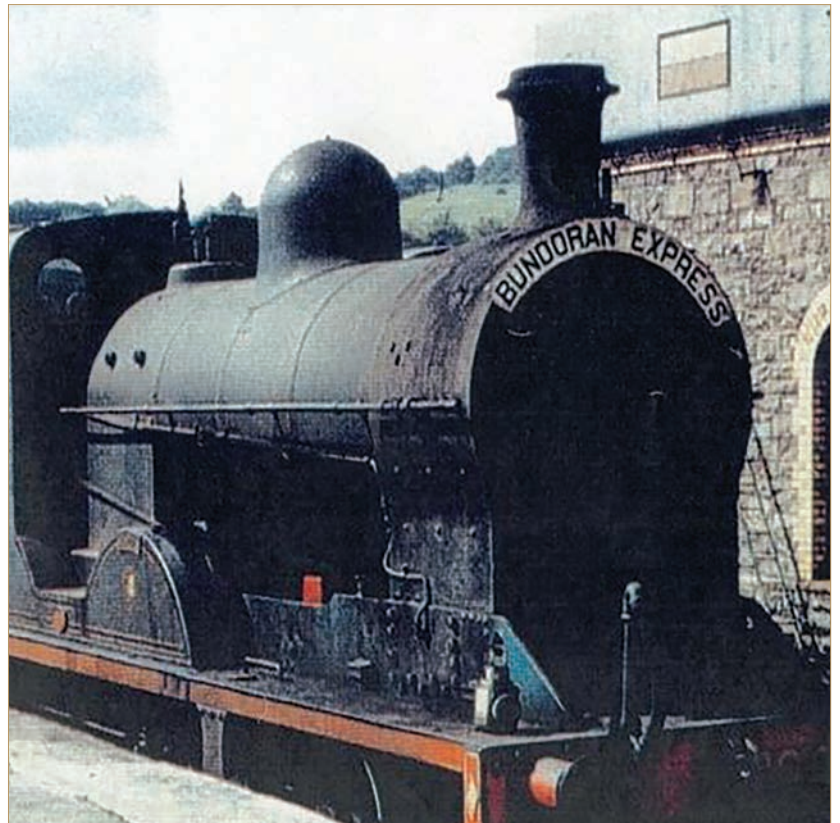


RAILWAYS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

THE PAST

The Great Northern Railway (GNR) transformed life in Monaghan during its century of operation, from the mid-1800s to the mid-1900s. Before the arrival of rail travel, most people lived and worked close to home. The railway opened up new opportunities, allowing people to travel for work, holidays, pilgrimages and sporting events. It also carried livestock, mail and goods, connecting Monaghan to wider national and international networks.

Like many developments of the Industrial Revolution, little consideration was given to environmental impacts. Railway construction altered landscapes and habitats, while steam locomotives consumed large quantities of coal and produced significant carbon emissions. Yet, viewed through a modern lens, rail travel could arguably be seen as a comparatively greener option than the horse-drawn transport it replaced. Horses required large quantities of fodder and produced a great deal of environmentally unfriendly waste!





THE FUTURE

While historic railways contributed to greenhouse gas emissions, modern electric railways are among the most sustainable forms of mass transport. Today, electric trains can produce significantly lower carbon emissions than single-occupancy car journeys, demonstrating how rail travel has evolved into an important part of efforts to reduce transport-related emissions.

Although Monaghan's railway has long since disappeared, many people would no doubt welcome its return in a modern, greener form. For now, however, that remains more wishful thinking than reality. What does survive are the bridges, embankments and other features that still mark the route of the old GNR across the county. These remnants of the steam age may yet play a role in a greener future, as many greenway projects follow former railway lines. By encouraging walking, cycling and biodiversity, greenways can support climate action while preserving an important part of railway heritage.



WHAT'S THE STORY: FROM HOCKEY FIELD TO BATTLEFIELD



T. F. Perrin seated front left. Ireland v Wales, 1910 - the year of his first Cap for Ireland. (Image courtesy of Irish Hockey Archive).



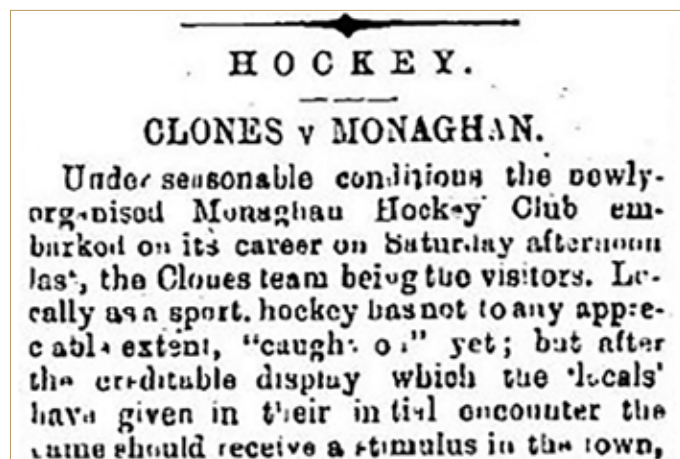
The hockey cap of Thomas Froid Perrin, Irish international hockey player between 1910-1914 (13 Caps).

Every object in the museum has a unique story to tell, very often connected to where it comes from, what it was used for, or related to its owner.

This beautiful velvet cap in the museum's collection provides some insight into the game of hockey in Ireland in the early twentieth century. Its owner was Thomas Froid Perrin from Blackrock, Co. Dublin known affectionately in hockey circuits as 'Doody'. He began his hockey career as a standout schoolboy goalie, but it was at centre-half where he truly shone playing for Ireland. Small, sturdy, and nicknamed the "wee marvel," his flawless stickwork and clever passing setup endless scores. Capped thirteen times for Ireland, in his final 1914 match against England, the crowd gave him a spectacular, well-deserved ovation.

When T.F. Perrin stepped onto the pitch, men's field hockey was still a fledgling sport in Ireland with Irish Men's Field hockey beginning in 1893. In 1894, the Irish Ladies Hockey Union formed in Dublin as the world's first national governing body for women's hockey.

In Co. Monaghan, hockey was being played by the end of the 19th century. The Clones Hockey Club was active by 1897 and the Northern Standard of Nov 26th, 1898, reported on the match between Clones and the "...newly organised Monaghan Hockey Club". It noted that "... Locally as a sport, hockey has not to any appreciable extent, "caught on" yet".



Excerpt from newspaper report: image courtesy of www.irishnewspaperarchives.com Northern Standard, 6th November 1898.

Over the next few years hockey became actively played in the County. The rare picture below from the museum's collection shows the victorious Monaghan club who won the McWilliam Cup from their rivals Clones (two goals to nil) in 1908.

Meanwhile, Perrin's opportunity to represent Ireland at hockey was cut short when he enlisted in the Royal Irish Regiment at the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. His sporting career effectively ended during the Battle of the Somme in July 1916, when he was severely wounded by a grenade, suffering serious injuries to his left thigh, ankle and heel.

Although he later returned to service in Salonica, Egypt and Palestine, he never fully recovered. Fragments of metal remained embedded in his foot, causing persistent pain and requiring further surgery. In the days before his death, he was reported to have lost money at a race meeting and borrowed small sums from fellow officers.

On 23 May 1920, while awaiting further treatment in London, Perrin died in Alexandria, Egypt, aged just 31. An official military inquiry concluded that his death was self-inflicted while suffering from temporary insanity. While the exact circumstances can never be known, the wounds received on the Somme had not only ended a distinguished hockey career but may also have contributed to the struggles of his final years.

Today, Perrin is buried in Chatby Military Cemetery, Alexandria. His velvet international cap serves as a poignant reminder of a gifted Irish sportsman whose career and life were profoundly shaped by war.

The museum gratefully acknowledges the research of Michael Lee, Dublin and the Irish Hockey Archive in the writing of this article.



2nd Lieutenant Thomas Frood Perrin (1889-1920). (Image courtesy of Irish Hockey Archive).



Monaghan Town Hockey Team, McWilliam Cup Winners 1908.

STITCHED TOGETHER: COMMUNITY STORY SHAWL

World Knit in Public Day was celebrated on June 10th and to mark this day of creativity the Museum and Monaghan Town Library came together to host an event: The Community Story Shawl. People were asked to knit or crochet a small charm that represents a memory, a story, or something meaningful to them. Then, on the day to bring this to the Community Hall in the Peace Campus where a label was provided for contributors to write a little about themselves and why they chose to make their charm. The charm was then added to the shawl to weave peoples' stories and charms together.



(L – R) Lynn McElvaney, Monaghan Town Library and Anna McCann, Monaghan County Museum stand with the Community Story Shawl.



(L – R) Lynn McElvaney, Monaghan Town Library and Irene Hanna who knitted the green shawl for the charms



Some of the crowd enjoying World Knit in Public Day at the Peace Campus.

On the day, over 60 people joined together to knit, crochet and create while socialising and enjoying the refreshments provided. Also, on display that day was the Drumlin Drape, a large colourful cape. "The Drumlin Drape," resulted from a former collaborative project that brought together wonderful women from craft groups across County Monaghan to stitch together their unique stories. This stunning piece also showcases the magic that can happen when communities connect and create something beautiful.



Some of the crowd enjoying World Knit in Public Day at the Peace Campus.



The Drumlin Drape on display in all its splendour.

MUSEUM VISITORS



Migrant Support, Monaghan enjoying a tour of our exhibitions 'Bordering Realities – Monaghan People & Stories' and 'The Project Children Stories – A Legacy of Peace Lives on in Monaghan'.



O'Neill Country Historical Society, following their guided tour of the museum's Bordering Realities – Monaghan People & Stories.



The Royal School, Cavan on their visit to Bordering Realities – Monaghan People & Stories and The Project Children Stories exhibitions at the Peace Campus.

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