

County Monaghan Heritage Office Report 2015



Children in the field of flax planted for Heritage Week in Monaghan.



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Monaghan Heritage Awareness Programme

List of activities 2015

1. **Wise Use of Wetlands Conference May 2015**
2. **Armagh Monaghan Architectural Summer School June 2015**
3. **Heritage Week August 2015**
4. **World War 1 conference October 2015**

1. **WISE USE OF WETLANDS CONFERENCE 21-22 May 2015**

Wetlands are the key biodiversity and ecosystem resource in County Monaghan and their mapping, survey and promotion have been important activities for the County Heritage Plan since 2006. The conference was delivered as a partnership between Monaghan County Council, Heritage Council and the Irish Ramsar Wetlands Committee(IRWC).

The conference had an international and national dimension, and attracted an audience of one hundred. It aimed to build collaboration between scientists, policy makers and practitioners and community groups and these connections were made during the two days. The Secretary General of the International Ramsar Convention for Wetlands, Mr. Christopher Briggs delivered a keynote address at the conference and attended the IRWC meeting the following day in Monaghan. The Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht opened the conference.

Attendance – 100 people at main conference on 21 May and 20 people on the fieldtrip to Sliabh Beagh SPA on the 20 May 2015. Mix of scientists, local authority officials (planners, engineers, technicians), community and heritage groups, wetland site managers in attendance.

Public relations –

Presentations from the conference are available on a dedicated youtube channel -

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCG4XX8UVXsDUCywsIWpesVA>

Northern Standard newspaper – full and front page coverage of the conference.

Northern Sound Radio – Heritage Officer interviewed on the Agriview by Noel Murphy. Podcast available –

<http://media.northernsound.ie/mediamanager/embed/player/podcasts/21/item/40856>

Event publicised and covered on social media via Monaghan Heritage Forum and IRWC facebook pages and websites.

Wise Use of Wetlands conference

This will be an informative and stimulating day in the midst of Monaghan's wonderful wetlands, at the Ballybay Wetland Centre on the Dromore River System, Ballybay.

The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, called the Ramsar Convention, is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.

The Minister for the Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Heather Humphreys will open the day's proceedings. Mr. Clars Briggs, Secretary General of the International Ramsar Convention secretariat will present the key-note address.

Irish Ramsar Wetlands Committee

IRWC was established in 2010 and comprises members from a wide range of agencies. Its principal aim is to promote the wise use and protection of all wetlands in Ireland.

www.irishwetlands.ie

The Heritage Council

The Heritage Council's mission is to engage, educate and advocate to develop a wider understanding of the vital contribution that our heritage makes to our social, environmental and economic well-being.

www.heritagecouncil.ie

Monaghan County Council

Monaghan County Council established a Heritage Office in 2004, and works with the County Monaghan Heritage Forum to promote the conservation and understanding of cultural and natural heritage through its strategic county heritage and biodiversity plans, funded jointly with the Heritage Council and other agencies.

www.monaghan.ie



Irish Ramsar
Wetlands Committee



Heritage Plan
2012-2017



in Stairiúilí Oibreachta
The Heritage Council

Admission is free but you must register:
kcolemans@monaghancoco.ie or Katrina
Coleman at 047 30500

This event is part of the implementation of the
County Monaghan Heritage Plan 2012-2017 and is
co-funded by the Heritage Council and Monaghan
County Council.

WISE USE OF WETLANDS Conference



THURSDAY 21 MAY 2015
9.15-4.30PM

BALLYBAY WETLANDS CENTRE,
COUNTY MONAGHAN, IRELAND.

IRISH RAMSAR WETLANDS
COMMITTEE,
HERITAGE COUNCIL &
MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL

CONTACT DETAILS FOR CONFERENCE

HERITAGE OFFICE,
MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL,
THE GLEN
MONAGHAN,
IRELAND

PHONE: 00353 47 73722
EMAIL: heritage@monaghancoco.ie
Stacey Clarke, Heritage Officer.

The Ramsar Convention

The Ramsar Convention's mission is "the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world".

www.ramsar.org

During the conference, we will discuss & demonstrate how to adopt a wise use approach in practice, through good planning, education and community action to ensure the conservation of our important wetland resources.



21 May 2015 Programme

9.15-11.00
SESSION 1 - WISE USE OF WETLANDS
Session chair - Stacey Clarke, IRWC & Monaghan County Council.

- Paul Flynn, Ballybay Development Association
- Mr. Michael Starrett, The Heritage Council
- Dr. Jimmy King, The Irish Ramsar Wetlands Committee
- Opening Address: Heather Humphreys, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
- Key note address: Dr. Christopher Briggs, Secretary General, International Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
- Dr. Peter Feen, Wetland Surveys Ireland

The importance of identifying and mapping our wetland resources, using examples from Ireland and elsewhere.

11.30-1.30
SESSION 2 - GOVERNANCE AND COLLABORATION
Session chair - Dr. Michelle Sheehy Skeffington, IRWC

- Nuala Madigan, Irish Peatland Conservation Council
- Role of NGOs in the promotion and conservation of our wetland resources, motivation, challenges, successes and the IPCC five year plan.

- Dr. Maurice Eakin (NPWS) & Dr. Loreto Gasman, Heritage Officer and Team from Gurley Bog Methall, Co. Meath

Gurley Bog Restoration project - the collaborative approach taken to the project, challenges and successes

- Dr. Olivia Woolley, University of Aberdeen, Wetland ecosystem protection, good governance and the international law.

2.15 - 4.30
SESSION 3 - WISE USE AND COLLABORATION
Session chair - Clivia Cross, IRWC & Birdwatch Ireland.

- Tom Flynn, Barrister-at-law
The new planning regulations and wetlands.
- Dr. Florence Reanon-Wilson, University Col-

lege Dublin.
The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and wetlands.

- Mr. Chris Uys, Abbeyfeux Bog, Co. Louth Abbeyfeux Bog Restoration project.
 - Marcus Malley, Conservation Officer, Northern Ireland.
- Role of the local authority in managing the Oxford Island centre, its conservation and education programmes and wider impact on the area.

- Conference round - up



20 May 2015 Fieldtrip

In association with the Knockatallon Ramblers Association

Meeting at the Sibah Beagh Hotel, Knockatallon from 1pm, and leaving at 2.30 to explore the wildlife and habitats of Sibah Beagh Blarney Bog. All welcome.

Phone: 00353 47 30500
E-mail: kcolemans@monaghancoco.ie



Mr. Christopher Briggs, Secretary General, International Convention for Wetlands (The Ramsar Convention) speaking at the Wise Use of Wetlands conference in County Monaghan.



Shirley Clerkin, Heritage Officer, Monaghan County Council at the Wise Use of Wetlands Conference in County Monaghan.



A selection of the crowd at the conference, held in the Ballybay Wetlands Centre.



Pictured on Sliabh Beagh SPA, a cross-border blanket bog site in County Monaghan on the conference fieldtrip.

2. CONSERVATION WITHOUT FRONTIERS Armagh – Monaghan Architectural Summer School, June 2015.

Held in conjunction with the Ulster Architectural Heritage Society and the Irish Georgian Society, this three day Summer School, an inaugural cross-border joint venture, was a boost to community and privately driven built heritage conservation projects in County Monaghan. The event was a timely follow on from the built heritage series in the county in 2014, and a real showcase for local conservation projects. It also brought visitors to sites that they would not have been previously aware and local projects were able to avail of the expertise of many of the Summer School participants. The knowledge transfer aspect of the event was particularly effective. Two full days of the programme were set in the county, and learning and discussion sessions took place at Castle Leslie, Glaslough; Tin Church, Laragh; Lady Anne Dawson Temple, Dartrey; Market House, Monaghan; St. Macartan’s Cathedral, Monaghan & Tyrone Guthrie Centre, Annamakerrig.



Students from universities across Ireland and abroad attended as a result of bursaries from the conference, and they submitted projects to a competition with regard to two sites that had conservation issues. These were discussed and judged as part of the Summer School.

About the Ulster Architectural Heritage Society



The UAHS is a charitable, membership organisation founded in 1967. It exists to promote appreciation, preservation and conservation of architecture across the nine counties of Ulster. Over the last 45 years the UAHS has established itself as a fearless campaigner for buildings of merit, an invaluable information resource and a provider of balanced help and advice. Its main activities include campaigning and lobbying, support and advice, publications and events.





About the Irish Georgian Society

The Irish Georgian Society is a membership organisation whose purpose is to protect and foster an interest and respect for Ireland’s architectural heritage and decorative arts. These aims are achieved through the activities of its membership and through its conservation and education programmes.

For more information:
 UAHS - 028 90550213
 IGS - 0035316798675
summerschool@uahs.org.uk
www.uahs.org.uk
www.igs.ie
 @IrishGeorgian @ulsterahs
 Irish Georgian Society Ulster Architectural Heritage Society

In partnership with





Conservation without Frontiers:

Historic Buildings of Armagh & Monaghan in Context

For the first time the Ulster Architectural Heritage Society and the Irish Georgian Society are coming together to provide a three day cross border summer school on the 25th - 27th June 2015.



RIAICPD LINKS
RIA I Recognised CPD Providers





In its first year the joint Ulster Architectural Heritage Society and Irish Georgian Society *Conservation without Frontiers* summer school will bring together students, enthusiasts and practitioners to explore, discuss and debate issues relating to our shared Irish heritage in the context of Armagh and Monaghan.

A key theme of the event is conservation and regeneration for community benefit which will demonstrate the critical importance of built heritage in maintaining the distinctive qualities of the region and supporting the growth of tourism, economic development and prosperity. The school will provide a platform to showcase the best that both counties have to offer in terms of their history and heritage. Leaders will include well known academics, architectural historians, architects, planners, conservation and heritage officers. The support of both councils will also reinforce the positive developing relationship between them and our respective organisations.

Summer school director: Kevin V. Mulligan, author of *The Buildings of Ireland - South Ulster* (2013)

Programme

25th June 2015 - Armagh

- Conservation Areas - the legislation and implementation
- New work and reordering: current practice in England
- Tour of cathedrals with Prof. Alistair Rowan
- Tour of Mall and Market Square with Alastair Coey
- Presentation on the work of Thomas Cooley and Francis Johnston by Judith Hill at Armagh Public Library
- Tour of Palace Demesne with Dr. Edward McParland.

Speakers: Prof. Patrick Duffy, Dr. Michael O'Neill, Dr. Frederick O'Dwyer, Andrew Derrick, Marcus Patton

26th June 2015 - Monaghan

- Tour of Castle Leslie
- Introduction to heritage and housing
- Discussion on cross border heritage initiatives
- *The Buildings of Ireland Series*
- Tour of Glaslough
- Visit Lady Anne Dawson Mausoleum, Dartrey
- St. Peter's Church, Laragh and St. Macartan's Cathedral, Monaghan
- Walking tour of Monaghan with Kevin Mulligan
- Discussion and debate at Market House, Monaghan

Speakers: Dawson Stelfox, Dr. Andrew McClelland, Prof. Alistair Rowan, Bishop Joseph Duffy

27th June 2015 - Annaghmakerrig

- Tour of Annaghmakerrig House
- Debate - Contemplating the Contemporary - Modernist vs. traditional approach to building in the historic environment in the 21st century
- Results and viewing of student competition
- Presentation of Summer School Student Awards
- Conclusion with celebratory lunch

Debate Chair: Frank Mc Nally

Speakers will include: Aidan McGrath, Liam Mulligan, Nicholas Groves-Raines

Conclusion: Shane O'Toole

For more information and programme updates visit the UAHS or IGS website

*Programme is subject to change



Members of the IGS, UAHS, Sammy Leslie, Alistair Rowan (Buildings of Ireland guides), Shirley Clerkin at Castle Leslie on Day 2 with the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

3. HERITAGE WEEK 2015

Monaghan Heritage Week Launch – 6 August 2015

Monaghan Heritage Week was launched by Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht at an event held by the Monaghan Heritage Office with Laragh Heritage in July to Pull the Flax for Laragh Linen. Flax was planted by the Lisdoonan Vintage Club in the Spring for this purpose, and it was an event that drew hundreds of people to the field on the N2 between Castleblayney and Carrickmacross for the pulling. The field and local children featured in the national heritage week publicity when the blue flowers came into bloom at the end of June.



Liz Christy, Weaver with Minister Humphreys and Eanna Ni Lamhna who spoke at the event.



The children from the area celebrating the flowering of the flax.

Laragh Harvest Celebration, 30 August 2015 –

Tying in with the Industrial Heritage theme for 2015, this joint event with Laragh Heritage group included talks from Fred Hamond on the Mills of County Monaghan and an interview and guided nature walk along the mill race with Eanna Ni Lamhna. The numerous stages from field to linen were illustrated with live demonstrations during the day from the Mills and Millers Association, Lisdoonan Vintage, four mills, breweries, and a reconstructed scutch mill was in operation. Hundreds of people attended the full day event.



Retting the flax, in a bath, not in the bog. This softens the outside fibre.



The first six steps of a staggering 14 steps to make linen.



Dorinda McCormick, weaver, demonstrating spinning to make flax thread.



A demonstration of how the flax was scutched to beat the hard fibre from the outside of each stem in the reconstructed Scutch Mill, made by a local mill enthusiast Patsy Connolly.

Tyrone Guthrie Centre Open Day

This is the first time that the artistic retreat opened for members of the public in over ten years, and it marks the start of a new approach to the heritage of the site by its' director. Held jointly with the Monaghan Heritage Office, a number of tours on the built, social and artistic heritage of the site were led by Christopher Fitzsimmons, former director of the Abbey and former resident of the house when it was a private family residence. Tyrone Guthrie was a renowned theatre director, and many famous actors stayed here whilst rehearsing plays.

The tours were booked out and the reserve list overflowing. Feedback from the event was that further tours for 2016 would be appreciated. Interviews with the Heritage Officer and the centre Director were transmitted on Irish TV for Heritage Week. <http://www.irishtv.ie/monaghan-matters-64>



Tea and scones were served to end of the tour of the Tyrone Guthrie Centre

Talk on Traditional Buildings

Held as part of the Heritage Plan action to undertake a survey of Vernacular Buildings in the county in 2015, Mr. Des Byrne of Lotts Architects presented a stimulating talk on the types, styles and evolution of traditional buildings in Monaghan.



4. WORLD WAR 1 CONFERENCE – October 2015

Held in partnership with the Ulster Local History Trust, this conference and book fair highlighted relevant local sources of information and stories about WW1 and the border counties, particularly Monaghan. Over 100 people attended the conference.

SUMMARY 2015

Monaghan Heritage Office took a partnership approach to all its events in 2015, in order to maximise attendance, increase collaboration and spread the heritage net as wide as possible whilst promoting key messages and philosophies.

The Black Pigs Dyke Regional Project



Figure 1 Black Pigs Dyke at Agheragh West, County Monaghan

In order to raise the visibility of this unique project and the important earthworks known as the Black Pigs Dyke, emphasis was placed on disseminating the findings of the research undertaken by this joint regional project in 2015.

A Heritage Guide was developed and distributed in conjunction with Archaeology Ireland magazine and additional copies of this were distributed throughout the region by the steering group.

A new website www.blackpigsdyke.ie was designed and populated with content, maps and images.

Public talks were held in the region by the project archaeologist and notably in County Monaghan the heritage network and community members led a number of tours to the BPD site at Scotshouse, based on what they have learnt so far about the monument.

Research continued to establish chronology, using modern methods on samples held in Monaghan County Museum since 1986 including archaeobotanical analysis. Excavation sites for OSL dating were identified, procedures for licensing and export of samples to the University of Oxford undertaken. Additional fieldwalking in County Monaghan identified previously unrecorded stretches of the earthwork and new information was collected on the morphology of the monument and sections were chosen for possible excavations at a later date that might help illuminate construction methods. All in all it has been a very exciting year for the Black Pigs Dyke project.

The Heritage Office led an application to Ireland's Ancient East for the development of a boardwalk, signage and interpretation at the section owned by Monaghan County Council, which was

unsuccessful, but we remain undeterred. There is a new level of interest in the monument and how it might contribute to sustainable tourism in Monaghan and in the region. Contacts were made by the Heritage Officer with the managers of a World Heritage Site in Scotland, and with the Adopt-a-Monument scheme in Scotland with regard to Monaghan getting involved.

The new research that has been undertaken has been of tremendous interest to the archaeological community and also to historians, and the department officials are keenly interested in the project.

County Monaghan Traditional Buildings Survey



This survey records a representative sample of the rural vernacular architecture of Co. Monaghan. Some 400 sites were recorded on site in July to September 2015 by Mr. Des Byrne of Lotts Architects who was awarded the contract.

The 400 sites are intended as a sample, and not as a comprehensive survey. There are 160 full records with an additional 250 records with photographs and location. A summary of both types of records is included in the report.

The outlook for the stock of buildings surveyed was found to be difficult. Most of the more intact or interesting examples surveyed were abandoned or derelict. The vernacular heritage of the county is seriously threatened by changes in the rural economy, modern expectations in housing and lack of understanding of the value of traditional houses.

This study will contribute to the knowledge of what remains of the vernacular architecture of Monaghan and will hopefully be part of a larger national study shedding light on regional characteristics. The following features were found to characterise the traditional houses of rural Monaghan:

Gable-ended houses of stone construction were the most prevalent type, originally having had thatched roofs that are now mostly with corrugated-iron or slate finish.

Examples of lobby-hearth entry houses predominate with a small number of direct-entry types.

Absence of surviving thatched roofs, though these were formerly widespread for both dwellings and outbuildings.

Variety of approaches to enlargement of houses, often an added upper storey.

Large number of two-storey houses and single-storey houses with habitable roof spaces.

Small number of attached houses as may have taken place as a consequence of subdivision of farms.

Houses with a stairs volume accessed from an extended entrance lobby or having a stairs in the corner of the kitchen space.

A small number of more formal houses with developed vernacular character.

Prevalence of undulating terrain in this part of the county with houses on sloping ground integrated into their settings, either built parallel or perpendicular to the slope, and in cases, provision for upper level access to a loft space from the surrounding terrain.

Location of a number of houses beside historic raths, indicating the use of topographical advantages and continuous settlement at these sites storey extending over all or part of the house.

The survey is taking place at a crucial time when radical change in the rural way of life continues at a rapid pace and many of the houses are disappearing. In this uncertain climate the survey aims to demonstrate the value of simple rural buildings, which have often been mistakenly associated with backwardness, their commonplace appearance belying the fact that they are often unique to the particular conditions of Co. Monaghan and distinct from the vernacular of other counties. The study hopes to raise awareness of the quality of this cultural heritage and to inform owners, planners etc of the particular value of different types, in order to act as a guide towards more effective protection of the vernacular architecture of the county

Des Byrne from Lotts Architects who undertook the survey presented an illustrated talk on findings in the Market House, Monaghan during Heritage Week. The Gallery of Photography ran a photo-scanning workshop in the Market House on the same day, for people to bring in their old photos of traditional houses and families.