



## **National Heritage Awards 2018**

### **Award Winners**

The Heritage Council National Heritage Awards shine a spotlight on Ireland's heritage heroes and showcase the most engaging and innovative National Heritage Week events.

#### **Heritage Hero Award**

The Heritage Hero Award celebrates an individual who always goes the extra mile for heritage, who makes an outstanding contribution to the protection and promotion of heritage in Ireland. The Heritage Council received 592 nominations for this year's Heritage Hero Award.

Ireland's Heritage Hero is Eugene Dunbar from Co. Westmeath. Eugene goes above and beyond to promote and protect the built, cultural and natural heritage of Westmeath.

Eugene was a geography teacher before retiring and has since devoted his boundless energy to local heritage. He is a founding member of ETHOS (Everything Tyrellspass Has On Show), a group set up to promote and enhance local heritage in Tyrellspass. Eugene is also involved in the Community Wetlands Forum and is a dedicated guardian of Cloncrow Bog, a Special Area of Conservation.

Eugene records biodiversity with his camera but also with the national biodiversity campaigns. He is active with Birdwatch Ireland and was involved in the recent swift survey of Westmeath. Eugene organises traditional music sessions and a weekly comhra, Irish language conversation group, in the village as well as geology lectures, biodiversity walks, field trips and more. He is always available to help anyone interested in the heritage of the village. The Heritage Council is pleased to award Heritage Hero to such a dedicated and enthusiastic advocate for the appreciation of local heritage.

#### **Le Cheile san Eoraip Awards**

As part of European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 the new Le Cheile san Eoraip Award recognises event organisers who explore Ireland's heritage connections with other places in Europe. Three prizes of €1,000 are awarded to the organisers of events during EYCH 2018.

#### **'Peat Crossing Borderlines' - Irish Peatland Conservation Council**

The Irish Peatland Conservation Council's event shared the Dutch-Irish Save the Bog Story and built awareness of the importance of Ireland's peatlands at a European level. They strengthened the connection between Ireland and the Netherlands and the countries shared passion for conserving Irish peatlands.

Participants from Poland, Russia, Holland, Northern Ireland and Ireland shared their personal experiences of bogs. Prof Matthijs Schouten- the father of peatland conservation was invited to speak as was His Excellency Mr Peter Kok the Netherlands Ambassador to Ireland. The Dutch-Irish Save the Bogs Story is an excellent example of European countries working together for the purpose of conserving our natural heritage.



### **‘An Exhibition of Kilrush Ceramics’ - Kilrush and District Historical Society**

This exhibition considered the place in Europe of a small West Clare town. The Kilrush and District Historical Society in Co. Clare explored a nearly forgotten industry in their town, the Ueblacker, later Rosenthal, owned ceramics factory operating in Kilrush, Co Clare from 1961 to 1983. It showcased the ceramics alongside the history of the factory and the economic climate in Ireland and Europe that led to its formation and later to the closure of the factory.

The junior section of the historical society created a questionnaire to interview the former employees of Kilrush Ceramics. By involving junior members of the society, this facet of Kilrush history has been brought to life for another generation.

### **‘A Taste Of The Past: Exploring Our European Connections’ - Loughrea Medieval Festival**

As part of Loughrea Medieval Festival, this event highlighted the cultural similarities and differences between Ireland, Hungary and Spain through talks, food & drink, and music from all three countries.

Talks included exploring Loughrea’s European links and the history of Ireland seen through the prism of food and drink. Cookery demonstrations focused on potato dishes from Ireland, Spain and Hungary demonstrating why the Potato is the King of the vegetables. Drawn Together - Loughrea Zibaldone Project, involved sketchers from Hungary, Spain and Ireland drawing together around the medieval town of Loughrea.

### **Hidden Heritage Award**

The Hidden Heritage Award shines a light on Ireland’s hidden heritage. This award recognises event organisers who successfully explored lesser known aspects of Ireland’s heritage during National Heritage Week.

### **Winner**

#### **‘By hammer, lens and pencil’ - Kerry Geo Adventures/Kerry County Museum**

This event shared a story about forgotten Irish geologist Frederick James Foot (1830-1867). He spent time between 1856-1859 surveying the Irish landscape in North Kerry. The exhibition mainly focused on his artistic drawings with some fine specimens of local minerals and fossils.

This beautiful artwork had never been shown to the general public before and Foot is little known even among Irish geologists. Through Foot’s artwork, we are able to reconstruct features of coastline, nature, and archaeology of past times. This event demonstrated that geology is not only about rocks but about the people who share stories of our landscapes.



## Shortlist

### **'Sharing Memories' - Killaloe-Ballina Local History Society**

The Killaloe-Ballina Local History Society in Co. Clare shared recordings from the Killaloe Heritage collection; a project which took place in the early 1990's and involved interviewing and recording a number of older people from the Killaloe & Ballina area. These oral history projects capture the lives of the ordinary everyday people in our communities and give an insight into what these historical twin-towns were like to live in years ago.

The Killaloe Heritage Collection is currently stored in the Local Studies Centre in Ennis and very few people are aware of its existence, including family members of those who were interviewed as part of this project. The aim over the coming year is to digitise this entire collection of cassettes and make them available locally and online.

### **Burriscarra Medieval Landscape - Anne-Julie Lafaye**

Anne-Julie Lafaye explored the history and archaeology of medieval Burriscarra, Co. Mayo, the site of one of the most extensive remains of an Augustinian friary in Ireland. Her public talk discussed the results of a laser-scanning and drone survey, and how it shed new light on our understanding of Burriscarra's medieval landscape. The talk shared innovative methods of archaeological recording to an audience that might not be familiar with these technologies.

This event helped shed light on this remarkable site which does not benefit from the same popularity with visitors than neighbouring Ballintubber Abbey. By engaging with the local public it has helped to begin placing Burriscarra back on the local tourism trail.

## Heritage Communities

The Heritage Communities Award recognises events that bring communities together to celebrate National Heritage Week.

## Winner

### **'Creative Connections' - Crawford Art Gallery**

The Crawford Art Gallery in Co. Cork created pathways for women living in Direct Provision to get to know some of their neighbours outside of the accommodation centre. Participants, some of whom were women living in Direct Provision and their neighbours, worked together around the table in the local parish hall, from Spring 2018, to create individual textile panels. The group explored the theme of hospitality and sharing stories.

Creative Connections invited the general public, makers, artists, educational, civic and community stakeholders to respond to collaborative textile work created by women of seven different



nationalities, meet the makers, and to try some simple textile techniques. The event sought to place value on the experience, traditions, expertise and ability held by women living within the community; to raise confidence and proactively seek to create new community and civic connections.

### **Shortlist**

#### **‘Our Local Landscape’ - Kiltyclogher Heritage Centre**

The small rural communities of Kiltyclogher Co Leitrim and Cashel Co Fermanagh are separated by the Ireland/Northern Ireland border but share a common landscape and heritage. Members of the two communities jointly developed and managed the event.

In the morning, families and children heard a talk and demonstration about native birds and then took part in a foraging walk along the border, followed by crafts activities. In the evening, Hubert McMorro, local Kiltyclogher historian, talked about the early days of the north-south border and smuggling. This was followed by a cross border walk to Cashel Community Centre. At Cashel, local historian Joe O'Loughlin spoke about notable figures of that area and also about smuggling. This event is a starting point for further cross border historical and heritage initiatives.

#### **‘Gallows Hill Community Excavation and Medieval Festival’ - Waterford County Museum/Gallows Hill Project**

The Gallows Hill Community Archaeological Project is a Waterford County Museum initiative bringing together members of the local community to understand a neglected archaeological site in the heart of Dungarvan. This event set out to encourage new volunteers to take an active role in uncovering the hidden history of the site with a community excavation. The excavation was then showcased to the wider community with an interactive and fun family Medieval Festival.

The festival engaged all ages of the community in the history and importance of Gallows Hill. Findings of the community excavation have given a whole new insight to the mound and the local community are developing a positive sense of place and a reason to protect their heritage for the future. This event shared the story of Gallows Hill with both the local and wider community and created a new positive narrative of the hill's past.

### **Cool for Kids**

The Cool for Kids Award recognises events that helped children learn about and enjoy heritage and encouraged children and families to participate in National Heritage Week.

### **Winner**

#### **‘The Master and the Mystery’ - The Irish Workhouse Centre**



The Irish Workhouse Centre in Portumna, Co. Galway ran a special children's day exploring life in the workhouse through art, followed by an afternoon tea-party at the Workhouse. The staff dressed as workhouse characters and shared their story through drama. This was a rare experience to see how the inmates and staff of the workhouse lived and to find out what 'Horrid Henry' Ogle got up to.

Engaging with the challenging story of the workhouse system through drama helped children better grasp it. In this innovative way, with parents and children alike were challenged on their own thoughts and understanding of poverty and homelessness. Each child was presented with a special pack which explored the parallels between poverty and homelessness in Ireland in the nineteenth century and today.

### **Shortlist**

#### **'Burren Wild Child' - Burrenbeo Trust**

This event by Burrenbeo Trust focused on active participation. On arrival at the NUIG research station, participants were briefly told about the work of university researchers, and asked to take on that role in terms of their 'Burren Investigations'. Following completion of all tasks, participants 'graduated' as Burren Wild Children and were given a Burren Wild Child badge.

Children were encouraged to explore the landscape around them through structured, fun, hands on activities and were actively enabled to investigate different habitats and aspects of the environment surrounding them. By creating an informed connection with place BurrenBeo Trust are helping to create active stewards to care for place into the future.

#### **'Youghal Medieval Festival' – Cork County Council**

Youghal Medieval Festival in Co. Cork welcomed over 8,000 visitors to their family friendly festival, now in its 12<sup>th</sup> year. Activities included archery, archaeology, talks, walks, tours, medieval village living and kiddies medieval battles.

The Arts & Crafts Tent was a particular favourite with younger visitors, where they painted their own shield and mask in preparation for the battle. Dressing in medieval costume was encouraged and a medieval hair-braider helped children complete their step back in time.