

The National Heritage Week Event Organiser Awards were hosted by the Heritage Council, in recognition of those who organised events during Heritage Week 2014.

In 2014, over 981 event organisations and individuals organized events nationwide, an increase of 4 % on 2013. 14 % of event organisers were taking part for the first time in 2014, with 29% being involved in the week for over five years. 52% of event organisers produced one event during the week, with 48% organizing two or more events.

When presented with their awards, the event organisers spoke of the enormous fun they had being involved in Heritage Week and how much support they received locally for their event.

Speaking about the winners, Michael Starrett, Chief Executive of the Heritage Council said, *“The people and groups that organize events throughout Heritage Week are to be commended, the week would not be the success it is today without them. It is their creativity, unwavered commitment to promoting and engaging with our heritage, and the pride they have in their project which makes each of the events so unique. Congratulations to all who took part in the week, and in particular to those that have been recognised through the Event Organiser Awards, it is a fantastic achievement.”*, added Mr. Starrett.

### **Best Community Award & Best Overall Event**

Tór Mór Cultural and Tourism Committee has won the award for the ‘Best Community Award and Best Overall Event’ in the 2014 National Heritage Week Event Organiser Awards for their event, Boat Trip & Guided Tour of Loughadoon & Doon Fort. The judging committee identified Boat Trip & Guided Tour of Loughadoon & Doon Fort as the clear winner of the ‘Best Community Award and Best Overall Event’.

*“The event was organised to highlight the unique archaeological, cultural, historical and wildlife setting of Doon Fort, which is part of the series of monuments known as ‘Western Stone Forts’. Loughadoon and its environs have been described as the ‘Jewel in Donegal’s Crown’ – a veritable paradise of medieval archaeology, folklore, mythology, romantic history, wildlife, flora and fauna”.*

### **Best Kids Event**

Úna Collier and Border Uplands Project/Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark, Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh has won the award for the ‘Best Kids Event’ in the 2014 National Heritage Week Event Organiser Awards for their event, Rock Detectives Club. The judging committee identified Rock Detectives Club as the clear winner of the Best Kid’s Event.

*“The Rock Detective Clubs brought children and their parents to discover places that are rich in geological, archaeological and cultural heritage. A key objective of the Rock Detective Club programme is to promote, strengthen and stimulate interest and pride in the unique heritage and culture of the region. The Rock Detective Clubs set out to explain how the geology and archaeology of the region can inform us about the evolution of the earth to how the landscape that we can see today was formed.”*

### **Best Event Organised with a Local Authority**

Freshford Old Graveyard Recording Group has won the award for the Best Event Organised in Conjunction with a Local Authority, in the 2014 National Heritage Week Event Organiser Awards for their event, Unearthing Freshfords Forgotten History. The judging committee identified Unearthing Freshfords Forgotten History, led by Michael Cormack as the clear winner of the Best Event Run in Conjunction with a Local Authority.

*“People worldwide, who trace their ancestors to Freshford, have access to the memorial record online. For the first time a record has been published of 135 people interred in the cemetery in graves without a memorial or marker. From a heritage point of view a new source has been added to the parish history archive with the publication of the book of memorials. The inscriptions on the memorials have now been preserved for study by future generations”.*

### **Most Innovative Event**

The Jackie Clarke Collection has won the award for the Most Innovative Event in the 2014 National Heritage Week Event Organiser Awards for their event, ‘Toy Soldiers-WWI Diorama’. The judging committee identified ‘Toy Soldiers-WWI Diorama’ as the clear winner of the Most Innovative Event.

*“The main objective of our event was to host ‘living history’ experience for children. A World War 1 battlefield Diorama was at the central focus, a miniature recreation of a surprise German attack on British trenches using a British Mark IV tank. In conjunction with this, the Teacher Facilitators at the Jackie Clarke Collection prepared and facilitated a number of curriculum based activities centred on the events of 100 years ago. These activities were designed to actively engage primary school children in learning about WW1. Activities included a brief presentation with an introduction to the war using films and images showing the impact on the life of the soldiers who participated.”*

### **Most Interactive Event**

Mary Flynn of Nell’s Farm House has won the award for the Most Interactive Event in the 2014 National Heritage Week Event Organiser Awards for their event, Traditional Irish Wake. The judging committee identified Traditional Irish Wake as the clear winner of the Most Interactive Event.

*“The wake was commonplace up until the 1970's when the funeral parlour took its place. It was a time for family to come together and grieve and remember their loved one. This being the 20th anniversary of the UN Year of the Family the wake was a central part of family life and its customs, practices and traditions are part of our heritage.”*