

The Heritage Council is delighted to announce the Heritage Award Winners 2016, showcasing the best of National Heritage Week and recognising the fantastic work of all the heritage enthusiasts who take part.

The Heritage Council's Heritage Hero Award celebrates someone who has made an outstanding contribution to the protection and promotion of heritage in Ireland. This year 86 individuals were nominated.

## **Winner**

**Matthew Farrell**  
**Edgeworthstown, Co. Longford**

**Matt Farrell** has spent a lifetime involved in community development in Edgeworthstown. He established Edgeworthstown District Development Association and the Edgeworth Society in 1994. Since then the organisation has gone on to acquiring an 1840 Schoolhouse and the local Fair Green from the Edgeworth Estate. Subsequently both were developed into cultural and recreational facilities to serve the local community. He was instrumental in the building of a state of the art Childcare Facility that currently caters for 150 children and provides local employment.

Recently he is the driving force behind the Edgeworth Heritage project which involved the establishment of the Edgeworth Heritage trail which takes in Edgeworthstown House and Walled Garden, St. John's Rectory with its Wilde and Goldsmith connections and St. John's Graveyard & Church. This took years of hard work in the gathering of research and the conservation and preservation of the graveyard, the Rectory, the Schoolhouse and the Fair Green. It also involved ten years of fundraising selling lotto tickets every Saturday night.

Edgeworthstown is now at the point of making a major breakthrough in the area of cultural tourism and is in discussions with Failte Ireland to launch the project under Ireland's Ancient East brand. In 2015 the work of the Association was recognised by the Co-operation Ireland by being awarded the prize for Best Community Group in Ireland. Most if not all of these achievements can be put down to the work of Matt.

## **Shortlist**

**Leslie Crawford**  
**Monaghan Town, Co. Monaghan**

**Leslie Crawford** has worked tirelessly to create a Facebook page called "Monaghan - My Kind of Town" in which he gives a daily mini history lesson about the characters and buildings which have made the town so special. He highlights the wonderful local history that can be sometimes taken for granted in a town. Leslie organised a number of walking tours of the town during Heritage Week which gave people the chance to become a tourist in their own town and also share memories, stories and local folklore that may have been forgotten.

Leslie also organises a Festival of Running bringing numerous visitors into the town at the start of each October. He organised a special tour for non-runners and supporters at the running festival this year.

Leslie has promoted Monaghan Museum and the rich history of Monaghan Town, it's beautiful buildings and streets to many thousands of people across the world through social media. He has turned a passing interest into a monumental campaign to bring his local town to life for everyone.

*"I've lived on Monaghan all my life (59yrs) & walked its streets, went to its schools, prayed in its churches, passed its monuments & buildings. But until I read Leslie's daily accounts of the actual details relating to our towns heritage I would have remained blind to his magnificent Monaghan was & is."*

[https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100010691115681&hc\\_ref=SEARCH](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100010691115681&hc_ref=SEARCH)

**Alan Martin**  
**Dublin Dock Workers Society, Dublin**

**Alan Martin** always had a passion for preserving the industrial heritage of Dublin Docks. Initially he did this

through his own photographs. Then he helped set up the Dublin Dock Workers Preservation Society, which appealed for old photographs. Alan maintains a website which displays the 3,500+ photographs that have been donated to date. Without him this rich heritage would have been lost.

[www.bluemelon.com/alanmartin](http://www.bluemelon.com/alanmartin)

### **Dr Mark Clinton Honorary Chair, Archaeology Committee of An Taisce**

**Dr Mark Clinton** is a professionally qualified and experienced archaeologist. Alongside his own professional career, he devotes substantial time to voluntary work. He is a fearless and trenchant defender of heritage causes and is willing to take on entrenched interests. Recent campaigns include the preservation of the medieval fabric of Kilkenny City and the Bronze Age wooden roadway at Mayne in Co. Westmeath.

He is a Heritage Hero because he challenges decisions that he sees as undermining or endangering built heritage. This willingness to challenge is uncommon in Ireland's close-knit heritage community and does not endear him to all. Nevertheless, he persists and deserves recognition for his commitment. Mark Clinton chairs the Archaeology Committee of An Taisce, in a voluntary capacity. In this role, he shows willingness to put himself in the firing line from critics and a willingness to put his head above the parapet.

### **Hidden Heritage Award**

This award shines a light on Ireland's hidden heritage and was open to event organisers who successfully explored lesser known aspects of Ireland's heritage during Heritage Week.

### **Winner**

#### **The Bucks & the Thrashers**

The **LEAP Project** in **Easkey Co. Sligo** brought history to life with a street theatre re-enactment of the most famous duel ever fought in Sligo. This happened in 1816 between Thomas Fenton of Castletown, Easkey, and Major John Hillas of Donecoy.

Scenes of the duel took place along the Easkey river, the subsequent court case was staged in Easkey's Historical Courthouse followed by a wake that spilled out into the main street. The Heritage Council was impressed by the attention to detail and imagination shown in staging this event which brought both the community and the diaspora together to engage with a lesser known story in their shared history.

### **Shortlist**

#### **Dungarvan Shopfront Heritage Trail**

The **Dungarvan Shopfront Heritage Trail** in **Co. Waterford** told the story of businesses in the town through the lens of heritage. This was achieved through an eclectic display of memorabilia, photos and creative exhibits in shop front windows and on the street.

The trail brought together the museum, businesses, Men's Shed and individuals and demonstrates how people can work together to uncover their town's hidden heritage.

#### **Queer Republic of Cork**

**Cork LGBT Archive's** Queer Republic of Cork Exhibition provided an opportunity to reveal some of the hidden

history of the Cork LGBT Community. The exhibition provided an opportunity for people to understand the journey that led from discrimination in the 1970s through to decriminalisation in 1993 and marriage equality in 2015.

Like many other LGBT communities worldwide, their story has been largely invisible in historical accounts and its contribution to social and political change and developments largely unacknowledged until now.

### **Reaching Out Award**

This award was open to event organisers who reached out to new audiences and helped more people enjoy Heritage Week.

#### **Winner**

##### **The War before the Great War**

**The Irish Workhouse Centre in Portuma, Co. Galway** looked at the number of German and French visitors to their region and decided to host a talk focused on Irish connections to the Franco- Prussian War. The event was promoted to tourists and bilingual Workhouse staff welcomed tourists in both German and French. This event was one of twelve organised by the Workhouse.

The Heritage Council was impressed by the thought and planning that went in to making this event accessible to French and German visitors.

#### **Shortlist**

##### **John Saul Horticulturalist from Castlemartyr to the White House**

The **Castlemartyr John Saul Appreciation Society** in **Co. Cork** ran an evening of talks to showcase the incredible work of John Saul the famous horticulturist who left Ireland to work at the White House in Washington.

The society reached out to local family carers, disability groups, the elderly and young people to help in the organisation of the event.

##### **Tunnel Vision: Going Underground at Casino Marino**

The Casino Marino found a photo in their archives from 1939 of 83 men of F Company 2nd Battalion IRA seated on the south lawn of Casino Marino, which included Oscar Traynor and Harry Colley amongst others.

Through word of mouth, social media, and PR they made contact with over 80 relatives of the original group. Their event recreated the photograph in the same location and format with the relatives during Heritage Week.

#### **Cool for Kids Award**

This award was open to event organisers who encouraged children and families to participate in Heritage Week.

#### **Winner**

##### **Footsteps in the Forest**

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and Ring of Gullion Landscape Partnership ran an event celebrating local folklore in the Slieve Gullion Forest Park. A theatrical guided walk led by a troll visited all the fairy folk of

the area each in a different part of the wood telling part of the tale of Finn McCool and Cailliagh Berragh. The event also included crafts, traditional music and dancing. Over 7,500 people attended over the two days.

The Heritage Council was impressed by this immersive, interactive approach to folklore and nature.

## **Shortlist**

### **Discovering Biodiversity in a Community Garden**

**Global Action Plan Ireland** ran a family workshop in their Community Garden in **Ballymun, Dublin** looking at the importance of biodiversity conservation and the protection of our natural heritage.

The event was delivered in a fun and practical setting where urban explorers were taken into nature and got their hands dirty. The event was all about learning through exploration, creativity and teamwork so that everyone, young and old, left with a greater awareness of the need to protect our natural heritage.

### **Stick Sunday**

**Down to Earth Forest School** in **Knocknacarra, Co. Galway** created an outdoor space in the woods for families to gather and connect through games and natural crafts. Children play on tree swings as the parents drank freshly foraged herbal tea.

Families worked together in the nature scavenger hunt, drilling wooden necklaces, and building a fire. Families including grandparents and aunts and uncles, all gathered together having pure forest fun.