



CULTURAL SERVICES DIVISION 2016

DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL



**Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall**
Donegal County Council

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Rosemount Lane
Letterkenny
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T: +353 74 915 3900

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*Launch of Cultúr: A Strategic Vision For Cultural Services 2016-2020
on 28 June 2016 at the Regional Cultural Centre
Photograph: Paul McGuckin*

Foreword

The mission of the Cultural Services Division is to enrich life, enhance a sense of identity, increase cultural and social opportunities and conserve our cultural inheritance for present and future generations by developing the Library, Arts, Museum, Archive and Heritage services.

Donegal County Council recognise that culture creates tangible societal value, promotes wellbeing and provides a positive direct and indirect economic value.

Cultural Services is a key area of work for Donegal County Council and we are proud to have a longstanding dedicated Division to lead and deliver in this area.

We are delighted to present the 2016 Cultural Services Review which is a snapshot of the wide and rich range of activities delivered during the year, not least of which was the launch of the new five-year strategic plan *Cultúr*, the 1916 commemorative programme and initial plans for the Creative Ireland initiative.

Joe Peoples, Director

Eileen Burgess, Divisional Manager



*Launch of Cultúr: A Strategic Vision For Cultural Services 2016-2020
on 28 June 2016 at the Regional Cultural Centre
Photographs: Paul McGuckin*

Cultúr:

A Strategic Vision for Cultural Services 2016-2020

Cultúr was launched in the Regional Cultural Centre by Cathaoirleach Cllr Terence Slowey in June 2016.

Speaking at the launch Cllr Slowey said “County Donegal’s unique and varied culture is a source of immense pride, and our county and its culture have always been intertwined. This culture is an all-encompassing, evolving force that helps us express and celebrate who we are as a diverse, traditional and modern people”. He added “to protect and promote our culture, language, arts, libraries and heritage in County Donegal and to encourage existing and new cultural forms to flourish, we must think laterally, aim high and chart out a vision for the future”.

Seamus Neely, Chief Executive of the Council confirmed the Council’s commitment to cultural development. He stated that Donegal County Council believes investing in arts, culture, heritage and language is a commitment to a healthier, more fulfilled, prosperous, successful county and that the staff and members of Donegal County Council are committed to implementing *Cultúr*.

Joe Mulholland, Director of the MacGill Summer School, commended the Council on its longstanding consistent support for cultural development. He emphasised the need to maintain and extend this support and highlighted Donegal’s rich literary tradition as warranting further focus.

In developing the plan, the public were invited to identify key cultural issues, how Cultural Services could realistically address or support them and what Cultural Services should focus on as priority areas.

Cultúr is presented under six key areas of Public Participation, Life-long Learning and Social Inclusion, Supporting Arts and Arts Organisations, Conserving and Promoting Cultural Inheritance, Building Relationships with Stakeholders and Partners and finally Developing a Sustainable, High Quality Cultural Service. Capital developments for the next five years are also included.





Central Library
Photograph: Paul McGuckin

Public Library Service

Donegal County Council provides a countywide network of libraries, including 8 community libraries in the Twin Towns, Bunrana, Bundoran, Carndonagh, Gaoth Dobhair, Lifford, Milford and Na Rosa, and 4 branch libraries in Ballyshannon, Donegal Town, Moville and Raphoe, with the Central Library in Letterkenny at its core. Taobh Tíre community outreach points and a Cross Border Mobile Library supplement the network. Details of all services are available online at www.donegallibrary.ie. During 2016, libraries hosted 336,700 visits, with over 328,000 items borrowed.



Central Library

Photograph: Paul McGuckin

Online Library

Donegal County Library Service joined the national e-books and e-audio books service in January providing access to an extended range of resources. We also provide online access to a national collection of online newspapers, magazines, language learning and courses, as well as online reference materials. These services are available through the Online Library section of www.donegallibrary.ie.

Free WiFi

Donegal libraries worked with IS to establish free WiFi services throughout our branch Library network. This network, together with other locations in Donegal County Council, allows visitors to libraries connect to free WiFi services, including online library services, during opening hours.

Joining the Libraries Ireland Service

Following an intense period of preparation, the service went live with *Sierra*, a new software system for library management, in July. In doing so, we joined other libraries in offering a shared library catalogue, sharing books and other items between libraries.

Libraries Ireland is a shared library management system which allows anyone with a public library card borrow and reserve books and other items from any public library in the Republic of Ireland. We continued to offer free library membership in Donegal and members can now use their library card throughout the country. Items are collected and delivered between libraries on a twice weekly basis.

Ballybofey Community Library moves location

The new Twin Towns Community library opened in June at its new location in The Base Enterprise Centre, Stranorlar. Due to the new location, a new name was required and is now the Twin Towns Community Library. The new library is almost twice as big and provides a bright, open and airy space. The extra space allowed for the development of dedicated zones for children, teenagers and IT.

RFID Buncrana Library

An RFID self-service kiosk was introduced in Buncrana Community Library, making it simpler for library members to borrow and return their own items within the library.



Azeez Obabire (Nigeria) reading in Central Library
Photograph: Paul McGuckin



EDIC

Europe Direct Information Centre Donegal and Gaeltacht had over 9,000 personal contacts with Donegal citizens and answered over 1,000 queries via email and phone. Thirty two events were organised including workshops on climate change, human trafficking, and a talk by Matt

Carthy MEP on The EU as a Global Actor. An important 2016 objective of the Centre was to promote the 10 point plan of EU President Jean Claude Juncker through writing 10 monthly articles in the Donegal News. The centre also worked to promote active EU citizenship and Agriculture reform by supporting relevant events in the Wainfest and Bealtaine Festivals.

Europe Direct Soapbox judges: Matt Carthy MEP, Caitlín Uí Chochláinn (Donegal County Council), Deirdre Hines and Andrew Galvin

Photograph: Paul McGuckin



Europe Direct Soapbox speakers

Photographs: Paul McGuckin

Read DL

Read DL continued to grow in Donegal during 2016, and formed part of the Donegal 1916 centenary programme. Read DL is a very successful countywide literacy programme encouraging schools and the Donegal community to read the same book at the same time, with a variety of activities taking place around the theme.

The book selected was *Blood Upon the Rose - Easter Rising 1916* by Gerry Hunt. It is a vibrant and action-filled account of the event, in a graphic comic style, that appealed to both young and old. Read DL 2016 was launched by *The Irish Times* *The Irishman's Diary* columnist Frank McNally in early February and ran until early March.

Wainfest 2016

Photograph: Paul McGuckin

Wainfest

Over 3,400 children participated in Wainfest which took place in October. Wainfest is the annual Arts and Book Festival for Children in Donegal, and strives to offer the very best in arts, culture and literature for children aged 4 to 12 years. Wainfest included 79 school events and 17 family events in public libraries, Taobh Tíre centres, the County Museum and the Regional Cultural Centre. While all of the shows, events and performances proved popular with the young audience, the most popular included *Barking Dog Pinocchio* in the Regional Culture Centre which had an audience of 429 and *Revolting Rhymes* which was performed in Milford, Bunrana, Twin Towns, Na Rosa and Gaoth Dobhair Libraries and which had a combined audience of 356. *The How to Train Your Dragon Show* performed in the Central Library and in Leabharlann Phobail Ghaoth Dobhair attracted 359 children.

Seachtain na Gaeilge

The annual Irish Language festival, organised in conjunction with Oifigeach Gaeilge, Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall ran from the 1 - 17 March 2016. Cathaoirleach Cllr Ciarán Ó Brógáin launched the programme in Bundoran Library on the 29 February. Cllr Mícheál Ó Cuinn, Cathaoirleach Choiste Na Gaeilge spoke at the launch about the importance of the festival and keeping the Irish language current. Language and Culture were celebrated with well over 120 events across Donegal. Activities ranged from scéalíocht sessions for children to Ceol Gaelach for adults. Over 1,800 children and adults attended the events.



EDIC farming event in Central Library, Wainfest 2016
Photograph: Donegal County Library

Bealtaine

The 19th annual Bealtaine Festival took place in Donegal during May. The theme continued Bealtaine's three-year exploration of Nationhood and Citizenship and specifically reflected on the first generation of citizens inhabiting the new Irish State. The festival also considered where we are culturally, as a maturing nation and people. A wide range of events celebrating creativity took place in libraries, Taobh Tíre Centres, arts and community venues, community hospitals and Day Care Centres. Events encompassed art forms such as music and dance, history lectures, knitting and crochet plus cinema and art classes. The festival was organised by the Regional Cultural Centre and the Library Service in association with partner organisations. The festival was launched by Cathaoirleach Cllr Ciaran Brogan, followed by Active Ireland's Grainne Hines.



EDIC Lego workshop in Central Library
Photograph: Donegal County Library

Summer Stars Reading Programme

Over 1,700 children took part in the very first national summer reading programme, Summer Stars. The free programme, open to all children, aimed to support and develop children's reading throughout the summer months. The reading adventure began with each child receiving their own Summer Stars Reading Card to record a reading stamp after each book read. At the end of the programme all children who participated were invited to an awards event. To help in promoting the programme, each county appointed ambassadors. In Donegal we were very lucky to have the support of Donegal Captain, Michael Murphy and Finn Harps footballer, Kevin McHugh.



Summer Stars 2016 Display
Photograph: Buncrana Community Library

Bookworm Babies

Since its launch in October 2013 Bookworm Babies, has gone from strength to strength, with over 720 registered members and almost 3,800 items borrowed by the end of 2016. Bookworm Babies is an initiative undertaken by the library service with Lifestart and the HSE and provides automatic library membership for new babies, while encouraging older children to also use library services through working with parents.



Twin Towns Library
Photograph: Donegal County Library

Decade of Centenaries 1916-2016

The Library Service provided a packed programme of events for the Decade of Centenaries programme in 2016. Funding was received from Ireland 2016. The year started with training for Cultural Services staff in January, conducted by Maureen Hetherington and Seamus Farrell from The Junction, Derry. The Junction is involved in community relations work including peace building, cultural education and dealing with the past. The purpose of the workshops was to raise awareness amongst staff of the commemorations and the importance of commemorating respectfully.

Ethical and Shared Remembering Workshops

In January and February, five Ethical and Shared Remembering workshops were held in Central Library. The workshops discussed the Easter Rising and the five themes of the centenary programme: Remembering, Reconciling, Presenting, Imagining and Celebrating. The workshops were facilitated by The Junction staff with the assistance of Dr Johnston McMaster. A total of 92 people participated.

Remembering 1916 - Ethical and Global Perspectives Conference

Dr Johnston McMaster, lecturer and co-ordinator of the Education for Reconciliation programme at the Irish School of Ecumenics, Belfast and Dr Cathy Higgins, Assistant Professor on the programme, facilitated an Ethical and Global Perspectives Conference in February. The theme was related to the workshops. Fifty people attended the conference with Cathaoireach Cllr Ciaran Brogan opening proceedings. Dr McMasters presented his thoughts on how we could appropriately commemorate events such as the 1916 Rising, while Dr Higgins presented an interesting perspective on women and The Rising, and how The Rising was perceived by literary artists.



Letterkenny Library

Photograph: Paul McGuckin

A scene from the National Theatre's touring production of Frank McGuinness's 'Observe the Sons of Ulster Marching Towards the Somme', featuring Letterkenny actor Iarla McGabhann (centre), which was seen at An Grianán Theatre, in July
Photograph: The National Theatre



Arts Service

The County Arts Service prioritises the continuous improvement of access to and participation in creative activities among all members of the public, the promotion and development of the educational value of the arts and the support of quality and innovation in the arts sector.

Strategic Partnership Revenue Funding programme

Donegal County Council provided significant revenue funding of €66,000 to the county's network of independent arts organizations - including Balor Arts Centre and Balor Developmental Community Arts Ballybofey, Abbey Arts Centre Ballyshannon, Artlink at Fort Dunree, An Gailearaí at Aislann Ghaioth Dobhair, An Cosán Glas artists group Gort a'Choirce/ An Falcarrach and Summer Palace Press at Cill Chartha.

16th Donegal Bay and Blue Stacks Festival

The 16th Donegal Bay and Blue Stacks Festival took place in late September and early October in a host of towns and villages in South and South West Donegal including Ballyshannon, Ballybofey, Donegal, Leghowney, Inver, Dunkineely, Cill Chartha, Gleann Cholm Cille, Ardara and Glenties. For the first time, a number of Festival events also enjoyed additional, very successful performances in Letterkenny.

Over 5,000 people enjoyed and participated in Festival events with theatre featuring prominently. Two new plays by Donegal writers were premièred - *In My Minds Eye*, Shirley-Anne Bonner's beautifully atmospheric work on the life of 19th century Stranorlar poet Frances Browne and *Mother Loss*, Maura Logue's play on the life and times of pioneering British feminist Mary Wollstonecroft (whose mother, Elizabeth Dixon, hailed from Ballyshannon). A new musical work, *The Girl With The Beret*, a suite of songs by Inishowen composer Kate O'Callaghan, was also premièred by the artist, accompanied by the Donegal Camerata String Ensemble.

The programme also included theatre by Donegal Drama Circle (Martin McDonagh's *The Cripple of Inishmaan*) and the Balor Rep Theatre Company (Marie Jones' *Fly Me to The Moon*) at Inver, Ballybofey, Ballyshannon, Gleann Cholm Cille and Ardara.



A scene from Mother Loss by Maura Logue, a new play produced by Dark Daughter Productions at the Abbey Arts Centre, Ballyshannon, supported by Donegal County Council Arts Service
Photograph: Catriona Bonner

16th annual Carnival Ballyshannon Project

The Carnival Ballyshannon project assumed a historical theme, commemorating the 100th anniversary of both the Easter Rising and the Battle of the Somme, under the title *Army Dreamers*. Up to 300 young people and adults participated in its six week, pre-event workshop programme. The project featured input from professional artists, theatre and carnival companies including LUXe landscape theatre (Inishowen), Workhouse Studios (Sligo), Dark Daughter Productions (Bundoran), Réalta (Galway) and community artist Tom Meskell (Westmeath). The Thiepval Memorial Pipe Band from Convoy, the Crickamore Fife and Drum Band from An Machaire and the Donegal Town Youth Band also featured.



Transition Year students from Coláiste Choilm Cille, Ballyshannon, playing the parts of Recruiting Officers in the Army Dreamers Carnival Parade Finale at Ballyshannon

Photograph: Catriona Bonner



The Thiepval Memorial Pipe Band, Convoy, performing at the Army Dreamers Carnival Parade in Ballyshannon, as part of the annual Donegal Bay and Blue Stacks Festival
Photograph: Jerome Keeney



The Votes For Women Carnival Group, including members of Lawne Parke Womens Group, Ballyshannon, the Donegal Womens Network and the 5050 North West - Donegal/Sligo/Leitrim project, who participated in the Army Dreamers Carnival Parade in Ballyshannon

Photograph: Andrea Whelan

Culture Night

Letterkenny's participation for the eight time in National Culture Night - on Friday 16 September generated over 4,000 visits to 23 cultural facilities and events.

New venues included Letterkenny University Hospital, which hosted a visual arts exhibition, the Letterkenny Freemasons Hall (one of the busiest venues on the night), ZoNa Dance Company's new dance studios and a literary, musical and visual arts-led Oíche Airneáil at the Dámhlann an Ghleanna facility at Gort a'Choiceir.

In all, the programme took place in venues including Letterkenny Town Park, Donegal County Museum, the Central Library, the Regional Cultural Centre, An Grianán Theatre, the LOFT Foróige Youth Café, St. Eunan's Cathedral, Conwal Parish Church and Parish Centre and the Create-A-Link Artists Studios / ArtCo Gallery.

The Regional Cultural Centre, Donegal County Museum, the Central Library and the Heritage Office all contributed immensely to the success of the programme. A particular highlight was Derry/Donegal artist Willie Doherty's 1916-themed *Loose Ends* installation at the Regional Cultural Centre, which enjoyed one of its busiest Culture Nights to date. Donegal County Museum hosted *County Donegal in 1916: Our Story*, a fascinating exhibition exploring the major events of 1916 from a Donegal perspective. The programme at the Central Library included performances by local Polish folk group The Hazels, Club Amhránaíochra Ros Goill and John McNutt, while the Heritage Office-organised walking tour of *Lawrence's Letterkenny*, led by Heritage Council Architecture Officer, Colm Murray, was enormously popular.

Culture Night in Letterkenny was co-ordinated and presented by Donegal County Council Cultural Services with the support of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. A simultaneous programme of Culture Night events, co-ordinated by Ealaín na Gaeltachta, took place throughout the Gaeltacht areas of the county.

Irish Aerial Dance Festival

Donegal Arts Service partnered with Fidget Feet Aerial Dance and An Grianán Theatre to co-present the 7th Irish Aerial Dance Festival in Letterkenny. The Festival featured a wide-ranging residential programme of specialized aerial dance classes, facilitated by 10 internationally recognised practitioners. Over 130 dancers from 20 countries over 3 continents participated in the Festival, directed by Ballybofey choreographer Chantal McCormick.

Investing in the Creation of New Artistic Work in Donegal

One of the most important roles of the Arts Service is encouraging the creation and presentation of new artistic work. The following works were among those supported.

The Arts Service partnered with An Grianán Theatre (through its Theatre Artist-in-Residence Programme) and Balor Developmental Community Arts to successfully stage additional performances of two works commissioned in 2015 - *I Would Walk These Fields Again* and *The Lad From Laghey*, as part of the Bealtaine Festival. Performances took place in Dungloe, An Machaire, Bunrana, Cill Chartha and Carndonagh.

In the second half of the year, the Arts Service supported two playwriting programmes, one led by Inishowen playwright Tara McKeivitt and the other by Bread and Roses Theatre Company artistic director, Kathleen McCreery. Both took place in partnership with An Grianán Theatre. Tara McKeivitt's programme - *Radio Short Waves* - with 9 writers led to the creation of a series of 9 short radio plays, while Kathleen McCreery led her writers towards the creation of 10 short works on a theme of mental health. In both instances, the works produced were extremely well received at special showcase evenings at An Grianán Theatre.

The Arts Service was delighted to support Inishowen Carnival in the creation of their new *Elemental: Ghost Dance* visual installation and performance work, which was premièred at Letterkeny Town Park as a highlight of Culture Night. Performing alongside Inishowen Carnival on the night were ZoNa, Aislingí and Dynamic Waves dance companies.

EDGES Donegal, East Iceland and Vesteralen (Norway)

Vesteralen Cultural Council hosted a tour by The Henry Girls in March 2015 and a very successful return visit to Donegal by six Norwegian musicians and seven Cultural Directors took place in June, hosted by Cultural Services. The Norwegian musicians performed alongside The Henry Girls at the Regional Cultural Centre, Glengad National School and at St. Buadhan's COI Church, Culdaff, while the Cultural Directors visited Fanad Lighthouse, An Gailearaí, the Irish Aerial Dance Festival at Aura Leisure Centre, Donegal Intercultural Platform at the Central Library, Artlink at Fort Dunree and LUXe landscape theatre company at Burnfoot.

As a result of this visit, the directors of LUXe travelled to Norway in September to discuss proposed projects for 2017-18. The proposal was subsequently the subject of a successful submission to Culture Ireland, supported by the Arts Service.

Similarly, following a successful submission by Artlink to the Arts Council's Visual Arts Projects Scheme 2016 - in which the Arts Service was a partner - a programme of four artists residencies will take place in 2017.

28th Earagail Arts Festival

The 28th Earagail Arts Festival took place from 8 - 24 July. The programme continued to animate the Wild Atlantic Way, further developing the hub model adopted in recent years, ie. focusing programme highlights in each of the three regions of West Donegal, Letterkenny/Ballybofey and Inishowen on alternate weekends, alongside on-going programming in Letterkeny throughout the period of the Festival.

The Festival continued to advance its strategic priority of increasing public engagement with the arts, this time through the *Unified: The Musical* community theatre project. The new musical, written by Guy Le Jeune and with songs by Fionn Robinson, told the story of the Unifi textured yarn plant in Letterkenny and the people who worked there over a thirty year lifespan. The production proved immensely popular over its three night run at An Grianán Theatre.



John Wilkie, Mark Mills and Ciaran Clarke in a scene from 'Unified - The Musical', at An Grianán Theatre, a very popular highlight of the Earagail Arts Festival in July
Photograph: Eugene McGinty



*Musicians and composers (above) Tommy McLaughlin, (from top right) Hannah Peel, Erland Cooper and Michael Keeney were commissioned by Earagail Arts Festival to create a suite of songs and music 'In The Shadows of Steam' inspired by the old railway networks of Donegal and Northern Ireland
Photograph: Earagail Arts Festival*



Donegal International Folk and Roots Weekend

The Donegal International Folk and Roots Weekend featured a series of top-class performances in the Regional Cultural Centre and An Grianán Theatre by Lynched, Andy Irvine, Chris Wood and Sam Lee as well as a much-admired musical tribute to the late Brian Friel, *Ar ais go Baile Beag*. It was composed by Manus Lunny who performed the work in the company of a host of guest Irish and Scottish musicians.

Wild Atlantic Arts on Malin Green

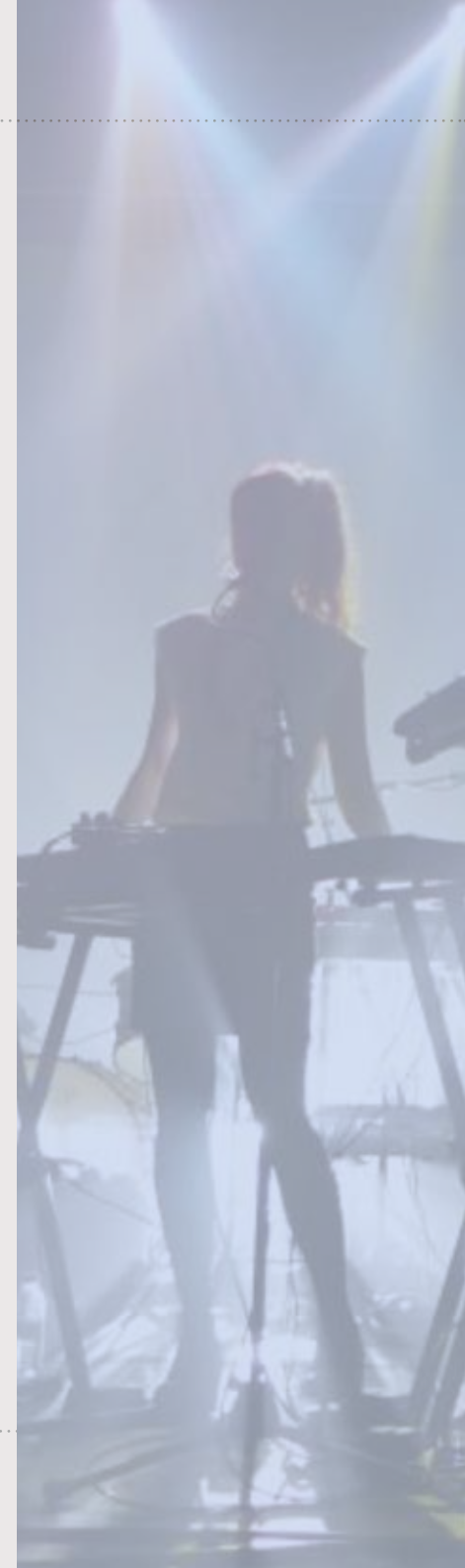
The two-day celebration of Irish street art and circus on Malin Village Green - with the Fanzini Brothers, Inishowen Carnival, the Lords of Strut and the Henry Girls - proved to be a wonderful success. As did the Festival's music, song and literary events programme - as Gaeilge and Scots Gaidhlaig - on Oileán Árainn Mhór, in partnership with the Swell Festival.

Commissions Programme

The commissions programme continued to facilitate the creation of new artistic work by local Donegal and visiting international artists, working in collaboration. *In The Shadows of Steam* was created by musicians, composers and producers Tommy McLaughlin, Michael Keeney, Hannah Peel and Erland Cooper. It explored the lost lines of the railways of Donegal and Northern Ireland through music, song and archive film. Premiered in Culdaff, it later went on to be seen at the prestigious Celtic Connections Festival in Glasgow.

Cultural Tourism

The Festival was delighted to work closely with Fáilte Ireland, animating Donegal's Wild Atlantic Way with an exciting, bilingual programme of theatre, music, visual arts, outdoor spectacle, literary events and events for children that engaged and entertained both local people and visitors alike. In all, 179 performances took place in 30 venues spread across 16 towns, villages and islands over 17 days and nights. The Festival attendance was 39,900.



Partnerships

Earagail Arts Festival continues to raise the profile of Donegal and nationally-based Irish artists as an ongoing process, and it continues to work with a range of partners locally including the Regional Cultural Centre, Ealaín na Gaeltachta, Donegal County Museum, An Grianán Theatre, Donegal County Council Arts Service, Donegal Local Enterprise Office, Balor Arts Centre Ballybofey, An Gailearaí Doire Beag, An tSean Bheairic An Falcarrach, Comharchumann Oileán Árainn Mhór, The Swell Festival, Malin Community Development, McGrory's of Culdaff, the OPW at Glebe House and Gallery Churchill, Glenveagh National Park and Tionscnamh Lugh, Gaoth Dobhair.

An Grianán Theatre

2016 was a very productive and successful year for An Grianán Theatre, where a number of in-house productions were created in partnership with other organisations including the Donegal County Council Arts Service, Earagail Arts Festival, the Nomad Regional Theatre Network and the Ireland 2016 Centenary Programme. It was a very positive year in terms of audiences with a growth in attendances of 2.5% and an overall capacity for the year of 62%.

Tradfest

The year started with Tradfest, run in partnership with the Regional Cultural Centre. The highlight was a sold out performance by Seamus McGuire with his two bands, Buttons and Bows and The West Ocean String Quartet.

1916 Commemorative Programme

An Grianán Theatre played a key role in the Donegal programme. With additional funding from Ireland 2016, the theatre curated a series of events which included the commissioning and performance of a new play from local writer and historian, Kieran Kelly, as well as a visiting performance, *The Rising*, which featured two talented Donegal performers, actor John Ruddy and dancer Brian Gillespie. A further highlight was *Left Behind*, a beautiful song cycle from Michelle O'Rourke, which explored the stories of the Women of 1916.

*John D. Ruddy and Ciaran Clarke in a scene from 'Unified - The Musical', at An Grianán Theatre, a very popular highlight of the Earagail Arts Festival in July
Photo: Eugene McGinty*



Unified - The Musical

For the Earagail Arts Festival, An Grianán Theatre presented a new community musical based on the story of the Unifi textured yarns factory in Letterkenny. The piece was written by Guy Le Jeune, theatre artist-in-residence, who drew from the personal histories of many of the plant's former workers including management, workers on the factory floor and transport staff. *Unified - The Musical* was enhanced with original music by Fionn Robinson and the production was directed by David Grant. The cast of 25 was drawn from the local community and featured performers aged from 16 to 70. The show played to capacity audiences over three performances.

Bailegangáire for Nomad Theatre Network

For the autumn season, An Grianán Theatre produced Tom Murphy's challenging play, *Bailegangáire*, in association with the Nomad Theatre Network. Featuring Joan Sheehy, Clare Monelly and Maeve Fitzgerald, the play toured Ireland for several weeks. It was nominated for two awards in the Irish Times' Theatre Awards, in the categories of Best Supporting Actress for Clare Monelly and Judges' Special Award for Contribution to Irish Theatre.

Peter Pan at Christmas

For Christmas, the theatre produced a school-friendly version of *Peter Pan* which featured An Grianán Youth Theatre, and others drawn from an open audition process. There were ten performances, as well as two 'relaxed performances', one for school groups and one for the public. This initiative was praised by teachers and parents as it allowed individuals with sensory disabilities or sensitivities to enjoy a performance where they could move around, where volume levels were reduced and lighting levels were increased.

Other Activities

In addition to these in-house initiatives, the theatre ran a full programme of performances across the various art forms from theatre to comedy, dance to opera and a diversity of visiting musical performers. The theatre also hosted a number of workshop programmes including An Grianán Youth Theatre, Worklab Theatre's acting masterclasses, Ballet Ireland Summer School, PBM Musical Theatre Summer School and a series of Radio Scriptwriting Workshops with Tara McKeivitt.

*Lynched and Stick in the Wheel, Donegal
International Folk and Roots Weekend
Photograph: John Soffe*



Regional Cultural Centre

Letterkenny's award-winning Regional Cultural Centre (RCC) building designed by MacGabhann Architects is one of the finest arts facilities in Ireland.

The Centre has had a full programme of high quality arts activities since it opened in 2007, a significant proportion of which have been organised in partnership with cultural, community and statutory bodies in the region and beyond. The RCC works particularly closely with the other parts of Donegal County Council's Cultural Services Division.

The programme is made possible by annual funding from the Arts Council, Donegal County Council and project funding from a variety of sources.

Visual Arts

The Regional Cultural Centre continued to commission and show major Irish and international art exhibitions in 2016. The highlight was *Loose Ends*, a 1916 centenary commission by world renowned Donegal/Derry artist Willie Doherty, filmed in locations connected with the Rising, on Gola Island Donegal and Moore Street Dublin. He produced a new two-screen video installation (with a voiceover by Sean McGinley) and eight related photographs for his exhibition at the RCC, which coincided with the Earagail Arts Festival. *Loose Ends* was commissioned by Donegal County Council / Regional Cultural Centre in partnership with Nerve Centre Derry, Kerlin Gallery Dublin and Matt's Gallery London. It was one of only nine Arts Council ART:2016 Open Call Commissions as part of their Ireland 2016 centenary programme. The exhibition was accompanied by an extensive *Drop-In, Hands-On Art-Room* for children and families.



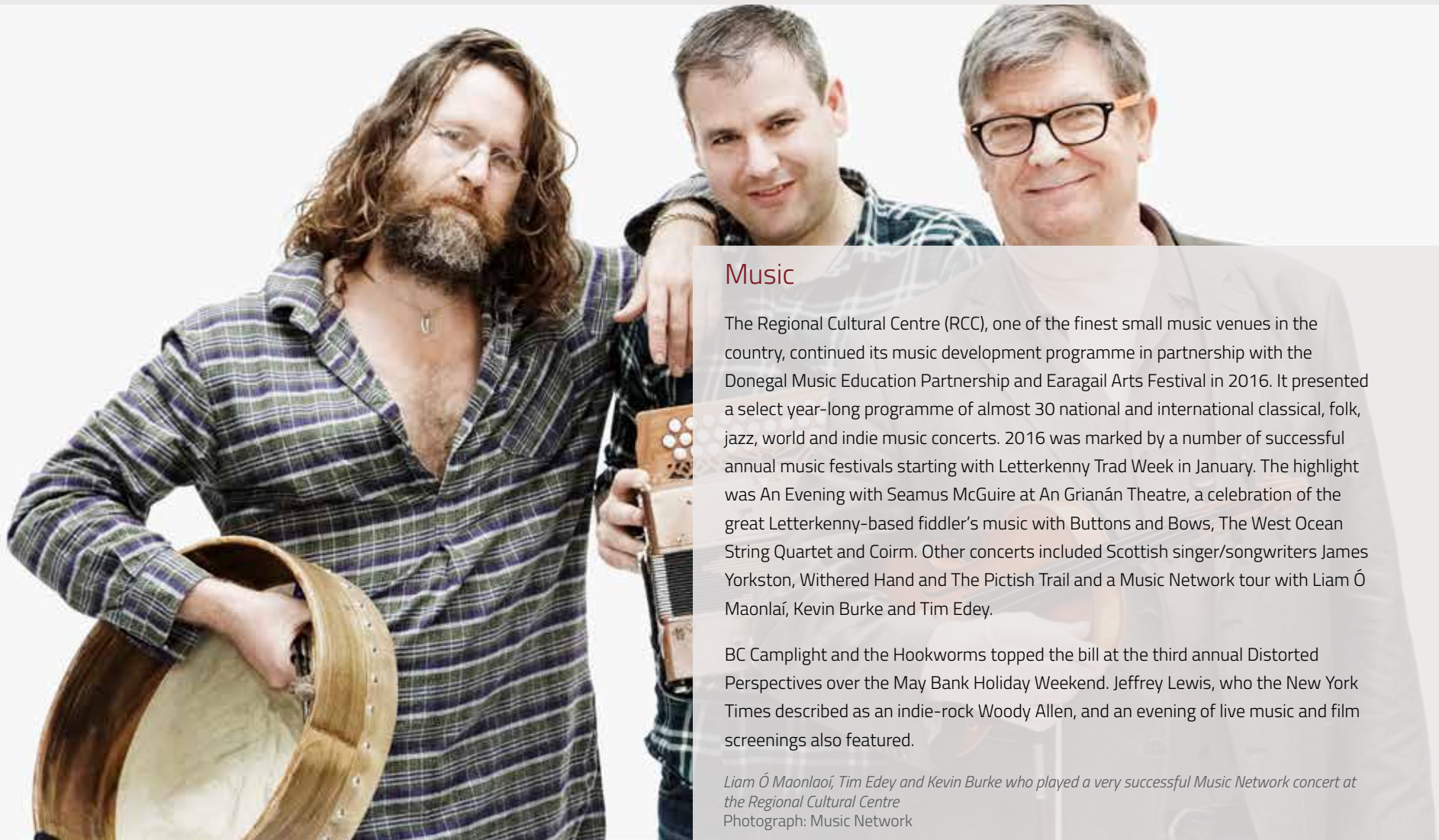
Distorted Perspectives poster
Designer: Neilis Sheridan

Hybrid, an Irish American group exhibition, curated by American based Letterkenny artist Rian Kerrane from University College Denver, was shown at the start of the year. The exhibition featured seven artists from Ireland and seven from the U.S. who travelled to Donegal and made new work here for the show. There was also an Irish American dimension to the major retrospective exhibition by the Donegal-based New York-born artist and photographer Richard Noble, which featured work from the different phases of his career over the past fifty years.

Lived Lives, an immersive exhibition comprising objects belonging to young people who died by suicide and artworks made by Donegal-born textile artist Seamus McGuinness, was presented at Fort Dunree, Inishowen in October. It was organised in partnership with the HSE as part of the Connecting for Life Donegal Suicide Prevention Plan.



Willie Doherty '*Loose Ends*' exhibition
Photograph: Declan Doherty



Music

The Regional Cultural Centre (RCC), one of the finest small music venues in the country, continued its music development programme in partnership with the Donegal Music Education Partnership and Earagail Arts Festival in 2016. It presented a select year-long programme of almost 30 national and international classical, folk, jazz, world and indie music concerts. 2016 was marked by a number of successful annual music festivals starting with Letterkenny Trad Week in January. The highlight was An Evening with Seamus McGuire at An Grianán Theatre, a celebration of the great Letterkenny-based fiddler's music with Buttons and Bows, The West Ocean String Quartet and Coirm. Other concerts included Scottish singer/songwriters James Yorkston, Withered Hand and The Pictish Trail and a Music Network tour with Liam Ó Maonlaí, Kevin Burke and Tim Edey.

BC Camplight and the Hookworms topped the bill at the third annual Distorted Perspectives over the May Bank Holiday Weekend. Jeffrey Lewis, who the New York Times described as an indie-rock Woody Allen, and an evening of live music and film screenings also featured.

Liam Ó Maonlaí, Tim Edey and Kevin Burke who played a very successful Music Network concert at the Regional Cultural Centre
Photograph: Music Network



The second Donegal International Folk and Roots Weekend in partnership with the Earagail Arts Festival was held in July. Highlights included the first ever Irish concert by Chouk Bwa Libète, one of the foremost Haitian Voodoo bands, a series of concerts and talks on Irish and English Folksong as part of the Ireland 2016 centenary programme and the world première of *Ar ais go Baile Beag*, a tribute to Brian Friel by Manus Lunny. Irish and English Folk had double-bills by Lynched from Dublin and Stick In The Wheel from London and by legendary singer/songwriters Andy Irvine from Ireland and Chris Wood from England. Richard Dawson, the experimental Newcastle singer and guitarist and Sam Lee's *Other Voices*, an audio-visual presentation on Irish Traveller singers, also featured.

The Education and Training Board's Donegal Music Education Partnership (DMEP) is based in the RCC and the two organisations work closely together, including the joint promotion of RCC concerts and the facilitation of workshops to accompany the Music Network concert series. The DMEP account for a significant proportion of the RCC's activities, including regular weekly classes and rehearsals for various ensembles.

Film

The RCC continued to develop its film exhibition programme including a programme of new world cinema and documentary, curated in partnership with Access Cinema, festival screenings as part of Bealtaine and Distorted Perspectives, locally produced community films, and seasonal family classics.



Education and Community Arts

The RCC coordinated the Bealtaine Festival for older people, which featured over 100 events countywide, in partnership with Donegal County Council Cultural Services, Age and Opportunity and older people's organisations. The Centre was also the venue for regular and ongoing workshops and events held by cultural, educational, community development and health organisations throughout the year. The RCC organised schools', children's and family events in the Centre and countywide with a range of partners. The RCC highlight of the Wainfest 2016 for children in October, presented in partnership with Cultural Services, was Lyngo Theatre Company's *Pinocchio*.



Drop-In, Hands-On Art Room
Photographs: Declan Doherty



Poverty

Health



In the early 20th century poverty and disease were rife. Diseases common in 1916 included measles, diphtheria, typhoid, typhus fever, scarlatina, enteric fever, whooping cough, tuberculosis (TB or Consumption), and dangerous strains of influenza.



As there were no General Hospitals in 1916, people who had been injured were treated in workhouses or the hospitals at the workhouses. Patrick Doherty a cattle dealer from Blownrock, Letterkenny, whose foot had been crushed in an accident, was treated at Glenties Workhouse in June 1916.



... Fever Hospital tended to sick and injured soldiers as the nearby Finer Camp. During 1916, the ... to 37 soldiers of the 12th Battalion, Royal ...



Glenties Bay, c.1900s
Courtesy National Library of Ireland

... housing was basic for most people. Many homes had only two rooms with no ... water or electricity. In June 1916, Donegal Rural District Council's Medical ... complained that there were too many 'cess pits and manure pits too close to ... ing houses' in some towns which 'were a cause of ill health.'



World War I had been raging for over 18 months causing huge financial pressure on the British Government. Money, labour and materials were scarce. As a result, local development such as the building of houses slowly grinding to a halt.

In November 1916, Letterkenny District Council reported ... the delays in building cottages ... joined the army'.

... ousers' cottages were being ... houses was still taking place

Opening of exhibition 'County Donegal in 1916: Our Story' at Donegal County Museum, March 2016
(L-R) Cllr Gerry McMonagle, Mayor of Letterkenny; Cllr Ciaran Brogan, Cathaoirleach,
Opposite page 34, Maura Logue, Dark Daughter Productions
Photograph: Donegal County Museum

Donegal County Museum

Through the Museum Service, Donegal County Council preserves and celebrates the collective memory of the county and its communities, by preserving, displaying and interpreting artefacts related to the history of Donegal. The Museum works with a wide variety of individuals, groups and organisations to improve access to and participation in heritage and to promote and preserve our cultural inheritance.



Ireland 2016

Throughout the year the Museum organised a programme of events as part of the County Donegal 2016 Centenary Programme.

Exhibitions

The Museum, in conjunction with the County Archives Service, organised a major exhibition entitled *County Donegal in 1916: Our Story*. The exhibition explored the national and international events of 1916 from a Donegal perspective and offered visitors a glimpse of everyday life in the County in this pivotal year. The exhibition was part-funded by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

The Museum also produced an Activity Booklet which enabled children to engage with the exhibition.

The Museum created a touring exhibition *Our Story: Donegal and the Easter Rising*, both in Irish and in English. The exhibitions explore the stories of Donegal people who played a role in the Easter Rising and were displayed in over 20 venues throughout Donegal.

As part of the Earagail Arts Festival programme, the Museum hosted the exhibition *Little Stories, Little Prints* in association with the Leinster Printmaking Studio. The exhibition featured artworks relating to little-known events at the time of the Easter Rising.



Museum - 1916 interactive drama workshops
Photograph: Donegal County Museum

Interactive Drama Workshops

In May, the Museum in conjunction with Dark Daughter Productions, held a series of schools' workshops during which students engaged in an interactive history experience with actress Maura Logue. The students entered the world of Donegal in 1916 and explored themes such as family life, school days and hiring fairs.

The Museum and the Library Service also organised four interactive drama workshops, on the theme of Donegal 100 years ago which were delivered in libraries throughout Donegal during National Recreation Week. They were funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

Lecture Programme

The Museum hosted a programme of talks which included *Coláiste Uladh and the Cultural Revolution* by Dr. Seosamh O'Ceallaigh; *Mobilising the Masses in early Twentieth Century Donegal* by Dr Arlene Crampsie; *County Donegal in 1916* by Caroline Carr, Donegal County Museum and *Cumann na mBan in Donegal* by Helen Meehan.



Launch of "Our Story: Donegal and the Easter Rising" travelling exhibition (L-R), Cllr James Pat McDaid, Judith McCarthy, Cathaoirleach Cllr Gerry McMonagle, (Donegal County Council), Cllr Marie Therese Gallagher, Chair of the Donegal Ireland 2016 Committee, Caroline Carr
Photograph: Donegal County Museum

World War I

Throughout 2016 the Museum organised a programme of events to commemorate the centenary of the Battle of the Somme.

In association with Imperial War Museums, as part of the First World War Centenary Partnership, the Museum arranged a series of free screenings of the 1916 film *The Battle of the Somme*. These screenings took place in Century Cinema Letterkenny, Fort Dunree Military Museum, Dungloe Public Services Centre, the Balor Theatre Ballybofey and Donegal County Museum.

The Museum hosted a programme of talks which included *Donegal Men and the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers* by Natasha Martin, *Donegal Freemasons in World War I* by Robert Bashford, *The Geography of War* by Patrick H. Lynch and *The Battle of the Somme* by David Scott. Museum staff also delivered talks on the theme of County Donegal and World War I to various groups and hosted the launch of the book *WAR! HELLISH WAR! Star Shell Reflections 1916 - 1918* during Heritage Week.

The Museum organised a special event on the centenary of the Battle of the Somme in the Regional Cultural Centre, Letterkenny. Col Declan O'Carroll re-enacted the first day of the Battle from the perspective of the 36th Ulster Division using a cloth floor model.



Cloth floor model re-enactment of the first day of the Battle of the Somme with Col. Declan O'Carroll at the Regional Cultural Centre, Letterkenny
Photograph: Donegal County Museum

Events Programme

The Museum events programme encompassed a wide variety of activities as well as events during the Bealtaine Festival, Heritage Week, Culture Night and Wainfest.

These included talks on the History of St Conal's Hospital and on the Landscape and Wildlife of the Bluestack Mountains, book launches, an exhibition on East Donegal Ulster Scots, a series of reminiscence sessions in day centres and community hospitals, traditional music sessions with Comhaltas Ceoltoirí Éireann, Craobh Leitir Ceanainn and on National Uilleann Piping day, photographic workshops with the Gallery of Photography and a talk for schools on life in the Antarctic by Dan McFadden.

Reaching Out To Communities

Donegal County Museum continued to make its travelling exhibitions available for loan to organisations and venues throughout Donegal. In 2016 they were on display at the Donegal Sports Star Awards Letterkenny, Manorcunningham Resource Centre, the Sliabh Sneacht Centre Buncrana, Monreagh Heritage Centre, the Tip O'Neill Diaspora Awards in Buncrana and Finner Camp Ballyshannon.

Throughout the year the Museum worked closely with the Donegal Education Centre to bring the Museum's Archaeology Box to primary schools in Donegal. Museum staff visited over 670 pupils throughout the County.



Donegal County Museum's Archaeology Box in action
Photograph: Donegal County Museum



Comhaltas Ceoltoirí Éireann, Culture Night
Photograph: Donegal County Museum



The lighthouse at St. John's Point in south Donegal. The Heritage Office commissioned a study of maritime built heritage as part of the implementation of the County Donegal Heritage Plan
Photograph: Joseph Gallagher

Archives Service

The aim of the Archives Service is to preserve and make accessible the recorded and documented heritage of the people of County Donegal for present and future generations.

It seeks to do this through the acquisition, cataloguing, conserving and secure storage of archival collections of public and private origin which relate to the history and culture of Donegal, and through the provision of public access to its archives.

The Archives Service works in partnership with many groups and organisations. Through its outreach and education programme the Service aims to bring archives to the wider community.

1916 Centenary Programme

The Archives Services collaborated with the Donegal Education Centre and with other Cultural Services in the distribution of the resource pack (produced at the end of 2015) *County Donegal in 1916: From the Edge: History and Heritage Education Pack* to primary and second level schools, to conferences, history and heritage groups and centres, and to interested individuals. The pack was translated into Irish and distributed to Irish language schools in the county. In cooperation with the Museum, the Archives Service gave illustrated talks on the subject of 1916 in County Donegal in the Museum and to heritage centres and primary schools. The Archives Service assisted the County Museum in its major Centenary Exhibition *County Donegal in 1916*.

As part of the 1916 Centenary programme, the Archives Service received a grant of €1500 towards the digitisation of the 1916 minutes of meetings of all County Donegal's local authorities. These archives - minutes of the meetings of ten Rural District Councils, three Urban District Councils, eight Boards of Guardians, Ballyshannon Town Commissioners and Donegal County Council - contain invaluable social, economic and political historical information. They were digitised during the year and the process commenced of uploading them onto the Archives section of the County Council website.

The Archives Service assisted the Museum in the production of the *James Glass* booklet.

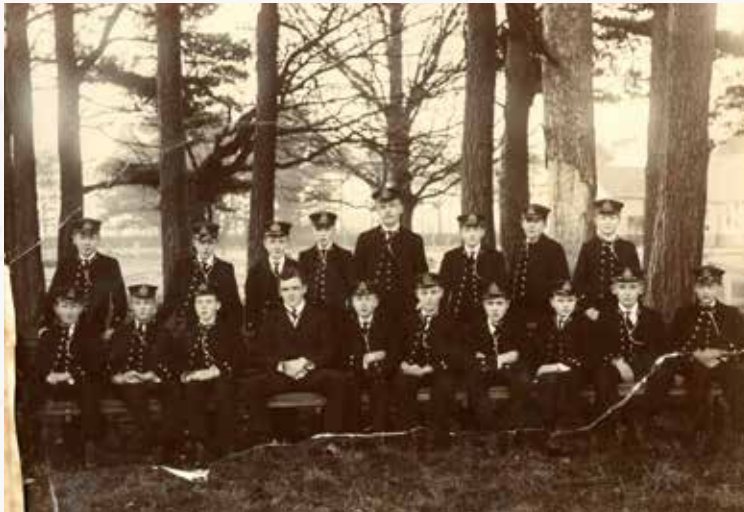


Cllr Ian McGarvey, Donegal's oldest Councillor, with Pat Gillespie, who was born in 1916, at the launch of the 1916:2016 Commemorative Programme at County House, Lifford in January 2016
Photograph: Anne-Marie Conlon, Donegal County Council

Outreach activities

The Archives Service, in cooperation with the Museum, took part in the festival of Bealtaine with reminiscences at day centres, including Clonmany, St Johnston, Falcarragh and Dunfanaghy. Reminiscences also took place later in the year in the Museum, Cloghan and Killybegs.

The *Past in the Present* touring exhibition was brought to the Sliabh Sneacht Centre Buncrana, for Heritage Week and to Lifford for Social Inclusion Week.



Photograph of young cadets, c. 1900. from Prof Anne Crookshank (Convoy House) Collection of archives and artefacts relating to Convoy House, donated to the County Archives and County Museum in 2016
Photograph: Donegal County Archives

Acquisition and Preservation

Several significant collections of archives were acquired by the County Archives in 2016, including a substantial collection of papers of the Montgomery and Boyton families of Convoy House, papers relating to the estates of Lord Leitrim, County Donegal Committee of Agriculture Minutes of Meetings, 19th century papers of Letterkenny Town Commissioners and records from three national schools. The process of sorting, preserving, boxing and cataloguing these collections commenced in 2016.



Illustrin National School with copies of 'County Donegal in 1916: From the Edge', at a school's workshop with County Museum and County Archives staff
Photograph: Donegal County Museum

Advice and Support

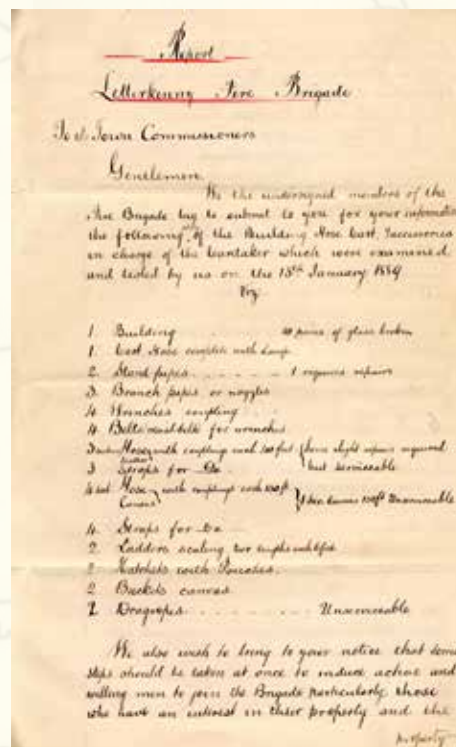
Researchers assisted by letter, phone, email, Facebook and at the Archives Service research room included staff and members of the County Council, other public service organisations including schools and colleges, the HSE, TUSLA and the National Archives, students of history and archives, academics, professional genealogists, local historians, local history and heritage groups, independent researchers, television and film producers, family historians, writers and journalists.

Records Management

Part of the remit of the Archives Service is the management of the non-current records of Donegal's local authorities. The Service preserved and provided access to the non-current records and archives of Donegal's local authorities held by the Archives Service and made recommendations regarding the preservation of archives and disposal of non-archival local authority records. Queries on records management matters were dealt with and records deposited in the archives repository. The archivist surveyed the non-current records held in Lifford and transferred to Archives many of those held in off-site storage. During this process an 1834 bound volume containing a *Return of Fines levied by order of the magistrates at Petit (sic) Sessions, Ballyshannon*, was discovered along with other 19th and 20th century legal deeds, and archived.

Policies

Two policies were adopted by the Council relating to the Archives Service in 2016 - Acquisition of Archives Policy and Preservation Policy.



1834 Fire Brigade Report, from the Letterkenny Town Commissioners collection which was deposited in the County Archives in 2016

Photograph: Donegal County Archives

Councillor Sayers moved the following Resolution copy of which was received from the Liverpool R. S. Council :-

"That we beg to ask the County Council to pay 2.5 per cent of the tonnage as a war bonus to the road contractors who entered into contracts prior to 1916." Councillor Mc Intyre seconded. As an amendment Councillor Lerry moved and Councillor McGowan seconded that the resolution be worded so as to apply to all contracts. On a division there voted for the amendment Councillors Mac Murtrei (P), Mac Murtrei (O), Lerry, McGowan and McGadden (O) - 5, for the motion Councillors, McGinley, Carr, Durning, Sayers, McGadden (P) and Mc Intyre - 6.

No vote. The Chairman, who declared the motion carried. Councillor Breslin was not present at the division.

A letter from the National Committee for relief in Belgium suggesting that the Council should form a local Committee to co-operate in Christmas appeal to British Empire on behalf of children in Belgium was read.

The resolution from the Dublin Corporation suggesting that the time has arrived for the Irish nation to unanimously demand the release of our fellow countrymen who have been interned in English prisons without trial and arrests for those who have been sentenced to terms of imprisonment and pending their release we request the Government to consider the advisability of treating them as Political Prisoners was unanimously adopted on the motion of Councillor McGadden seconded by Councillor Mac Murtrei (O).

Extract from Dunfanaghy Rural District Council minutes of meeting on 10 June 1916, which were digitised in 2016
Photograph: Donegal County Archives



Thatcher Hugh Gallagher repairing part of the thatch on Granny Kate's Thatched Cottage in Common, Glengesh near Adara as part of National Heritage Week in August. The cottage was one of 18 heritage projects that benefitted from funding from The Heritage Council under its Heritage Management Grant Scheme
Photograph: Joseph Gallagher

County Donegal Heritage Office

The role of the County Donegal Heritage Office is to raise awareness, provide advice, collect data and promote best practice in relation to our cultural, built and natural heritage. It oversees the implementation of the County Heritage Plan in partnership with the County Heritage Forum.

The Heritage Office rejoined the Cultural Services Division in May and worked with colleagues to produce *Cultúr: A Strategic Vision for Cultural Services 2016-2020* which was launched in June.

Education and Outreach

The *County Donegal in 1916* History and Heritage Education Pack, which was a collaboration between Donegal County Council's Archives, Museum, Heritage and Library Services was launched by Michael Starrett, Chief Executive of The Heritage Council in January as part of the *Donegal 1916-2016* Programme Launch.

The Heritage Officer assisted the Donegal Historical Society re-design, organise and publicise its annual schools' competition. The theme of the competition was *Virtually 1916* and a record 40+ entries were received.

The Heritage Officer and the Head of Business, The Heritage Council gave a presentation on *Local Authority Heritage Services* at the Association of Irish Local Government training event for elected members in Letterkenny in May.

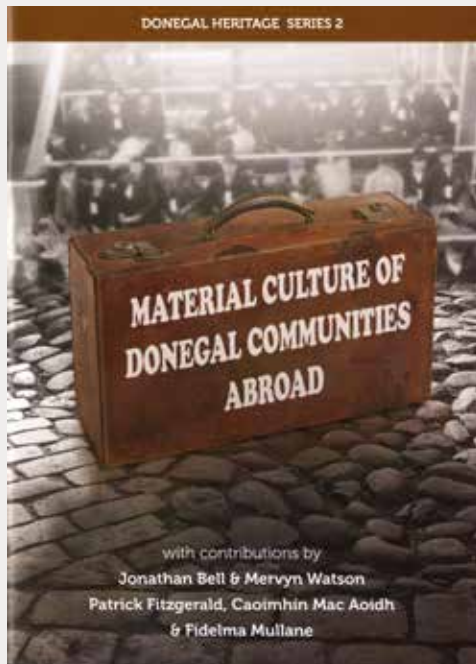
The Donegal Education Centre, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Inland Fisheries Ireland, Nature North West and the County Donegal Heritage Office organised a *Learning Through The Landscape* CPD Course for Primary Teachers in Glenveagh National Park in July. The Heritage Office sponsored ecologist, author and broadcaster Éanna Ní Lamhna to deliver a training day on bogs as habitats.



Pictured at the launch of the 'County Donegal in 1916: From the Edge' History and Heritage Education Pack in County House, Lifford, County Donegal are (from left to right): Joseph Gallagher (Heritage Officer, DCC), John McDonough (Director, National Archives), Eileen Burgess (County Librarian/Ireland 2016 Donegal Coordinator, DCC), Cllr. Marie Therese Gallagher (Chair, Ireland 2016 Donegal Committee), Judith McCarthy (County Museum Curator, DCC), Niamh Brennan (County Archivist, DCC) and Michael Starrett (Chief Executive, The Heritage Council)
Photograph: Heritage Office

Donegal Diaspora

The County Donegal Heritage Office in partnership with The Heritage Council launched a booklet on the *Material Culture of Donegal Communities Abroad* as part of Donegal-Irish Diaspora Conference in May. The free booklet highlights selected historical migration patterns from Donegal and the items that Donegal people took with them when they left. The booklet is the second in the *Donegal Heritage Series* and includes narrative accounts by Dr. Fidelma Mullane, Dr. Jonathan Bell and Mr. Mervyn Watson, Dr. Caoimhín Mac Aoidh and Dr. Patrick Fitzgerald.



Cover of the free 'Material Culture of Donegal Communities Abroad' booklet produced by the County Donegal Heritage Office and launched as part of the Donegal-Irish Diaspora Conference in May
Photograph: Joseph Gallagher

Heritage Plan

As part of the County Donegal Heritage Plan implementation and, in partnership with The Heritage Council, the Heritage Office commissioned Phase II of a study on the maritime built heritage and its interpretation. It also commissioned architect, lecturer and broadcaster Orla Murphy to prepare guidance for the conservation of traditional shopfronts and vernacular signage, and oral historian Dr. Tomás Mac Conmara to undertake an audit of oral history recordings and collections from County Donegal. Over 4,000 recordings in 57 collections have been identified.



John Barr's drapery shop on Main Street, Bunclara exhibits many of the classic architectural features of a traditional shopfront
Photograph: Joseph Gallagher

Heritage Week

National Heritage Week with its theme of *100 Years of Heritage* in August was coordinated by The Heritage Council and Local Authority Heritage Officers. County Donegal was the county with the most Heritage Week events taking place per head of population in the country with over 115 events organised. The Heritage Office compiled the free, pocket-size County Donegal Heritage Week Event Guide. It also, in association with the Communications Office, secured air time for public service announcements on Highland Radio and Ocean FM in relation to Heritage Week, hedgerow heritage and a live Highland Radio outside broadcast of *Drivetime with Lee Gooch*.



Pictured with ecologist, author and broadcaster Éanna Ní Lamhna (front row, centre) at the 'Learning through the Landscape' course outside the Bridge House Education Centre at Glenveagh National Park in July are primary school teachers from across the county and staff from Glenveagh National Park
Photograph: Joseph Gallagher

Pollinator Award

Local Authority Heritage Offices and Biodiversity Offices sponsored a new annual Local Authority Pollinator Award as part of the Tidy Towns' competition. The award encourages local groups to implement pollinator-friendly actions in their towns and villages as part of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.



Pictured at the 'Highland Radio' outside broadcast unit in August are broadcaster Lee Gooch, Judith McCarthy (Curator, Donegal County Museum) and Joseph Gallagher (Heritage Officer, Donegal County Council)
Photograph: Heritage Office

Culture Night

As part of Culture Night in September, the Heritage Office hosted a built heritage walking tour entitled *Lawrence's Letterkenny* with Colm Murray, Architecture Officer, The Heritage Council that was attended by 70 people. Accompanying the walking tour was a temporary exhibition of 14 images of Letterkenny from the Lawrence Collection displayed in the shopfront windows of 12 businesses along Main Street as close to the viewpoints from which the original images were taken by Robert French.

Advice and Support

The Heritage Office provided advice to many community groups and individuals throughout the county and on the Heritage Council Grants Programme, Traditional Farm Buildings Grants Scheme, *Adopt-a-Monument* Scheme and other built heritage grants. It also provided support for the Tír Chonaill Stone Festival in June in Glencolumcille organised by the Dry Stone Wall Association of Ireland for the repair of a dry-stone wall, a study of the flora of roadside verges in Inishowen by Aulino Wann and Associates, a guided tour of Drumhome monastic site during Heritage Week, and Donegal heritage-themed cartoon workshops in libraries during Wainfest in October. The Heritage Office also provided conservation advice for Niall Ó Dónaill's House, Loughanure and *The Laurels* (Brian Friel's aunts' house), Glenties. These actions contributed to community efforts to conserve these important examples of the county's built and cultural heritage.



*Stones of Éire wall, Glencolumcille June 2016
Photograph: Eileen Burgess*

Ireland 2016 centenary programme

2016 was a year of extensive activity in Donegal commemorating the events of the 1916 Rising, reflecting on our achievements over the last 100 years and looking towards our future.

Programme management

The Donegal programme was managed by Coordinator Eileen Burgess, County Librarian/ Divisional Manager Cultural Services. A local committee of 10 Elected Members, 5 Community representatives nominated via the Public Participation Network, and 5 Council staff members, met during late 2015 and throughout 2016. The committee was chaired by Cllr Marie-Therese Gallagher, who is related to Major General Joseph Sweeney, one of those present in the GPO during the Easter Rising.

Commemorative programme of events

The programme was launched in January, with special guest Pat Gillespie who was born in 1916. Pat was presented with a commemorative pin and declared the day to be one of the best of his life. The level of community engagement far exceeded expectations and both grant schemes were over-subscribed. Events were distributed across all 7 strands and took place in almost every corner of the county, including at least two offshore islands. One of the most ambitious

community projects was a stone map of Ireland erected in Glencolumbcille, involving stone and stone masons from all over Ireland.

Donegal County Council signature events

The Council undertook several signature projects including the Turner prize nominee Willie Doherty video commission led by the RCC, one of only 9 Arts Council funded projects under their call to the Irish imagination. This exhibition was launched at the Earagail Arts Festival and was later exhibited in Dublin and London. The *Donegal in 1916* exhibition in the County Museum and the accompanying education pack led by the Archives Service supported by Museum, Library and Heritage staff, were well researched and well received. A travelling version of the exhibition was displayed on Oileán Thoráí and at the MacGill Summer School amongst other venues, and copies of the education pack were requested by third level institutions worldwide.



Maquette of History Table: Elevation, by artist Brian Connolly, selected as the County Council's commemorative monument to be sited at The Diamond, Lifford.
Photograph: Clive Wasson

The Library Service organised staff training, public workshops, and a conference on Ethical Remembering. Participants from varied backgrounds came together at trusted and neutral venues for challenging but very worthwhile discussions. Further details on these and other commemorative events can be found under the individual service sections. The Council commissioned *History Table: Elevation* by renowned artist Brian Connolly to be sited at the Diamond in Lifford, the County Town.

TV

We were very pleased to be selected and to assist in the research for one of the four RTE *Ireland's Rising* programmes - exploring the 1916 family history of former Donegal manager Jim McGuinness.