

Press Release Embargo until Friday 6th May 2011

County Heritage Awards Ceremony

Galway County Heritage Awards ceremony took place in the Claregalway Hotel on **Thursday 5th May 2011**. The Awards Ceremony which was postponed from December 2010 due to bad weather was very well attended by elected representatives, community groups, schools and individuals from all parts of the county.

Speaking at the Awards Ceremony, Cllr. Jimmy McClearn, Mayor of the County of Galway, said 'Our heritage belongs to each one of us and it is vital that it is valued and appreciated at a local level if we are to manage, preserve and protect it. It is clear from the number, quality and caliber of the nominations for a County Heritage Award, that our built, natural and cultural heritage is valued at a local level.'

The judging panel of Mr. Hugh Carey, Archaeologist, Monument Service, Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government, Archaeologist, Ms. Mary Flynn, Community Planner and Ms. Sheila Murphy, Ecologist were given a daunting task in trying to pick the County Heritage Award winners.

Ms. Martina Moloney, Galway County Manager said 'I am delighted to see that all the hard work, commitment and contributions of so many groups, individual and schools throughout the county who have furthered our awareness, appreciation and knowledge of our rich heritage been acknowledged tonight through the County Heritage Awards'.

Mr. Brendan Smith, speaking on behalf of Galway Education Centre said 'Galway Education Centre is delighted to sponsor an Award for the best Schools Projects as it is very important that children have an awareness and appreciation of their heritage'.

Cllr. Jimmy McClearn, Mayor of the County of Galway presented the Awards.

County Heritage Award Winners 2010 Overall County Heritage Award Winner:

Burrenbeo Trust

Since it was established at the end of 2000, the Burrenbeo Trust has had an outstanding impact in increasing the knowledge and heightening the awareness on the heritage of the Burren both in Galway and Clare. The Burrenbeo Trust carries out monthly walks and talks on heritage with local experts, these have been attended by 900 locals and visitors since launched. The Trust has educated over 400 primary school children on 20 week heritage courses. It also has 62 people registered with the Burren Conservation Volunteers to tackle any problems with heritage on the ground through monthly 'action days', has developed and continuously updating the largest information website on the Burren with 750 hits a day. The Burrenbeo Trust is key in heightening the awareness of heritage in the Region.

Ballinasloe Electoral Area:**Joint Winner****Joe Molloy, Clontuskert**

Joe has been nominated for his outstanding contribution to the successful publication of 'The Parish of Clontuskert: glimpses into the past' of which he was the editor. The publication has generated huge interest in heritage. In addition to this Joe has guided the pupils and their teachers on a field trip to Clontuskert Abbey from the local national school, is a member of the graveyard recording project and provides help and assistance to numerous people who are undertaking heritage projects.

and

St. Augustine's National School, Clontuskert

The students of Clontuskert National School have created a valuable online resource that can be accessed across the world and used as an incentive to encourage tourism to the area. Last year 2nd and 6th class took part in a history project on monasteries. As part of this project the students visited Clontuskert Abbey and following this visit the school decided to create a 3D image of the Abbey using photosynth and their work can be viewed on www.photosynth.net.

Second Place:**Scoil Mhuire, Monivea**

The teachers and pupils of Scoil Mhuire have transformed what are normally bland perimeter school walls into a fantastic series of colourful educational murals based on stories from Celtic mythology. (Children of Lir, Bradan Feasa, na Fianna). The project was a school community effort with each class taking responsibility for one section of the wall.

Connemara Electoral Area:**Winner:****Coiste Oidhreachta Leitir Mealláin agus Gharumna.**

Tá obair dheonach iontach á dhéanamh ag an gCoiste Oidhreachta a chuireann go leor ama agus fuinnimh isteach i bhforbairt cúrsaí oidhreachta, cultúir agus teanga sa cheantar le cúpla bliain anuas anois. Is í an phríomhaidhm atá ag an gcoiste ó bunaíodh é Oidhreacht Cheantar Gharumna & Leitir Mealláin a chur chun cinn agus feasacht a mhúscailt inti, ní amháin go háitiúil ach go náisiúnta agus fiú go hidirnáisiúnta trí suíomh idirlín a fhorbairt amach anseo.

Second Place:**Petersburg Outdoor Education Centre**

Petersburg Outdoor Education Centre has undertaken a considerable amount of work and effort in promoting Joyce Community as an aspirant Geopark. They have spent time researching the geopark concept, putting together a really interesting power point

presentation that is accessible to all and most importantly they ensure that the communities in Joyce County have an understanding and awareness of the project.

Loughrea Electoral Area:

Winner:

Scoil Bhríghde Naofa, Northampton, Kinvara

‘Gairdín na Scoile’ project – the creation of the organic school garden has been a wonderful learning curve for all ages. It has been an intergenerational bridge. It has precipitated the revival of the ‘meitheal’. People have shared their time, energy, expertise, knowledge and ability to forage for materials together with their creative talents and knowledge. The staff, pupils and parents of Northampton National School are immensely proud of their organic school garden.

Second Place:

Ardrahan Church of Ireland

A booklet of the history of the Ardrahan Church of Ireland was published and its main aim is to highlight the significance of the church in the community, as a restored place of worship.

Oranmore Electoral Area:

Winner:

Coldwood Heritage Association

The Coldwood Heritage Association produced a calendar for the year 2010 which celebrated their winning of the Golden Mile. The Calendar showed the unique heritage of Coldwood village, its people and school through photographs. Villagers past and present were featured. Each month had its own theme, including the class of 1923 in Coldwood National School, students of today, the main features of the winning of the Golden Mile and the beautiful flora of the Turlough. It celebrated all aspects of the unique heritage of Coldwood village and its people.

Second Place:

Thomas Cuffe

Tom was nominated in recognition of the valuable record of Galway’s avian fauna through the production of 3 video DVD’s and photographic website over the past 4 years from 2006 through to 2009 and continuing to 2010. They are an invaluable educational and heritage resource which is made available to schools and other interest groups now and into the future.

Tuam Electoral Area:

Winner:

Eight farmers from Milltown– PJ Garvey, Sean Thornton, Eamon Bane, John Waldron, Teresa Mahon, Frank Kirrane, James Reapy, Jim Singleton.

These eight farmers co-operated in every way and provided access over their land to two projects

- (a) Development of Cloondroon Lake as a Coarse Fishing Lake and picnic area
- (b) extension of Clare River walk.

Cloondroon Lake project when completed will be a first class coarse fishing lake/recreation/picnic area/wildlife area.

The Clare River Walk extension of 750m will enhance this award (National 2000 AD) winning walk and convert it into a gem of a recreation area, when it is linked to the existing Slí na Slainte Route. It will be a tranquil recreation area for walkers and fishermen (surrounded by heritage & wildlife)

Second Place:

Frances O'Reilly

Frances O'Reilly was nominated for re-publishing the book "The Abbey of Ross" by Oliver J. Burke which is a valuable source of information on what is a unique local building. The book was first written in 1868 and because of huge local interest and a daily influx of tour buses to the Abbey or Friary it was decided that this book is a valuable source of information about one of the largest and best preserved ecclesiastical structures in Ireland and needed to be re-produced.

Best Publication:

Winner:

Very Rev. Anthony Previt 

The book 'A Guide to Lough Corrib's Early Monastic Sites' by Very Rev. Previt  serves to highlight in clear, simple and accessible way the presence of so many structures and ruins that still populate our countryside. The excellent maps and photographs help locate these remains and readers may be surprised to find out that many really interesting buildings and structures are right on their doorstep. This book is a reminder of what we still have that is of 'real' value and it is time to focus on preserving, restoring and caring for these valuable parts of our heritage.

Second Place:

Breandan O Scanaill

His Book 'Historical Sketchbook –Listed Buildings of Connemara Volume 1' has covered the history of buildings from various parts of Connemara both north and south. It is significant as it highlights the fact that there are protected structures throughout the county and the region. It has awakened an interest in the historical buildings both large and small and it has created a means for many people to explore these buildings. It is a valuable tool for schools and other groups who are interested in their local history.

Highly Commended:

Sir Henry Grattan Bellew

Sir Henry Grattan Bellew was nominated for the promotion of Mountbellew/Moylough through a pictorial memoir of the last 150 years entitled 'Mountbellew-Moylough & Environs: A Pictorial Memoir'. This is a Socio Historical Memoir of the parishes in this part of East Galway. It is something that will be treasured by the residents of the area and something that future generations will be able to refer back to.

Best School Project:

Winner:

Glinsk National School

Glinsk National School plays a vital role in stimulating an interest in and an awareness of local heritage. The School flag celebrates the building which gives focus to Glinsk that being Glinsk Castle. They have captured local heritage on three 20 minute films as part of the Dept of Education FÍS programme. Other project include 'Cottages 2010' Art and Crafts, planting of fruit and vegetables in school garden, the planting of a holly tree in Glinsk Heritage Park, 'Family Trees' planted on perimeter of school grounds, art of handwriting, nest boxes, and production of Christmas Cards. The pupils have made visits to a local workhouse, Glendeer pet farm and a visit to see a thatcher at work to broaden their heritage experiences. Visitors to the school included artist Gordon D'Arcy, Officers of the Shannon Regional Fisheries, Tree expert Dr. Janice Fuller, Bat Night with Dr. Kate McAneny, cartographer Padraic Higgins, story-teller and poet John Conneely and past pupil Miriam Cuddy. The heritage of the local area is pivotal in the everyday life of the school.

Second Place:

Scoil Náisiúnta Inis Meain

The pupils of Scoil Náisiúnta Inis Meain recorded a series of traditional Irish songs whose origins lie in Connemara and the Aran Islands. The young people of Inis Meain undertook a heritage project, through their recording of traditional songs in the sean-nós style, that may be impossible to undertake in the next decade if the population of Irish speaking in communities in Galway keep declining. The sean-nós recordings are a beautiful rendition of a world that is disappearing and should serve as a wake-up call to all Irish people.

Highly Commended:

St. Annin's National School

The school has created a diverse wildlife school garden about 5 years ago. Last year it set up a heritage tree trail with 18 native trees. The school recently acquired a plot of land that was to be used as a carpark. When it transpired that about ¼ - ½ acre of this land consists of a woodland that is at least 200 years old it was decided to change the architects plans to ensure the woodland area would not be interfered with. The woodland is now put to conservation use.

The following is the full listing of all groups, individuals and schools that were nominated for a County Heritage Award:

BALLINASLOE ELECTORAL AREA

Birdwatch Ireland, Banagher, Co. Offaly
Brendan Donnellan, Ahascragh, Ballinasloe.
Caltra Community Council, Golden Mile, Ballinasloe
Caltra GAA, Caltra, Ballinasloe
Fohenagh National School, Fohenagh,
Joseph Molloy, Clontuskert, Ballinasloe
Scoil Mhuire, Monivea
Sir Henry Grattan Bellew, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin
St. Augustine's National School, Clontuskert

CONNEMARA ELECTORAL AREA

Breandan O'Scannail, Clifden
Coiste Comóradh 75 Bliain Ghairmscoil na bPiarsach, Ros Muc,
Coiste Oidhreacht Leitir Mealláin & Gharumna, Leitir Mealláin,
Killannin Graveyard Committee,
Petersburg Outdoor Education Centre, Clonbur,
Scoil Naisiúnta, Inis Meain
Scoil Naisiúnta Muire Gan Smal, Claddaghduff
St. Annin's National School, Roscahill,
Very Reverend .Anthony Previté, Oughterard

LOUGHREA ELECTORAL AREA

Athenry Environmental Network, Athenry
Ardrahan Church of Ireland, Ardrahan
Burrenbeo Trust, Kinvara
Scoil Bailemanach, Craughwell
Scoil Bhrighde Naofa, Northampton, Kinvara

ORANMORE ELECTORAL AREA

Coldwood Heritage Association
Joe Murphy, Kilcolgan
Maree National School, 3rd Class, Oranmore
Thomas Cuffe, Galway

TUAM ELECTORAL AREA

Barnaderg National School
Cloughanover National School
Creggs National School
Eight Farmers from Milltown: PJ Garvey, Sean Thornton, Eamon Bane, John Waldron,
Teresa Mahon, Frank Kirrane, James Reapy, Jim Singleton

Frances O' Reilly, Headford

Glenamaddy: Fr. Paddy Mooney, PP Glenamaddy, Seamus Walsh, Breda & Peter Keaveney, Patricia Keady – Producers of DVD – ‘History of St. Patrick’s Church, Glenamaddy’

Glinsk National School

Killrerin Heritage Society

‘Songs from the Broken Wheel’ Group, Tuam

Detail is available about each project entered into the competition if required.

For further information please contact: Marie Mannion, Heritage Officer, Galway County Council, Prospect Hill, Galway. Phone 091 509198/087 9088387: E-mail: mmannion@galwaycoco.ie