



Laois Heritage Office Newsletter

June 2024

Welcome to the Laois Heritage Office Newsletter – providing updates on heritage-related news, events and activities in Laois.

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Heritage News



Laois Biodiversity Week 2024

National Biodiversity Week 2024 took place from 17th - 26th May with a variety of events happening around Laois. Everything from a 'getting to know pine martins' talk in Abbeyleix, a biodiversity walk on Meredith's farm in Ballylinan, birdwatching for young people in Heywood Gardens to the launch of a community garden and action plan for Camross (pictured).



Timahoe Heritage Festival 2024

This year's Timahoe Heritage Festival took place on the 1st and 2nd June. The viking village, and battle reenactments create a impressive link with the the area's past, and are always a big attraction. However the festival also includes a 5k run, talks, a funfair, and an array of craft exhibits.

The Laois Heritage Office was happy to support the 'Big Dig' Viking Workshops again this year, which were very popular and completely booked out!



Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement Conference

The Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement (GSIHS) annual conference took place in Portlaoise on the 10th-12th May. The conference was very well attended with fascinating talks ranging from 'The Prehistoric Monuments of the Great Heath' by Eoin Sullivan, 'The Maps of Leix and Offaly' by Rolf Loeber to 'Vernacular Settlements of County Laois' by Barry Reilly in addition to a wonderful talk by Regina Dunne on 'The Helen Rose Collection'. A field trip went to Stadbally Hall and the Rock of Dunamase.

Community Heritage Grants 2024 - Laois Projects

In May the Heritage Council announced successful applications to the 2024 Community Heritage Grant scheme. They received a record 444 applications and with no increase in budget were only able to support 123 projects. Three Laois projects were successful in the applications.

[VIEW FUNDED PROJECTS](#)

Upcoming Heritage Events

Abbeyleix House and Farm Family Day (featuring the 'Portlaoise Plane')

The Abbeyleix House and Farm annual family day takes place on Sunday 23rd June. This is a great opportunity to explore the impressive walled gardens and surrounds of this historic house, while enjoying the variety of activities on offer for all the family. As part of the open day's air show this year the famous 'Portlaoise Plane' will be on view by special arrangement so don't miss the opportunity to see this important piece of aviation history!

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

Oral History Training Events

The Oral History Network are running a series of free networking and feedback sessions around the country for oral historians and anyone interested in history and heritage more generally over the week of 19th-25th June.

See below for information on booking and event locations.

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

Plays in Emo Court

Chapterhouse Theatre Company will be performing two plays in Emo Court. This is a great opportunity to enjoy top class performances in an amazing historical setting.

Little Women - 21st June at 7pm

The Beauty and the Beast - 10th July at 7pm

[BOOKING DETAILS](#)

Community Corner

Laois Education Centre - Opening of Biodiversity Demonstration Garden

On 14th June the Laois Education Biodiversity Demonstration Garden was officially opened. This project was the culmination of many years of planning and collaboration between Laois County Council staff, Laois Education Centre, and the various experts and professionals that were involved. It will provide an excellent educational resource for the community. For more information on the inspiration, design and process behind creating the demonstration garden, Dee Sewell who designed the garden has written an excellent blog available [HERE](#)



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