



MUSICAL FANS ENJOY A CULTURAL SPECTACULAR AT THE BELFAST TATTOO



Over 500 artists combined to make this year's Belfast Tattoo at The Odyssey a truly remarkable event

PAGE 5



Applications invited for music and dance tuition programme opening on October 1 - [Page 11](#)



Some 1,000 children from 24 groups attend the annual Summer School Series - [Pages 8&9](#)



A summer of Ulster-Scots music and dance is enjoyed by all - [Pages 12&13](#)

Fair Faa ye



Welcome to the September 2014 edition of the Ulster-Scot.

Another summer has come and gone, the first term of the new school year is under way and autumn is upon us again!

In this edition we look back at some of the fantastic Ulster-Scots activities and events that took place throughout July and August all over the country including weekly entertainment at Cockle Row Cottages in Groomspoint, Sunday afternoon concerts in Lisburn's Wallace Park, the Scotch Quarter Festival and the Siege event in Carrickfergus, the Dalriada Festival in the stunning grounds of Glenarm Castle, the Walled City and Belfast Tattoos, and Pipes in the Park in Bangor, to name just a few!

Looking forward, the Ulster-Scots Agency will be seeking applications from Community and Voluntary groups to participate in the 2015 Music and Dance Tuition Programme which opens on October 1 – for more information see page 11.

Also in this edition we are announcing the dates for several exciting annual Ulster-Scots events – including the St Andrew's Day Celebration at Carrickfergus Castle and the Burns Concert in the Waterfront Hall.

As always we welcome your feedback and hope that everyone finds something of interest in this edition.

Ian Crozier is Chief Executive of the Ulster-Scots Agency



Wae a heart an a half...



As part of the Reivers Ulster-Scots festival week, 14 young actors performed *Wae a Heart an a Half* by playwright Philip Orr in Killeel Primary School on July 8 and 9.

The play tells the story of four young local men who go off to fight in World War I with a heart and a half and charts their time training, fighting in the trenches and ultimately three of their deaths. It's a poignant and historical look at what made these young men sign up to fight and also how their deaths affected those back home.

Over 10 days the children taking part in the project were instructed by director Orla McKeagney, assisted by Stephen Beggs and James Kennedy who looked after sound and lighting.

The play was adapted to Killeel to follow the lives of four young Mourne men; W.J. Hanna, Wm Thomas McKnight, Thomas Balance, and Hayden Floyd and an extraordinary nurse, also from the Mourne area, Margaret Anderson.

The Schomberg Society would express thanks to Stella Byrne of Heritage Lottery Fund (the project's main funder), Philip Orr for giving permission to adapt his original script, Stephen Cherry (Killeel Primary School), David Cunningham (principal of Killeel High School), the board of governors at Killeel PS for permitting use of the school, Roberta Heaney, David Parke, Jim Hudson (Somme Heritage Centre), Lauren Newell, Maynard Hanna (Ulster-Scots Agency), Orla, Stephen and James and all those who came along to the performances.



“ It's a poignant and historical look at what made these young men sign up to fight and also how their deaths affected those back home.

The Ulster-Scot

The official newspaper for the Ulster-Scots Agency /
Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch

Main office:

The Ulster-Scots Agency,
Corn Exchange,
31 Gordon Street,
Belfast,
BT1 2LG
Telephone: (028) 9023 1113
Fax: (028) 9023 1898
Email: info@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk

International callers dialling the Ulster-Scots Agency:

Europe - 00 44 28 9023 1113
Australia - 00 11 44 28 9023 1113
USA - 011 44 28 9023 1113

Regional office in Raphoe:

The Ulster-Scots Agency
William Street,
Raphoe, Co Donegal
Telephone: +353 7 4917 3876
Fax: +353 7 4917 3985
Email: freena@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk

Editor: Gary McDonald

Associate Editor: Gillian Pearson

Production: The Irish News

Printing: Interpress NI Limited

The Ulster-Scot next edition: Saturday November 15

Deadline for copy: Wednesday October 29

Contributors should note that publication of any submitted article is at the Editor's discretion



Ulster-Scots Agency
Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch

CLICK ON THIS...



For details of what's on check out our events calendar -
www.ulsterscotsagency.com/events

For Ulster-Scots news - www.ulsterscotsagency.com/news

To sign up for the Ulster-Scots E-Newsletter -
visit www.ulsterscotsagency.com/newsletter/subscribe/
register your details and receive updates on the areas that you are most interested.

Join us on Facebook - visit
www.facebook.com/UlsterScotsAgency now and like our page to keep up to date on what's happening, upload your photos from Ulster-Scots events and share your comments.

WORD OF THE ISSUE

Shane

Meaning:
Soon

SUMMER ENTERTAINMENT AT COCKLE ROW COTTAGES

North Down Borough Council and the Ulster-Scots Agency joined forces to create a fantastic programme of free cultural entertainment every Sunday during July and August at Cackle Row Cottages in Groomsport.

The entertainment was in celebration of Ulster-Scots connections and the influence it has had on our culture and entertainment ever since.

On Saturday and Sunday September 6 & 7 a fantastic Eagle Wing Celebrations event was held to mark the season close at the cottages and entertainment included Ulster-Scots music by The Woodworms, Highland dancing, Eagle Wing re-enactments and family orientated entertainment including a magician, face painting, balloon modelling, glitter tattoos and baking demonstrations. The Cackle Row Cottages will re-open next Easter.

For more information of upcoming events in North Down contact Bangor Visitor Information Centre on (028) 9127 0069 or email tic@northdown.gov.uk.



Dancers from the Bright Lights School of Highland Dance with piper Ian Burrows at the Cackle Row Cottages in Groomsport

NEWS AND EVENTS

Tattoo time

Following the success of the recent Belfast Tattoo, it has been confirmed that the show will return to The Odyssey Arena for 2015, for three performances on September 4 and 5. Show times are Friday September 4 at 8pm, with two performances on Saturday September 5 at 2.30pm and 8pm. Tickets are available from: The Odyssey Arena Box Office - telephone (028) 9073 9074 or visit www.ticketmaster.ie The Belfast Tattoo - telephone (028) 9031 3131 or visit www.belfasttattoo.com

For further information contact anita.wonderlandproductions@gmail.com.

Save the date...

The Ulster-Scots Agency, in partnership with the Northern Ireland Environment Agency and Carrickfergus Borough Council, will be hosting a St Andrew's Day Celebration at Carrickfergus Castle on Saturday November 29.

Further details and a full programme for the event and will be published on the Ulster-Scots Agency's website (www.ulsterscotsagency.com) over the coming weeks.

The countdown is on to Burns Night 2015 at Belfast's Waterfront Hall

Saturday January 24 has been confirmed as the date for the 2015 Burns Night Concert in Belfast's Waterfront Hall, organised by the Ulster-Scots Agency and featuring the Ulster Orchestra.

This increasingly popular and immensely entertaining celebration of the close cultural links between Scotland and Northern Ireland attracts and impresses more people with every passing year.

The annual Burns Night celebration is a grand occasion, with music, dance and spectacle showcasing rousing pageantry and compelling performances. When the pipes sing out and the 'Ode to a Haggis' is performed, the rich cultural links between Scotland and Northern Ireland will be brought to life with the words of Robbie Burns!

Tickets are now on sale, prices from £13.50 to £29. For more information and to book click on www.ulsterorchestra.com/events/burns-night.



DAMP BANGOR WEATHER FAILS TO COOL FIERY PERFORMANCE BY THE RED HOT CHILLI PIPERS

THOUSANDS of visitors, despite the poor weather, visited Bangor on July 26 for an Ulster-Scots Day and a special 'Pipes in the Park' event featuring the world-famous Red Hot Chilli Pipers.

Promoted by the Ulster-Scots Agency in partnership with North Down Borough Council, a full programme of Ulster-Scots activities and events took place throughout the day at the North Down Museum and the grounds of the Town Hall in Bangor.

Inside the museum musical entertainment came in the form of Chanter and the Broken String band whilst other activities included 'Soda bread Shirley' with a little help from North Down mayor Peter Martin, baking sodas for the crowds along with historic talks on the Ulster-Scots heritage of the area by Alister McReynolds and linen spinning demonstrations.

On the west lawn of the Castle, the Ulster-Scots Agency Juvenile Pipe Band performed a number of selections and there were highland dancing displays by the Bright Lights School. Throughout the day re-enactors told the stories of Sir James Hamilton and Thomas Raven and their contribution to the areas Ulster-Scots heritage and children were entertained with face painters, giant games and young and old could try their hand at archery.

The main act of the day saw the inimitable Red Hot Chilli Pipers and dancers perform in front of Bangor Castle and their unique repertoire of bagrock kept the crowds dancing



and singing even through the odd shower including their very own versions of tracks including Avicii's 'Wake me up' which has now had more than two million hits on YouTube. Alex Irvine, tourism development officer for North Down Council, said: "We were delighted to be able to put on such an event in partnership with the Ulster-Scots Agency. "To host such a concert with a world class act like the Chilli Pipers was a great spectacle for the town. "Combined with the other acts and attractions throughout the day, including the Juvenile Pipe Band, dancers and kids' activities, it all contributed to a great day out for all."



PRONI OPENS THE DOORS ON OUR EUROPEAN HERITAGE

This year hundreds of properties across Northern Ireland will be opening for free today and tomorrow (September 13 and 14) as part of the European Heritage Open Days.

European Heritage Open Days run all over Europe during the month of September. Everyone gets an opportunity to visit historic buildings, many of which are not ordinarily open to the public, and take part in a wide variety of events.

Taking part in this ever popular weekend event, the Public Record Office (PRONI) will be open to the public from 10am to 5pm on Saturday and Sunday.

On these days, PRONI will be providing introductory talks and tours of our exhibition and building. Visitors will also have a chance to view the artwork located throughout the building.

It is also a great opportunity to see parts of the record office everyday visitors rarely get to visit, including the conservation laboratory and the secure vaults which are home to Northern Ireland's unique archival heritage. Today, as part of PRONI's programme

of talks, Ulster-Scots historian, Alister McReynolds will deliver a talk on the Castlestewart Papers from 12 – 12.45pm. On the Saturday PRONI will provide a full service. Visitors may register as a reader throughout the day (photographic identification required for registration). The self-service microfilm facility will be open throughout the day. Tours of the building must be booked in advance - contact PRONI to reserve your place by emailing proni@dcalni.gov.uk or telephoning (028) 9053 4800.

Some of the other properties included in European Heritage Open Days 2014 are:

- Carrickfergus Castle; Dunluce Castle; Parliament Buildings/Stormont Estate Sinclair Seamen's Presbyterian Church; Belfast City Hall; Young and Mackenzie Buildings; 1st Presbyterian Church; St Mark's Church, Dundela; Campbell College; Belfast Orange Hall; Clifton House; May Street Presbyterian Church; Ulster Hall; Crescent Church and St Nicholas Parish Church.

Emily Smith in concert...

Multi award winning singer Emily Smith is a leading figure of the Scottish folk scene and 2014 sees the launch her new album with a nationwide tour including a performance at Newtownabbey's Theatre at the Mill.



On this, her fifth studio album, Emily continues to draw on her talent as one of the finest interpreters of traditional song in the UK. New settings of time worn texts weave beautifully alongside contemporary covers blurring the borders of old and new to create what could be her finest album yet. Joining Emily are Jamie McClennan (guitar, fiddle & vocals) and Matheu Watson (guitar and whistle).

Emily started out as an instrumentalist on piano and accordion but it's her outstanding voice which has gained her a stream of awards throughout her career including 'BBC Radio Scotland's Young Traditional Musician of the Year' in 2002, USA Song writing Competition Winner in 2005, 'Scots Singer of the Year' at the Scots Trad Music Awards in 2008 and more recently two nominations at the 2012 BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards for 'Folk Singer of the Year' and 'Best Traditional Track' for her song 'Sweet

'Lover of Mine' on her 2011 album release 'Traiveller's Joy'.

Emily has toured worldwide performing on the main stage of many of the world's biggest folk festivals. She has also taken her music to audiences in Japan, Russia, New Zealand and North America.

Date: Friday October 3 2014
Show Time: 7.45pm
Price: £14 & £12 (Concession) Group Discount Available
Contact Box Office for tickets or theatre enquiries on (028) 9034 0202
Alternatively email: boxoffice@theatreatthemill.com

RIDING HIGH AT THE **WALLED CITY TATTOO**



Jordan Beckers (pictured), part of world famous motorcycle display team *The Imps*, talks about his experience of performing in this year's Walled City Tattoo....

Jordan Beckers, at just 16, was among the older members of the world renowned *Imps* Motorcycle Display Team which mesmerized the crowds over four nights at The Walled City Tattoo at the end of August. The *Imps*, noted for their impeccable smart red tunics and highly disciplined spectacular show, originated in the 1970s from The Hackney Adventure Holiday Project – a charity founded by Roy Pratt MBE which provided holidays in the country for under-privileged young people.

Some of the children found a dysfunctional old motorbike and a motorcycle display team, uniquely comprising of children, emerged. And for more than 40 years *The Imps* have performed around the world to millions of people, with appearances on prime time television and displays at major events, such as The Edinburgh Military Tattoo. Jordan and his team mates were among the local, national and international performers who entertained 18,000 in an open-air amphitheatre on Ebrington Square last month



- and he enjoyed the experience. "One of the best things about being in *The Imps* is travelling and meeting people from different places," he said. "We have visited many countries around the world which has been exciting. Being away from home for a long period of time for the Edinburgh Tattoo was hard but it was also one of our best performances yet. The Walled City Tattoo was equally spectacular." He added: "It was fantastic meeting other performers and also seeing some of the city,



which lived up to the great things I'd head about it. "After the Tattoo headed on two more international tours to Belgium and the Netherlands - and then I also had to get ready to start college!" Walled City Tattoo producer James Kee from Sollus Cultural Promotions said: "It was a real delight to welcome these inspirational young men to this year's show. "The *Imps* are highly skilled and immaculately turned out performers, but

WALLED CITY TATTOO COMPETITION WINNERS

Congratulations to the four lucky winners of a pair of tickets for last month's Walled City Tattoo. They were:
Wednesday August 27 - Norman Carlisle, Magherafelt
Thursday August 28 - Wallace Boyd, Limavady
Friday August 29 - Valerie Carson, Strabane
Saturday August 30 - Breda Doohan, Falcarragh, Co Donegal
We hope you enjoyed the event!



they are also fine examples of what young people can achieve with dedication, passion and teamwork. Their spectacular stunts and daring performance simply blew the audiences away." The Walled City Tattoo was funded by the Department of Trade, Enterprise and Investment through the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure, Derry City Council, Ilex and the Ulster- Scots Agency and was supported by Derry Visitor and Convention Bureau.

Belfast Tattoo hits all the right notes

More than 500 artistes took to the auditorium floor over the three nights of this year's Belfast Tattoo at the Odyssey, including one of the greatest massed pipe bands ever assembled under one roof anywhere in the world.

The Tattoo, now in its second year, showcased some of the finest musicians and dancers from across Ulster in a two-hour show which allowed the artistes and bands to feature their talents on a scale or in an arena, never available to them before.

The net was spread far and wide to bring together the bands and artistes taking place in this year's event.

Musical director for the shows was Armagh man Derek Boyce, previously a piper with the St Laurence O'Toole band in Dublin and now with grade two outfit Blearly & District, who were one of the Tattoo's headline acts.

Other piping participants include the Pipes and Drums of the 1st Scots Regiment, Ravara, Aughintober, Manorcunningham, the 1st Battalion Royal Irish Regiment, 2nd

Battalion Royal Irish Regiment, 152 (Ulster) Transport Regiment RLC and North Irish Horse.

There was also a display of 30 champion drum majors, under the control of senior drum major Brian Wilson MBE, who put on a display never before seen in Northern Ireland. The Belfast Tattoo Highland Dancers were also a feature of the show.

Among the flute bands taking part were Ballylone, Cahard, Churchill and the Newry-based Hunter Moore Memorial, celebrating their 130th anniversary this year. Silver bands included Murley, in their 90th year, and Dungannon.

The Tattoo line-up included Lume de Biqueira, a Galician Gaitas bagpipes band from Spain, formed in 1998 at Centro Gallego in Madrid. The Tattoo has its roots firmly in the traditions of the Ulster-Scots people, but reached out to showcase many talents through music and dance that Ulster-Scots people have come into contact with as they have travelled around the world and also those traditions



Senior drum major Brian Wilson pictured with Gemma McDowell (Tullylagan Pipe Band) and Emma Barr (PSNI Pipe Band) at the 2014 Belfast Tattoo.

and people who have come to Ulster and had an impact on the traditions of the people of Ulster.

Meanwhile pipes and drums were again pivotal to the Walled City Tattoo in Londonderry, which saw nearly 1,000 local and international participants perform in the open air amphitheatre in the city's Ebrington

Square over four nights in August.

Around 300 international performers took part alongside a 550-strong local cast of musicians, dancers, actors and acrobats. This year's production was themed around the transport history of the north west, and the spectacular opening scene of this year's Tattoo will tell the story of the old ship building yards on the River Foyle.

A 30-strong drums corps from marching bands, rock bands and samba bands across the country will create an exciting and unique sound for the show's ambitious opening, swapping their traditional instruments for oil barrels, corrugated iron sheets, steel tubing, hammers and grinders.

Two of the city's oldest bands, Britannia Concert Band and Hamilton Flute Band, performed together for the first time while special guest performers included the Switzerland Starbugs, world-renowned motorcycle display team *The Imps*; the 30-strong Marsa Scouts Pipes and Drums from Malta and the Paris Fire Brigade Band.

JUVENILE PIPE BAND SHINES ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

The Ulster-Scots novice juvenile pipe band chose the world stage to produce arguably their best-ever performance.

Under the guidance of pipe major Andy McGregor, the fledgling band - made up of pipers and drummers aged between nine and 16 drawn from Monaghan, Donegal, Londonderry, Tyrone and Belfast - competed at the World Championships in Glasgow in August.

And although they didn't make the final in a 28-band novice juvenile grade, the band turned in a stirring display which got them within just six placing points of qualification. The Ulster-Scots were drawn in a tough qualifying heat alongside the likes of reigning world champions George Watson's College, yet despite having to come to the starting line at just before 10am in the teeth of a storm, their 23 pipers and 19 drummers turned in the performance of their lives. The band finished 10th out of 14, but drumming adjudicator Alex Dudgeon had them in second place, just behind the world champs George Watson's.

Piping judges Ronnie McShannon and John Wilson put them ninth and 10th respectively, while ensemble adjudicator Jennifer Hutcheon gave the Ulster-Scots a 12th place. That total of 33 points was just six shy of Inverclyde's 27 points - not a million miles off making the final.

The band was only created in August 2012 with the idea of taking absolute beginners and novice musicians through the Ulster-Scots Agency's Peripatetic Music Programme, and ultimately equipping them



for competition work.

Andy McGregor, whose work with the pipers is complemented by drummer Barney Megoran's assistance with the back-end percussionists, said it was a "marvellous effort" by the youngsters.

"Every member continues to give his and her best, and I can't ask for more. They should be proud of themselves."

For the record, the top six bands in the novice juvenile grade were: 1 George Watson's College; 2 George Heriot's School; 3 West Lothian Schools; 4 Dollar Academy; 5 Robert Malcolm Memorial (Canada); 6 Preston Lodge High School.

Meanwhile congratulations to Lisburn's Field Marshal Montgomery pipe band, who battled through the elements to clinch a fourth consecutive World Championship title. It was their 10th Worlds in total, all having been achieved in little over two decades

since their inaugural crown in 1992.

The world titles and an incredible 50 other major championship wins have all come under the impeccable watch of pipe major Richard Parkes from Comber.

He is now just two world titles behind the legendary Ian MacLellan of Strathclyde Police - a personal goal he admits he's now aiming to equal, if not surpass.

"I never believed the band would ever get near to the records we're hitting, and every year it gets tougher because our rivals are getting closer and closer," Parkes said.

"But I still believe we have a clarity of sound and a power all of our own, and the unbelievable thrill of winning the Worlds never diminishes with the years.

"We'll take a break now for a couple of months and then I've some new ideas as we look towards 2015, because there can be no let-up."

FM Montgomery, who draw their players from all over Ireland as well as Scotland, North America and Australia, were pushed all the way at the weekend by Inveraray & District, who were runners-up, and by Dublin-based St Laurence O'Toole in third.

St Laurence, who won the title in 2010, were competing for the first time in the Worlds under their new pipe major Alen Tully, who succeeded his father Terry last September. In grade two, Bleary & District came agonisingly close to a world title but were pipped to the title by French raiders Brieg. But there was another world crown for Ireland as Thiepval Memorial from Convoys, in Co Donegal, claimed the spoils in grade 3B. It was achieved under the direction of Alyson McKnight, one of the few female pipe majors in world piping.

A number of other Irish contenders were among the silverware across the various grades, including Ballybriest, Annsborough (both 3A), Upper Crossgare, Matt Boyd Memorial (3B), Tralee, Cloiskelt, Marlacoo (4A), Whitewater and Ballyboley (4B). Some 25,000-plus spectators were on Glasgow Green for more than 350 performances from the 223 competing bands over two days.

Ian Embelton, chief executive of the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association, said: "Every year we see pipers and drummers putting in thousands of hours of practise in a bid to set new standards for themselves and their bands, and the people who have been in Glasgow over the last two days have enjoyed some terrific competition."

Ulster and Maiden City Festival highland championships

It's been a hectic summer for Michelle Johnston, who led and choreographed the Belfast Tattoo highland dance troupe - but who also found time to claim another Ulster Championship adult highland dance title at the Maiden City Highland Dance Festival in the Millennium Forum, Londonderry.

Michelle Johnston, who is well known in highland dance circles, running dance classes for schools around Ulster, as well as having her own class centred in Moneyreagh, was among a host of winners.

The competition took place on Wednesday August 6 and the morning session saw beginners, novices, intermediate and pre-Championships battle it out for an array of trophies.

Then came the Ulster Championships, a confined event restricted to those residing in Ulster and incorporating the top dancers from around the province.

The competition was judged by Linda Rankin (Ayrshire), Myra Miller (Glasgow) and Heather Jolley (Canada), and the full results are:

- Pre Championships (12 years and under) - Sophie Killen / Rebecca Welsh
- Pre Championships (13 years and over)



The Bright Lights Highland dancers at The Ulster Championships

Ulster Junior Champion Ellie Andrews of The Johnston School and Ulster Adult Champion Michelle Johnston of The Robertson, Scotland



- Chloe McElhinney
- Premier Nationals (12 years and under) - Rebekah Keery
- Premier Nationals (13 and 14 years) - Islay Lyttle
- Premier Nationals (15 years) - Ellie Andrews
- Premier Nationals (16 years) - Sarah Graham
- Nationals (adult) - Michelle Johnston
- Ulster Championships 12 years and under - Champion Sophie Killen; 1st runner up: Rebekah Keery; 2 Rebecca Welsh; 3 Emma Miller; 4 Miah Ng; 5 Helen Parker.
- Ulster Championships 13-15 years - Champion Ellie Andrews; 1st runner-up: Nina Robinson, 2 Chloe McElhinney, 3 Anna Morrow, 4 Allison Davis, 5 Daniele Irvine.
- Ulster Championships 16 years - Champion Sarah Graham; 1st runner-up Jasmine Ng; 2 Emma McCluskey; 3 Olivia Tweedie; 4 Naomi Mitchell; 5 James Blackwood.
- Ulster Championships 17 years and over - Champion Michelle Johnston; 1st runner-up Alice Greeves; 2 Gillian Montgomery; 3 Emma Rice; 4 Rayeanne Blackwood.
- Congratulations to all the winners!

THE ULSTER HISTORY CIRCLE - BLUE PLAQUE

Two more blue plaques have been unveiled by the Ulster History Circle to perpetuate the memory of esteemed Ulstermen David Nelson VC and Rev James McGregor - one a hero from the First World War, and the other an 18th century pioneer dubbed the Moses of the Scotch Irish in America

HONOURING A MONAGHAN BORN WWI HERO

A century to the very day since he won Ulster's first Victoria Cross of the First World War for his heroism, the Ulster History Circle together with the Ulster-Scots Agency unveiled a blue plaque to David Nelson (1886-1918) at the former Cahans Presbyterian Church in Co Monaghan, where his family worshipped.

The plaque was officially unveiled on September 1 by Heather Humphreys TD, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Born in Darraghlan, Co Monaghan in 1888, David Nelson originally enlisted in the Royal Field Artillery in 1904, but later transferred to 'L' Battery of the Royal Horse Artillery. In 1910 he was promoted to corporal, and by the beginning of the Great War he had obtained a first class certificate in gunnery from the Ministry of Defence Gunnery School located east of London, near Southend. Further promotion ensued, and on August 5 1914 he was promoted to Sergeant in 'L' Battery of the RHA and embarked with the regiment to France. August 1914 saw the advance of the large German army across Belgium, and after the Battle of Mons, its sweep into Northern France. The retreating British and French regiments encountered many engagements in



Andrew Carlisle, Director of The Ulster History Circle, Chris Spurr, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Heather Humphreys TD, Ulster-Scots Agency Development Officer, Maynard Hanna and David McCallion from War Years Remembered

which the retreating troops tried to hold back their pursuers.

One such action took place on September 1 1914 at Néry, about 35 miles north east of Paris.

Before the early morning mist had lifted, David Nelson's 'L' Battery unit held up a considerably larger force of the German 4th Cavalry division.

The fighting was bitter and highly destructive. Before 'L' Battery could return fire, it had lost three of its six guns, shortly to be followed by another two. One gun remained, and under heavy German bombardment, David Nelson -

whose precise job was range-finder - manned the gun as best he could.

Although seriously wounded and ignoring orders to retire, he stayed with the gun until the last shell had been expelled. His injuries required hospitalisation and two days later he was taken prisoner. He managed to escape soon after.

For his bravery in the field at Néry, David Nelson was awarded the Victoria Cross on November 16 1914 - the same day that he was commissioned as a second lieutenant. Further promotions followed, and on March 1 1918 he was promoted to major, given

a command of 'D' Battery, 59th Brigade, and Royal Field Artillery and returned to France, but it was there that he was severely wounded in action and died on April 8. He is buried at Lillers Communal Cemetery. The gun used at Néry on September 1 1914 survived and is on display together with David Nelson's Victoria Cross at the Imperial War Museum, London.

Chris Spurr, chairman of the Ulster History Circle, said: "David Nelson was honoured 100 years to the day on which his valour won him the Victoria Cross in one of the early actions of World War I.

"His heroism at the battle of Néry led him to become the first Ulsterman to be awarded the VC in conflict.

"We are delighted to honour David Nelson with this blue plaque, placed on the Church where his family worshipped. Major Nelson's son, Victor Cyril Nelson, aged 98, is living in Seattle, Washington State, USA. The Circle has been in contact with him and he is overjoyed to learn that his father is being acknowledged for his bravery by his homeland."

The Ulster History Circle thanked the Ulster-Scots Agency for their financial support towards the plaque, their first in Co Monaghan, and is grateful to the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht for her participation at the unveiling.

A man who shaped the New World...

Magilligan man Rev James McGregor (1677-1729), a veteran of the Siege of Derry, an 18th century pioneer credited with founding Londonderry in north America and who was dubbed the 'Moses of the Scotch Irish in America', has been commemorated with the unveiling of an Ulster History Circle blue plaque in Aghadowey.

Mr McGregor led hundreds of his congregation to America in 1718, where they founded the towns of Londonderry, Coleraine and Antrim. He was also the leader of the pioneers that in 1719 settled the Nutfield grant in Southern New Hampshire - now the towns of Derry, Londonderry, Windham, as well as portions of Manchester, Hudson, Salem, and Pelham.

In 1701, Mr McGregor, who was a fluent Irish speaker, became the pastor of a small Presbyterian church in Aghadowey and in 1710, the synod gave him the privilege of preaching in Irish.

At that stage, Presbyterians were not allowed to hold office, teach or to conduct most civil ceremonies such as marriages and funerals. In early summer 1718, Mr McGregor and the major part of his congregation set sail for Boston on the brigantine Robert.

The group consisted of about 200 people, primarily from 16 families and ranging in age from babies to an elderly couple aged 90.



Representatives of the Ulster History Circle and the Ulster-Scots Agency with the U.S. Consul, Gregory S. Burton

Arriving in New England, they found they were not welcomed by the Puritans of Boston. They were diverted to Maine where they suffered a long, cold winter. Returning south in the spring, they heard about an unoccupied piece of land in the province of New Hampshire that had been previously named Nutfield.

By the end of the first year, the Nutfield colony was judged a success. Under McGregor the community soon built a meeting house, church and a school. Nearly every house was soon spinning and weaving linen. In 1722 Nutfield was incorporated as a town and took as its official name: Londonderry.

The news of the success of Londonderry soon spread back to Ulster and thousands were inspired to follow McGregor across the Atlantic to the New World. He died on March 5 1729 aged 52.

Hundreds of people gathered outside Aghadowey Presbyterian Church for an evening of celebrations to unveil the Ulster History Circle's blue plaque to James

McGregor, the latest in the series of plaques funded in 2014 by the Ulster-Scots Agency. Moored by the church wall was a replica sailing ship, flying the American flag, and crewed by young folk from the church congregation, all dressed in the costumes of 300 years ago.

The Foyle Civic Trust mounted an exhibition about their work and publications, and the church put on a display of historic documents and church artefacts. There was even a special commemorative cake, decorated on the theme of McGregor's migration.

The Glenkeen Fife and Drum Band played as the guests gathered for the unveiling, and the chairman of the Ulster History Circle, Chris Spurr, welcomed everyone, including Ulster-Scots Agency chief executive Ian Crozier; Ulster-Scots poet Wilson Burgess, the Bard of Aghadowey; Coleraine mayor George Duddy; Rick Holmes, town historian of Londonderry, New Hampshire, who had travelled especially for the event with his wife Carol; Rev Dr Robert Kane, minister of Aghadowey Presbyterian Church, and Gregory S. Burton, Consul-General of the USA in Belfast.

A series of short speeches followed, including a verse specially composed in honour of James McGregor by the Aghadowey Bard, and then the Rev Kane and Consul-General Burton jointly unveiled the plaque, together symbolising McGregor's links to the church and to Ulster, and to the new life awaiting in America for him and his followers on the Great Migration.

The plaque now sits on the front wall of the

church, to interest and inspire all who come to worship there, or who see it from the church gate.

The large crowd of around 300 was one of the biggest ever to attend a Circle plaque unveiling, and the numbers were a demonstration of the high regard the people of Aghadowey have for their church, their history, and for this remarkable pioneer.

After an enthusiastic response to the event outdoors, the crowd moved into the sports hall, where Rev Kane led the singing of a metrical psalm, reflecting the manner of worship in Rev McGregor's day.

Local historian and teacher George Dallas presented an illustrated historical entertainment on James McGregor's life in Ulster, which included musical items on fife and drum, traditional dancing, Scottish country dancing, and re-enactments, all performed by members of the congregation.

McGregor's American adventures were brought to life by Rick Holmes, who delivered a talk full of humour, and of his passion for an Ulsterman whose personality inspired thousands to make the perilous journey across the Atlantic, and who in 1722 founded Rick's home town of Londonderry, NH.

Mr Holmes then presented gifts from the pastor and congregation of McGregor's church in East Derry, NH, to Rev Kane, including a framed plaque featuring a small wooden cross made from the timbers of the very house where James McGregor dwelt in the 1720s.

SUMMER SCHOOLS

SUMMER SCHOOLS

1,000 KIDS ATTEND ANNUAL SUMMER SCHOOL SERIES

This year a total of 24 groups participated in the Ulster-Scots Agency's summer schools programme during June, July and August at venues the length and breadth of Ulster, from Donegal to Down and from Monaghan to Antrim.

This year 17 of the 24 schools adopted the traditional Monday to Friday format, five selected to hold a World War One themed summer school and the remaining two groups held residential.

And in total, some 1,000 children were involved over the nine-week programme.

In late June Newbuildings Youth Club and Clooney Estate Residents Association kicked off the first of the summer schools with Major Sinclair Memorial pipe band in Doagh and the Small Steps group in north Belfast wrapping up the programme with their respective Ulster-Scots schools running until August 22.

Each summer school included a language workshop, this year delivered by Ulster-Scots Agency education development officer Gary Blair and community network development officer Matthew Warwick.

Other activities included cookery classes and a number of music workshops including the highland pipes, accordion, flute, fife, Lambeg drum and drum major classes.

Timetables also included highland and Scottish country dance and sports, including football, archery and golf.

A number of day trips were also organised to various places of interest, including the Ulster American Folk Park in Omagh, the Folk & Transport Museum at Cultra, Titanic Belfast, Hanna's Close in Kilkeel and Londonderry.

The Ulster-Scots Agency would like to take this opportunity to thank all the groups who participated in the 2014 Ulster-Scots summer school programme.

Congratulations to all the organisers and volunteers in helping to make the 2014 programme a resounding success!

RAPHOE



MAGHERAFELT

SOUTHEAST
FERMANAGH
FOUNDATION

This issue's Ulster-Scot innovator is ejector seat pioneer Sir James Martin

An Ulster-Scot with a profound influence on aviation

James Martin from Crossgar in Co Down, an Ulster-Scots engineer who designed the first ejector seat for the Air Ministry in the 1940s, was born on September 11 1893 as the son of Thomas Martin, a farmer and inventor, and his wife Sarah (nee Coulter).

He has often been described as 'Churchillian in character, with extraordinary stamina and upright principles'.

He grew up on a farm where from an early age he showed great skills in his ability to design and his understanding of mechanics. His father had passed away while James was still an infant, leaving his mother to push him towards a university education, though James was already a gifted mechanic, having designed and sold many of his creations before the age of 21. His memory of his university interview spoke volumes of the independence that he would later show when managing his company: "After interrogation and discussion, the professor and he decided it would be wise and to their mutual benefit to terminate their acquaintanceship at this early stage."

James was a man of strong personality and deep religious convictions, a student of simple biblical truths; he brought a clear, no-nonsense attitude to bear on all he did. Not wishing to spend his time in the lecture rooms of the university, Martin journeyed to London to begin work and start his own business. He found a small shed to rent in Acton and this became the centre of James Martin's early activities. He recalled journeying some distance away to buy timber from a demolished building to make a workbench and travelling back to Acton carrying large planks on the platform of a London bus, much to the chagrin of fellow passengers.

But from this modest origin grew the present strong company of which Sir James



Sir James Martin features in the recently launched gallery of Ulster-Scots innovators in the Thompson Dry Dock. Pictured here with Ulster-Scots Agency Chief Executive, Ian Crozier and Northern Ireland Science Park Chief Executive; Dr Norman Apsley

"James was a man of strong personality and deep religious convictions, a student of simple biblical truths; he brought a clear, no-nonsense attitude to bear on all he did."



Martin was founder. In the early days at Acton, his remarkable gifts of design and engineering ingenuity were put to the task of developing and putting on the market a wide variety of useful and saleable machines ranging from small oil engines to specialized vehicles of all kinds.

"Martin's Aircraft Works" was later founded as an aircraft manufacturer in 1934. The factory was established in 1929 and four aircraft prototypes were produced: MB1, MB2, MB3 and MB5. It was during the designing and testing of the MB1 where Sir James Martin and Captain Valentine Baker started their friendship and 'Martin-Baker Aircraft Company Ltd' was established. In 1934, Captain Valentine Baker, a flying instructor, became a partner and together they formed the Martin-Baker Aircraft Company Ltd. Sadly in 1942, Baker died when the MB-3 he was flying crashed after engine failure during landing.

In 1944 the Air ministry asked Martin-Baker to develop an ejection seat as in the new age of jets, bailing out of an aircraft had become impractical or impossible. Martin set about this task and in 1945 carried out the first test with dummies from the defiant aircraft. It was found that most effective way of ejection was to have an explosive charge that forces the seat up into the air.

On July 24 1946, Bernard Lynch was the first person to participate in a live test. The first person to be saved by a Martin-Baker ejection seat was test pilot John Lancaster who ejected from an A52 'flying wing'. Since then more than 6,900 lives have been saved by Martin-Baker ejection seats and the company is now the largest supplier of ejection seats worldwide. Since the pre-Mk1 ejection seat, Martin-Baker has had over 7,400 successful ejections and equipped more than 200 different aircraft around the world. Among James Martin's many honours were a knighthood in 1965 and an honorary doctorate from Queen's University, Belfast in 1969.

From London to Ulster: Studying Shakespeare's influence here



Focus on Sir John Byers, and eminent medical scholar and enthusiastic student of Ulster language and folklore

By Gordon Lucy

John Byers was the only son of Margaret Byers, the remarkable woman who was the founder of Victoria College in Belfast and the first Ulsterwoman to be awarded an honorary degree from any university. John, as Professor of Midwifery at Queen's University, was a significant figure in the city in his own right and was knighted by King Edward VII in 1906. Although an eminent medical scholar and contributor to medical journals, John was also an enthusiastic student of Ulster language and folklore. He was an avid collector of the words, expressions and superstitions of Ulster people and studied them for their origin and meaning.

In 1904 he published 'Sayings, Proverbs and Humour of Ulster' which was based on the text of a lecture delivered to the Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society in 1903 and on a paper which he had contributed to the Northern Whig in May 1901.

His sudden and untimely death in September 1920 prevented the publication of a much more ambitious and substantial work that had been in preparation for many years.

He was also the author of 'Shakespeare and the Ulster Dialect' which was first published in the Northern Whig on April 22 1916, the eve of the 300th anniversary of Shakespeare's death. He identified a great many Elizabethan words and phrases that were brought to Ulster at the beginning of the seventeenth century and which were still

in everyday use there at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Byers' obituary in the Northern Whig observed: "Personally the deceased was one of the brightest and most genial of men, and also one of the kindest and most tender-hearted. To local Pressmen he was an ever-accessible and ever-reliable authority upon the history of the city and the biographies of its inhabitants, and his unfailing store of information upon these matters was always placed most courteously at their disposal, no matter at what personal inconvenience."

• Both these fascinating publications - *Sayings, Proverbs and Humour of Ulster and Shakespeare and the Ulster Dialect* - are available from Amazon either as paperbacks or for Kindle.

Siege of Carrickfergus event success

THE Ulster-Scots Agency, in partnership with Carrickfergus Borough Council, hosted another hugely successful 'Siege of Carrickfergus' celebration at the town's famous castle on July 13.

This date marked the anniversary of King William of Orange landing his army at Carrickfergus Castle in 1690. The one-day well attended event included re-enactment groups from around the country dressed in period costume performing the infamous Siege of Carrickfergus and the landing of King William upon his landing at Carrickfergus Castle and Castle Green.



Music and dance tuition programme update

The Ulster-Scots Agency will be seeking applications from Community and Voluntary groups to participate in the 2015 Music and Dance Tuition Programme.

This year's programme will open on October 1 and close on October 31 at 3pm. The Agency, in partnership with the Ulster-Scots Community Network, have organised a series of public information events to advise groups of the 2015 Music & Dance Tuition Programme.

108 projects were funded by the Ulster-Scots Agency under this programme in 2014 and according to Derek Reaney, the programme manager; this financial support can make a real difference to community

and voluntary groups including bands who are committed to supporting and advancing the Ulster-Scots culture through music and dance.

He added the 2014 programme was very competitive with considerable more applications than funds available, and many groups were disappointed when they failed to secure sufficient points to avail of the funding. We expect a similar high level of interest in the forthcoming round of funding and it is vital that groups make every effort to attend the public information events so that they are



aware of the various requirements of the programme.

In addition to the public information events, staff at the Ulster-Scots Community Network are willing to meet groups in their Belfast office, telephone (028) 9043 6710 to arrange a meeting. Groups can also drop into the Agency's regional office in Raphoe, telephone 00 353 74 9173876.

All groups who applied in the last two years will also receive an invitation to the public information events, if you wish your group to be added to this list please contact the Agency's Regional Office in Raphoe at the above telephone number as soon as possible.

Details of public information events (all commence at 8pm sharp):

- Monday September 22 - Millbrook Lodge Hotel, Ballynahinch
- Monday September 22 - Silver Birches Hotel, Omagh
- Wednesday September 24 - Killyhevlin Hotel, Enniskillen
- Wednesday September 24 - Holiday Inn Express, Antrim
- Thursday September 25 - Royal Hotel, Cookstown
- Monday September 29 - Clooney Hall, Londonderry
- Wednesday October 1 - Brownlow House, Lurgan
- Thursday October 2 - Ullans Centre, Ballymoney

Ulster-Scots festivals ensure a summer of music and dance

Wallace Park Sunday band concerts

Lisburn City Council, in partnership with the Ulster-Scots Agency, hosted a number of free Ulster-Scots musical concerts in Wallace Park throughout July and August.

The concerts were part of the 'Park Life' programme of events throughout the summer, and proved a roaring success with the public. The weekly Sunday concerts featured performances by the Harry Ferguson Memorial pipe band, Lisburn Young Defenders flute band, Ballycoan flute band, Dynamic Brass, Drumlough pipe band and Bailliesmills accordion band.

The concerts were rapturously received by the public, and many attendees have praised the events as a perfect way to spend a Sunday afternoon in a splendid location.

The audience demographic ranged from followers and family of the band members, to the public visiting the park to enjoy the facilities and those who specifically came to attend the concerts.

Indeed as the weeks passed, a sense of community developed among the audience who came each Sunday.

This was the fourth summer Wallace Park has hosted the concerts, which are now an important element of the Park Life programme. The existing partnership between Lisburn City Council and the Ulster-Scots Agency helps to secure such a programme.



Scotch Quarter Festival

The Ulster-Scots Agency and Carrickfergus Borough Council celebrated the Ulster-Scots cultural heritage of Carrickfergus during the second annual Scotch Quarter Festival in the town's Marine Gardens on August 16 and 17. The Scotch Quarter was named after the colony of fishermen who arrived from Argyle and Galloway shires during the persecution in Scotland around 1665 and they influenced much of the town as we know it today.

The Scotch Quarter festival celebrated this history and the contribution of the Ulster-Scots that followed.

Festival goers were treated to performances by Bernagh, Risin' Stour, Crooked Jack, the Alan McPherson Trio and Chanter with traditional highland Scottish dances and historical re-enactments performed throughout the two day event.

There was haggis tasting and face painting for both adults and children alike as well as highland games including wellie throwing, caber toss, tug of war, throwing the haggis and barrel rolling!



Dalriada Festival

The Dalriada Festival took place in mid-July, and the Ulster-Scots Agency worked in partnership with organisers on the main festival days (Sunday 13 and Monday 14) to showcase a range of activities including music and dance performances and displays of living history.

Ulster-Scots musical performances were provided by Stonewall, Rightly On, Willie Drennan and the Ulster Folk Orchestra, the Grouse Beaters and the Alistair Scott Ceilidh Band.

There were also displays of Highland dance and displays of living history, including the Border Reivers.

The Ulster-Scots entertainment was very well received over the two days, with thousands of visitors in attendance.



Bruce Festival celebrations in Dunfermline

The Ulster-Scots Agency attended the annual Bruce Festival on July 12 and 13 in Dunfermline to commemorate the anniversary of the Battle of Bannockburn and the Bruces.

The Agency, in partnership with the Ministerial Advisory Group for Ulster-Scots (MAGUS) and Ulster Historical Foundation, developed a new booklet, trail map and an exhibition on the story of the Bruces in Ulster ahead of the Bruce celebrations in Northern Ireland in 2015.

Those who attended the Bruce Festival celebrations were treated to extraordinary performances by a 'The Knights of Middle England' jousting team, bird of prey demonstrations, re-enactment camps and family entertainment.

Visitors could experience the sights, sounds and atmosphere of 14th century Scotland, by visiting the encampments of Robert the Bruce and Edward II as they prepared their battle strategies to wage war on the English. If you would like to find out more about the Bruces in Ulster you can request a copy of the booklet and trail map by phoning (028) 9023 1113.



Donaghadee Ulster-Scots Autumn Festival

Donaghadee will celebrate its strong Ulster-Scots link with an extended weekend of festivities from October 15-19 during its Ulster-Scots Autumn Festival.

Activities will include a series of events to explore these links including an Ulster-Scots concert, lantern parade, fireworks, a living history day, Ulster-Scots food and more.

Donaghadee was the port through which James Hamilton and Hugh Montgomery arrived in Co Down in May 1606 with the first boatloads of their Scottish families, and they were followed by a flood of Scottish tenants who transformed the region of Ards. ATQ Stewart wrote: "They created the bridgehead through which the Scots were to come into Ulster for the rest of the century." Ards remains rich in Ulster-Scots heritage to this very day making Donaghadee the obvious choice of venue for this celebratory event.

There are a wealth of events happening over the course of the five days, and a full programme can be found on www.ards-council.gov.uk or by contacting Ards Tourist Information Centre on (028) 9182 6846.



RECIPES

COOKING WITH JUDITH McLOUGHLIN



Lamb chops with creamed buttermilk potatoes, leeks and chorizo Skirlie

The story:

Skirlie is a traditional Scottish side dish or stuffing for fowl and game, and it has been adopted in Ulster as a nutritious and cost effective dish using oats in the skillet. The name Skirlie comes from the oats being 'skirled' in the skillet. I just had a little fun with this, and updated the age old recipe for my own family with peppery chorizo sausage and leeks - and it paired rather well with the lamb making an interesting crispy crumble with the buttermilk mashed potatoes. I hope you enjoy this new twist on the taste of Ulster-Scots tradition. Enjoy!



How to make it:

1. Combine marinade ingredients together and rub over rack of lamb. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight.
2. Remove lamb from marinade and season with sea salt and freshly milled black pepper.
3. Preheat oven to 425 degrees.
4. Heat 2 Tbsp of oil in a heavy based skillet over high heat. Sear the rack of lamb for 2-3 minutes each side.
5. Place rack of lamb bone side down on the skillet and place in preheated oven. Roast in oven for 10-12 minutes for medium/well done or 15 minutes for well done. Cover and rest for 7-9 minutes.
6. To make buttermilk mashed potatoes cover the diced potatoes in cold salted water. Bring potatoes to the boil and switch heat to medium cooking until soft when pierced with a fork. Gently warm the buttermilk and melt butter together in a small saucepan. Rice or mash potatoes and combine with warm buttermilk mixture. Season to taste to season with salt and pepper.
7. To make Skirlie heat vegetable oil in a large skillet. Add the Chorizo and cook for 2-3 minutes. Add the chopped leeks and cook for 2 minutes to soften. Stir in the oats to lightly toast in pan for 3-4 minutes, stirring with a wooden spoon. Season with salt and pepper.
8. Remove lamb from the skillet and slice rack of lamb between the ribs. Deglaze the skillet with a little stock and red wine and cook to reduce slightly. Season to taste with a little salt and pepper.
9. To serve place a little potato in the centre and then spoon the Skirlie crumble. Top with 2-3 chops per person and drizzle with a little jus.

Ingredients: (Serves 2-4)

For the lamb chops

- 1 (8 bone) rack of lamb, trimmed
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 Tbsp rosemary (chopped)
- 2 cloves of garlic (crushed)
- 1 Tbsp Dijon mustard
- Cracked black pepper and coarse sea salt
- 2 Tbsp vegetable oil

For the jus

- ½ cup vegetable stock
- ¼ cup red wine

For the potatoes

- 1 ½ Lbs (4 medium potatoes) (cut in to small 1 inch pieces)
- ½ tsp fine sea salt
- ¼ cup buttermilk
- 2 Tbsp salted butter

For the chorizo and leek Skirlie

- 4 oz Chorizo sausage (casing removed and diced)
- 8 oz leeks (washed and chopped)
- 1 cup of steel cut oatmeal
- Salt and freshly ground pepper

The joys of harvest in days gone by

Hairst, by Frank Ferguson.

As the year turns autumnal, we might consider the Scots word for this season—Hairst (Harvest). For many of us who are no longer directly connected to the tasks and patterns of the traditional farming calendar it is important to be reminded of the natural rhythms of the landscape and nature, and indeed to breathe a sigh of relief that our daily occupations are not as physically demanding of those of our ancestors. The Ulster-Scots literary tradition permits us a glimpse of the practices of farming in days gone by and in particular the customs associated with the harvest. Hugh Porter, a poet from Moneyslane County Down, captures the joys and rigours of bringing in the grain harvest in his poem *The Muse Dismissed*.

*Be hush'd my Muse, ye ken the morn
Begins the shearing o' the corn,
Whar knuckles monie a risk maun run,
An' monie a trophy's lost an' won,
Whar sturdy boys, wi' might an' main
Shall camp, till wrists an' thumbs they strain,
While pithless, pantin' wi' the heat,
They bathe their weazen'd pelts in sweat
To gain a sprig o' fading fame,
Before they taste the dear-bought cream—*

*But bide ye there, my pens an' papers,
For I maun up, an' to my scrapers—
Yet, min' my lass—ye maun return
This very night we cut the Churn.*

This is a great breathless poem, full of anticipation for the labour ahead in the fields. It is a piece of writing in which Porter knows that he must turn to practicalities and send away his poetic muse to get on with the hard job he has to do. The word 'camp' alludes to the struggle for superiority that he is about to undergo to attempt to gain the prestige of cutting the sheaf of corn called the Churn, which Porter informs us:

The Churn is a parcel of the stalks of corn which are left standing in the field, tied together, after all the rest of the harvest has been cut down; at which the reapers, each in succession, from a given distance throws his reaping hook:—The person who has the good fortune to cut it down carries it home in triumph, and claims an immemorial right to as much of the cream which is in the Churn, ready for churning, as he chooses to drink.

This attempt to gain the Churn shows Porter at his playful best. The form of the poem is reminiscent of a classical hero arming himself for battle—although in this case he must contend with the grain and the muscles of rival reapers. Never one to miss the opportunity of emphasising his rural

roots, or parading the effortless he has in blending high literary themes with the world of bindweed farms, this text takes us through the expectation of the battle ahead and the mercilessness of the occupation. The repetition of 'pithless (lacking strength) pantin' coupled with the searing rhyme of 'heat' and 'sweat', which only an Ulster-Scots pronunciation can emphasise the full extent of the sweltering conditions of the labour.

The concept of the Churn also alludes to more distant cultural inheritances shared between Ireland and Scotland. The custom of the cutting of the last sheaf derives from practices associated with propitiating the earth mother or the corn spirit. By gaining this prize, Porter not only wins the cream in the jug and bests his neighbours: but celebrates warding off of the cailleach, the Irish for the old woman of winter, and known in Scots as the Carlin. The literature surrounding this figure is a rich and ancient one and one requiring further examination within the Ulster-Scots tradition—for it is a theme that has inspired our writers from Porter right through to John Hewitt in the twentieth century and Philip Robinson in the contemporary period. Often the biblical admonition to not glean to the edge of the field has been taken too literally in Ulster-Scots writing, and critics have not looked too deeply at writers whom they have perceived as living on the



margins of literature. When we do begin to explore what Hewitt termed as 'the Swathe Uncut' we discover much enrichment of our sense of cultural inheritance and much to inspire us creatively in the present and the future. As we approach shorter days and the winter cold, we might remember that even behind the most basic, hamely tasks of field and farm resides a rich and deep tradition shared between Irish and Scottish cultures. We should also appreciate Porter's gift to us of his poetic imagination, and that amid even the most difficult of everyday drudge and toil, he was able to summon his muse to celebrate and dignify his corner of the world.

Ulster-Scots Place to Visit - Somme Heritage Centre

EXPLORE IRELAND'S ROLE IN WWI AND THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME CLOSER TO HOME

THE Somme Heritage Centre, based on the Bangor Road in Newtownards, opened in 1994 as an educational facility and tourist attraction.

It examines Ireland's role in the First World War, with special reference to local cross-community involvement in the three volunteer Divisions raised in Ireland: the 10th and 16th (Irish) Divisions, and the 36th (Ulster) Division.

The museum has expanded into the Second World War and other modern international conflicts. It has increasingly focused upon the community relations potential of this shared history as a vehicle to further cross-community and cross-border contact, mutual understanding and reconciliation. The museum has an extensive collection of material from the Great War period and in the last number of years a growing collection from World War Two including a large oral history archive. In 2002 it became a fully registered, independent museum. A visit to the Somme Museum consists of a guided tour of the First World War exhibition which includes a reconstructed trench and recruiting office. The tours are given by experienced and knowledgeable guides and include audio visual presentations which contain original footage depicting the Home Rule crisis and the Battle of the Somme. Throughout the decade of centenaries the museum will be launching new exhibitions to coincide with major First World War events.

The current temporary exhibition details the formation of the Ulster Volunteer Force and Irish Volunteers and also covers the Third Home Rule Bill.

For the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War the museum refurbished part of the guided tour and added a 'Causes of War' section. The plan for 2015 is an exhibition to mark the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli campaign (this will open early in the new year).

On permanent display you will also find numerous memorials from churches and factories. These items have come to museum following the closure of the buildings they were once housed in. The museum also displays a sizeable collection of First World War medals (policy being to display all medals that are donated). The rest of its vast collection is displayed on a rotational basis. The museum also houses a substantial paper archive including letters, diaries, photographs and other personal and official documents.

Its oral archive contains the first-hand accounts of Ulstermen who fought in the First World War; this important collection has had much interest recently and has been used on television and radio broadcasts.



Here are some of the comments from people who've visited the Somme Centre in the last few months:

- "I have visited here on a number of occasions - there's lots to see and take on board."
- "Was very impressed with this centre and would return."
- "Visit exceeded my expectations. Thoroughly enjoyed the experience thanks to the excellent tour guide who brought the story of this dreadful war to life with his expert knowledge, interesting exhibits and a short film which described life in the trenches. Visit this centre - you will not be disappointed."
- "Very well worth a visit - I'm just surprised not more people know about this place."
- "If you're not moved by your visit here, you have no souls. The attraction is an exhibition of WW1 from a Northern Irish (mostly) perspective. A look at how soldiers of the Great War had to overcome the various pitfalls, the weapons used and at mock up of how the typical trench might have looked. A great experience. Allow a good few hours to take in all that is on offer."

VISITOR INFORMATION

SOMME HERITAGE CENTRE
233 Bangor Road
Newtownards
County Down
BT23 7PH

www.sommeassociation.com
Email: enquiry.shc@hotmail.co.uk
Phone: (028) 9182 3202
Fax: (028) 9182 3214

OPENING TIMES

April - June & September

Monday to Thursday: 10am - 4pm

Saturday: 11am - 4pm

July & August

Monday to Saturday: 10am - 5pm

October - March

Monday to Thursday: 10am - 4pm

First Saturday of each month: 11am - 4pm

GUIDED TOURS

Guided tours commence every hour, on the hour; the last tour is one hour before published closing time. Booking for groups is essential. Guided tours last approximately one hour - admission price on request. Parking is available within the complex of the museum and is suitable for coaches.

WEANS' WURLD

CHILDREN'S RECIPE – SODA BREAD

INGREDIENTS

- 250g plain flour, some extra for kneading
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¾ teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- 250ml buttermilk

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat heavy based flat griddle or frying pan to low heat.
2. Place the flour and salt into a large baking bowl and sift in bicarbonate of soda. Make a well in the centre and pour in the buttermilk.
3. Work quickly to mix into a dough and knead very lightly on a well floured flat surface. Form into a flattened circle, about 1cm thick and cut into quarters with a floured knife.
4. Sprinkle a little flour over the base of hot pan and place each quarter into the hot pan, one at a time until the 4 quarters create a complete circle.
5. Cook the farls for 6-8 minutes on each side or until golden brown and cooked through (You may need to cut through the centre cross to turn over)
6. Take the pan off the heat and allow the farls to cool in the pan for 10 to 15 minutes.
7. Enjoy!



COMPETITION RESULTS...

BELFAST ZOO COMPETITION RESULTS:

Congratulations to Matthew Robinson, Lisburn. You have won a family ticket to Belfast Zoo!

THE ZOO
BELFAST ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS



the **Ulster-Scot** COMPETITION

WIN TWO TICKETS FOR A PUBLIC TOUR OF THE CRUMLIN ROAD GAOL!

The Ulster-Scots Agency has a pair of tickets for a tour of the Crumlin Road Gaol, which dates back to 1845, to give away. The tour will cover all aspects of the Gaol from the Tunnel linking the courthouse on the other side of the Crumlin Road to the Hanging Cell, the Historic Holding Cells, Governors Office, Centre Circle, C-Wing, Hospital and Graveyard. Tours run seven days per week and last for approximately 1



hour and 15 minutes (first tour 10am and last tour 4.30pm).

For your chance to win simply email your name, address and telephone number to competition@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk with 'Gaol' in the subject box by Friday October 24. Good luck!

School funding available for music and dance tuition

The Ulster-Scots Agency is currently offering funding to schools for up to £1,000 towards Ulster-Scots music and dance tuition.

The tuition programme can start from September 29 with all activity to be completed by December 19. If your school would like to apply, please download a copy of the application and guidance notes at www.ulsterscotsagency.com/education/schools-programmes. If you have any queries or would like assistance with the application process contact a member of our education team on 9023 1113 or email education@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk. Please note the deadline for submission of completed applications is Friday September 19 at 2pm.

