

## REVIEW OF 2014

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
January				168	252
February				296	243
March	1028	880	781	1041	855
April	882	1223	977	918	1149
May	1034	1161	1098	1423	1343
June	1413	1556	1272	1475	1565
July	3128	2326	1961	1849	2255
August	4028	2596	2375	2726	2993
September	2244	1706	2114	1823	1909
October	1116	887	1088	1090	1111
November		183	13	110	347
December				175	219
	<b>14873</b>	<b>12518</b>	<b>11679</b>	<b>13094</b>	<b>14241</b>

### Visitor Figures

There has been will be year on year increase of c 9 % (8.75) for 2014, following on a 10% increase in 2013.

We will have crossed the 14,000 mark for the first time since the Free Friday promotion in 2010. The increase is in line with what appears to be the industry trend for 2014, though we are something of a niche product and I would not necessarily take the general trend as a benchmark for us.

The table below gives our visitor place of origins. The pattern is much as usual, with 75% of our visitors from overseas.

	<b>Ir</b>	<b>GB</b>	<b>Eur</b>	<b>N. American</b>	<b>Jap</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>2014</b>	<b>24.67</b>	<b>17.12</b>	<b>39.07</b>	<b>13.32</b>	<b>2.72</b>	<b>3.09</b>
<b>2013</b>	<b>25.6</b>	<b>16.10</b>	<b>39.41</b>	<b>15.85</b>	<b>2.27</b>	<b>3.45</b>
<b>2011</b>	<b>22.69</b>	<b>18.26</b>	<b>41.91</b>	<b>12.67</b>	<b>1.59</b>	<b>3.42</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>32.19</b>	<b>14.53</b>	<b>38.56</b>	<b>10.42</b>	<b>0.93</b>	<b>3.34</b>
<b>2009</b>	<b>20.16</b>	<b>15.68</b>	<b>42.33</b>	<b>15.41</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>4.32</b>
<b>2008</b>	<b>17.38</b>	<b>23.51</b>	<b>44.52</b>	<b>10.74</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2.87</b>

Within those described as European, the breakdown is as follows

	<b>German</b>	<b>French</b>	<b>Spanish</b>	<b>Italian</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>2014</b>	<b>17.22</b>	<b>9.68</b>	<b>6.74</b>	<b>1.70</b>	<b>3.73</b>
<b>2013</b>	<b>13.3</b>	<b>9.09</b>	<b>8.39</b>	<b>3.63</b>	<b>5.0</b>

As can be seen, the German percentage has increased significantly and is now higher than the GB figure.

## Visitor Survey

The results of the visitor survey, conducted, as usual, in the last two weeks of August and the first two weeks of September are a matter of concern.

% response							
Would you recommend the Museum?	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Yes	68	77	68	75	70	70	65
No	10	4	9	6	12	12.4	8
Perhaps	22	19	23	19	17	17.54	27

While the negative response has dropped considerably, the undecided figure is at its highest level ever and the positives at its lowest. My impression from the survey forms is that the drop in positives and the increase in the undecided are related to the higher number of German visitors. The higher negative response from Spanish speakers is consistent with earlier surveys. On a positive note, our Trip Advisor rating has increased from 3.5 to 4, out of a possible total of 5.

	English speakers	German	French	Italian	Spanish	Polish
Yes	75.18	54.02	68.75	52.63	55.88	70
No	2.92	6.9	12.5	10.53	26.47	10
Perhaps	21.9	39.08	18.75	36.84	17.65	20

<i>2 How did you hear about the Museum?</i>	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
<b>Guide Books</b>	31.74	26.67	31.25	29.1	41.3	29.11
<b>Leaflet at the Tourist Office</b>	13.9	15.49	14.58	15.26	13	8.54
<b>Word of Mouth</b>	10.58	14.37	10.67	11.32	11.7	11.71
<b>Passing by</b>	7.46	11.34	15.36	10.06	16.9	15.18
<b>Leaflet at accommodation</b>	19.5	9.1	11.19	12.01	5.65	10.44
<b>Internet</b>	7.26	8.94	7.55	13.86	13.04	11.71
<b>Other Centre</b>	1.65	2.39	2.27	3.23	1.3	0.95
<b>City Tour Bus</b>	4.77	3.5	3.38	2	7.82	6.96
<b>Other</b>	3.11	8.14	4.42	4.39	7.82	5.38

The comparatively high return for "City Tour Bus" may reflect the joint offer with Shandon Bells which was promoted by one bus driver in particular. As always, it is the Guide Books that are the single most significant avenue of information.

<i>3 Why did you visit the Museum?</i>	2008 (%)	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
<b>Interested in History</b>	20.41	21.32	22.48	22.48	20	41	22.56
<b>In Cork and want to see the sights</b>	30.52	26.6	23.47	23	22	39	27.11
<b>Curious</b>	21.05	27	21.82	24	22	27	22.78
<b>Interested in Butter &amp; Food</b>	15.64	14.85	19.16	20.29	22	37	20.17
<b>Recommended by other</b>	6.72	8.52	7.64	8	10	7	4.12
<b>Other</b>	5.37	1.6	5.43	1.8	4	10	3.25

As in previous surveys, there is a fairly even split between those with an interest in the subject (History, Butter & Food - 43%) and those just curious or "doing Cork (50%).

## Exhibition Development

The installation of the Seamus Heaney poem, "Churning Day." on the wall of the Museum was the single most substantial addition to the fabric of the Museum. Apart from the intrinsic merit of the project, it gave us the opportunity to re-assemble and repaint the rear exhibition area and to plaster the back wall, removing the bare cold look of the block. Not only was the block finish unattractive, it was unsuitable for mounting images. It is hoped that, over time, we can plaster more of the block finish, use the surfaces as part of the exhibition and introduce a stronger visual element to the Museum.

We have also introduced butter making and milk separating demonstrations on a regular basis. While we always had the capacity to make butter, the separating was possible only because we sourced a regular supply of unhomogenised milk. The initial idea was that they would coincide with the visit of liners to Cobh though I am not sure that they have increased visitor numbers from that source. The events have been well received and I intend to continue and, resources permitting, extend them. I need to work more on the promotion of the events, but they will, in time, become embedded in the activity of the Museum.



## **BUTTER MAKING DEMONSTRATIONS AT THE BUTTER MUSEUM**

We asked Fáilte Ireland to send us a "Mystery Shopper"; the outcome was positive, if not without areas that we need to work on. One of the items the Mystery Shopper commented positively upon was the audio files. These seem now to be functioning well, but the take-up remains poor. I am told this poor pick-up is common in exhibitions.

## **Outstanding Issues**

Australian Butter; we have not been successful in getting funding from the Australian Embassy for the installation of the image in the back stairs lobby. A line of communication remains open, so I will continue to pursue the matter. Translations need to be reviewed and updated; an exhibit on the Famine is not in place nor is there one on the Surprise Butter Competition. The collection of mini butter wrappers that we acquired during the year must also be incorporated into the exhibition. In the longer term, the video will soon be 20 years old and will need to be revisited and re edited. As I write, three of the five audio-visual presentations are malfunctioning in one way or another and will need to be fixed or replaced.

## **Projects**

Many of the projects that have been ongoing for a few years are now coming to a close. The Museum's contribution to the cataloguing of the records of the **Cork Butter Exchange**, though the completion of the process is a matter for Cork City and County

Archives. It was a very substantial undertaking and has taken four years to reach this stage.

The recording part of the **Munster Institute Oral History** is now complete. I have commissioned Patricia Baker, a radio producer, to come up with some ideas for an edited version(s) of the recordings which could be given wider dissemination. I am considering approaching Boston Scientific again to seek funding for this stage of the project. The book,

**Butter in Ireland – from Earliest times to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**, which has been funded by the FBD Trust was launched on the 11<sup>th</sup> of December by Dr Noel Cawley, ex CEO of the Irish Dairy Board

And now chairman of Teagasc. The book is well designed and illustrated with contribution from authorities in their fields, so it will give the Museum good profile in the industry. The **Primary**

**Schools Lesson Series** is in hand. It will comprise four lessons for the classroom and a final one located in the Museum, as well as teachers' notes. It is being prepared by a person who was a

volunteer in the Museum for some months in the summer with the assistance of a teacher in a local National School.

# Butter Today



Lesson One		
Geography	Strand:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Human Environments</li> </ul>
	Strand Unit:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People at work</li> <li>Settlements- Homes and other buildings</li> <li>People living and working in the local area</li> </ul>



What will I learn?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The value of butter in our everyday lives</li> <li>What makes Irish butter so popular?</li> <li>The farmer's role in producing Irish butter</li> </ul>
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## Museum Dictionary!

Match the word with the correct meaning. Use your dictionary to help you. There is one answer done for you. Match up the rest!



Alternative	The usual weather conditions in a place.
Buttermilk	A food that is used in place of butter. It is made of vegetable oil, milk, colouring and other ingredients.
Margarine	Producing or able to produce farm crops or other plant life.
Vegetable oil	One of two or more choices.
Climate	A sour liquid left after making butter from milk. Often used in baking.
Fertile	To feed on growing grass.
graze	Liquid fats taken from the seeds, fruit or leaves of plants.
Export	Something that is exported : a product that is sent to another country to be sold there.

I expect the final item to be completed by April of next year and we can begin to promote it to schools for the next school year. We will need to source funding to print the booklets.

A sample page is included in this report.

## **Marketing**

The one marketing initiative this year, the joint ticket with St Anne's Shandon, turned out to have been disappointing.

As the survey shows, the established routes, of leaflets and guidebooks, see still to be the most effective means of advertising. We also had a stand in the Tourist Office in the Grand Parade for much of the summer.

## **Web Matters**

We were successful in gaining funding from the Department of Arts, Heritage and An Gaeltacht, for an online database. Its function is to make available to a wider audience the historical material that I come across in the course of the work of the Museum. Over time, this has been considerable and it makes sense to make the material known to others with an interest in the area. Fáilte Ireland did an assessment of our website and it fell within acceptable standards, though capable of improvement. We have also introduced a page on the website to meet new requirements for transparency in organisations designated by the Revenue Commissioners as charities. The initial material, including past accounts and directors' biographies, are in place, but this is an ongoing process.

## **Conclusion**

The attendance figures are positive, particularly crossing the 14,000 visitors mark. However, the increasingly less positive reaction of the visitors chimes in with my own sense that the Museum is beginning not to meet contemporary expectations of what a facility such as this should provide. I am currently attending a Fáilte Ireland course on Attractions Management and one of the desired outcomes from the course is a Business Plan. That plan will be the vehicle through future development of the Museum will be outlined.



