



Review of 2018

Chairman's Preface

The aim of the Butter Museum to preserve and promote Ireland's unique heritage in butter and butter making has seen numerous and varied activities carried out during 2018. One of the most important ongoing tasks is to improve the visitor experience. With this in mind a major refurbishment programme has been initiated and the planning for an enhanced educational programme (with particular reference to primary schools) has been completed.

The considerable challenge in carrying out these tasks has been met by financial support not only from our usual sponsors but with increasing support from the dairy industry.

The Museum acknowledges with thanks the generous support of the following

---for refurbishment project:

Dept. of Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht	€41,000
Cork City Council	€4,000
Kerry Group	€5,000
Carbery	€5,000
Golden Jubilee Trust	€5,000
Private donations	€4,000



---for exhibition enhancement

Dept. of Agriculture and Food €15,000

---for new video

Dept. of Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht €10,000

Ornua €4,000

The total sum of €97,000 is a very encouraging vote of confidence in the work of the Museum.

The uniqueness of the history and location of Shandon has been enhanced by the work done by the City Council in O'Connell Square where the Museum is located.

We were much saddened during the year by the passing of two people who had given great service to the Museum. Pat Dawson, a former Board member, had served as a Councillor and will be long remembered for his contribution to the cultural life of the city. John O'Brien, a staff member, always had friendly greeting for all visitors. His warmth, good humour and his great interest in the successful working of the Museum will be sadly missed

David Bird,
Chairman

Visitor Numbers

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	
<i>Jan</i>	252	223	250	257	215	
<i>Feb</i>	243	288	432	335	388	
<i>Mar</i>	855	966	1158	1070	928	
<i>Apr</i>	1149	1005	1055	1547	1325	
<i>May</i>	1343	1490	1320	1747	1964	
<i>Jun</i>	1565	1690	1657	2201	1970	
<i>Jul</i>	2255	2592	2494	2411	2752	
<i>Aug</i>	2993	3507	3219	3182	3484	
<i>Sep</i>	1753	1694	2298	2064	2293	
<i>Oct</i>	1111	1237	999	1309	1423	
<i>Nov</i>	347	334	229	302		
<i>Dec</i>	219	199	274	285		
TOTAL	14085	15225	15385	16710	16742	

There was a marginal increase on visitor numbers year on year. The poor weather in March and April (down 14% on 2017) and the closure in December and November to facilitate the capital refurbishment both had a negative impact on visitor figures, as did, paradoxically, the good weather in June. Visitor numbers have increased by 19% in the five years since 2014.



O'Connell Square during the snow in March; the poor weather in March and April contributed to a 14% year on year decline in visitor numbers for that period.

Visitors by place of origin

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Irish	24.67	23.86	23.33	22.03	18.93
GB	17.12	13.45	14.84	15.72	14.16
German	17.22	15.73	13.82	13.56	11.00
French	9.68	9.63	12.10	10.93	8.08
Spanish	6.74	6.07	4.99	6.27	5.44
Italian	1.07	2.37	1.97	2.24	2.27
Other European	3.73	5.6	5.85	5.75	6.92
North American	13.32	15.81	16.67	16.53	25.52
Other	5.81	5.06	7.44	6.97	7.69

The significant increase in visitors from North America is apparent.

Visitor Survey

Would you recommend the Museum to someone else?

%	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Yes	70	65	72	75	70.5	82.62
Perhaps	18	27	20	18.5	22	14.25
No	12	8	8	7	7.5	3.13

Why did you visit the Butter Museum?

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Curious	27	22.78	37.41	39.08	21.67	25.56
Interested in Food	37	20.17	35.41	36.4	22.86	24.22
In Cork to see all the sights	39	27.11	34.52	27.59	19.05	17.34
Interested in History	41	22.56	33.85	39.08	20.71	20.18
Told it was worth seeing	7	4.12	9.13	8.43	8.33	8.67
Other	4	3.25	7.17	4.6	7.38	4.04

How did you find out about the Butter Museum?

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Guide Book	29.1	41.3	37.19	30.65	21.20	18.45
Passing By	16.9	15.18	13.5	9.96	10.12	10.97
Tourist Office	13	8.54	12.69	13.03	6.58	8.48
Internet	13.04	11.71	12.02	20.31	21.42	27.18
Word of Mouth	11.7	11	11.58	13.79	14.58	16.21
Accommodation Leaflet	5.65	10.44	7.79	8.43	9.21	8.73
Tour Bus	7.82	6.96	4.23	3.83	6.56	2.99
Other Visitor Centre	1.3	0.95	3.11	1.53	3.45	1.5
Other	7.82	5.38	2.67	5.36	6.84	5.49

The visitor sample, 15%, was lower than had been the norm in previous years, 22%. The increase in the positive reaction to the Museum, from 70% to 82.62% (highlighted in red) is remarkable and may be a statistical anomaly due to the sample size.

The reasons why people visit the Museum is, as in former years, split between those who have a specific interest in food or history (44.4%) and those who are in the city to see the sights or just curious about what a Butter Museum is (42.90%).

The internet continues to grow as a source of information for visitors about the Museum, as is Word of Mouth. Brochures, either in the Tourist Office or in accommodation centre have become proportionately less important.

Activities and Events

We had 65 public butter making demonstrations in 2018, a slight drop on the 70 of last year. At peak season the average attendance was 31, with the highest number at 47. We did two Saturday demonstrations in August, due to the numbers of people wishing to attend the events. We had 45 tour groups; 14 primary schools, 4 Transition Year groups, 8 third level college groups and 19 adult groups.



View of the participants in the guided tour of Shandon, given as part of Urban October. The Museum also had 65 butter making demonstrations and 45 organised tours of the Museum

The Museum also participated In Culture Night, Heritage Day, Urban October and an Historic Food event in the Cork Public Museum in September, organised by the Dept of Archaeology in UCC. We had 345 visitors on Heritage Day, the 18th of August and 300 on Culture Night, the 21st of September. This compares with 342 and 376, respectively, in 2017. The Urban October event was a walking tour of Shandon, held on the 14th of the month. I also brought two groups of Transition Year students around Shandon in November. Due to a misunderstanding, we did not participate in the Lifelong Learning Week in 2018. In May, St Peter's, Elizabeth Fort and ourselves collaborated in walking tours for three groups of staff, 50 people in all, from St John's College along the Historic Spine.



The **2017 Heritage Day** event at the Public Museum, in which we took a prominent park, was a runner up in the “Cool for Kids” category. Pictured below is Dr Ben Gearey, UCC Archaeology Dept, receiving the award on behalf of the participants.

The annual lecture was given by Mr Joe Gill, of Goodbody Stockbrokers. It attracted an audience of some 60 and there was a lively debate after the talk. The Farmer's Journal, Agriland and the Farming Independent all noted or reported the event.

Projects

The fundraising and tender process for the **refurbishment** of the lobby and downstairs exhibition area of the Museum was completed in 2018 and work began late in the year. The **Schools Project**, which had been stalled due to the cost of the production of the work sheets for the class groups has progressed, thanks to the acquisition of a high volume printer. This was funded by a part of the €15,000 grant that we received from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. One set of the material for the was sent to a fifth class Blarney Street National School, under the aegis of the local Home School Liaison teacher, Ms Caroline McCarthy. This involved printing and binding thirty sets of 20 documents, totalling 6,300 pages. We intend to move this forward in 2019. The funding from the DAFM also allowed us to modernise the **website**, to which we can now text, images, notices of events etc., as we choose. The update of the **video** has now also been completed and the new video will come into use in March of this year. . The **Historic Spine Walk** is progressing. The Dept of Archaeology in UCC have agreed to give technical support, and St Peter's and ourselves are collecting material to create two sample points along the route to identify issues around the collection and navigation of the material.

Acquisitions, Exhibition, Conservation

Acquisition

Metal Milk Skimmer	Private Purchase
End over Churn	Private Purchase, used in a pub in Ovens, Co. Cork
Newport Creamery Butter Box	Private Purchase
Notice of Dispatch of butter from Killasnett Creamery, Co Leitrim	Auction Victor Mee
Diabolo Churn	Private Purchase, Co. Waterford
Ceramic block for cutting butter in a shop	Private Purchase, Co. Sligo

We also bought a postcard, made from peat, showing butter being brought to the Sligo Market. We already have the image but this particular medium, paper made from peat moss, will be a natural fit for the room with the bog butter.

Exhibition

The image of the 1943 reduced Australian butter ration was installed in the front stairwell. The standard black and yellow road sign for Cattle Crossing was installed on the back stairwell. The DAFM funding allowed the Museum to acquire equipment that allows user initiated audio files. Five were acquired and four have been installed, playing recordings of Seamus Heaney's *Churning Day*, one of butter related folklore and two of reminiscences of life in a rural household and in the creamery in the past. The sound file files add a new dimension to the exhibition,



The image of the 1943 reduced Australian butter ration was installed in the front stairwell

Conservation

Progress has been slower than might have been wished but the priority in 2018 was the husbanding of resources to meet the needs of the capital project. That being said, all the wooden artefacts have now been condition surveyed, marked and catalogued. It now remains to do the metal artefacts. The back yard shed had now had electricity put in and is now designated as the reception area for new object until any necessary treatment is identified. An upper room has been shelved and will be the main storeroom for artefacts.

Marketing and Publicity

The Heritage Circle group of 12 visitor attractions, of which the Butter Museum is a part, did not produce a joint brochure in 2018 as this has been superseded by Cork City Council's "Top Attractions in Cork City". The group organised the distribution of these brochures to non-hotel accommodation centres. The City Council has also produced an information brochure for Shandon, which has been well received. The Council are also supplying Shandon businesses with branded bags for resale with similar branding. The Director was also interviewed for the RTE Radio show "In Business" and the Museum received favourable mention in

the online edition of Condé Nast Traveller as part of a piece on Cork city.



TG4 staged an episode of Blasta, a series on traditional Irish foods in the refurbished O'Connell Square in June, which was broadcast in the autumn. The refurbished square had added greatly to the amenity of the area and fears about anti-social behaviour have proven largely unfounded.



Some of those participating in the TG4 food event in O'Connell Square

Time Out was in touch looking for some material for a forthcoming item and we were also visited by a Spanish TV crew. Lengthy discussion with Air B'n'B about developing a product for distribution to their guests came to nothing as they were wary of a food event that was not originated in a HACCP kitchen, which we do not have. We also hosted a group of Austrian travel writers who were guests of Fáilte Ireland and a group of Maltese clients of Ornu.

Administration

The Museum has updated its Child Safeguarding Policy and put a new Health and Safety Statement in place. It has also entered into the Charities Regulator's Governance Code. The 2017 audit was, as always, without qualification.

Audited Accounts for 2017 have been filed with the Companies Office and with the Charities Regulator.

Jan 2018