

Bantracht na Tuaithe

The Irish Countrywomen's Association



ICA 100 Exhibition

Background to the Exhibition

This exhibition arises out of a collaboration between the National Museum of Ireland and the Mayo Guilds of the Irish Countrywomen's Association (ICA). The exhibition celebrates the centenary of the founding of the ICA in May 1910.

The partnership between the ICA and the National Museum has already resulted in a knitting workshop for visitors to the Museum. In October, the ICA and the Museum will host a crafts exchange workshop to mark World Rural Women's Day and a presentation of photographs relating to the ICA in Mayo.

The Process

The ICA approached the Museum with an idea for an exhibition at the Museum. The idea was discussed in the various Mayo guilds and met with considerable interest and enthusiasm. A call for submissions was made through the guilds and regional newspapers. The aim was that as many guilds as possible would be represented.

The process used for this exhibition is the approach generally adopted by Museums except that for this exhibition the ICA representatives became part of the exhibition team. The ICA sourced and selected the exhibits based on guild representation and the quality of the work. They liaised with individual owners gathering information about the maker, materials used and the year of production. Each item was tagged and numbered in order to keep track of it and a record was compiled for each item. The details recorded about each object are now used in the exhibition labels and in the exhibition catalogue. The items made from organic material were frozen - a preventative conservation measure - to protect exhibits from pests such as moths and woodworm.

The ICA undertook background research and worked with museum staff in writing and designing the information panels, labels and invitations.

The Museum would like to thank the ICA representatives: Mary O Reilly, President Mayo ICA; Breda Kennedy, Secretary; Mary McGreal, PRO and Deirdre Flanagan who worked tirelessly to create this exhibition.



Feedback

This exhibition of the work of Mayo guild members past and present, hopes to evoke personal, local and national stories rather than to document the history of the ICA. The ICA has provided a Comment Book and both the National Museum and the ICA would be very interested to know your views.

We hope you enjoy the exhibition and your visit to the National Museum.

