

NEWS

Milltown heritage guide shows the hidden gems of a hidden gem

By David Burke

MILLTOWN is one of the hidden gems of Ireland, and it too has its share of smaller gems, many of which are new even to the natives.

Now there is no excuse for everyone in the village not to be an expert on their own place. The key to all this knowledge is the local guide to the area's natural, built and cultural heritage which has just been published.

The handsome booklet with its upright format will fit as easily in a jacket pocket as on the shelf in the kitchen where everything of importance is kept.

That was the message from the launch of the booklet on Sunday morning, when the best of the village's food producers, craft workers and community organisations lined the hall in the community centre.

They were there to showcase a remarkable community, known to all who travel the N17 north to Mayo for its unpretentious beauty, its excellent visitor facilities and its cleanliness.

A proud local woman who

now holds a position of national importance, Mary Mitchell O'Connor, Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, cited Milltown's remarkable record in the Tidy Towns Competition as evidence of the vibrance of the community.

"I am a rural TD living in Dublin," she told the audience, which included her proud parents Paddy and Kathleen and brother Anthony.

Heritage begins with a sense of being and belonging, which starts at home and is nurtured in school, said the minister, paying tribute to past and present teachers in the schools of the parish.

She was glad to see so many children in the audience, getting the sense of what heritage is and how important it is.

"I thought I knew Milltown until I read this book," she continued. So far she has read it three times, discovering something new each time, for example that Milltown was known as the Fairhouse of the West on account of its race meeting and the associated carnival.

Community Council Chair-



BOOKLET LAUNCHED: Nick Skehan, Cathaoirleach of County Galway Michael Connolly, Tony Murphy (Committee), Liz Gardiner, Pauline Connolly, Minister Mary Mitchell O'Connor, Frank Glynn (Committee), Michael Rhatigan (Committee) and Minister Sean Canney at the launch of the Milltown Heritage Trail booklet.

man Michael Rhatigan had earlier urged everyone in the parish to have a copy – they sell at €5 – and to remember them as gifts for Milltown people living abroad.

He was echoed by Minister of State Sean Canney, himself no stranger to Milltown from his years working as a quantity surveyor with the Rhatigan building firm.

As part of his OPW brief, Minister Canney has had a number of heritage-related engagements, but the gathering at Milltown was the best turnout he had seen.

It was important for places like this, and others in East Galway, away from the tourist havens of Galway city and Connemara, to market themselves to visitors who will ap-



Aqua Fitness and Wellness Programmes

Coral Leisure Centre Pool Tuam

Bump Aqua:

Specialised Pregnancy and Post Natal Aqua Exercise
Thursday September 8th @ 7pm

Heart Healthy:

Suitable for people with high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol, post cardiac event or anyone trying to reduce their weight or improve their overall health and wellbeing.

Tuesday September 13th 7pm

Thursday September 15th 2.15pm

Deep Water Running:

Ideal for those who wish to improve their cardiovascular fitness, core, strength and flexibility. Suitable for those who want to maintain fitness while injured.

Thursday September 15th 8pm

4 or 6 week course options

Trial classes available – pre booking essential

For further information contact

Caroline 086 2513536

email carolinecostello@eircom.net



LOTS of tasty bites from Clare O'Connor and John Ryan of Mill Meats.



SIMPLY CRAFTISTIC: Pauline Singleton and her son Daniel Lynch displayed their crafting skills.



THE GAA LOTTO is going well in Milltown, with Austin Winston, Padraic Kirrane and Mary Hernon to help it along.



SHEILA Canney, candlemaker, displays her wares.