



UL ENGAGE

Community Briefing

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KILMURRY ARTS AND HERITAGE CENTRE

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UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

UL Engage

share

enable

grow

Promoting University Community Collaboration

THE BRIEF

Project Aim

The overall aim of this project is to achieve further engagement of the local community and young people especially from UL with the Kilmurry Arts and Heritage Centre.

Project Objectives

The project brings together the students and the community. The objectives are to organize events and to promote the centre with the collaboration of the Kilmurry Arts and Heritage Centre committee and the project team from UL Engage.

Project Rationale

Through this project, the community of the centre grows and gains younger members. This is done through the Rambling House events which are organised several times a year; through sewing, maths and dance classes given at the centre. The events that are made at the centre are being promoted as a part of the project which draws more people into them. Also, the project team and the centre committee are having the chance to work with a different team and contribute to each other's work.

COMMUNITY

Overview of Community Organisation

Kilmurry Arts and Heritage Centre is situated in the Old Kilmurry Church, situated in Castletroy Co. Limerick. Together with the people of Castletroy, the committee seeks to create a central hub at the heart of wider area that enhances, embraces and promotes the full potential of the diverse community centred on the Old Kilmurry Church. Central to this vision is to keep Kilmurry Church as a venue, available to the people of Castletroy for arts, heritage, cultural and community purposes.

Community Partners

Marian Hurley (left): Chairperson of Kilmurry Arts & Heritage Centre, local Councillor and Deputy Mayor of Limerick City & County. Involved with youth work, 'Tidy Towns' (village clean-ups and planting); promotion of music and drama. Member of 75 member 'Community Choir who rehearse in the Centre each week.

Colette O' Reilly (middle): Treasurer and Bookings. Involved in local community work for many years, including resident's association, family swimming club and 'Search for a Star' talent competitions.

Goretti Campbell (right): Marketing & Fund Raising. Member of Limerick Lions Club who fundraise for a variety of charities throughout the city and county. Organises the '7 Bridges' Walk in the City each year as a fundraiser. Keen hill walker. Walked the 'Santiago de Compostela' (Camino) in 2017.



STUDENTS



Ciara Burke–Stonehill College

Ciara is a third-year student from Pennsylvania majoring in Psychology and Visual & Performing Arts, with a minor in Arts Administration. As part of her arts administration studies, she has worked with other non-profit arts organizations, making Kilmurry Arts and Heritage Centre a good fit. She has been competitively Irish dancing for 17 years and has really enjoyed taking classes on Irish traditional music and dance at the Irish World Academy.



Alicia Niblock – University of Minnesota

Alicia Niblock is a second-year student at the University of Minnesota studying Industrial and Systems Engineering with a minor in Management. At home, she enjoys being involved within her campus through student groups like the Society of Women Engineers, Institute of Industrial Engineers, and her sorority Kappa Alpha Theta; however, during her time abroad, she has decided to try something new and has joined the University of Limerick’s surf club! During her time in Ireland, she has most enjoyed exploring different parts of the country as well as sharing a “sociable cuppa” with her Practicum Community Partners Marian, Goretti, and Colette.



Ahmet Tunç – Bilkent University

Ahmet Tunç is an Erasmus student at UL coming from Turkey. Both at his home university and at UL, he studies Political Science and Public Administration. He had worked with different student clubs and volunteered with them and off-campus organizations. His interests include history, philosophy and getting to know different cultures – currently the Irish culture.

OUTCOMES

By implementing various methods of marketing and advertising within the community of Limerick, we were able to produce successful outcomes. First and foremost,

- we increased the attendance of a younger audience, which was one of the top priorities of Marian and the board members. Along with a diversifying of age,
- we also saw an increase in the number of cultures represented at our events. From India to Denmark, America to Turkey, and more, Kilmurry Arts and Heritage Center began to look like a real heritage centre with diverse guests bringing their perspectives and cultures. Diversifying was another prominent goal of the Center.
- Improving the variety of ages and heritages was mostly done by sending out event information to multiple cultural groups on the University of Limerick campus and within the Limerick community.
- Finally, throughout the term of our engagement, we experimented with different forms of marketing-- the majority of which were brought to fruition and proved to be successful. By being more active on social media channels (mostly Facebook), exploring advertising opportunities within the community (radio), and relaying the message to multiple cultural groups within the University and community, our group was able to overall improve attendance at Rambling House events while also contributing to the variety of ages and cultures present.

TESTIMONIALS

Marian: “Ciara, Alicia and Ahmet are delightful young people who endeared themselves to our committee from the first time we met. They immediately got a feel for the project and applied themselves with enthusiasm. Alicia’s creativity was to the fore in decorating the centre for the eve of St Patrick’s Day and the Intercultural Event. She enchanted the audience with her delicate ukulele playing”.

Colette: “It was so lovely to see how easily they blended with the community when invited along to our ‘Rambling House’ events – mixing and chatting to young and not so young became second nature to the students. Ciara’s World Class Irish Dancing charmed the audiences at both events”.

Goretti: “Ahmet had the extra challenge of getting used to our English language and he mastered this very well. He took the lead in organising the Intercultural Evening, explaining the tradition around the ornate cap he wore (see pic above) and impressing visitors with his ‘cookies’ – the recipe he shared with the ‘World Recipe Exchange’ based in Limerick.

RECOMMENDATIONS

One of the biggest challenges we faced in terms of planning and attendance for our events was timing. Both of the events were held on Friday nights, and while it worked well for the first event since everyone was in Ireland for St. Patrick's Day weekend, it was a challenge for the multicultural night. Many international students travel on the weekends, and most Irish students go home on the weekends. For the future, student attendance may increase if events are held on weeknights.

Another challenge we see in the future is the sustainability of our project. The Centre wants a younger and more diverse audience from the University, but we mostly brought in our friends, who are only here for a semester. To keep a sustainable younger population in the Centre, it might be useful to have a full-time student working with them. Also, if they continue to advertise to the same student groups we emailed like the World Academy and the UL Practicum students, they may be able to maintain a younger population.

GALLERY



Kilmurry Arts and Heritage Centre (Old Kilmurry Church) – The venue of the events



The project team at the first Rambling House



The project team and community partners at the second Rambling

APPENDICES

The Blurb for the First Rambling House Event:

Kilmurry Arts and Heritage Centre will host the next 'Rambling House' event on Friday, March 16th from 7.30 - 9 p.m., wrapping up with a sociable cuppa. The night will have an Irish traditional theme, as we approach St. Patrick's Festival in mid-March. This is a free event and all are most welcome. The Centre will be decorated in festive green and guests are encouraged to enter into the spirit of the occasion by wearing a touch of green also!

The Blurb for the Second - Multicultural Rambling House Event:

Kilmurry Arts and Heritage Centre will host the second of this year's "Rambling Houses", this time with a multicultural theme on Friday, April 6th from 7.30 - 9 p.m., wrapping up with a sociable cuppa. The night will be a showcase of a diversity of different countries and cultures represented with their music, dances and food. This is a free event and all are most welcome. Guests are encouraged to bring along instruments, songs, food etc.!

The Blog Post About the First Rambling House

This past Friday, Kilmurry Arts and Heritage Centre hosted its 3rd "Rambling House," giving an opportunity for guests to showcase their singing, dancing, and poetry skills. The theme was "festive green" to get everyone in the spirit for St. Patrick's Day.

The event was well-attended, with over 40 children, teens, and adults gathering to share traditional Irish music and dancing. There were a variety of cultures represented, with students and adults from America, Turkey, Singapore, Germany, and Denmark, as well as Ireland. The evening kicked off with a lively reel from a tin whistle and banjo duo, and

transitioned to Irish dancing from a few students and kids. When someone wanted to sing, dance, or play an instrument, they were passed a blackthorn stick for their turn. There were plenty of recited poems, sing-alongs, and even a euphonium performance. The evening wrapped up with some tea, biscuits, and chatter with the attendees.

The next Rambling House will have a multicultural theme and will take place on April 6th at 7:30pm at the Centre. All are welcome to attend and bring instruments, dance shoes, songs, and food from their home countries!

Kilmurry Arts and Cultural Centre will host its 4th Rambling House on April 6th at 7:30pm at the Kilmurry Church, in which attendees can perform a song, dance, poem, or tune in an open-mic style gathering. The theme is multicultural night, so don't forget to bring an instrument, song, dance, or food native to your culture. The night will wrap up with a sociable cuppa-hope to see you all there!

UL Engage: Kilmurry Arts and Heritage Centre

University of Limerick: Ciara Burke, Alicia Niblock, Ahmet Tunc
 Academic Supervisor: Bernie Quillinan



Background

- Kilmurry Arts and Heritage Centre is situated in the old Kilmurry Church
- Works with the local community of Castletroy
- Enhances, embraces and promotes the potential of the community
- Keeps the old church a venue available for the community purposes

<https://kilmurrycentre.com/home/about-us-2/>

Goals/Objectives

- To further engage the local community and young people in the area
- To bring together the community
- To organize events and promote the Centre
- To diversify age and the cultural background of the event attendees

Outcomes

- Increased attendance of younger demographic
- Improved cultural variety present
- Executed successful marketing strategies
- Engaged and started dialogues with local community



Recommendations to Sustain Outcomes

- Make events on weeknights so more students who travel/go home on the weekends will be available to attend
- Keep working with UL Engage students or keep the student email lists we used to market future events



Acknowledgements

We would like to extend a special thank you to our community partners at the Kilmurry Arts & Heritage Center. Additionally, a big thanks to Bernie Quillinan and Tracey Gleeson for supporting us and the UL Engage students for their attendance at our events.

Methods

- Organized 2 "Rambling House" events, in which attendees could bring a song, instrument, dance, or poem and perform it at the Centre open-mic style
 - The first was Irish traditional-themed, the second was Multicultural-themed
- Marketing for events through Facebook and emails to The Irish World Academy students, international students, and various local cultural groups
- Event setup, take down, and decoration



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