

Newsletter

Of the Cork Folklore Project

**CORK
FOLKLORE
PROJECT**
RECORDING & SHARING
THE MEMORIES OF CORK



**WINTER
2022**

**ISSUE
10**



CONTENTS

CFP RECENT INITIATIVES

Recent Initiatives-----	04
Quarter Century of the Cork Folklore Project-----	05
Reaching into the community-----	05
Catching Stories-----	06
Opening the Archive -----	07
Potential for Growth-----	07
Christmas -----	08

ORAL HISTORY FOR HEALTH (Collaboration with HSE)

Oral History for health - Project Outline-----	09
Grattan Street Stories - Now online!-----	11
Shearing the Stories -----	11
Grattan Street Interview Compilation -----	11
Putting Grattan Street on the Map! -----	11
Behind the scenes -----	11
Art Collaboration -----	12

MEMORIES FROM OUR COLLECTION

NOEL KEOHANE -----	13
Seeking a Premises.	
Adapting to the challenge of the dementia.	
Benefints of the Men's shed.	
CON O'CALLAGHAN-----	14
Zest for Life.	
"The Feel Good Factor": Martin's Music HAZ band.	
Memories of the Cork Polio Epidemic.	

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Gearóid Ó Cruailaich- New Book Publication -----	15
CFP oportunities and aspitations-----	16
Contact details -----	16

CORK FOLKLORE PROJECT RECENT INITIATIVES



It has been a challenging time for the Cork Folklore Project as a result of the Covid-19 experience. Nevertheless, by turning the focus of our collection towards that experience ([Chronicles of Covid-19](#)) we managed to emerge from the Pandemic with a great understanding of Cork daily life than before, which

in essence is the function of our Project. As you will see from this **expanded edition** of our CFP Newsletter (Issue 10), through determination, collaboration and experience, we have managed to continue and grow our positive contribution to the social and cultural health of Cork.

Tomás Mac Conmara
Cork Folklore Project Manager

CFP RECENT INITIATIVES

Crawford Art Gallery

CFP worked with a graphic designer to develop Grattan Street material focused on children's games.



For more information click the link:

<https://crawfordartgallery.ie>

Memory Map Cork Folklore Project

Red Placetags Link to Audioclips and Transcripts from the Grattan Street Stories Project.



<https://corkfolklore.org/memorymap>

Catching Stories *(Science Foundation Ireland)*

In 2022 CFP secured additional funding and researcher allocated to project based on its success. Current phase will see increase in dissemination of collected material.



<https://corkfolklore.org/health/about>

Grattan Street Stories Artwork

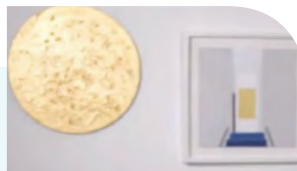
Collection created by Edith O'Regan in collaboration with CFP Oral History work. Digital version of the exhibition and the CFP oral history work available online.



<https://www.edithoregan.com>

Online Video

Sample-Studios Visual Arts Programme Edith O'Regan - Discussing the Grattan Street oral history and artistic project collaboration with CFP.



<https://www.youtube.com/Studio>

Academic Seminar

(In person, streamed & recorded online video)

School of Irish Learning Spring Seminar Series February 2022 - Discussing Oral History For Health project with audio samples.



<https://www.ucc.ie/seminar2022>

Tripe + Drisheen Article

Research and publication by Jamie Furey and Kieran Murphy Incorporating interviews and testimony from the Cork Folklore project.



<https://tripeanddrisheen.substack.com>

Cork Folklore Project Catalogue

Grattan Street on The CFP Catalogue



<https://corkfolklore.org/catalogue>

QUARTER CENTURY OF THE CORK FOLKLORE PROJECT



When in late 1996, Donal Sugrue, Manager of the Cork Folklore Project (then called the Northside Folklore Project), outlined the Project's approach, its methodology, core values and aims for the future, he was certain of the past and its value.

He, Professor Gearóid Ó Cruallaigh, Dr. Marie-Annick Desplanques their colleagues in UCC, could not have been as sure of the future and for how long the Project would continue. Over twenty-five years later, it is rewarding to write as the Manager of that Project and to confidently express the value of our continued work and contribution to Cork. In 1996, specific areas of tradition were then being examined, including the harrier tradition, fashions of the past and present, the textile industry, Blackpool during the Emergency, calendar customs of Farranree, school's folklore and the showband tradition. A quarter century years later, these subjects remain of interest, yet our scope of interest has expanded and deepened considerably.

The Project had advanced over the last quarter century, adapting to an ever-changing technical, drawing on

technological advances to bolster our core work. Cork has changed too and with that transformation, CFP have both widened and refocused our lens, to take account of an increasingly diverse experience within both the city and county. While initially a Project focused exclusively on the northside, CFP now reaches further and wider. Nevertheless, we remain positioned in the northside and it is there we have perhaps made the strongest impact. The growth and development of CFP cannot be effectively treated here. However, with continual development, there is reassurance that our Project remains true to the original commitment, set out back in August 1996, 'to record the folklore and folklife' of the people of Cork. This basic principle and simple ambition will remain at the core of our work as we move forward into our second quarter of a century and beyond. A new chapter beckons for the CFP.

Reaching into the community

At the heart of our work over the last twenty-five years, has been a continuous engagement with the communities of Cork, both in the recording of tradition and folklore, and the sharing of that material with the people of Cork.

We have been struck by the levels of support and enthusiasm we have received at a local level and look forward to deepening these relationships over the coming

The CFP Manager and Team with Bridie O'Leary from Chapel Lane, who the Project is recording a series of Life Story recordings with across the Winter of 2022.





Catching Stories

The Catching Stories team have been busy these past few months. The Science Foundation Ireland grant has been instrumental in the development of Catching Stories. From the undertaking of new interviews to creating the new online resource to talks and live events and even the planning of the project exhibition in the Boole Library next January.

The new interviews undertaken by the team have been incredibly rewarding, and we would again like to thank all those who have given up their time and stories to help the project.

We would also like to thank those who have attended our talks and events. We had an incredibly successful Heritage Week talk in Central Library on Grand Parade. This was the first real outing for the team to present the project, and we couldn't have been happier with the turnout and the response.

We are holding a similar talk for Science Week 2022 at UCC on January 15th.

Our pop-up Culture Night event has been the highlight so far. The team donned their white coats and set up a 'time travelling' vaccination clinic outside the old medical centre on Grattan St. Willing participants sat on a bench and heard Joe Scanlon's story of receiving the 'Branding Iron', Joe's term for the vaccine apparatus used in the 1950s. Joe's story, and the event elicited a great response from those who took part.

We will be running a series of events across Winter 2022- 23.

Finally, we are putting together the final touches of our new look website. Here you will be able to listen to the interviews and learn more about the infectious disease covered by the Catching Stories Project.

Jamie Furey



KEEP AN EYE ON OUR WEBSITES
AND SOCIAL MEDIA FOR MORE
UPDATES.

www.catchingstories.org

www.corkfolklore.org

Twitter @corkfolklore



Opening The Archive

We constantly seek to process and add new material to our public resource. Drawing on interviews conducted for the Grattan Street Stories collection and the CFP database of interviews, James Furey and Kieran Murphy have written an article for the 'Tripe + Drisheen' newsletter about swimming in Cork. [View this Article here.](#)

There has been a great reaction to the article showing again the appetite in Cork for the work being undertaken by the Cork Folklore Project, as well as reaching out to a new on-line audience.

The topic of swimming touches on issues of childhood, leisure, class, gender and poverty and these themes are explored in the article while retaining the integrity of the original stories which first drew us to the topic. Both 'Wild Swimming' and swimming in public baths are discussed. In 2022, as part of a **UCC Module (AD 2875 Community Memory - Influences & Dynamics)**, delivered by CFP Manager, Dr Tomás Mac Conmara, new material was generated, focused on the experience of swimming in Cork.

HERITAGE COUNCIL GRANT AWARD 2022

CFP were successful in obtaining funding from the Heritage Council in 2022, as part of the Community Grants Scheme for increased data entry to our online catalogue. The Project was carried out from June to September 2022. Liaison was maintained between the appointed consultant (Kieran Murphy) with the Project Manager (Tomás Mac Conmara) throughout and shadowing days (with CFP Research Assistants) were conducted at appointed times at the North Cathedral Visitor Centre. The project resulted in the addition of a further 247 items to the catalogue, increasing dramatically the metadata available to the public

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council



Potential for Growth

The positive response to recent efforts of CFP Management to engage with new stakeholders indicates a recognition of the far-reaching benefits to our work. Encouraging collaborations with organisations like the **Cork North Community Work Department of the HSE**, underline how the experience and credibility gained by CFP over the years are now an invaluable skill set in forging new pathways for our work.

The CFP Outreach Officer Post involved a collaboration between CFP and the Cork North Community Work Department (HSE) which saw the latter invest in a pilot two-year part time post, that focused on the use of oral history in helping develop sustainable community health programmes in Health Action Zones (HAZ) areas.



Members of HSE and Cork Folklore Project

CHRISTMAS

In 2020, CFP collaborated with Blackpool Library in the creation of a Christmas themed content and graphic exhibition. We delved into our collection of memories and drew a range of experience recalled by our interviewees, both within Cork City and around the county, of Christmas in the past and the changes witnessed over the decades. As part of our outreach plans, exhibition will travel across Cork libraries over the coming years.



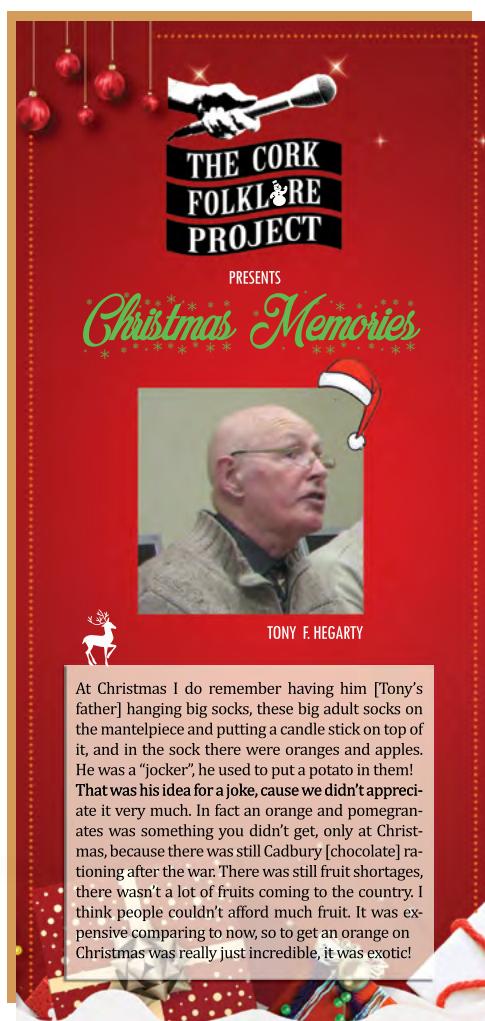
THE CORK FOLKLORE PROJECT PRESENTS *Christmas Memories*




FELIX BARRETT

Christmas Day you didn't go to anybody else's house nor nobody came into your house, and it was just as well because if they would be coming all you would be hearing about the stories from way back about the bad sheep and about the ghosts and different things like that!

I was thinking about the flour bag, what was done with that? It was emptied, then two or three of them would be sewn together. The women in the house would make a sheet out of it. They were cotton so they make a sheet out of those.



THE CORK FOLKLORE PROJECT PRESENTS *Christmas Memories*



TONY F. HEGARTY

At Christmas I do remember having him [Tony's father] hanging big socks, these big adult socks on the mantelpiece and putting a candle stick on top of it, and in the sock there were oranges and apples. He was a "jocker", he used to put a potato in them! That was his idea for a joke, cause we didn't appreciate it very much. In fact an orange and pomegranates was something you didn't get, only at Christmas, because there was still Cadbury [chocolate] rationing after the war. There was still fruit shortages, there wasn't a lot of fruits coming to the country. I think people couldn't afford much fruit. It was expensive comparing to now, so to get an orange on Christmas was really just incredible, it was exotic!



THE CORK FOLKLORE PROJECT PRESENTS *Christmas Memories*



BIDDY BARRETT

Santa would be a big thing. Not that we got a whole lot, but I mean, just the idea of Santa coming and leaving something t'was a major thing, and also I suppose getting the house ready you know, ready in so far as putting up holly and ivy and getting these paper decorations going and streaming them across the kitchen and preparing the candle as well ... and then of course the Church for us added a big thing to it because that was a huge job, getting that ready, that took of a lot of time. All the figures for the crib would be kept in the sacristy and they were brought out then at Christmas time. My brother would collect holly and ivy from a local farmer. That would come out I suppose a week or two before Christmas and then the straw for the crib would be collected.

ORAL HISTORY FOR HEALTH

A UNIQUE COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE CORK FOLKLORE PROJECT AND THE HSE



In 2019, the Cork Folklore Project embarked on an exciting and unique collaboration aimed at exploring the use of oral history in a health-based setting. The CFP Outreach Officer Post involved a collaboration between CFP and the **Cork North Community Work Department (HSE)** to deliver a pilot two-year part time post, that focuses on the use of oral history in helping develop sustainable community health programmes in **Health Action Zones (HAZ)** areas. The

Project recognised the potential for oral history, both as a method of exploring people's lives and past experiences, as well as generating a unique resource on those lived experiences. Over the last two years (with a short interruption caused by Covid-19), the project has generated amazing results which affirm that potential and validate the investment made by the HSE. This Newsletter displays some of those outcomes and successes.

Tomás Mac Conmara
Cork Folklore Project Manager

ORAL HISTORY FOR HEALTH

Subjects Explored

River Lee
Pharmacy and Medicines
Unemployment
Cork Characters
Irish Language
Trading and Commerce
Workplace
Housework
Christmas
Tenements
Fishing
Shawlies
Pawn shops
Religion
Medical Dispensary
Public Health Nurses
Housing and Accommodation
Music and Song
Life Perspectives
Societal Change
Emigration
College Life
Cork University Hospital
The North Infirmary
Dancehalls
Marriage
Food and Cooking
Business
University Education
Festivals and Parties
Children's Games
World War II
Neighbours and Community
Churches & Devotion
Built Heritage
Grandparents
Parents & Family
Childrearing
Hobbies
Elitism
Social Position
The Mercy Hospital
St Finbar's Hospital
The Marsh and Middle Parish

Grattan street stories now online!

Grattan Street Stories oral history project has gone live on the Cork Folklore Project Online Catalogue webpage.

[View the Grattan Street Stories Oral History Collection here](#)

Here you can find an overview of the project, details of its various outputs, a summary description of each interview undertaken for the project as well as a detailed timestamped abstract of each interview.

Sharing the Stories

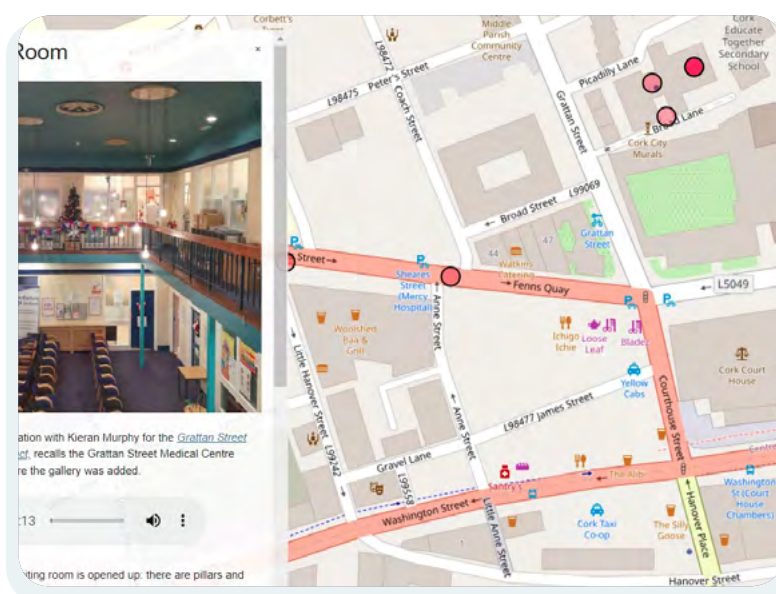
This is an important step in sharing with the wider community and outside researchers the subject matter and value of oral history which has been collected through this Community Oral History Outreach Officer role in collaboration with the HSE Cork North Community Work Department, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare (Health Services Executive).

The individual interviews are featured at the bottom of the page. You can click each interview title or interviewee photograph to access the summary, interview abstract, audio excerpt and other details for the specific interview.

Grattan Street Interview Compilation

A selection of interviews about Grattan Street accompanied by historical and contemporary photographs is also available to view online:

<https://www.youtube.com/CorkFolklore>



Putting Grattan Street on the Map!

Audio clips of stories from the Grattan Street project are available on the CFP Memory Map online.

The Memory Map is a novel resource for connecting stories, places and people. You can access the map following the link below. Each coloured dot on the map represents a story connected with that place. The red dots represent stories which originate from the Grattan Street Stories project or from the wider Community Outreach Project.

<https://corkfolklore.org/cork-memory-map>

A Memory Map dedicated solely to Health and the Community oral history topics presents a potential future avenue to deliver more interactions with public and CFP resources. Such a map would adequately represent the quantity and quality of the interview material collected around health thus far.

Behind the Scenes

To successfully make this project accessible on the CFP online catalogue required nearly 2,000 subject tags to be individually created and added. The web-pages in the catalogue for this project amount to well over 65,000 words of text in total.

It just goes to show that even once the interviews are completed there remains much work to bring the material to a wider audience and secure its future as a lasting, reliable and sustainable resource for researchers and the community.



Edith O'Regan

Art Collaboration

Grattan Street Stories Artwork created by artist Edith O'Regan in collaboration with CFP Oral History is available to view on her website:

<https://www.edithoregan.com/grattan-street>

This innovative work combines photographs and paintings inspired by Grattan Street with panels featuring quotations carefully selected from oral history interviews by CFP Community Outreach Officer with staff and patients, along with panels giving historical information and context again researched by CFP Community Officer.



SEEKING A PREMISES

Noel hails from Gardiner's Hill and has recently stepped in as chairman of the Mayfield Men's Shed.

"I Love the shed, oh god I love it. It's my one ambition, before I kick the bucket now, to get our own premises."

The Mayfield Men's Shed has been looking for a permanent home for some time. Despite having everything in place and ready to go they are still seeking a suitable site.

Noel explains the benefits that having a shed of their own would bring: "we could open five days a week. We'd increase our membership and the men could go up there and have a read the paper or do whatever they want to do."

ADAPTING TO THE CHALLENGE OF DEMENTIA

Another challenge the Men's Shed face is the increase in dementia among their membership. The men have adapted to the problems this poses in a few ways. They now collect any members with dementia and drive them to meetings as it is important to maintain social contacts.

For any member who is living in residential care they make a special effort to visit these members to stay in touch. They have found that singing together in their choir has also had a positive effect.

Most importantly, Noel says, they keep up the Men's Shed tradition of "all the ball-hopping and the slagging that goes on!"

BENEFITS OF THE MEN'S SHED

Noel is adamant about the health benefits of this camaraderie in the Men's Shed. He mentions a few men whose "wives have passed away. It's the greatest thing they ever done coming into the Men's Shed. It has brought them out of themselves."

As for his own relationship with the Men's Shed Noel admits that "it's very rewarding and I enjoy it."



ZEST FOR LIFE

We recently interviewed Con as part of the Cork Folklore Community outreach Project. Con grew up near The Lough and has a passion for motorbikes, sailing and music. Just as he prefers to wear the shorts of his youth rather than the long trousers of 'grown-ups', so too he retains a boyish enthusiasm for life and his various hobbies.



"THE FEEL GOOD FATOR": MARTIN'S MUSIC HAZ BAND

Even though Con's hands have been broken in motorcycle accidents he still puts them to good use on his beloved African drums both with his own Lazy River Band and with the Martin's Music HAZ Band.

Martin's Music play together in Kerrigan Tyrrell Hall in Mayfield regularly when Covid-19 restrictions allow them.

They sit in a circle and take it in turns to call the tune that the group plays. From playing together Con says "the main thing you get is a feel good factor."

The group also bring their musical talents to nursing homes: "it's brilliant to put a bit of music out to these people and let them get an afternoon's enjoyment."

Beyond the joy they bring to the wider community Con reflects on the experience for the musicians themselves "If you have the skill of playing stuff you want to play to an audience."



Con O'Callaghan Holding a Photograph of his Father (left) and his father's work colleague (right)

MEMORIES OF THE CORK POLIO EPIDEMIC

Con even recalled the polio epidemic in Cork in the 1950s as a happy time for him. Even though there was great fear of Polio at the time, as he says "Mainly kids were getting it. A lot of them ended up in wheelchairs or with callipers" as a result of the disease.

To protect him from polio he "was shipped down to Mallow ... to friends of my father's who had no kids. And they were delighted to take me in. I was treated like a king!"

"I spent the whole summer down there, it was pure magic altogether! I had great freedom- they wouldn't have been half as restrictive as what my parents would've been."

ENGAGING WITH IRISH VERNACULAR WORLDVIEW

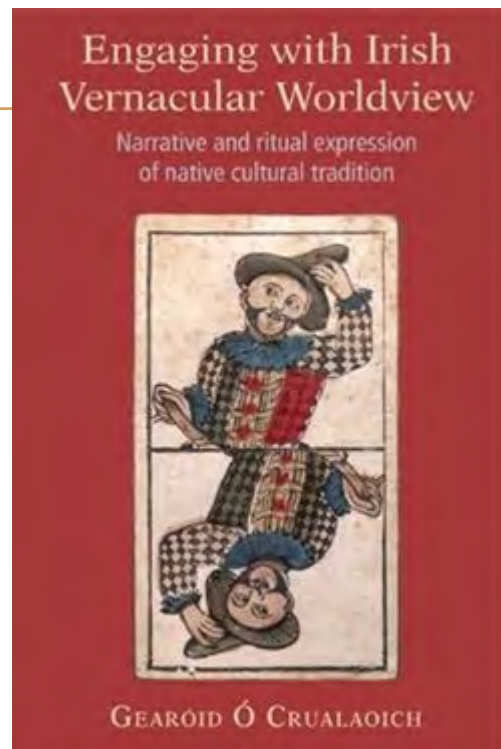
by Gearóid Ó Cruailaoich

Professor Gearóid Ó Cruailaoich is a founding member of the Cork Folklore Project and one of our organisation's most passionate supporters. We are delighted to share details of his most recent publication.

Engaging with Irish Vernacular Worldview comprises an ensemble of articles and essays offering its readers engagement from an ethnological perspective with significant facets of the domain of Irish Studies.

It attempts, both in its organisation and intellectual orientation to be a contribution to the instruction and formation of a variety of readerships. Undergraduate students of the various Irish Studies disciplines, especially Folklore and Ethnology; graduate research students in the disciplines of Irish Studies; a general readership of people with an interest in Ireland; graduate and research students of Irish literature, culture, society and history apart from specialists in Folklore and Anthropology. Without requiring any competence in Irish language, it nevertheless encompasses materials giving insight and some access to the centrality of the Irish language and Irish language materials in vernacular native tradition and heritage.

The style encountered in the books parts ranges from the occasional and discursive to the sustained and scholarly. Keeping pedagogical considerations in mind, readers can encounter some degree of confirmatory overlapping and circularity that also reflects the authors own ongoing understanding and interpretation of the matters involved.



A distinguishing feature of the book is the manner in which descriptive and analytic treatments of fundamental aspects of vernacular worldview duality in cosmology, creative ethnopoetics in narrative tradition, the symbolic and socially functional significance of the conception of the otherworld feminine combine to bring readers to an appreciation of how vernacular worldview can be understood to continue to inform issues of gender, history and politics in the modern world. This follows on from the stance adopted in my earlier book, *The Book of the Cailleach* (Cork University Press, 2003).

ISBN: 9781782055433



CFP Manager, Dr Tomás Mac Connmara with Professor Gearóid Ó Cruailaoich in November 2022 at the launch of Professor Ó Cruailaoich's new book.

TO ACQUIRE THIS BOOK CLICK [HERE](#)



Become a Volunteer, Collector or Researcher



Over 2023, CFP hope to build on a positive foundation of Volunteer recorders and researcher across Cork City.

This will give volunteers the **opportunity of receiving training in oral history, archiving and dissemination.**

We are not in a position to announce a start date for this programme as of yet but, if you would like to register your interest to Volunteer for CFP, please email tomas.macconmara@ucc.ie or ring 087 9160373.

Looking Forward

The CFP will continue to deliver on our core function as a collection, preservation and dissemination archive of oral history and folklore within Cork.

CFP Management are actively seeking funding opportunities to consolidate and grow our resource to meet what is an increasingly challenging position and responsibility.

Potential sponsors or partners are asked to email

info.cfpmanager@gmail.com



NORTH CATHEDRAL VISITORS CENTRE

Roman Street, Cork. T23NX7.



+353 (021)4228195



corkfolkloreproject1996@gmail.com



www.corkfolklore.org



@corkfolklore



@corkfolklore



@corkfolklore

Project Manager: Tomás Mac Conmara

Research Supervisor: Cliona O'Carroll

Digital Archivist: Jamie Furey

Team members: Paul Ahern, David McCarthy,
Lisa Dalton, David O'Donoghue, Sylwia Krupa.

Graphic Design & Layout
Sylwia Krupa