

## Summary of Limerick's chosen three examples of Good Practice

Details*	Good Practice 1	Good Practice 2	Good Practice 3
<b>Name</b>	Foynes Flying Boat Museum	King John's Castle	Riverfest
<b>Category</b>	Maritime & Industrial	Military	Maritime
<b>Location</b>	Foynes, Co. Limerick	Nicholas Street, Limerick	
<b>UTM Coordinates</b>	29U 492569, 5829080	29U 525323, 5835596	29U 525228, 5835120
<b>Opened/Re-opened</b>	1989	1991	Est 2004
<b>Current Use</b>	Visitor Attraction – Museum	Visitor Attraction – visitor centre with interpretive activities and exhibitions	Annual Summer Festival every May Bank Holiday celebrating the River Shannon
<b>Annual Visitors</b>	50,000	110,112	100,000 (2018)
<b>Employment</b>	24	11 full time, 12 seasonal	
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.flyingboatmuseum.com">www.flyingboatmuseum.com</a>	<a href="http://www.shannonheritage.com/KingJohnsCastle/">www.shannonheritage.com/KingJohnsCastle/</a>	<a href="http://www.limerick.ie/riverfest">www.limerick.ie/riverfest</a>

\*Please note these are not numbered in any particular order or ranking

## **Foynes Flying Boat Profile**



### **Description**

Foynes Flying Boat & Maritime Museum has been in operation for almost thirty years and the museum is heralded for its unique aviation collection and for being the birthplace of Irish Coffee. In a short time, the museum has established itself as an important Irish heritage site and it has received numerous awards. It's a unique cultural and historical institution that enriches Irish and international visitors alike. What has been achieved is a testimony to the dedication and hard work of staff and the willingness of Government and the Local Authority to help part fund crucial developments which have created jobs and cultivated one of Limerick's most popular tourist attractions.

Foynes, Co Limerick, has been an important sea port since 1846, but during the late 1930s and early 1940s, this tranquil town on the Shannon estuary was transformed into a major international airport. Foynes became a fulcrum point for air traffic between the United States and Europe. Visitors get the opportunity to walk in the footsteps of JFK, Bob Hope, Eleanor Roosevelt & many other dignitaries, movie stars & refugees who landed at Foynes during World War II. Throughout the original terminal building this truly unique story is told by way of original film in a 1940's style cinema, showcases covering the war years & numerous exhibits on the romantic flying boat era including the chance to board a life size replica of the Boeing 314 Flying Boat.

Flying boat heritage is now an essential part of the tourism and economic life of Foynes and the south Shannon Estuary. Critically this heritage is a major item of local pride, supporting local employment

and other regional attractions and hospitality services in west Limerick. In 2013, the Maritime Museum opened its doors to the public. This development quadrupled the size of the museum and completes the original plan that was first envisaged back in 1988.

While maritime may conjure images of water & docks, the history charted at the museum will give you an insight into how the river changed & shaped the lives of those who lived on or near it through the centuries. Learn about transportation and emigration on the river during the famine, see how American Confederate uniforms were made in Limerick and shipped from Foynes during the American Civil War and uncover many of the unique social history stories connected to Foynes.

When Hollywood movie star Maureen O'Hara stepped off a flying boat in Foynes with her husband Captain Charles Blair in 1976, it would be the beginning of a relationship with the Museum that would last nearly 40 years. That special relationship will now continue after her death. In July 2018, a new temporary exhibition opened to the public with the aim of preserving the memory of Ireland's most famous actress by showcasing her memorabilia including the Honorary Oscar she received in 2014. There is also a cinema room screening a rolling film on her life encompassing her love of music, film and fashion.

### **Significant Dates**

- **July 8th, 1939:** The Pan American Airways, Boeing 314 'Yankee Clipper' was the first scheduled passenger flight to cross the Northern Atlantic... from New York to Foynes via Botwood, Canada
  - Cost of flying to Foynes from the US during World War II..... \$375 dollars one-way (\$20,000 in today's money)
- **1941 to 1943:** More than 2,000 flying boat flights arrived in Foynes.
- **1943:** Foynes becomes the Home of Irish Coffee invented by Chef Joe Sheridan
  - Chef Sheridan worked in the Airport Restaurant during the flying boat period and invented this world-renowned tippie to cheer up some wet and weary passengers.
- **8<sup>th</sup> July 1976:** Maureen O'Hara's late husband, Capt. Charles Blair flew the first non-stop passenger flight to cross the Atlantic, landing in Foynes, 25 hours and 40 minutes after leaving New York.
- **July 8th, 1989:** Foynes Flying Boat Museum opened.

### **Ownership & Management**

Foynes Aviation and Maritime Museum DAC is a not-for-profit charitable institution. The museum was founded as a limited company with a shareholding. Shares are non-tradable and were purchased mainly by aviation enthusiasts and local support groups. Its Board of Directors represent local communities, businesses, aviation companies and tourism bodies.

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### **Past & Current Uses**

The museum is housed in a historic building, original purpose a hotel, built in 1860s and named the 'Monteagle Arms' which opened in conjunction with the new rail line to Limerick. The building had many uses over the intervening years such as an airport terminal, residential Irish college until the 1970s and headquarters for Foynes Port Company. Over the past number of years, a substantial amount of building work has been completed, improving the fabric of the building.

The museum is used for private meetings, weddings, concerts, fashion shows, temporary exhibitions and other educational events.

### **Accessibility & Location**

Foynes is the only location in Limerick on the Wild Atlantic Way and the village is nestled along the banks of the Shannon estuary, 30 minutes from Limerick city and 1 hour from Shannon Airport. Most visitors come to Foynes on privately booked coaches or by car. Public transport is limited.



## King John's Castle Profile



### Description

King John's Castle was built between 1200 and 1210. In 1197 the city of Limerick was issued a Royal Charter by John, Prince of Ireland, the brother of Richard the Lionheart. 13 years later, and now crowned King of England, he brought a large army to Ireland and asserted his authority over the country. Whilst John did not go to Limerick, he ordered the construction of a new castle in the city. Over the following two years the Royal Exchequer spent the large sum of £773 (Around €10,000,000 today) on replacing the old wooden ring castle with a strong new fortress.

### Significant Dates:

**February 1990:** An extensive new archaeological dig began on site. This was the first of many during the 1990's. The dig revealed the foundations of the lost wall, evidence of pre-Norman houses and earlier features. It was decided to build a large modern building that would straddle the missing eastern section of the wall; this allowed the various historical finds to be placed in site.

**1991:** The new visitor centre with its modernistic steel framed design was opened to the public.

**2011:** Shannon Heritage announced a new project to upgrade the castle facilities and improve the various exhibitions with new hi-tech and multimedia innovations, such as touch screen technology, ghost imaging and 3D computer generated models.

**June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2013:** The newly refurbished King John's Castle opened to the public.

### **Ownership & Management**

King John's Castle now sits within the Shannon Castle & Banquets Heritage DAC portfolio which has developed over the past 50 years from one product in 1963, which was the Medieval Banquet at Bunratty Castle, to a total of seven day visitor experiences and four evening entertainments located in the Shannon Region.

Shannon Heritage Group are dedicated to capturing the past at their visitor attractions and dinner entertainments including King John's Castle in a way one can enjoy and appreciate.

King John's Castle: Management Team

- General Manager-Ivan Tuohy
- Operations Manager-Fiona Kilderry
- Conservation –Dr Matthew Potter (Limerick Museum and Archives -Curator) oversees our conversation

### **Past & Current Uses**

King John's Castle now boasts a state-of-the-art visitor experience that brings together the Castle's remarkable archaeology and 21st century technology to help visitors discover the history of Limerick and King John's Castle.

The castle provides unique experiences with a blend of culture, history and entertainment, acting as the perfect setting to create new concepts, original themes and imaginative solutions for private events, gala dinner or activity programme.

The castle has also hosted a number of special events both past and present such as concerts, fashion shows, gala dinners, networking events, charity events, Halloween, Easter and Christmas.

### **Accessibility & Location**

King John's Castle is located on Nicholas Street just a short walk from Limerick city centre on the banks of the River Shannon. The exhibition is fully wheelchair accessible, however the castle is not.



## Riverfest Profile



## Description

Established in 2004 and located in Ireland's western region on the estuary of the River Shannon, Riverfest is when the natural wilderness of the Wild Atlantic Way converges with the energy and convenience of a modern city for a spectacular weekend of extreme sports, outdoor activities, food, fireworks and family friendly fun. Riverfest combines interactive activities with audience attractions to create an invigorating programme of active participation and spectacle. Located amongst stunning natural and built heritage this tourism initiative celebrates Limerick's close connection with its natural and historical heritage.

The festival hub, the Riverfest Village provides a natural viewing platform for spectacular interactive river-based activities, whilst offering an artisan food, live music and traditional carnival. Riverfest partners with The Bon Secours Hospital Great Limerick Run, Shannon Heritage and Dolan's Live Music events. This tourism initiative and family friendly festival takes place over 3 days during the May Bank

Holiday weekend. With its picturesque setting and a natural viewing platform provided by the architecture of the city, Riverfest is when the city welcomes summer by turning its face to the Shannon to celebrate and enjoy this wonderful resource in the heart of our city.

### *Limerick and The River Shannon*

The River Shannon is named after the beautiful young goddess Sionna (Sinnán) who sought the secret of poetry and learning in the hazelnuts of wisdom. These she found on a hazel tree hanging over a deep pool. The ripe nuts were falling into the pool where they burst into bright purple colours and were eaten by the salmon of wisdom which inhabited the pool. Sionna leaned forward, lost her balance and fell into the pool which rose up in anger at this disturbance and swept her into the sea. In this way the River Shannon got its name.

The River Shannon, the longest river in these isles, is the cultural spine of Ireland. Along its river banks and lake shores, monastic settlements were home to the Irish monks that, through the Dark Ages, preserved and refined the art of manuscript illumination, and travelled throughout Europe, bringing their art with them. When Europe emerged to advance towards the Renaissance, this enormous contribution from the island of Ireland enabled the exploration and communication of new ideas, the influence of which is still visible today in the visual arts, design and literature of Europe.

The River Shannon flows through Ireland, carrying this rich cultural contribution to the Atlantic Ocean at Limerick. There is also an opposite movement as the spawning salmon return, making their way upriver, seeking again those hazelnuts of wisdom.

Limerick is at a confluence of Irish culture and international culture where identities - local, national and European - can be explored as they emerge out of the quiet minute of opposing flows and tensions.

### *Riverfest Programme*

Riverfest's programme combines water sports and activities, artisan food, music, arts, culture and heritage. Annual favourites include, Ireland's largest barbecue cook-off competition, The Riverfest Village, exhibitions by international extreme water sports stars, and a spectacular fireworks display.

### **Ownership/Management Details**

Riverfest is delivered by Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) managed by LCCC Culture and Arts Office in collaboration with LCCC Marketing & Communications and a tendered Event Management company. This collaboration ensures that the economic/tourism, environmental and social/cultural aims of the event are addressed throughout the planning, delivery and evaluation stages of the project at the highest level of professionalism.

Riverfest is one of 4 key civic events produced and managed by LCCC. It is in line with Objective 2 of ***Limerick Cultural Strategy: A Framework 2016 - 2030:***

*"To grow the physical and human resources, infrastructure and support for staging*

### **Past & Current Uses**

#### ***Vision***

Riverfest's mission is to become the national celebration for Ireland's largest river, The Shannon, attracting tourism into Limerick and promoting our beautiful waterside location, culture and riverine heritage.

#### ***Mission Statement***

Promoting tourism by celebrating Limerick's culture and heritage as the only city located on Ireland's largest river, The Shannon.



## Accessibility & Location

Riverfest activities are focused around key locations/landmarks:

- **The Riverfest Village** with its artisan food, live music, and carnival forms the festival hub. Its picturesque location in Arthur's Quay Park, set between two bridges and overlooking Limerick's most famous built and natural heritage landmarks, from King John's Castle to the Curragower Falls, provides a natural viewing platform turning the river into a stage for the duration of Riverfest.
- **King John's Castle** becomes a second hub of activity at night transforming into a live music venue programmed and produced by Dolans and forming the backdrop for the highlight of the weekend, a stunning firework display over the castle with a live LED water performance.
- **The River** throughout Riverfest becomes a stage for a spectacular water-based programme energising the city with an array of performances from international extreme sports stars to local kayaking, rowing and sailing clubs. A free zip-wire allows audiences to enjoy a river experience unique to the festival with incredible views and the thrill of traversing the waters at speed.

In addition to the official programme, Riverfest collaborates with a number of fringe events including with The Bon Secours Hospital Great Limerick Run, Shannon Heritage and Dolan's Live Music to provide a coordinated promotion and publicity campaign for all events taking place in Limerick during the May Bank Holiday. Other events & activities taking place in Limerick during the Bank Holiday weekend are promoted showing other activity for the culturally curious, including Fleadh by the Feale and the Ballyhoura Walking Festival, both quality tourism products.