

Celebrate Muckross, Past and Present

14 JUNE 2024



Muckross House, Killarney National Park

Muckross House – Welcoming Visitors Since 1964

Muckross House was completed in 1843 for Henry Arthur Herbert and his Scottish wife Mary Balfour. Situated close to the eastern shore of Muckross Lake, the House was designed by the well-known Victorian architect William Burn of Edinburgh.

Muckross House was completed in 1843. The Herbert family hosted the English Queen Victoria, with members of her family, at Muckross, in August 1861. However, by the end of the 19th century the Herbert family was bankrupt. In 1899 Muckross House and its Estate were purchased by Lord Ardilaun, a member of the Guinness brewing family. Over the following decade the property was rented out annually for its hunting, shooting and fishing.

In 1911 Muckross was purchased by a wealthy American, William Bowers Bourn. He and his wife Agnes presented it as a wedding present to their daughter Maud and her husband Arthur Rose Vincent of Clonlara, County Clare. Maud died unexpectedly in 1929. Three years later her husband and parents presented Muckross House and its Estate to the Irish Nation. Muckross became Ireland's very first National Park on 1 January, 1933. It was then known as the Bourn Vincent Memorial Park. Muckross House remained closed and unused for over 30 years. Today we are celebrating the 60th Anniversary of its opening to the public on 14 June 1964.

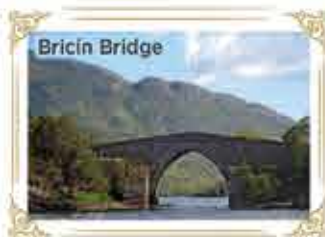
The Bourn Vincent Memorial Park initially covered an area of 4,300 hectares (over 10,000 acres).



Killarney National Park



During the 1970s it was greatly extended by donations and also land purchases by the State to form the present Killarney National Park. today the park covers an area of approximately 10,000 hectares (over 24,000 acres).



Killarney National Park stretches to the south and west of Killarney town. It includes many diverse habitats, including, lakes and mountains, woodlands, grasslands, bogs and waterfalls. Within its boundaries there are also many important historical and cultural sites including, Muckcross House and Gardens, Killarney House and Gardens, Ross Castle, Copper Mines, Innisfallen monastic remains, Muckcross Abbey, picturesque estate collages and stone built bridges such as Bricin Bridge and the Old Weir Bridge.

Our indigenous herd of red deer, the largest in the country, is among the most important of the mammals found within Killarney National Park. Red Deer in Co. Kerry have a continuous bloodline dating back over 4000 years. The smaller Sika Deer were introduced here in 1865 as a gift from Lord Powerscourt, Co. Wicklow, to Lord Kenmare. Killarney Sika Deer are recognised as one of the purest herds outside of Japan. Other important mammals found within Killarney National Park include, the otter, Irish hare and red squirrel.

The Freshwater Pearl Mussel is a critically endangered species and there are only eight locations in Ireland where it can be found. One of these locations is on the boundary of Killarney National Park. The Freshwater Pearl Mussel is found in rivers rather than lakes and it requires clean, oxygenated, low-nutrient water.

There is an incredible diversity of birds found within Killarney National Park. Some of these are resident, while others are migratory. Among the many bird species found here are meadow pipit, stonechat, raven, peregrine falcon, merlin and red grouse. The white-tailed sea eagle has been reintroduced in recent times.



1. Welcome Marquee!

Visit our Welcome Marquee for information and assistance.

3&5. The Machinery of Killarney National Park

At both of these stops you can examine the displays of Horticultural and Agricultural machinery employed both within Muckcross Gardens and the wider Killarney National Park. The types of machinery employed includes: tractors, mini-diggers, track chipper, chainsaws, and much more besides.



2. School House

State-sponsored primary school education, organised at parish level, was introduced to Ireland in 1831. This schoolhouse is typical of many rural Irish schools built c. 1910 and is divided into two rooms internally. Pupils were expected to bring sods of turf to school to burn on the open fires.

Visit the schoolhouse and view documentaries telling the story of Muckcross and Killarney National Park.



4. Weather Station

Gerry Murphy Horticultural Supervisor, NPWS, carefully monitors rainfall within Killarney National Park. Monitoring began 80 years ago and our records date back to 1943.

From 1943
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT AND POWER - METEOROLOGICAL SERVICE
DAILY READINGS OF RAINFALL IN 1963
at *Bawn Summit, Killarney National Park, Killarney, Kerry*
Readings in millimetres.

RAIN MEASURING MEASUREMENT SHOULD BE REFERRED TO THE PREVIOUS DAY

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
1943													
1944													
1945													
1946													
1947													
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6. Fire Equipment

The fire team based within Killarney National Park has been specially trained to respond in the case of an emergency. Here you can view some of specialist tools, pumps, skids and tankers that they employ to protect our park.

7. Muckross, History and Culture

The aim of Muckross House Research Library is to document the traditions, way of life, and history of the people of Kerry.

Since its establishment by the Trustees of Muckross House, almost 60 years ago, the Library has played an important role as a Centre for the Collection, Storage and Preservation, of documentary material relating to Kerry.



Visit our website at www.muckrosshousereseearchlibrary.ie and also Muckross House Research Library Flickr.

8. Geology and Mining: Past and Present

Ireland was a prolific centre of Bronze Age metallurgy, and the discovery of a rich copper mine at Ross Island, Killarney, supplied almost all of the copper used in Ireland from 2400-1900 BC.

The Herbert family became very wealthy during the 18th century due to the working of the copper mines on the Muckross Peninsula.

These areas are now designated as Special Areas of Conservation for Calaminarian Grasslands.





Guided Tours and Walks

Staff will provide guided tours of Muckross Gardens and Glasshouses, the Muckross Abbey Walk as well as Wildlife Walks at 12pm and 2pm on Friday 14 June. Meet at the front door of Muckross House.

Free Entry

to Muckross House and Traditional Farms on 14, 15 and 16 of June.

Muckross House
Open 9.15am - 6pm (last entry at 16.40)

Muckross Traditional Farms
Open 10am to 6pm (last entry at 5pm).



Muckross House, Gardens & Traditional Farms, The National Park, Killarney, Co Kerry, Ireland

Tel: 064 6670144 **Email:** info@muckross-house.ie



NPWS

an tSéanáir
Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications
National Parks and Wildlife Service

Web: www.nationalparks.ie/killarney/
www.muckross-house.ie
www.muckrosshousereseearchlibrary.ie



9. Killarney National Park Education Centre

We work with people of all backgrounds, ages and abilities, from outreach to childcare facilities and primary schools, to Leaving Certificate geography & biology fieldwork, third level fieldwork sessions, Teacher training, guided walks and Junior Ranger Camps, “tailoring” courses/activities to suit each group. This Education Centre is the longest established Education Centre of any of Ireland’s National Parks and on average, caters for 11,000 to 12,000 student sessions annually.

LIFE OF THE LAKES – Learn about the flora and fauna that are dependent on the lakes for their survival. Examine aquatic insects close up, using a magnifying glass or microscope and learn about

the unique characteristics they have to survive beneath the waters. Examine a collection of aquatic plants which are ready for you to identify.

Tradition of Rowing upon the Lakes

The tradition of rowing on Killarney’s Lakes is said to date back to the 1700s. The Annual Killarney Regatta is believed to be the oldest regatta in the world, now apparently in its 239th year. In modern times it is raced from Mahoney’s Point, on Lough Léin.

There are five rowing clubs in Killarney: Muckcross RC, Flesk Valley RC, Workmen’s RC, Commercials RC, St Brendan’s RC & Fossa RC. The type of boat used, ‘The Killarney Sixes,’ is unique to this area. It is wooden in structure, with wooden oars and fixed seats and was originally designed and built by Salters of Oxford, England.



11. Kerry Cattle

The law texts of the 7th and 8th centuries contain the earliest accounts of Irish cattle. These are believed to have been similar to modern Kerry Cattle in size, colour and build. The small, black, satin-coated Kerry cattle are very docile in nature. Hardy and agile they will thrive in poor conditions. Their milk contains a high percentage of butterfat. Arthur Rose Vincent of Muckcross began breeding Kerry cattle c. 1915. The Muckcross herd rapidly expanded over the following decade and won many prizes in agricultural competitions.





12. Birds of Killarney National Park

Discover more about the amazing birds that can be found here in the National Park; White Tailed Eagle and Peregrine Falcon to the Great Spotted Woodpecker and Cuckoo, there are lots of interesting birds to be discovered all around the National Park. See the White Tailed Eagle specimen and its nest, also a Great Spotted Woodpecker nest

WOODLANDS & FUNGI - Learn about the wonderful woodland habitats within Killarney National Park which includes Reenadinna Yew Woodland, Oak Woodlands

and Alder Carr Woodlands. Find out about the various species of Fungi found within Killarney National Park. Discover the diverse range of Flora and Fauna that are present in our woodlands. Our Conservation Rangers are available to talk about the range of species associated with the Woodland habitats in Killarney National Park.



PÁIRC NÁISIUNTA NA MARA CIARRAÍ is Ireland's first Marine National Park dedicated to protecting our marine biodiversity and heritage. Our coastline is home to many breeding and wintering seabirds, whales and dolphins.

13. Weaving – 12.30-1.30 pm and 3-4pm.

Since 1971 the Trustees of Muckross House have supported and operated a Weaver's Workshop at Muckross. Visitors can still see spinning and weaving carried out the traditional way, in

our craft workshop. Under the expert eye of master weaver John Cahill our weaving products are exported world-wide.

14. Pottery

The Trustees of Muckross House have operated a pottery workshop at Muckross since 1971. Our potter Margaret Phelan produces unique, hand thrown and hand decorated pottery. She is constantly developing products that are fired on site in our kiln at temperatures of between 1220 and 1280C



15. Book Bindery / Conservation – 12 pm and 3 pm.

The Trustees of Muckross House established the bookbindery at Muckross during the early 1980s. Here, Paper Conservator Paul Curtis employs traditional bookbinding skills, together with modern conservation methods, to provide the very best care for paper items. The materials employed by Paul are of the highest archival quality and are all acid free.