

DRUMKEERIN OLD FAIR DAY 2017

Andy Redican Photos: Mary Rooney

NOSTALGIA CAN be emotive. And so it was most evident as crowds thronged Drumkeerin on Saturday, 19th August 2017 to be winged back in time at the Drumkeerin Old Fair Day, a most memorable day at the beginning of Drumkeerin Community Family Festival.

Never, could any one of the oldest residents recall such large numbers to parade up and down the village, as they exploring and investigating every stall, stopping to savour the memories rekindled. Visitors watched and enjoyed butter making, basket and creel weaving, wool carving and spinning, and many other farming related activities from the past.

Many arrived at the fair dressed in period costumes, having been encouraged to do so by the Committee who offered prizes for the most appropriately dressed female and male; prizes that went to Mary Bohan and Miceal Lavin.

Perhaps, many missed the lowing of the cattle, the shouts of the jobbers and farmers haggling, the wheeling, the dealing, the



■ **Andy Redican, the Cant-man heading home from the fair**

bargaining and hand slapping, which used to accompany the settlement of prices of the cattle and sheep that were sold. They would miss, too, the cant and humour of the “cant-man“ as he attracted the attention of audiences who would be lured into buying “wonderful“ bargains, the likes they would never see again!

However, visitors were fully compensated as a street drama,

“The Dysfunctional Ram”, written and directed by Andy Redican and performed by local actors, Joe Walpole, Paddy Joe Daly, Angela Evans Flynn, Maureen Ryan, Aine Bohan, Maresa McGovern, Aaron Wynne, Kieran Kelly and Andy Redican, captured for the onlookers, many of the activities and shenanigans that went on at the fairs.

The huge audience that milled





■ Traditional stone cutting at the old fair day

around the performance was not disappointed. The action had the “Cant-man”, his cant and luring activities. After the haggling, shouts, hand slapping and bargaining the sheep, (who were part of the set), were sold. A great argument

and row over a dysfunctional ram, a dud sold the previous year also was witnessed. The era of the matchmaker was revived as the daughter arrived with her young boyfriend to defy and deny her father’s scheme to marry to an old man, more than twice her age. Loud was the applause when they ignored her father’s cries and ran off in his vintage car, ending the drama to

rapturous and appreciative exclaim.

The fair-goers were brought back to reality, following the drama, as many joined in the dancing and jiving to the singing and music of Stuart Moyles. As



■ Testing out the hand-made skipping ropes

the stalls were taken down it was an end to a most memorable Old Fair Day in Drumkeerin; one so well planned, organised and run by Chairperson Des Wynne together with a wonderful working committee.



■ Drumkeerin Fair Day
Shane Mckeon had good
dry turf for sale