

The National Centre for Excellence in Furniture Design and Technology
GMIT Letterfrack Newsletter 2019-2020

Welcome to the 4th Newsletter for GMIT Letterfrack. This newsletter captures just a few of the events that have taken place during the academic year of 2019-2020 that highlights collaborations and opportunities that the students of GMIT Letterfrack have been involved with.



As with many colleges and universities around the world, due to the COVID 19 coronavirus the academic year was turned upside down, many efforts have been put in place in GMIT Letterfrack to continue the delivery of the programmes and to engage with students online. Due to distancing restrictions in place, many events that would have been recorded in our annual newsletter have not been able to take place however it's worth noting that many eventful activities did happen, we welcome you to read and enjoy our news.



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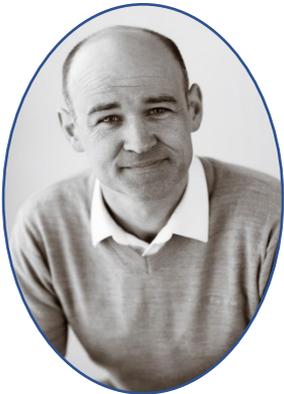
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Hello and welcome to this year's GMIT Letterfrack newsletter. We have captured many of the interesting and exciting events which our students have participated in. I hope you enjoy reading through our stories and perhaps even get an insight into the life of one of our students. It has been a busy year. Our students have been involved in a variety of activities throughout the year such as going on national and international study visits, student union events, competing in national and international competitions, green campus activities, playing hurling and football, to mention a few.

The arrival of Covid-19 impacted college life dramatically. Our students were so close to completing their final projects but due to the closure of the college were unable to. How did we adjust? All lecturing staff worked industriously and creatively to deliver their modules and assessments online. Follow up calls were made to students to 'check in' with them, to find out how they were adjusting to their new learning environment.

The commitment and team effort from all staff; Lecturers, Administration and Technicians on the campus proved to be stronger than ever, working to support each other in sharing skills in the online environment and making themselves available to help with any issues to ensure the academic year was complete. We are hard planning to have our Machine Halls and Bench Rooms in full motion come September, while working within the recommended guidelines.

Many students chose to stay in Letterfrack during the lockdown, saying they felt safer here and who could blame them, Letterfrack village is beside the Connemara National Park with stunning scenery and a peaceful atmosphere.



While our economy has suffered a massive shock, we are hugely encouraged by how many of our industry partners are looking to employ graduates to assist them in future proofing their business. They see our graduate's skillset as key to that challenge. Equally our teaching graduates are excellently positioned to be leaders within the education sector with their unique skills and the prospect of increased levels of online teaching for second level. For those who may be thinking about studying at GMIT Letterfrack, surely this is the perfect time for you to consider one of our programmes.

We very much look forward to welcoming all our existing and all new students back in September 2020.

Paul Leamy

Paul Leamy
Head of Department
GMIT Letterfrack.

Career Opportunities



Digital - Career opportunities

- CNC Programmer
- Operation manager
- Production line technician
- Quality control
- Automation
- Robotics technician
- Programmer
- BIM Technician
- Project Management
- Costing and Estimating
- Entrepreneurship



Design - Career opportunities

- Designer Maker
- Product Designer
- Kitchen Designer
- Space Planner
- CAD Design
- Procurement
- Prototyper
- 3D Modelling
- Project Management
- Costing and Estimating
- Entrepreneurship

Careers in Teacher Education

- Construction Studies / Materials Technology (Wood) Teacher
- Design and Communication Graphics / Technical Graphics Teacher
- Researcher
- Education Management
- Academic Co-ordinator
- Product Design
- Craft Technician (furniture)

Making - Career opportunities

- Bespoke maker
- Kitchen manufacturer
- Machine operator
- Technician
- Bespoke joinery
- Shop fitting
- Fitting
- Machine maintenance
- Project Management
- Costing and Estimating
- Entrepreneurship



Letterfrack

First Year's Welcome Programme

The Welcome programme got off to a great start on Tuesday 3rd September when we invited our 76 new students who had travelled from many counties around Ireland along with a few international students accompanied with friends and family to the Campus in GMIT Letterfrack for the Welcome Evening. This is an opportunity to meet staff and other students before the Induction programme begins the following day. The cohort of students are made up of school leavers, students coming from level five and level 6 courses and also mature students, this creates a very positive learning environment with the different age groups being able to share different skills.

To help students settle into life in Connemara, activities are arranged to encourage team building, develop new friendships and to inform the students of the necessary information they will need to help them through the year.

The students were invited to take a trip to one of the beautiful local beaches to explore their inner creativity, they were set a brief 'create a sculpture using only natural materials found on the beach' the results were impressive.

Located in the village of Letterfrack is an impressive Astro pitch which is open for both student and community use, a mix of fun games were organised by the Student Union that took place on the Astro.



From September 2020 we are offering a new course structure.

Students apply for a common first year, BSc in Furniture Design, Making and Technology GA974 (Level 7) GA984 (Level 8)

After year one, students choose their preferred degree option from the following:

- Furniture Design and Manufacture
- Furniture Making and Architectural Woodworking
- Furniture and Digital Manufacturing

Teacher Education

GMIT Letterfrack also offer an Honours degree in Teacher Education (Construction Studies and DCG) (GA980)

[Click here to see our virtual Open Day](#)

GMIT Letterfrack is the National Centre for Excellence in Furniture Design and Technology. Due to our reputation and award-winning students, our graduates are highly sought after within the industry and boast a 100% employment record upon graduation.

Please visit our virtual open day.



LETTERFRACK, CO. GALWAY

Basking in the beauty of Connemara in Co. Galway, Letterfrack is a small village beside Connemara National Park, Diamond Hill and close to Kylemore Abbey. Visitors and residents are drawn to Letterfrack by the stunning scenery and peaceful atmosphere. Students can avail of regular bus links to Galway (two hours by bus) and are usually able to live quite close to the campus in self-catering accommodation.

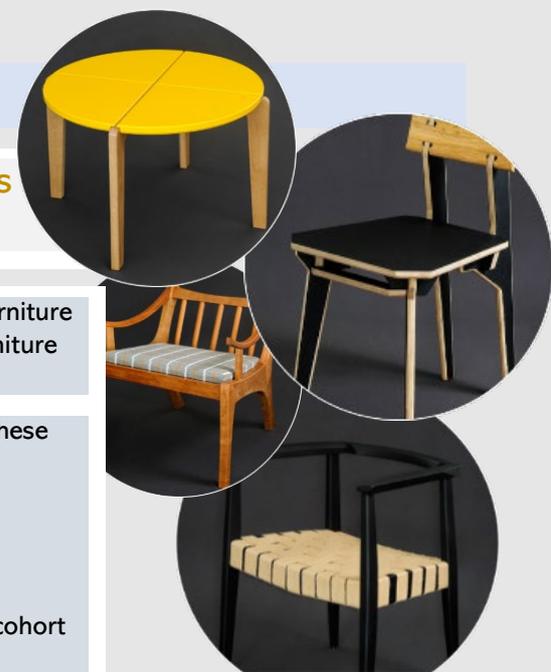
Thank you to ALL staff in GMIT Letterfrack. Your contribution with images, stories and of course the organising of these events all have contributed to this Newsletter. A special thank you to the Student Body, your participation in these events have created memories! Hope you enjoy looking back over the year and for those students who are continuing with us we look forward to creating more memories with you.

Awards & Achievements

GMIT Letterfrack students selected to exhibit at Prestigious International Stockholm Furniture & Light Fair

Students and graduates of GMIT Letterfrack's National Centre for Excellence in Furniture Design and Technology were selected to exhibit at one of the world's leading furniture exhibitions, the Stockholm Furniture Fair (4 – 8 February 2020).

The famous and prestigious Stockholm Furniture Fair in its 70th year welcomed these five students/graduates to display their work, Kay Woodcock from Letterfrack, Co Galway; Roscoe Holt, Claremorris, Co Mayo; Maciej Dubiel from Ballymahon, Co Longford; Conor Cremins from Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin and Declan Barrett from Kilcullen, Co Kildare are students/graduates of the Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Furniture Design & Manufacture at the Letterfrack campus. This was a fantastic opportunity for the students to expose their talents and to network with an elite cohort of designers from Europe and beyond.



The group exhibited their work (pictured) in the Greenhouse section where up-and-coming designers and leading design schools show their creations to future partners, producers and customers. Many of today's leading designers had their breakthrough showcase in the Greenhouse and many young designers' debut there resulted in their products going into production. To be chosen for this exhibition, the students' work was judged, and accepted, by an international panel of experts.



Following on from the generous support of the Irish Embassy in Stockholm, GMIT Letterfrack was also invited to participate in the Design Diplomacy event in the Embassy on 5 February 2020. This is a popular concept that was launched at Helsinki Design Week 2016 and has since toured in cities such as Tokyo, Berlin, Madrid and New York.

"We feel very privileged to participate in such a prestigious event", added Paul Leamy. "We would like to acknowledge and thank the generous support of our main sponsor the Irish Embassy in Sweden. We are also very grateful for the support we received from our campus partners Connemara West Plc., and from Conor Clarke, Detail Furniture, Johnston Shopfitters, MJM Marine Ltd. and Inspired Designs.



GMIT Letterfrack Lecturer Jeremy Madden says "It was a considerable honour and acknowledgement that the standard of work that our students produce is on a par with international standards of excellence. We are the first Irish college to ever have been selected to exhibit at this fair which was attended by representatives from some of the world's leading design universities and institutes."

GMIT Letterfrack Head of Department Paul Leamy says "Our presence at this fair helped raise awareness, internationally, of the quality of furniture design and making in Ireland and in particular in GMIT Letterfrack. This was an excellent opportunity to promote **GMIT Letterfrack as a destination** for potential international students to attend.



World Skills



Following the exciting news last year where GMIT Letterfrack had six students competing in the Ireland skills live finals in the RDS in Dublin with Jack Lynch coming out as winner of the cabinet making category, Jack then went on to represent Ireland to compete at the World Skills finals in Russia. Jack went into an intensive 12 weeks of training in preparation for the competition along with 14 other Team Ireland competitors in their respective skills area. The training involved intensive cabinet making skills preparation under the guidance of WorldSkills Ireland chief expert Declan Barrett as well as diet, fitness and mental training and preparation skills.

The 45th WorldSkills Competition was held at the KAZAN EXPO International Exhibition Centre in Kazan, Russia in August 2019. Jack travelled with Team Ireland and performed excellently at the competition. He came 7th in the world! Receiving a highly coveted **Medallion for Excellence** at the closing ceremony. A medallion for excellence is only awarded to those whose final score is within a very close percentage of the winners score.

Well done Jack! GMIT Letterfrack are so proud of you and your achievement for your hard work, commitment and focus during this competition. It also validates our title as National Centre for Excellence in Furniture Design and Technology to have our students compete so well with the world's best, a huge testament to our skilled lecturers and staff.

Scholarships

Every year, an Academic Award is given to 14 students in GMIT based on their academic merit. The award this year for achieving the highest Leaving Certificate points was presented to Thomas Quirke who is studying B.Sc. Hons in Teacher Education (Construction Studies and DCG). Well done Thomas.

In addition to this award, Barbara Doran who is currently studying B.Sc. Hons in Furniture Design and Manufacture received the Mature Student Scholarship. This award is open for all first year Mature Students to apply, the award is granted to just three students in the whole of GMIT based on their application detailing their own personal journey in returning to education in GMIT. Well done Barbara.



Bursary awarded

Flanagan Fittings are a furniture fittings company with over 40 years' experience in supplying to Irish manufacturers. Paul Flanagan presented a bursary award of €3000 to Ian Madden for achieving the highest-Grade Point Average in 3rd year. The bursary has been a huge benefit to Ian, a mature student in completing his studies and achieving his BSc. (Hons) in Furniture Design & Manufacture.

Student project display in National Museum Ireland



GMIT Letterfrack student undergraduate Philip Carey was responsible for the design and build of a replica 1950s kitchen for the National Museum of Ireland, Mayo. The kitchen was the focal point of the 'Kitchen Power' exhibition which showcases the impact of rural electrification in Irish homes. Philip undertook research as part of his Major Project module supervised by Dr Marion McGarry on his 4th year of the BSc (Hons) Furniture Design and Manufacture programme. The exhibition was opened by Mary Robinson in July 2019. The kitchen will be on display at the museum from July 2019-July 2020

Student Competitions

Students in GMIT Letterfrack are encouraged and given the opportunity to enter design and making competitions in Ireland and further afield in Europe. These competitions are an acknowledgement of the skills and ability of the students in GMIT Letterfrack, some winning prize money but also importantly is the recognition and networking this creates for the individual student.



W2W student competition



Congratulations to three GMIT Letterfrack students who were shortlisted and commended in the annual W2W student design competition at the awards night held at the BDO in February this year.

The students and their pieces were:
 Bosca Portable Storage - **Aodh Cunningham**.
 Vita Task Lead Surface - **Aidan Devine**.
 The Loop - **Conor Cremins**.

The competition in association with W2W, Grey Fox Design, Perch and Anois.org now in its 5th year receives over a hundred entries from students in Ireland and beyond. The challenge this year focused on the 'Circular Economy' principles, a topic which is very much at the centre of conversation today.

'Students were challenged to provide a design solution that facilitates an ergonomic, body-conscious solution, while paying particular attention to natural, aesthetic and biophilic features with the intention of enabling the worker feel in control of their immediate environment and demonstrate an appreciation of the social, physiological and psychological underpinnings for healthy workers when collaborating in groups 3 to 6 people'

<http://www.w2w.ie/news/w2ws-student-design-competition-results>



Irish Made Awards

Pictured left is Brian McGee of Design and Crafts Council of Ireland and Irish Country Magazine Editor Klara Heron presenting the Furniture Winner award to **Conor Cremins** of **Éalú**.

Conor's shortlisting in this competition was announced last summer, following on from this and the call for votes Conor was successful in his category being announced as the 'Furniture Winner'. The Irish Made Awards is now in its third year, the inaugural ceremony, in partnership with Kilkenny Shop, took place on Thursday, 26 September at Fallon & Byrne, Dublin.

Design and Crafts Council of Ireland, sponsor of the FURNITURE category
<https://irishcountrymagazine.ie/irish-made-awards-2019-456440/>





IDI Graduate Awards



Congratulations to GMIT Letterfrack student Roscoe Holt for WINNING the Product Category for his *Pure Line Chair*. These awards recognise outstanding achievement across the design spectrum in Ireland. Presenting the Category Winners prizes on the night in TU Dublin was IDI President Róisín Lafferty.

Congratulations also to two of our graduates who were shortlisted in the Product Design – Furniture Design category for the Institute Designers Ireland, Irish Graduate Design Awards 2019. *The Falls Chair*, Kieran McNeely, GMIT Letterfrack and *Tweak* Maciej Dubiel, GMIT Letterfrack.

Conor Farrell Award for Excellence in Design

GMIT Letterfrack and Farrell Furniture are delighted to announce the launch of **The GMIT Letterfrack Conor Farrell Award for Excellence in Design.**

In memory of Paul Farrell's son Conor who tragically died a young man this annual award is sponsored by Farrell Furniture in remembrance of Conor who was deeply involved with Design and Furniture.

This award will recognise the single most outstanding Designer across all programmes in GMIT Letterfrack with a cash prize of €500 and a perpetual trophy designed by Jeremy Madden, Lecturer and made in collaboration with Paul Coyne, Graduate of GMIT Letterfrack who is currently working in the school of jewellery in Dublin. Students are eligible to apply using designs they created as part of their study in GMIT Letterfrack. We are excited to announce the inaugural winner later this year.



The Ellis Award



'Unfortunately, with the current situation the presenting of The Ellis Award 2020 has been postponed, but we hope to announce the recipient in the new academic year.

The GMIT Letterfrack James and Mary Ellis Award for Excellence in Making recognises the single most outstanding maker across all programmes and years delivered at GMIT Letterfrack. The recipient also embodies the spirit and character of Letterfrack and the Legacy of James and Mary Ellis."

Kay Woodcock was the first student to be presented with this award last year, we are looking forward to presenting this award to another student to join Kay on the board soon.



Collaborations

Second year students studying on the B.Sc. (Hons) in Furniture Design and Manufacture in GMIT Letterfrack completed a project with the Office of Public Works (OPW) to design and make a 'Flag Memorial Vessel' which would contain the Irish flag and could be presented to the families of deceased former members of the Oireachtas on the day on which Expression of Sympathy are held in the House.

The OPW brief challenged the students to design and make an imaginative and timeless piece in Irish hardwood that embraces the sensitivity of its purpose while also enveloping and protecting the National Flag. The flag within the vessel is representative of one that would have flown at 33 The Mall, Waterford where Thomas Francis Meagher, the Irish patriot and US army general and Governor of Montana, first flew the tricolour flag on the 7th March 1848.

Applying research on the historical context of the National Flag and using information from the Thomas F. Meagher Foundation, the students drafted initial proposals where feedback provided by the OPW allowed refinement to develop and make final design proposals. On 30 January a presentation was made in Leinster House to the Ceann Comhairle and staff members of the Oireachtas, where all were delighted by the range, diversity and quality of the proposals put forward. A judging panel determined a ranking of proposals where the vessel made by student Maighr ad Bussmann from Ballinrillick in Co Sligo was deemed to be the top-ranking piece.

Credit: Anthony Clare, Lecturer, GMIT Letterfrack

Display Vessel



This Irish flag was raised over 33
The Mall Waterford, from where
Thomas Francis Meagher flew a
Tricolour for the first time on
March 7th 1848

Paul Leamy, Head of Department, GMIT Letterfrack, says: "GMIT Letterfrack is delighted to collaborate with the OPW in a significant and exciting project of this nature. As the National Centre for Excellence in Furniture Design & Technology nothing serves to illustrate this more than being asked to design a piece that could be presented to the families of deceased members of the Oireachtas by the Ceann Comhairle. On behalf of the staff of GMIT Letterfrack I wish to congratulate all the students on presenting such a fantastic range of proposals and particularly Maighr ad Bussmann for the exceptional piece she designed and made. I would also like to thank lecturers Anthony Clare and Davin Larkin and technicians Martin Kearney, Kevin Gyves and Daniel Collins for their support and guidance to students throughout the project".

Anthony Clare, lecturer in GMIT Letterfrack, says this has been a rich educational experience for the students. "To participate in a live project with a defined brief and client expectations affords the students a learning opportunity hard to replicate through normal class teaching. The students' level of knowledge and professionalism around all areas of client interaction and engagement has been significantly enhanced, along with their presentation skills. In a project of this significance the design and making of the final output is critical and this has further focused attention to all details in their final proposal. The students deserve great credit and they have been involved in an experience I am sure they will carry with them for the rest of their lives, added Mr. Clare.



Collaborations and Sponsors

GMIT Letterfrack are continuously working with partner companies and suppliers of materials and equipment to develop mutually beneficial collaborations.

The key advantage for all these companies partnering with us, is that our students, staff and graduates have significantly increased product and brand knowledge of their products by using them in their projects while in GMIT Letterfrack. Many of our graduates rapidly become decision makers within the companies they work in after graduation. Product and material knowledge is an important part of the furniture making process. It's a long-term marketing strategy for the suppliers and obviously we as an educational institution gain also. We offer all our partner companies the opportunity to come and give presentations to our students as well as erecting signage in the college to promote the partnership.



In December 2019 we welcomed the EGGER Ireland Team to GMIT Letterfrack. Terry Farragher, Jonny Donnelly, Emma Leslie and Vic Hodskins from EGGER UK. The team gave a presentation on their new materials, products, and future market trends to all FWT and FDM 3rd and 4th year students. It was very valuable for students to know about the advances in materials and current trends in woodgrains and board colours. EGGER is a leading global manufacturer of wood-based materials and offers premium decors, TFL and laminate products for architects, designers, fabricators, furniture makers and more.



This year, Egger have very kindly sponsored GMIT Letterfrack with a large quantity of Melamine Faced Chipboard (MFC) decorative panels and edging material. We use MFC for carcass and cabinet manufacturing particularly in our Advanced Manufacturing Technology module where students are instructed on the use of large-scale production equipment such as the Beam Saw, Edge bander and CNC workstation.



Mark Foy from Lacquerite in Tullamore visited the campus in October 2019 providing information on their wood finishing products. Both staff and students benefit from this relationship by receiving specific information on specialist finishing techniques and products. Lacquerite have kindly committed to supplying our campus with 500 litres of lacquer and paint annually which our students use to apply a protective and decorative finish to their projects.

GMIT Letterfrack 4th year students are hard at work thanks to Farrell Furniture in Ardee who generously supplied one of their fantastic height adjustable office desks to our 4th year research space. See more of Farrell Furniture products at <https://farrell-furniture.com>



Collaborations and Sponsors

In September, the first phase of a collaboration project with Flanagan Fittings began when they came to our campus to give a presentation to all 3rd and 4th year students and to launch a display kitchen in GMIT Letterfrack along with a BLUM boring machine which was kindly sponsored by Flanagan Fittings. The Flanagan Fittings team who travelled was Paul Flanagan, Kieran Divilly and Sean Commons. Thanks also to Donal Walshe, MD of Turin Components who supplied the kitchen Carcass units. The Kitchen is an excellent tool for learning and demonstrating with the cabinet interiors fitted out with the latest wirework, drawer systems, integrated bins and lift mechanisms. We were also delighted to welcome back GMIT Letterfrack Graduate Barry Goulding from BSG Design, who also presented on the day, to inform students about his company and the industry.

GMIT Letterfrack are looking forward to phase 2 of this project where we will see jigs, further fittings and a computerised piece to the boring machine being installed.



Thank You from all the staff and students in GMIT Letterfrack

MEDITE SMARTPLY is part of the Coillte Group, a market leading manufacturer of sustainable timber panels. The award-winning brands of MEDITE and SMARTPLY are renowned for delivering the highest quality products, customer-led innovation and industry leading customer service. Their sustainable supply chain and manufacturing processes mean their products are as environmentally conscious in their make up as they are in their application.

MEDITE SMARTPLY Technical Sales Managers Devin Fallon & Jason McMullan visited the campus in March 2020, having very kindly supplied GMIT Letterfrack with a range of high quality MDF products. We use MDF for a variety of reasons such as jigs for manufacturing, furniture components, substrate for veneering and more.





Irish Wood & Furniture Manufacturing Network



The Irish Wood & Furniture Manufacturing Networks second annual conference took place in Trinity college in October 2019, opened by Minister Heather Humphreys to a capacity attendance from all corners of Ireland including staff and students of GMIT Letterfrack. A well-balanced team of speakers delivered a series of excellent papers with the theme running through the Conference on LEAN manufacturing from Sustainable Resources aiming to achieve a Circular Economy. Both Neil Kerrigan from Enterprise Ireland and Des O Toole from Coillte emphasised the large volumes of timber coming from our forests and the opportunities this created for Innovation in Irish Woodworking. Among the speakers, Dermot O'Donovan discussed "The Evolution of Work-based Learning".

At an Industry Forum at GMIT Letterfrack in 2017, a shared vision was reached by GMIT, Western Regional Skills Forum (WRSF) and industry representatives to develop a roadmap to support and nurture this sector. Soon after, the Irish Wood and Furniture Manufacturing Network (IWFMN) was formally established, prioritising four key strategic pillars:



The IWFMN has grown from strength to strength, organising two national conferences in Galway and Dublin and facilitating a range of training and peer-to-peer learning experiences for Network members.

When Covid-19 arrived in March this year, it looked like all the work undertaken to date by the IWFMN might be compromised. However, since then the IWFMN has begun hosting a weekly online forum with industry members. The forum is designed to be open and constructive, where companies can learn from each other and share experiences and expertise to help overcome some of the challenges facing the sector.

Paul Leamy, Head of Department for GMIT Letterfrack says: "For GMIT, it helps us stay in touch with the industry and we have just completed a Training Needs Analysis with the WRSF for the sector. Understanding and meeting the flexible and work-based learning needs of the sector is now more crucial than ever."

Looking forward, the IWFMN has a number of funding applications in the pipeline and its focus is on supporting the industry through the immediate and medium-term challenges posed by Covid-19. In this regard, GMIT Letterfrack have initiated a project called Education and Work Integrated Learning (eWIL) which is focused on transitioning undergraduate programmes to become work-based as they move towards year-long work placements.

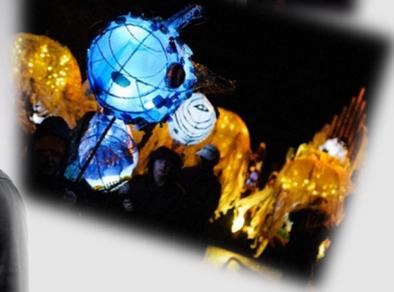
The network builds on an already well-established network of industry related companies that provide opportunities for students to go on work placement. Companies are also very accommodating when bringing students on study trips, most certainly a very valuable collaboration for GMIT Letterfrack.



After the Light Parade 2019



Well done to all First Year Students for their inspiring contribution to the 'After The Light Parade' as part of Connemara Environmental Education & Cultural Centre Sea Week which took place in the village of Letterfrack in October. Their response to this year's theme - 'Sustainable development and the climate crisis of our time' was one of overwhelming enthusiasm. In terms of community participation, this most topical theme concerning sustainability and the climate crisis, provided a truly aesthetical opportunity for the students to give voice to their concerns. They have shown immense creativity and sensitivity in making lanterns around the theme which provided a wonderful and thoughtful spectacle at the parade this year. The results were an outstanding achievement. It was inspiring to see the power of community with participation of students from the Crèche, local primary schools, Youthreach, VTOS, Brothers of Charity and GMIT Letterfrack all contributing. Huge thanks to Geraldine O'Brien, lecturer in GMIT Letterfrack for her enthusiasm and for co-ordinating this project for GMIT Letterfrack.

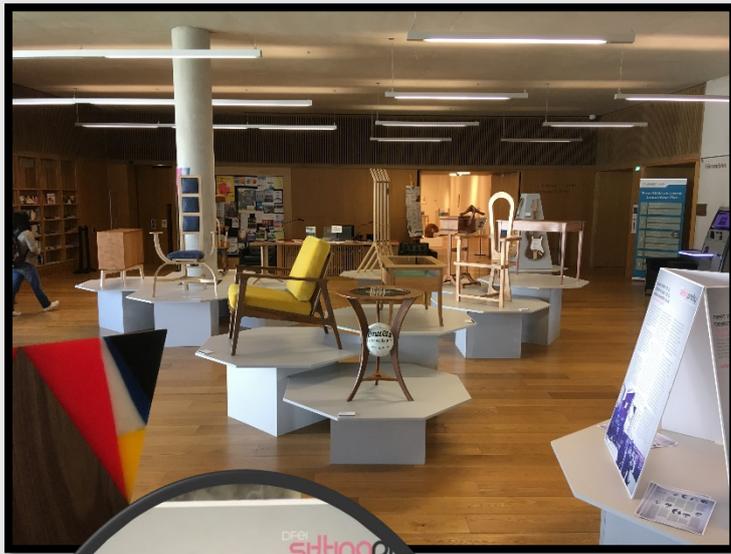


Student Visitors from France

Continuing on from very successful previous student exchanges, two students from the Lycée Professionnel de l'Ameublement located in Revel in the south of France arrived in Letterfrack in March this year, they had planned to join the FDM2 group for the next four weeks. The Lycée Professionnel de l'Ameublement is a specialist furniture making college providing specialised programmes in Cabinetmaking, Woodturning, Marquetry, Chair Making, Restoration, Upholstry, Wood Carving, Finishing, Furniture Design and Making and Furniture Production. The skills taught range from traditional techniques in art, design and creativity along with specialised skills in making from traditional cabinetmaking all the way through to 5 axis CNC and digital manufacturing technologies. They host 400+ students. Unfortunately, their time here was cut short due to the Coronavirus, we hope to be able to invite them back again in the near future



DFEi – Sitting Pretty Exhibition



Dun Laoghaire Further Education Institute – DFEi – opened a 10-year retrospective exhibition of furniture making in the Lexicon Library in Dun Laoghaire last May.

As the most prominent provider of Advanced Entry students to GMIT Letterfrack, a number of our graduates, present students Dara Howlett, Dave Nolan, David Fox and future students feature in this show.

A number of the pieces exhibited were made as part of the FDM course and due recognition of this is shown in the explanatory flats used in the show and much was made of the links between DFEi and GMIT Letterfrack in the opening speeches given on the night.



Careers Day

The annual Careers Day in GMIT Letterfrack took place in October 2019. It was a great occasion for all our students to see the opportunities available to them both for work placement and their future career paths. James Corbett, lecturer co-ordinated the event along with the GMIT Careers Office who facilitated the delivery of a CV Clinic for the students. We are especially grateful to all the companies who travelled to GMIT Letterfrack to deliver presentations. It was fantastic to see so many of our graduates representing these companies and it was wonderful to hear the graduates speak so highly of the qualifications and skills they learned during their time in GMIT Letterfrack. Graduate Oliver O'Neill, now working in Western Postform presented about career opportunities in their company. He was very complementary of the skills and qualifications he learned at GMIT Letterfrack. Oliver said:

"When you go to a company and say you graduated from GMIT Letterfrack they say when can you start. You only realise the value of that when you graduate. The skills you get open up so many career opportunities."

Other companies that presented employment opportunities to our students on the day included Sofasource, Leinster Woodcraft, Mark Lohan Kitchens, Allwood, MJM Marine, Castlebrook, Farrells of Ardee and The Deluxe Group.



Creativity and Innovation Conference

The GMIT Letterfrack Creativity and Innovation in the Classroom Conference 2020 took place on Wednesday 19th February at the Connacht Hotel in Galway. This popular annual event has gathered momentum over the years, as alumni joined forces with our own student teachers, and a collaborative community of professional learners emerged. This annual event is a forum for final year student teachers on the BSc in Education (Design, Graphics & Construction) programme to showcase their most creative pedagogies and assessment methodologies that they have practiced during their School Placement. The event is one of the highlights of the academic year in the GMIT Letterfrack teacher education programme, providing a rich insight into the journey of the emerging professional teacher. Dr. Patrick Tobin, Head of the GMIT School of Design and Creative Arts gave the welcome address. As well as presentations from final year students, this year's event featured keynote addresses from Dr. Cornelia Connolly and Kathy O'Sullivan, both of NUI Galway and Thomas Sheppard of GMIT Letterfrack.

CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION IN THE CLASSROOM INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION CONFERENCE		Event schedule
Wednesday February 19th 9.30 am - 3.30 pm Venue - Galvia Suite, Connacht Hotel, Dublin Rd., Galway Galway Mayo Institute of Technology		9.30 - Registration and Tea/Coffee
		10.00 - Welcome Address Dr. Patrick Tobin, Head of School of Design and Creative Arts, GMIT
		10.15 - Introductions, Kevin Mays, Programme Chair, GMIT
		10.35 - Keynote Addresses on Literacy and Numeracy in Irish Post-Primary Context, Dr. Cornelia Connolly and Kathy O'Sullivan, NUI Galway
		11.00 - Thomas Sheppard, GMIT Numeracy and Irish Graphics
		11.30 - Q&A
		11.30 - Break
		12.00 - Literacy & Numeracy Questionnaire
		12.15 - Break-out Discussion Groups and Feedback
		1.00 - Lunch
2.00 - Final Year Students' School Placement Proposals		
3.15 - Closing Remarks, Páid Lacey, Head of Department, GMIT Letterfrack		



Study Trips

Study trips are essential for students to experience in person the opportunities that may lay ahead for them within the industry, whether this be in the form of employment or for them to be inspired and discover the creativity within themselves to help them with their own studies and projects they are working on. Study trips are organised in great detail by the lecturers in GMIT Letterfrack, giving the students this opportunity to visit companies both in Ireland and further afield in Europe.

Industry Visit Ireland - October

3rd Year Furniture Wood Technology students paid a visit to **TopForm**, Creative Worktop Solutions company based in Co Galway who are a medium sized company supplying both standard and customised worktops to the Irish and European market and **Tippo International**, kitchen, bathroom and bedroom door manufacturer based in Co Tipperary as part of their Operations Management module. A common theme throughout the day was the drive to continuously improve within the furniture manufacturing industry through the use of lean operations.

TopForm are embracing a lean culture, a topic in which the students have been focusing on, on receiving a very warm welcome the staff gave an insight into how their operations are managed and talked of their 'lean journey'. A special thank you to Production Director David Prendergast and Lean Business Manager David Spellacy for their hospitality.

Staff at Tippo International very kindly hosted the visit and provided information to the students who were particularly interested to learn about the operations management techniques and strategies being employed at Tippo. They gave a tour of their new showrooms; students were able to see all the advanced technology and automation in use in their modern manufacturing facilities.

Credit: Kate Dunne, Lecturer GMIT Letterfrack.



3rd year students also paid a visit to Flanagan fittings for a tour of their facilities following on from the IWFMN seminar the previous day. Huge thanks to Flanagan's staff for being so giving of their time as our group was divided into smaller groups and given in-depth explanations and demonstrations of a variety of kitchen, bedroom and bathroom fitting and appliances throughout their extensive showrooms.



Industry Visit Ireland - December

2nd Year Furniture Wood & Technology students visited some superb manufacturers in the furniture industry to get an overview of their operation management systems and strategies. Students were encouraged to ask questions following a tour of the facilities. It was an opportunity to also see so many of GMIT Letterfrack's graduates thriving in these companies, an inspiration to current students. Companies visited were Mark Lohan Kitchens, Woodfit Acoustics, Farrell Furniture, O'Connors of Drumleck, BSG Design and Felder Group. *Credit: Sean Tracey, James Corbett, Lecturers GMIT Letterfrack.*

Mark Lohan's Kitchens

We visited the showroom of Mark Lohan's kitchens where we met Mark and two graduates from Letterfrack Darren Beatty (Operations Manager) and Peter Diffley (Design Consultant) who gave us a guided tour of their new showroom and factory. Two other graduates working at Mark Lohan's kitchens are Conor Gibbons and Conor Carroll who are both working in Production.



We would like to thank Damien Costello from Felder who demonstrated a range of features of the Felder range of woodworking equipment during our visit to their showroom in Roscommon

WoodFit Acoustics

On our arrival at Woodfit in Athlone we were met by graduate Mark O'Connor who gave us a guided tour of their facilities showing us some projects he is currently working on, one of which involves the manufacture and installation of acoustic panelling for an opera house in the middle east. Thanks to Anthony Denby for facilitating us and huge thanks to Mark for giving us such an informative tour of the incredible facilities at Woodfit Acoustics.



BSG Design

On day two of our visits we again went to see another past graduate of Letterfrack who is running his own business in conjunction with his brother; BSG Design in Trim. The company specialise in corporate and interior fitout with a unique ability for fast turnaround of projects. Their commercial work has included projects with some of Ireland's best architectural practices and fit-out contractors to deliver Ireland's best workplaces. We would like to thank Barry Goulding for all his time and for giving the students a tour of his Lean and dynamic facility.



Farrell Furniture

Brendan Farrell and a graduate of Letterfrack Brian Tierney met us on our arrival at Farrells Furniture in Ardee. Farrells Furniture specialise in office furniture and student accommodation fit outs. Brendan gave us an insight into how a company the size of Farrell's operates with over 100 employees and with multiple projects going through the factory at any one time. We would like to thank Brendan and Brian for giving the students a very informative tour of the factory. We would especially like to thank Brendan for giving us so much of his time and looking after our students so well. GMIT Letterfrack are delighted to be working with Farrell furniture on a new Design Award, **The Conor Farrell Award for Excellence in Design**. You can read more about this award in the awards section.



O'Connors of Drumleck

Our final visit brought us to O'Connors of Drumleck This company is one of the top kitchen manufacturers in the country. The quality of product and efficiency of their production system was inspiring. We were met by John and Peter O'Connor and a graduate of Letterfrack, Muiris O'Sullivan upon arrival. John, Peter and Muiris gave a very informative guided tour of their showroom and manufacturing facility.

It was great to see so many of our graduates from Letterfrack progressing so well with their careers in the industry and we wish them all the best in the future.



International Trip - Portugal

January 2020 International Trip – Porto in Portugal.

The 4th year Furniture and Wood Technology (FWT) study trip was a first for GMIT Letterfrack with a four-day visit to Porto, Portugal by students, and lecturers Kate Dunne and James Corbett. It took place between 13-16th January 2020. During the four day trip, hosted by the Portuguese Association for Furniture and Wood Industry (AIMMP) the students visited some of the leading manufacturing companies in Portugal including LAMINAR (laminated boards and veneer manufacturer), MADEIPOCAS (sawmill), X8 Solutions (chair design and manufacture), STRONG, RIBADAO WOOD BOUTIQUE (both wood flooring manufacturers), CARMO wood (wooden stake & outdoor furniture manufacturer) and CFPIMM (educational centre for the Portuguese wood and furniture industry).

This was the first time a group of GMIT Letterfrack students visited Portugal. It was a huge success so much was learnt about the Portuguese furniture/wood products industry and how it compares with the Irish Industry. To see first-hand lots of examples of topics that are covered as part of the Furniture and Wood Technology programme such as lean operations, automation, manufacturing techniques, CAD/CAM and project management proved to be such a valuable learning experience for all.

Credit: Kate Dunne And James Corbett, Lecturers GMIT Letterfrack



Eucalyptus logs ready to be processed into laminated board at Laminar



Madeipocas sawmills operated by the 3rd generation of the Poças family.

This sawmill is steeped in tradition using the current directors' grandfather's workshop to process mostly Eucalyptus trees. Expansion and developments mean the company is also involved in building domestic and commercial units. After an overnight stay in Porto, the second day of the trip started with a tour of the laminated board and veneer processing company called Laminar, which is in operation for over 60 years. Again Eucalyptus, a common tree found growing throughout Portugal, was the main raw material used. It was fascinating to see how the tree trunks are debarked and peeled to create the layers from which laminates were glued up and pressed.



President of AIMMP, Vitor Poças, showing the students his family's 3rd generation Madeipocas sawmills

Prestigious chair design and manufacturing company X8 Solutions.

Here the students got to see the manufacturing facilities used to manufacture these exquisite chairs that featured solid wood frames and beautiful upholstery. The attention to detail and expertise built up over the previous 60 years of operation was very evident.





CFPIIMM (educational centre for the Portuguese wood and furniture industry) Gave a tour of their facilities to the group. This centre prepares 15-18-year-old teenagers interested in pursuing a career in the Portuguese wood and furniture industry, unemployed adults wishing to enter the industry, and offering Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities to members of the industry. The day was concluded with a very interesting tour of Strong Wood Flooring. Advanced automated solutions and high quality were all features of this company.



On the final day of the trip, the group travelled to central Portugal to visit Carmo Wood that specialises in wood products for the agriculture, equestrian world, construction, tourism, leisure, security and telecommunications. This company had to rebuild following a devastating fire in 2017, and now operates a lean production system using a mix of traditional and modern production techniques including a robotic line.



Lastly, the group had a very interesting tour of Ribadão Wood Boutique who specialise in wood flooring for export mainly to the USA. The students were delighted to see their automated spraying line in operation.



aimmp

Associação das Indústrias de Madeira e Mobiliário de Portugal



A common theme throughout the week was the rich tradition of furniture and wood products manufacturing in the companies visited combined with advanced techniques and technology. All the companies visited are in existence for at least the last 40 years with the majority having 60 plus years of experience. A sustainable cradle to grave approach is applied by the industry with locally grown wood used where possible. The support and benefits of the Portuguese Association for Furniture and Wood Industry (AIMMP) for the industry was very evident in the companies toured. The CFPIIMM also plays an invaluable role training individuals for the industry to ensure they are efficient and competitive manufacturers.

GMIT Letterfrack is hugely appreciative of all the companies and their staff that afforded us such a warm welcome and a willingness to give up their valuable time to share their expertise and experiences.

In Ireland, Bill Vernon of the Irish Furniture and Wood Manufacturing Network (IFWMN) worked tirelessly to establish links between GMIT Letterfrack and the AIMMP. President of AIMMP Vitor Poças was so generous with his time and hospitality. Gratitude is also extended to AIMMP consultant Carla Borges who organised the companies and travelled with us to visit the companies. The trip was a huge success with the students, and lecturers learning so much about the Portuguese furniture/wood products industry, and how it compares with the Irish Industry. Examples of topics the students are covering as part of their FWT programme such as lean operations, automation, manufacturing techniques, CAD/CAM and project management were seen first-hand.

International Trip – Denmark & Sweden

We encourage all students to travel in GMIT Letterfrack and this year was no exception. We brought a group of second- and fourth-year Furniture Design & Manufacture students to Copenhagen in Denmark and also Sweden for a few days in January 2020. The purpose of the visit was to broaden the student's horizons and give them an insight into Scandinavian design through an immersive trip. The trip was planned over five days where they explored three topics, Education, Industry and Innovation. They visited Danish education facilities, industrial companies, retail visits, museums and the Ikea Museum in Almhult, Sweden. The trip was very informative for work being completed by students in their ongoing projects and research. It also helped establish links between GMIT Letterfrack and education and industry in Denmark.

Credit: Davin Larkin, Jeremy Madden, Susan Rogers, Anthony Clare, Finian Sheridan, Lecturers GMIT Letterfrack

On Wednesday, the 15th we all made the long trip to the hometown of Ikea in Almhult in Sweden, a two-hour train ride from Copenhagen. While there we visited the newly opened Ikea Museum to learn about the history of Ikea but also their ethos, products, materials and democratic design process. The students undertook a Democratic design workshop facilitated by Ikea staff which provided students with a fascinating insight into how a multinational furniture company approaches product development. This visit was a first for GMIT Letterfrack and we hope to be back again sometime soon.



On Thursday the 16th of January, the group made a visit to the Republic of Fritz Hansen at their headquarters at Allerød Denmark. This was arranged with a link we had formed with Walls to Workstations, one of our industry partner companies. The tour had everything from history to the present day. To see the classics of Arne Jacobsen and Poul Kjærholm and their development explained was fascinating. After this visit the group went to the master makers in PP Mobler, a family owned Danish joinery workshop, established in 1953, with a strong tradition for crafting design furniture of high quality. A complete workshop tour was a highlight for all seeing some of the best of Hans Wegner chairs being manufactured to the highest quality of craftsmanship. The day was completed with a visit to the Danish Architecture centre to view this year's Danish Cabinet Makers Exhibition which focused on sustainability.



On Friday 17th the students made a number of visits around Copenhagen. The first visit was to A. Petersen where students were exposed to Design and artisan craft in a boutique showroom, exhibition space and workshops. A fascinating tour with exposure to traditional materials such as eel grass for upholstery and hemlock fillings. A first time visit for us followed by another first, a visit to KADK (The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, Schools of Architecture, Design and Conservation, where some of their Furniture Design Students showed us their highly impressive chair collection where students had the pleasure of touching, feeling and sitting on real life classics. They also got to explore their studio space and workshops. The final visit of the day was to the Danish Design Museum, a must for any trip to Copenhagen. Some of the group also took the opportunity to visit the Danish National Skills Competition which was taking place in the city at the same time. This is the annual Danish Championships for Vocational Training with around 300 young people participating as they compete in 40 different skills to become the best in the country. On Saturday 18th students had some free time to explore Copenhagen, take in the sites or just enjoy what a capital city had to offer. A fascinating trip that has been one of our best to date.



This trip was funded by a Christmas giftware project now in its third year.

This year it was bigger and better with both the second and third year FDM students working in groups to design, products, package and sell Christmas Giftware to help fund their international study trip. Proceeds received were used to pay costs for product production, a donation to a local charity and subsidy for each of the travelling students.



GMIT Letterfrack Research

GMIT Letterfrack regularly undertake a number of research projects. Research is and has been an integral part of what happens at the GMIT Letterfrack campus for many years. As of September 2019, we have 3 full time research students, 7 members of the academic staff engaged in supervision, and 5 members of the academic staff undertaking their own postgraduate research studies. In addition to the research being carried out by students, GMIT Letterfrack currently engage with a number of external organisations to continue exploring and researching to enhance the knowledge, opportunities and awareness within the furniture and wood industry, these organisations include IWFMN, Mimwood, Innovawood and Pro Silva.

Joseph Bray - Churchill Fellowship / Ryecotewood

Joseph Bray, an undergraduate course leader from Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, travelled to Denmark, Ireland, Norway, Sweden and the USA to explore support for graduates to become skilled craftspeople and furniture makers. Joseph spent a little time in GMIT Letterfrack carrying out research.

"I wanted to again thank you all for your support in giving me such an incredible opportunity to visit your institution. It was such an amazing experience and in my new role as head of Wood School at the Sylva Foundation I am looking forward to putting my findings into practice."

Research Project Title: Investigation and development of viable 3-axis CNC machining strategies and techniques for Small Intricate Wooden Objects (SIWO)

Research Student: John Gallagher

Exploitation of the working properties and utilisation of small-diameter Irish-grown alder (*Alnus glutinosa*)

Research Student: Colin Marren

GMIT Letterfrack
A Case Study Analysis of the provision and Efficacy on Literacy and Numeracy Training in the Initial Teacher Training Programme, GMIT Letterfrack

Research Student: Patricia O'Reagan

You can find out more on the current research projects taking place by visiting the GMIT Letterfrack website.

<https://www.gmit.ie/furniture/gmit-letterfrack-research-projects>



Letterfrack

Sports News – GMIT Letterfrack Football & Hurling 2019/20

Gaelic games play a significant part in the traditions of GMIT Letterfrack. The football team, which is an amalgamation of the four year groups, put in an excellent effort this year. Preparations began in September where the team trained frequently on the local GAA and AstroTurf pitch.

During the league campaign, GMIT Letterfrack kicked off the session with a victory against GMIT Castlebar in McHale park in October 2019. Soon after we played NUIG at home which ended even in a drawn game in Letterfrack. This took the team to the quarter final where we played TU Dublin in Athlone where we were narrowly defeated.

The championship round robin began in early January where GMIT Letterfrack began with the neutral venue against the Royal College of Surgeons. The following week GMIT Letterfrack played Cavan Institute who were exceptionally strong and unfortunately, knocked Letterfrack out of the championship.



The hurling team began training on the 2nd of October and we played our first league game at home against a very strong National University Ireland Galway (NUIG) team. Unfortunately, we came out the wrong side of this tie it was nip and tuck until NUIG emptied their bench and pulled away in the last 10 minutes.

Our next game was against Tipperary Institute in Clarinbridge, after a very flat first half performance that improved considerably in the second half but wasn't reflected on the scoreboard unfortunately we ended up on the losing side at the final whistle, thus ending our participation in the league and bringing a close to our league hurling for 2019.



When the championship draw was made for the 2020 Fergal Maher Cup we were drawn in a group with The Cadets and Sligo IT.

We played Sligo IT under lights in the Connacht Centre of Excellence, after a first half of complete dominance playing with the aid of a stiff breeze, we failed to make it count on the scoreboard producing some unforgivable wides. We paid the price in the second half and lost by 2 points bringing an end to the team's participation in the Fergal Maher Cup.

January and February are very busy periods for third and fourth year students studying in GMIT Letterfrack with the teachers out on Teaching Practice and FWT and FDM students out on Work Placement in Industry which means they could be situated anywhere in the country but they always did everything they could to put themselves in a position to play for the college. Looking ahead to the 2021 Fergal Maher Cup competition we would be hoping to further advance GMIT Letterfrack reputation as strong contenders in this competition.



The team would like to specially thank [Central Technology Supplies Ltd.](#) For sponsoring two sets of jerseys for the footballers and hurlers. GMIT Letterfrack are looking forward to the 2020/2021 academic year and the upcoming hurling and football session.

Green Campus

The GMIT Letterfrack Green Campus committee continues to grow and recruit new members each year. Eve McDonagh, Green Campus Chair last year, passes on the chair to Matthew Mullan wishing him the very best of luck with the Green Campus committee this year. *"A special thanks to members of the committee. I've learned so much and made some great friends. Wishing you all the best in the new year!"*

A strong ethos remains in the village of Letterfrack on going greener in many aspects from tree planting to environmental improvements, energy saving strategies to raising awareness in and around the community. Here are some highlights of some of the work that has happened this year:



Water bottles

Following the successful bid for funding by Green Campus committee member, student Matthew Mullan, we saw the arrival of the new stainless-steel water bottles which were distributed to every student and staff member on campus. To further encourage the use of the water bottles, a second refill water station has been installed in the campus.

This campaign highlighted UN Sustainable Development Goal number 12 – responsible consumption and production.

Cake Sale



An impressive €240 was raised from the cake sale, it's safe to say the campus consists of students and staff who both love baking and who also love to EAT cake! 😊 This money will help to fund Green Campus projects for the year ahead.

An Taisce

Staff and students from Green Campus met with Dara Dever from An Taisce who paid a visit to GMIT Letterfrack and shared insights and great discussions into projects and activities into sustainability and the environment, particularly how we can apply these to the college. Dara also participated in the annual Green Campus Quiz and not surprisingly he did very well! Well done Dara!



Scrap piece challenge

This 'challenge' in its 2nd year took place in January 2020. The idea of the competition is to create something unique from the waste wood and material found in the wood bins in the machine halls in GMIT Letterfrack. This material is normally disposed of but has the potential to become so much more, using waste material for other added-value purposes is the basis of the circular economy. It is up to the students to make what they wish. There were offcuts of solid wood, waney edge pieces, MDF, birch ply, plus more.



Scrap piece challenge WINNERS 2019

Yuliya Karavayeva, Furniture Design and Manufacture student salvaged off cuts from a Manufacturing Technology project to create a functional, well-crafted laptop stand.

Stuart Anderson also on the Furniture Design and Manufacture programme created a piece of wooden wall art, reminding us that wood can be utilised not only in design but also in Art form.

Eryk Bijak, Furniture and Wood Technology student sculpted a beautiful candle holder showcasing his hand skills and great attention to detail.

Darragh Keady is an educational student and on placement last year he created shelving units using recycled materials. Great to see education students implementing the circular economy into their teaching. Thank you all for your participation in last year's challenge.

Scrap piece challenge WINNERS 2020



Eryk Byjak, 2nd Year FWT student
Business Card Holder



Nicholas Demangeat 2nd Year FWT student
Connect 4 Game



Jason O'Kelly 1st Year FDM student
Beer can holder



Seed planting

June 2020



December 2019

First year GMIT Letterfrack students planted acorns that were kindly donated by Coillte nursery in Carlow. The students learnt about the complete lifecycle from seed to furniture as part of their module Materials and Sustainability. Each student will take a sapling with them upon their graduation from GMIT letterfrack.

Mid May 2020



Early May 2020



Tree Planting

The annual Tree Planting event took place in February, the day stayed dry, staff, students and community members all joined in to plant an additional 200 trees to the already established woodland, now in its 6th year.





Green Quiz



The Annual Green Quiz went ahead this year despite the Coronavirus restrictions, it was held online using both Microsoft Teams along with the App Kahoot. The session was well turned out, it was great to engage again with other students, staff and their families of the GMIT Letterfrack Campus and of course to be enlightened with the knowledge around Global Sustainable issues. Congratulations to Kevin Gyves, the overall winner, closely followed by Féile O'Donovan and Dara Dever from An Taisce.

Connemara Green Festival – Inspiring Action for Conservation

Connemara Green Festival celebrated its 5th year in 2019 and each year it continues to grow and expand. The main aim of the festival is to raise awareness of the unique ecology of Connemara and raise funds for biodiversity projects and conservation of our local environment. The Green Campus Committee support this festival, this year GMIT Letterfrack delivered a Timber Drying Workshop open for members of the community to attend. Seeds were also planted by the students, Sowing the seeds for the future - collecting and sowing seeds from trees with children which was led by Alan Linnane, Arboriculturist and Staff and students from GMIT Letterfrack along with members of the Letterfrack Tidy Towns.



Graduation



Receiving the **GMIT Academic Achievement Award** were Ian Madden, Roscoe Holt, Andrew Bailey and Jamey Kingston.

15th November 2019, GMIT Letterfrack welcomed back 53 graduands along with their family and friends.



Special Award for **Maker of the Year** was given to Andrew Bailey and John Farrell and to acknowledge non-academic contribution to student life a **Special Award** was given to Roscoe Holt.



Receiving a Special Award Certificate of **Excellence in Teaching Practice** was Richard Dunphy and Jamey Kingston.

On behalf of the staff, management, Academic Council and Governing Body of GMIT we offer our sincere congratulations to all Graduates of GMIT Letterfrack, we wish you all the very best in your futures and please do keep in touch!



2019 marked the beginning of a series of Library Lunchtime talks at GMIT Letterfrack. Kicking off with Dr. Marion McGarry who graciously gave of her time to introduce such an interesting topic on **Irish Vernacular Furniture and Architecture**.

In February, the library was delighted to hear about 'The Journey' from Letterfrack College to the **Stockholm Furniture Fair** where five of our students had the opportunity to display their work. Presented by one of our own, Jeremy Madden who filled us all with enthusiasm to prepare ourselves for Letterfrack's next big undertaking.

In March, we celebrated **International Women's Day** in style with 2 LunchTime talks in the library on the talented Artist/Designer/Architect Eileen Gray with Dr. Marion McGarry & Sven Habermann from Conservation Letterfrack followed later with tea/coffee and treats in the Courtyard Café.

Library Talks



New Projects



A lovely project and collaboration between past and present students; our new furniture display cabinet, exhibiting tiny examples of famous and beautiful chairs made between the 20th and 21st century. Each miniature chair has information about the designer, the year it was made, the material it was made from and the exact dimensions of the original piece. A fantastic example of a 3-dimensional reference tool.



Events

Social Inclusion week

In 2019 Social Inclusion week was held between 14th – 20th October. Organised by Galway City Council; its purpose is to increase awareness and understanding of inclusion and diversity in County Galway and to tackle social exclusion, poverty and deprivation. The library was delighted to welcome Amach LGBT+ Galway for an Information evening session & Book club chat.



In March, we were honoured with a visit from a European Social Enterprise Group which included delegates from Serbia, Czech Republic, Romania, England and Wales. These individuals ranged in age from 18-50 years old who work or volunteer in some way with Young People. The project essentially looked at Best Practice internationally of examples of Social Enterprises that engage young people (aged 13-30).





Polar Express Storytime

Finally, to finish off 2019 with something a little bit special, we had a visit from Santa Claus and a trip on the Polar Express! Each year, our Teacher Education students are assessed on their teaching techniques in front of a 'live' class and the children and teachers from Letterfrack National School are only too happy to help. This year, our students wanted to say a very big thank you to the school by inviting the children from 1st & 2nd class for a very special Christmas event at the library. The students help to organise the event, dressing up as elves, singing carols, reading stories and handing out hot chocolate and of course, helping Santa give out presents to the children.

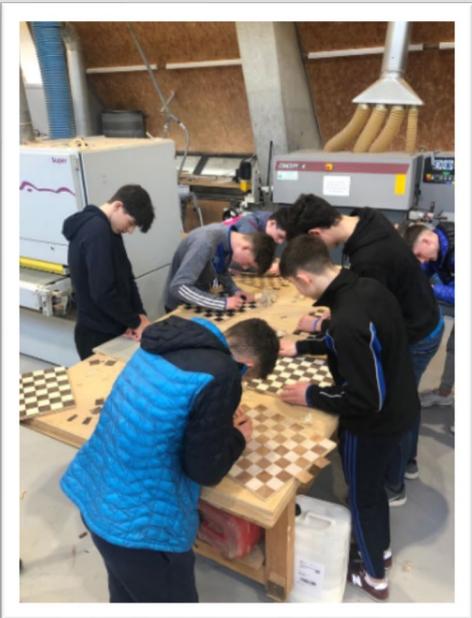


TY students



In February GMIT Letterfrack welcomed TY students from all around Ireland to participate in a programme over a week. The programme introduced the students to designing a project with the use of the CNC machine in the machine hall and with the use of CAD, computer aided drawings.

The students also joined the campus in its annual tree planting event which took place in the Connemara National Park. The TY programme is an opportunity for students to get an insight into the different learning environment that can be found in 3rd level education.



Student Union



GALWAY-MAYO

INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

The SU is a democratic organisation run by students for students.

We have full autonomy from GMIT, so we are completely independent from the college. Every registered student in GMIT is a member of the Students' Union. We work for students in a wide variety of areas:

Representation – Represent students on all levels throughout the institute from class reps attending SU council and Programme boards to full-time sabbatical officers representing students on Governing Body and Academic Council. We also represent students at a national level with the Union of Students in Ireland (USI)

Education – We handle any academic issues students may face throughout their time in GMIT whether it involves problems with exams, lecturers or just sourcing grinds if we cannot help you, we will find someone who can.

Welfare – The SU run welfare campaigns throughout the year to tackle issues linked to Mental, Sexual and Physical Health (plus many more) that students may face during their time of year. We also provide a confidential referral system where students can seek help for any issue, they may be facing either inside or outside of college life.

Finance – The SU have a direct contact with SUSI so if you are having difficulties with your grant then get in contact for a straight answer. We also sit on the committee for the Student Assistant Fund (SAF)

Events



GMIT

INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA NA GAILLIMHE-MAIGH EO
GALWAY-MAYO INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Letterfrack



Thank you to our Head Rep Elise Carey, all the Class Reps and the Ambassadors who helped with events throughout the year! Your contribution to college life is very much appreciated. We look forward to working with the students again for the next academic year 2020-2021