

News in brief



Butter label exhibit opens

A TOTAL of 87 butter label copies used in former Irish creameries went on display last night in the Cork Butter Museum, as part of a major new installation called *Butter Bricks*.

Created by butter label collector Mike Carey from Ballysimon, Limerick, the installation is by Cork artist Maud Cotter, *above*. Speaking at the launch, Simon Coveney TD, Minister for Agriculture, Food and Marine said: "I'm delighted to open the exhibition which in a unique way provides us with an insight into the history of the dairy sector, from the small creameries, to the dairy companies who subsequently went to on to grow and prosper."

Fashion show fun

SEÁN MURRAY'S on Main Street, Skibbereen, will hold a fashion show in aid of the Irish Cancer Society on Wednesday, October 26, at 8pm.

The event is one of the highlights of the Breast Cancer Awareness campaign being run by Seán Murray's. Tickets for the fashion show are available from Murray's on the night for €5.

Cork murder trial

A MURDER trial was due to get underway in Cork this morning. Timothy O'Driscoll from St Rita's Avenue, Gurrabraher, appeared before Mr Justice Paul Carney as the Central Criminal Court sat at Washington Street courthouse. He is on trial for the murder of Lee McCarthy at St Rita's Avenue, Gurrabraher, Cork, on Saturday, April 17 last year.

Men searched

FACE masks, mobile phones, masking tape and cable ties were seized by gardai when they stopped a car in Ballyphehane on Friday night. Three men who were in the car were searched and then released by gardai. A file will be sent to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Antique auction

AN AUCTION of antiques and fine art takes place tomorrow from 6pm at Woodward's Salesrooms, 26 Cook Street.

Catalogues are now available for €3. See www.woodward.ie.

Restore our historical Vernon Mount House

By KIERAN DINEEN

THE heritage and historical significance of Vernon Mount House risks being 'lost forever' if action is not taken urgently to restore the 18th century building.

That was the message delivered last night by residents who are concerned about the future of the premises which has fallen into a dilapidated state.

The building is currently in the hands of Vernon Mount House Restoration Ltd, which had previously been in discussions with the county council about developing the site and restoring the house. These talks ended in 2006.

More than 50 people attended a public meeting last night in Rochestown Park Hotel which was organised by the Grange-Frankfield Partnership.

The residents' group is pushing for the park planned for the former landfill site at Kinsale Road Roundabout to be connected across the South Link Road to Douglas and Frankfield via a pedestrian bridge.

The group unveiled their plans last night and stated Vernon Mount House and its grounds — which are currently used as a track by the Munster Motorcycle Club — must form part of the 'super park' proposals.

First and foremost, said spokesman Ger Lehane, the former stately home of the Hayes family, Vernon Mount House, needs to be restored and he pointed out it was a protected structure due to its heritage. He said if the owners would not carry out the necessary works then the council must act, through a Compulsory Purchase Order of the property.

He told residents that part of the roof had fallen in and they were concerned about the general state of the building.

"The plans for the superpark may take four or five years, but we may



Ger Lehane answering questions from the audience at the Grange-Frankfield Partnership meeting in the Rochestown Park Hotel last night. Also pictured is Ross Palmer, Cork County Council. Picture: Diane Cusack

have only four or five days — or even hours — to save Vernon Mount House," he warned.

One of the directors of the company that owns the house, Olaf Maxwell, also spoke at the meeting. He said he would allow members of the Grange-Frankfield Partnership in to inspect the property and that the company would welcome talks with the council again. However, he said to make any redevelopment viable — and to raise the €2 million needed to restore the house — the council would need to agree to allow 100,000 square feet of commercial development on the grounds of Vernon Mount House.

Conservationist Richard Wood gave an account at the meeting of the significance of the building which was the former home of Sir Henry Hayes who, after being deported for kidnapping became a 'Ned Kelly-like' character in Australia.

The architecture of the house is also significant, he said, as it was heavily based on masonic ideals. The house

is very rare in that it includes paintings by the famous Cork artist Nathaniel Grogan on the ceilings.

Cllr Deirdre Forde was among those who said the house should immediately be restored.

TDs who attended the meeting, Micheál Martin, pictured left; Jerry Buttimer; Ciarán Lynch; Michael McGrath; as well as Senator Deirdre Clune, agreed to ask the county manager, Martin Riordan, to make the issue a priority.



Local resident, Lillian Canniffe, at the meeting in the Rochestown Park Hotel last night. Picture: Diane Cusack

Public meeting told 30,000 would benefit from Douglas 'superpark'

MORE than 30,000 people and 13 schools would benefit from a new 'superpark' that would include cycleways and pedestrian access connecting Douglas and Frankfield with the city centre. Details of the ambitious proposal were revealed last night at a public meeting held in the Rochestown Park Hotel by the Grange-Frankfield Partnership.

The residents' group behind the idea of the superpark is urging both Cork city and county councils to come on board and endorse their proposals.

Central to the plans would be the development of a pedestrian bridge connecting the park already planned by the city council for the former Kinsale Road landfill site with Grange and Frankfield.

Ross Palmer, senior executive planner with Cork County Council, said that plans for a bridge were contained in the local authority's development plan as are plans to upgrade pedestrian access

and to install more cycleways. Laura Locke, head girl of Regina Mundi College in Douglas, endorsed the proposals and said currently just two of the 150 students in the school cycle in regularly.

She said these plans would make it easier for students to get to school on bikes and would cut down on the traffic problem in Douglas.

The Grange-Frankfield Partnership urged both local authorities to come together to work on these proposals.

Marie Collins, from Frankfield, said the area had suffered from having a lack of amenities over the years.

"It would be fabulous if the kids were able to walk to school. This needs to be made a priority," she said.

People at the meeting voted overwhelmingly to allow the Grange-Frankfield Partnership continue in their efforts to get the 'Superpark' idea off the ground on their behalf.