South Tipperary County Museum's 'Heritage in Schools Project' Wins for its 'Best Education & Community Engagement' Project in the 'Museum of the Year Awards' 2009

'The Heritage in Schools Project' has developed over three years and has grown from strength to strength. It has proven to be a great success in the community of South Tipperary. The educational & curriculum based project introduced over 14 schools and 630 students to positive and active learning in the classroom and in the collections of S.T.C.M. The project which is open to primary, secondary and post leaving certificate students aims to give student's of any ability the tools and knowledge to research the Great Famine in Ireland (theme changes annually), the local history of South Tipperary and the museums collection.

Students were asked to submit projects focusing on any aspect of cultural, social, built, natural heritage or economic changes of the famine times. As an aid to researching the famine, students were invited to visit the museum to participate in a series of famine related workshops and history re - enactments. This also gave the education officer, Julia Walsh & staff of the museum an opportunity to discuss projects types and exhibition techniques with teachers and students. The project has developed from a small local outreach venture into a large community exhibition of high standard models, short films, creative writing, research boards and folders. The Art Department of the Senior College were also involved. The students used this opportunity to complete their work experience and multimedia / design modules as part of their F.E.T.A.C. level five-portfolio coursework. The student's interpretation of Famine Victims created a strong and emotive introduction to the Heritage in Schools project exhibition.

The staggering response from schools and the general public has given the museums team a great sense of pride in its achievements and has guaranteed the projects longevity.

Marie McMahon, Curator, S.T.C.M.