

## Press Release - Banagher students sail new waters - May 31 2011

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### PRESS RELEASE

Date May 31st 2011 IMMEDIATE

START

#### BANAGHER STUDENTS SAIL NEW WATERS

As the first vessel edged under the Bridge and the Fleet turned purposely into Banagher Harbour, it was clear that these were no ordinary boats. These were the vanguard of the Heritage Boats that are celebrating the 10th anniversary of their association over the coming weeks.

The 6th Class students of Saint Rynagh's National School were eagerly awaiting the arrival of the fleet. In recent weeks they have been participating in a project centred round the Heritage Boats, their links with Banagher and incorporating the wider heritage and history of the Shannon River. The students, supported by the school principal Mr Fergal McMahon, class teacher Ms Catherine Dolan, local historian and teacher Mr James Scully and local historian Mr Jim Madden, explored the impact the River Shannon has had on the town and its hinterland over the centuries.

The Heritage Boats, now visiting the town's harbour, are the very same boats that many decades ago carried the cargos that were the lifeblood of the nation's commerce. Banagher was an important harbour and distribution point on the inland waterway system.

Supported by Offaly County Council and with the great help of renowned artist Ms Rosalind Fanning from the Tin Jug Studio in Birr, the students have documented their work in a unique publication called 'HBA 10 @ Banagher'.

With their many new young fans, the old boats of the fleet of the Heritage Boat Association are assured a warm welcome in Banagher in the decades ahead.

END

The students' publication 'HBA 10 @ Banagher' will be launched at Banagher Library on Friday June 3rd at 1.30pm. Members of the Press are very welcome.

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Heritage Boats arriving in Banagher Harbour