

Heritage Ireland

Issue 2 SUMMER 2015



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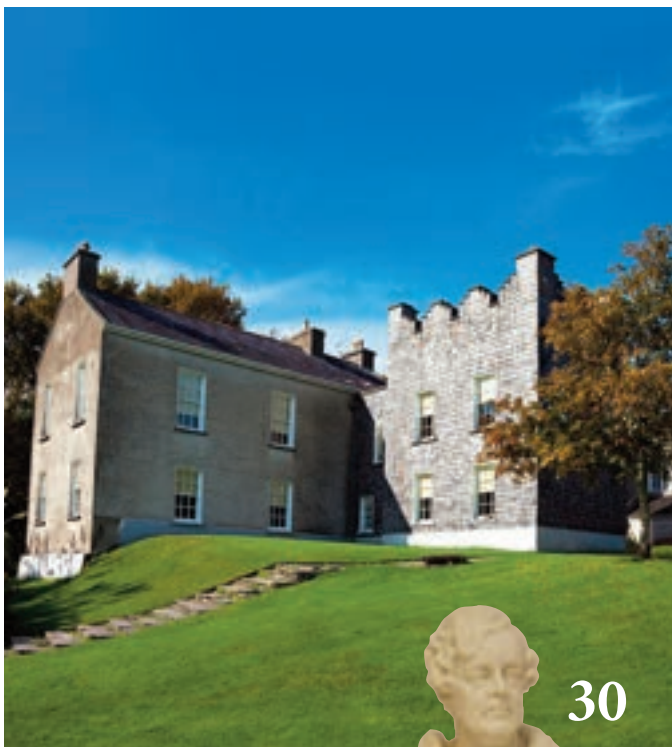
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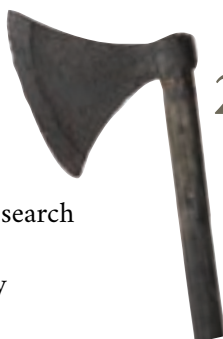
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welcome

Welcome to the second edition of Heritage Ireland, a collaboration between the Office of Public Works and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, bringing you news and features on Ireland's wonderful heritage sites and cultural institutions.

Summer has finally arrived and so begins a busy season for our heritage sites and cultural institutions. At the end of August, we are expecting over 400,000 people to participate in over 1,800 heritage events being organised as part of National Heritage Week. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to get involved, or to plan a visit to a variety of heritage sites around the country that have opened their doors over the summer months. To help you to decide where to go, we have features on a selection of heritage sites across the country, including Mellifont Abbey, Co. Louth, Daniel O'Connell's house at Derrynane, Co. Kerry, Portumna Castle, Co. Galway, Newmills Corn and Flax Mills, Co. Donegal, as well as the Wellington Testimonial in the Phoenix Park in Dublin.

We can also look forward to a new television series on RTÉjr next autumn that will bring Ireland's national monuments to a new generation, and we have a sneak preview of some of the events being organised for 2016 as part of commemorating the centenary of the Easter Rising.

We hope you enjoy learning about our past through the wonderful historic sites and events all over the country. Please visit our websites at **www.heritageireland.ie** and **www.ahg.gov.ie** for more information about our heritage sites and cultural institutions.



► Top: Knowth Megalithic
Passage Tomb at Brú na Bóinne
Photo © Tourism Ireland

► Below: Neolithic bowl, circa 3500 BC

Contributors



LINDSEY ILONA BRADY has worked with the OPW as a seasonal guide for 8 years.

She is an artist and teacher and works at Old Mellifont Abbey and Newgrange.

She has a particular interest in Medieval history.



KARL BRADY is an archaeologist working in the Underwater Archaeology Unit of the National Monuments Service. Karl has published a number of articles on early maps, medieval ship graffiti, early medieval ecclesiastical remains and shipwrecks and has also published two books on shipwrecks entitled *The Shipwreck Inventory of Ireland: Louth, Meath, Dublin & Wicklow* in 2008 and *Warships, U-boats & Liners: A Guide to Shipwrecks Mapped in Irish Waters* in 2012.



ADRIAN CORCORAN is Supervisor Guide in the Kerry region with responsibility for the guide service at Derrynane House, Ross Castle, Ardfert Cathedral, Garinish Island and Skellig Michael. He has many years experience with the Office of Public Works having previously worked at the Rock of Cashel and Clonmacnoise. He is a graduate of History and Old and Middle Irish from NUI Maynooth.



CILLIAN DE GRÁS is the Supervisor Guide at Dún Aonghasa and Teach an Phiarsaigh, Ros Muc. He studied History and Medieval & Celtic Studies at Maynooth University and Trinity College, Dublin. He previously worked at the National Museum of Ireland, The Hunt Museum and Castletown House, and has published articles on medieval history and literature. Cillian is currently researching Patrick Pearse's links with Conamara, in preparation for a new visitors centre to be opened in summer 2016. He lives on Inis Mór, with his wife and baby.



JENNIFER MCCREIA specialises in audience development and interpretation in heritage and she focuses on creating engagement opportunities for a broad range of audiences through rich and relevant visitor experiences. Jennifer has over twenty years' experience in education programme development, volunteering initiatives, as well as training, development and planning in the museums and heritage sector. Jennifer studied the History of Art at Trinity College, Dublin and holds an MA in Museum Studies from the University of Leicester, where she majored in interpretation.



EILÍSE MCGUANE is an architectural historian, specialising in the documentation of the historic environment. She has previously taken part in a number of NIAH surveys of Dublin City and Co. Monaghan, and is currently employed as an Assistant Designation Adviser with Historic England, assessing buildings, archaeological landscapes and parks and gardens for designation.



SEÁN MCLOONE: As Supervisor Guide Seán McLoone manages four National Monument sites, Donegal Castle, Parke's Castle, New Mills and An Grianán of Aileach. Seán derives great job satisfaction from his role, working with excellent guide teams, Visitor Services and Depot colleagues dedicated to ensuring that visitors to OPW sites receive excellent customer care and enjoy their visit. This is reflected in the very positive feedback he and his team receive. Having a keen interest in Irish history Seán has obtained a Certificate in Humanities from the Open University and intends undertaking a Diploma in Heritage later this year.



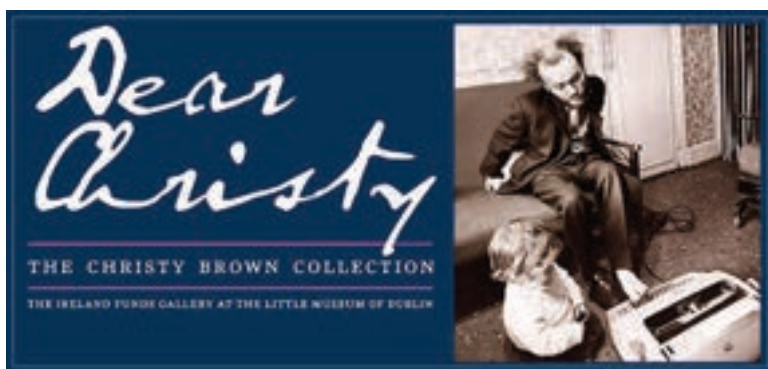
MARIE GIBBS: Supervisor Guide based in Portumna Castle & Gardens with responsibility for three sites, Portumna, Aughnacore Castle, Oughterard and Athenry Castle, Co. Galway. Marie started working for the OPW in 1994 and has remained enthusiastic about being part of the interpretation of these interesting and important sites. Each site has its own individual history while being part of a time line of the history of Irish Architecture and the social history of the West of Ireland.

Editorial Team: Chris Corlett, Michael Loughran, Brian O'Brien, Robert Corrigan and Noreen Finnegan.

Layout & Design: Sinéad Mallee

CHRISTY BROWN ARCHIVE ON VIEW AT LITTLE MUSEUM OF DUBLIN

The exhibition *'Dear Christy: The Christy Brown Collection'* opened in the Little Museum of Dublin on April 30th. It features Christy Brown's personal archive, which was jointly purchased by the National Library of Ireland and the Little Museum of Dublin at auction in London in 2014.



The archive includes many unique, previously unseen artefacts, including childhood mementos, unpublished poetry, nude sketches, a letter to Katriona Maguire (née Delahunt) declaring Brown's ambition to become an artist, his passport and a letter from John Banville describing *Down All The Days* as "perhaps the best Irish novel since *Ulysses*." Intimate, humorous and moving, the collection is a unique record of the life and work of this world-famous artist and writer. Christy Brown is remembered by many people as the character played by Daniel Day-Lewis in the Oscar-winning film *My Left Foot*. But the complexities of his life, together with his struggle to be understood – and taken seriously – have only recently come to light. Those complexities are explored in this brilliant new exhibition at the Little Museum. "We are proud to be exhibiting this extraordinary collection," says curator Simon O'Connor, "as it celebrates the life of a truly inspirational Dubliner."

The show explores the struggles of Brown and the ways that people around him inspired him to create his paintings, a classic memoir, four novels and four collections of poetry – using only his left foot. The exhibition runs until 2nd August 2015 in The Ireland Funds Gallery at the Little Museum of Dublin, 15 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin 2. www.littlemuseum.ie



NEW GRANT SCHEME FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH ON WORLD HERITAGE SITES

On the 22nd of May 2015, the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Heather Humphreys TD, announced she is providing €13,000 to the Royal Irish Academy (RIA) for archaeological research on existing World Heritage Sites and sites on Ireland's Tentative List for future World Heritage accreditation by UNESCO.

The allocation will be used to fund a new grants scheme for archaeologists and will be administered by the RIA's Standing Committee for Archaeology.

Announcing the new grant scheme Minister Humphreys said:

"UNESCO World Heritage Sites are deemed to have special cultural significance, and of course the UNESCO accreditation can greatly help to boost tourism. I am providing this small funding allocation to support research on our existing World Heritage Sites and the sites on Ireland's Tentative List for future World Heritage accreditation by UNESCO."

"The new research grant will help in the management of the archaeology within the core areas of these internationally important sites and to maintain and, where possible, enhance their Outstanding Universal Value."

"As part of the finished survey work, a catalogue of sites will be provided to the National Monuments Service in my Department. This will allow the NMS to update their records and to extend the protections of the National Monuments Acts to any new finds."

"I hope this grant will make it easier to produce the research needed to help Ireland's bid to add more sites to UNESCO's World Heritage list and to retain the status of our existing World Heritage sites."

NEWGRANGE

Winter Solstice Draw



There were 30,532 applications from the public to be at Newgrange for Dawn during Winter Solstice 2014.

All access to the chamber is decided by lottery. However, everyone else is welcome to come and stand on the outside of the monument.

Sunrise on the shortest days of the year is at 8.58am. The Office of Public Works opens the monument for dawn from December 18th until December 23rd inclusive. Admission on those mornings is free of charge.

Professor O'Kelly rediscovered the roof box at Newgrange during excavations. It is a small opening above the entrance that had been blocked up before he started work on the site. He found that the Neolithic builders of the monument had placed the roof box so that sunlight could enter the chamber at dawn at the Winter Solstice.

On December 21st, 1967, he was the first person in millennia to see the light of the rising sun illuminate the inner chamber of the 5,000-year-old tomb.

He recorded; "the effect is very dramatic as the direct light of the sun brightens and cast a glow of light all over the chamber. I can see parts of the roof and a reflected light shines right

back into the back of the end chamber."

Almost fifty years later, the Winter Solstice at Newgrange is a huge event. It attracts attention from all over the world.

Most of the application forms to be in the chamber for dawn are filled out by visitors after they have visited the site and before they leave the Visitor Centre. Many people from overseas also apply by e-mail writing to us at brunaboinne@opw.ie with their details.

The draw for places at Newgrange for the Solstice takes place at the end of September. Children from three local schools choose the winning applicants. They are from Donore NS, Slane NS and Knockcommon NS.

Fifty names are drawn, and each of those fifty people is invited along with a guest to attend on a specific morning. There are ten lottery winners and their guests in the chamber on each of the mornings. Some additional names are also drawn and placed on a reserve list. The reserve list is there in case someone whose name is drawn for the initial list is not contactable or else finds it impossible to travel to Newgrange on the date they have been assigned.

For Solstice 2014, lottery winners travelled from as far away as California and Chile. There is no guarantee that



► Top: Evening Sun at Newgrange
Photo © Tourism Ireland

► Above: 2006 Winter Solstice
© Alan Betson Irish Times
Photographer.

there will be sunlight in the chamber on any of the mornings, so travelling to Newgrange for Solstice dawn is a great act of faith. Despite the fact that we don't always have clear skies, visitors always say that it was still worth their while to be there.

There are very few events that we can share with people who lived so long ago. Standing on a hill in Co. Meath waiting for the sun to rise after the longest nights of the year is a special one.



SEAN SCULLY AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF IRELAND

Sean Scully at the National Gallery of Ireland marks the artist's 70th birthday. Born in Dublin, Scully, now living and working in New York, retains a powerful sense of Irish identity. He moved to New York at the end of the 1970s and established himself as one of the leading abstract painters of his time.

Responding to minimal art of the 1960s and 1970s, Scully has always striven to associate emotions and phenomena of the world into

his art, resisting formalism while rigorously reducing the means he employs – a reduced palette of colours and restricting himself to patterns of vertical and horizontal stripes. Scully has always managed to introduce extraordinary variety into his



paintings, while their titles often hint at associations with his life or surroundings.

This exhibition at the National Gallery of Ireland charts the two decades, the 1980s and 1990s and juxtaposes paintings from that period with works, principally multi-part photographic sequences, made over the past decade. The exhibition brings together a group of major paintings on loan from Tate, Arts Council England, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Kerlin Gallery, as well as works on paper from a private collection. It also features a single recent 'window' painting as a response to the earlier 'White Window', and a new photographic work in ten parts.

9 May – 20 September 2015

Millennium Wing – Admission free



Sean Scully. Photograph courtesy of Sean Scully Studio, New York



NATIONAL LIBRARY OF IRELAND ANNOUNCES LAUNCH DATE FOR NEW ONLINE GENEALOGY RESOURCE

**ALMOST 400,000 IMAGES OF
CATHOLIC PARISH REGISTER MICROFILMS
TO BE AVAILABLE ONLINE FOR FREE
FROM 8TH JULY 2015**

The entire collection of Catholic parish register microfilms held by the National Library of Ireland (NLI) will be made available online – for free – from 8th July 2015 onwards. On that date, a dedicated website will go live, with over 390,000 digital images of the microfilm reels on which the parish registers are recorded.

The NLI's Ciara Kerrigan, who is managing the digitisation of the parish registers, said: "This is the most significant ever genealogy project in the history of the NLI. The microfilms have been available to visitors to the NLI since the 1970s. However, their digitisation means that, for the first time, anyone who likes will be able to access these registers without having to travel to Dublin."

The parish register records are considered the single most important source of information on Irish family history prior to the 1901 Census. Dating from the 1740s to the 1880s, they cover 1,091 parishes throughout the island of Ireland, and consist primarily of baptismal and marriage records. Typically, the parish registers include information such as the dates of baptisms and marriages, and the names of the key people involved, including godparents or witnesses.



IRELAND 2016 CENTENARY PROGRAMME

Clár Comórtha Céad Bliain

The Ireland 2016 Centenary Programme was launched on 31st March 2015. The programme is an invitation to everyone on the island of Ireland and to the global Irish community to shape and engage in a diverse range of historical, cultural and artistic activities – all designed to facilitate reflection, commemoration, celebration, debate and analysis and an active imagining of our future.

The Ireland 2016 Centenary Programme is built on seven programme strands:

State Ceremonial - Over forty State Ceremonial events will take place, focused on remembering and honouring those who took part in the Easter Rising and those who gave their lives. The State Ceremonial Programme opens on 1st August 2015 with a State commemoration of the funeral of O'Donovan Rossa in Glasnevin Cemetery.

Historical Reflection - A range of history-based activities and initiatives, designed to deepen and broaden our understanding of the events of 1916 and of that pivotal period in our history.

An Teanga Bheo - An Teanga Bheo offers Irish citizens, the global Irish family and friends of Ireland from all over the world, the opportunity to join us in reflecting on the central place of the Irish language in the ideals of the Revolutionary Generation and in celebrating the language through a diverse programme of events.

Youth and Imagination - Placing children and young people at the centre of the centenary programme and integrating historical exploration with a range of imaginative activities. Planned initiatives include:

- **Proclamation for a New Generation:** An 'action learning' project which will invite all primary and post-primary schools to write their own proclamation for 2016.
- **The 1916 Ancestry Project** will invite all primary and post primary pupils to trace a family tree back to 1916.
- **Proclamation Day 2016** will take place in all educational institutions on 15th March 2016, including pre-schools, schools, further and higher education institutions. The day will start with the raising of the flag followed by a reading of the Proclamation.

Cultural Expression – Working with our creative community, our National Cultural Institutions and other arts organisations to reflect on our past, our present and our future, with a focus on 1916.

Community Participation – Local authorities are currently consulting widely with local interest groups, historical societies, community organisations, and other stakeholders in relation to possible initiatives and the development of county plans of locally based events and activities to commemorate the centenary of the 1916 Easter Rising.



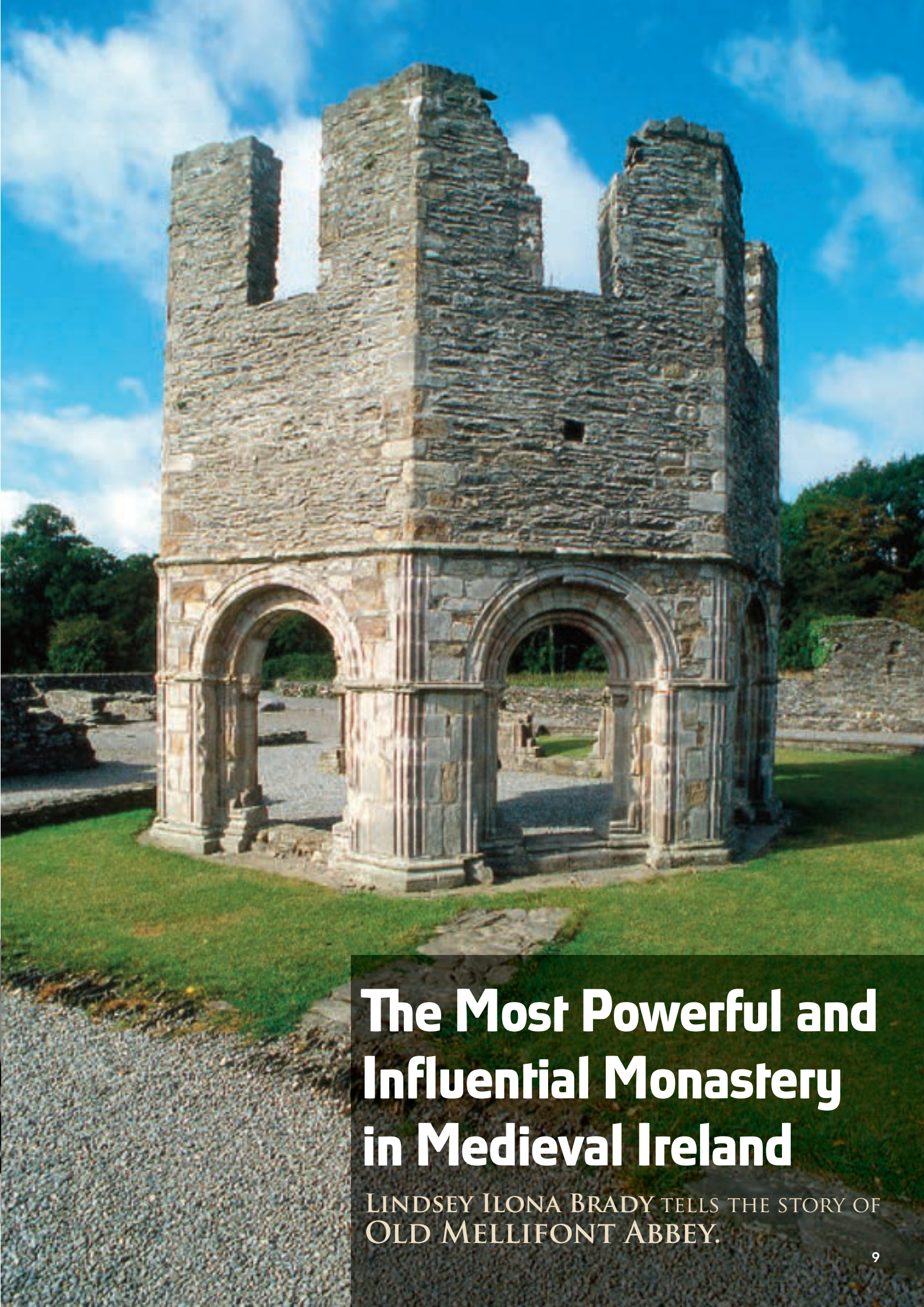
Irish Republic flag that was raised over the GPO on O'Connell Street in Dublin during the 1916 Rising, currently on display at the National Museum of Ireland, Collins Barracks.

Global and Diaspora – Ireland's Embassies and Consulates are engaging with the Irish Diaspora and local communities across the world to ensure global participation in commemorations and celebrations to mark the centenary of the Easter Rising.

Further information on the projects and events planned for 2016 can be found on the website www.ireland.ie



GPO 1916 © Keogh Photographic Collection, National Library of Ireland



The Most Powerful and Influential Monastery in Medieval Ireland

LINDSEY ILONA BRADY TELLS THE STORY OF OLD MELLIFONT ABBEY.



Mellifont Abbey

Nestled on the eastern bank of the tranquil Mattock river in County Louth, the ruins of Old Mellifont Abbey stand as testament to what was once the most powerful and influential monastery in medieval Ireland. Founded in 1142 by St. Malachy of Armagh, on lands granted by O'Cearbhaill, the local king of Airghialla (Oriel), Mellifont was the first Abbey belonging to the Cistercian order founded in Ireland. The arrival of the Cistercian monks heralded a new wave of European monasticism which over time replaced the earlier Celtic tradition that had previously flourished for centuries.

Following the ideals of St. Benedict's rule (poverty, chastity and obedience) the Cistercians lived "in a spot far removed from the noise and bustle of the world". They developed as a reform order from the Benedictine monks in 1098 and spread quite rapidly throughout France and Europe under the auspices of St. Bernard, the Abbot of Clairvaux. Clairvaux was Mellifont's mother-house. The Cistercians became renowned for their organisational skills and agricultural knowledge, which led them to become excellent farmers and land managers. This acclaim led them to receive over 50,000 acres of surrounding land in counties Meath and Louth through patronage, donated by local chieftains, kings and Anglo-Norman lords. The legacy of their "grange" system of land division has



© Tourism Ireland



The Octagonal Lavabo at Mellifont Abbey

today given title to one of the most celebrated sites in Ireland, Newgrange passage tomb.

The legacy of the Cistercian's grange system of land division gave Newgrange its name

Cistercian architecture is considered to be one of the most beautiful styles of medieval design. Its "pure" unadorned appearance compliments the simple "Ora et Labora" (prayer and manual work) mantra of daily monastic life. Although the remains of Mellifont are quite fragmentary, the outlines of the church and domestic buildings can be seen. Two buildings remain largely intact today, the thirteenth century early English Gothic chapter house and the octagonal Romanesque lavabo. The

lavabo is the unique architectural feature of Mellifont, the only one to be built in Ireland. It stood as a medieval washroom that originally contained a fountain used for both physical and spiritual cleansing. It is from this fountain that Mellifont or Melli-Fons (honey fountain) derives its name.

The lavabo contained a fountain used for both physical and spiritual cleansing and was the only one to be built in Ireland

Over the course of its monastic life Mellifont became the founding house of over twenty affiliated "daughter" monasteries, including Baltinglass Abbey in Co. Wicklow, Bective Abbey in Co. Meath and Boyle Abbey in Co. Roscommon. Its fortunes waxed and waned for 397 years until it was surrendered to the British crown at the dissolution of the monasteries by King Henry the VIII of England. On the 23rd July 1539 it was valued at £352.3s.10d, making it the wealthiest Cistercian house in Ireland after St. Mary's Abbey in Dublin.

Following dissolution the property eventually passed to Sir Edward Moore. He distinguished himself in the army of Queen Elizabeth I and was knighted in 1579, whereupon the dissolved abbey and lands of Mellifont were granted to him in reward for his services. He converted the abbey buildings into a fortified Tudor residence and the upper storey extension of the lavabo stands as

a reminder of the Moore family's architectural alterations. It was Edward's son Garrett that received the title of Earl of Drogheda in 1621 and, with Mellifont as his primary residence, his title carried down to the four further generations of Moores that resided here.

In 1603, during Sir Garret Moore's time at Mellifont, Hugh O'Neill, the Earl of Tyrone, submitted to Lord Deputy Mountjoy after the Nine Years War. It was this submission and the subsequent signing of the "Treaty of Mellifont" that was to forever change the course of political history in Ireland. The Treaty led to the confiscation of Gaelic lands and the Plantation of Ulster after the "Flight of the Earls" in 1607.

During the Battle of the Boyne in 1690 Mellifont was used as the headquarters of King William of Orange. Both the chapter house and lavabo were intact during this period. Today, they stand as monuments to the immense history created within their walls.

Visiting the ruins of Old Mellifont Abbey today it is easy to recall the wisdom of St. Aelred of Rievaulx, *"everywhere peace, everywhere serenity, and a marvellous freedom from the tumult of the world."*



Images, top left and centre:
Lindsey at Old Mellifont Abbey with visitors painting copies of original Mellifont floor tiles during Heritage Week.

Top right:
Musicians entertain in the grounds during Heritage Week.

Below:
Aerial photograph of ruins of Old Mellifont Abbey.



The Secret Garden at Fota House



TEXT BY JENNIFER MCCREA



Most people who visit the walled Victorian garden at Fota House in Cork compare it to the story in the much-loved novel *The Secret Garden*. Concealed behind high walls few clues are given as to what is hidden within and as in the novel a rusty iron door was locked for decades: beyond it the garden lay abandoned as ivy and brambles infiltrated the once beautifully ordered glasshouses and weeds choked anything left in the beds. Today Fota's garden has been reclaimed, thanks to the Irish Heritage Trust and its team of enthusiastic garden volunteers: neatness and order once more prevail in this thriving hub of activity and productivity. The restoration and re-use of this enchanting space has not gone unnoticed and in April the garden and Trust volunteers were awarded a prestigious Europa Nostra Cultural Heritage Award.

Fota's garden restoration story started in 2007 when the Irish Heritage Trust took over the property and just like the best novels it has a number of sub-plots that make it exceptional. Following the acquisition the Trust embarked upon a major programme of conservation work on Fota House and the walled garden. The conservation plan was conceived and managed by John O'Connor Architects and was carried out by a skilled team of local craftsmen and joiners from Cobh. Supported by Fáilte Ireland and private donations the result was of such a high-standard that the garden was awarded an Irish Georgian Society Conservation award in 2012.

'Conserving the buildings is the easy bit' says Kevin Baird, CEO of the Trust. 'What we really wanted for the garden was to restore the heartbeat of the place – bring it back to life and make it useful.' Not an easy task in the teeth of a recession you may think. However, as anyone who has read *The Secret Garden* will understand, it is the passion and enthusiasm of the people who care for and enjoy the garden that adds that magical heartbeat and this is exactly what has happened at Fota. In 2012 a small group of volunteers committed to work part time in the garden, their objective was to make use of this beautifully restored place to produce a range of organically grown plants to sell to visitors and the café in Fota House. The micro-business is now thriving and in line with the mission of the Trust to promote public benefit initiatives, a range of activities take place here that demonstrates and promotes sustainable gardening practice. Many of these activities, such as water capture from the roofs of the glasshouses, composting and seed saving, echo the practices of the canny Victorian gardeners who worked on estates such as this in the past.

The project has gone from strength to strength and the volunteers' pride in their achievement is justified and very evident. It has a greater benefit too. 'Volunteering for the Trust in a variety of roles not only





gives the local community a voice in how Fota is run but it is good news in the long term for heritage,' comments Baird. He believes that the more people get involved in heritage and the more accessible it is to communities, the more they will care for and feel proud of heritage. The result leads to a more secure future for buildings, collections and gardens such as Fota's.

This theory is proven at Fota. Today the garden is humming with enthusiastic gardeners who love sharing this wonderful place with their visitors. In addition the garden is paying for itself; it also provides a unique venue for community training and employment schemes and supports the employment of a full time gardener. The space also adds another fascinating dimension to the interpretation of the big house, demonstrating in a really tangible way how the estate was run as a sustainable entity in the past. However the real success of the Fota garden story - and this is very apparent when you visit the garden- is the level of participation, camaraderie and sheer enjoyment displayed by the entire Fota team. It is for these reasons that this unique initiative at Fota was singled-out for such a significant award, a happy ending indeed. www.fotahouse.com

Images above:

The same glasshouse a few months later: much of the original Victorian materials were salvaged during the restoration process.

Transformed from its once parlous state, this is one of the Fota glasshouses today: beautifully restored and productive. (Image Joleen Cronin)

Right

Organic salad crops grown in the gardens are served in Fota House café (Image Joleen Cronin)



Images, opposite page:

Flower border at Fota Walled Victorian Garden.

An example of one of the glasshouses before restoration.

Right:

Anne, Sally, Edwina and Bea: volunteers at Fota pictured with Finola Reid who is a consultant on the Walled Garden project.

Below:

Fota's glasshouses bursting with colour. The walled garden is open for tours and plant sales. (Image Mary Carroll)

Springtime at Fota House, Cork.



National Heritage Week

Discover the past. Build the future.

22nd-30th August 2015

Coordinated by:



CELEBRATING
20 YEARS 1995-2015

Working for heritage | Working with communities

The Heritage Council is the statutory body charged with identifying, protecting, preserving and enhancing Ireland's National Heritage. Over the last 20 years, the Heritage Council has worked with a range of partners to establish a local heritage infrastructure that is based on the vital connections between people and place. Such an approach offers immense potential in terms of Ireland's development and it is our ambition that the next 20 years will see this work continue to expand and engage communities across Ireland.

It's full steam ahead for National Heritage Week because this year from 22 - 30 August, the Heritage Council is inviting us to examine Ireland's past through the unique but often neglected perspective of our industrial heritage.

Our shared industrial past is a story of change, development and creativity and of the men and women who were a part of that story whether as mill worker, dock worker or the proud owner of a motor car. Industrial heritage engages all of us and has left a legacy in the buildings, records and memories of people across Ireland, a legacy that paved the way for how we live today. This National Heritage Week we are celebrating, sharing and enjoying aspects of this story.

National Heritage Week gives everyone the chance to discover Ireland's industrial heritage. From harvesting flax and making linen in Monaghan to navigating the Boyne canal in Meath to taking a steam engine ride in Laois, there is so much to see and do.

This year National Heritage Week is expecting over 400,000 people to participate in over 1,800 heritage events organised by 1,000 organisations, community groups, businesses and individuals. Events will include walks and talks, archaeological digs, historical re-enactments, demonstrations, exhibitions, tours and workshops.

Photographs –

Left: Castlecomer Discovery Park, Co. Kilkenny.

Below: Kilkenny Castle.

Opposite page:

1. Lifetime Lab, Old Cork Waterworks Steam Centre.
2. The Stradbally Woodland Express, Co. Laois © Michael Scully.
3. Athenry Walled Town Day.

On 22 August Lifetime Lab at Old Cork Waterworks will run a "Water Heritage Open Day", a family fun day themed on the industrial heritage of Cork's Victorian Waterworks. Throughout the day the team at Lifetime Lab will provide guided tours of the impressive engine and boiler rooms that offer an insight into the working day of a waterworks employee and map the role of water supply with the growth of Cork City.

Athenry's Walled Towns Day on 23 August is a free family fun event where history comes alive. The event will be held in various locations within Athenry including Athenry Heritage Centre, Athenry Castle and Athenry Park. Experience a great day out in the best preserved medieval town in Ireland.

Leave the present at home and step back in time as you enter Carlow Town Park. On 22 August experience the sights and sounds of prehistoric and medieval Carlow and take guided tours of the town's streets. Discover prehistoric pottery firing, stone tool making, smelting and music as well as medieval weaponry and dress. A number of walking tours will also be led from the park focusing on the town's medieval and post-medieval built heritage.





villages, buildings and landscapes. Hear the history, folklore, legends and tall tales that shaped Ireland.

From magnificent buildings to stunning landscapes National Heritage Week will open up some of Ireland's most incredible places to the public. It's a chance to get a new perspective on a well known site or discover a hidden gem.

National Heritage Week is also a fantastic opportunity to shine a light on the work of dedicated volunteers and their incredible community spirit. It highlights the abundance of great work that is carried out in all communities in Ireland to preserve and promote our natural, built and cultural heritage.

Most events are available free of charge. That is because the primary ambition of National Heritage Week is to raise awareness of our heritage and make it as accessible as possible.

National Heritage Week is a part of European Heritage Days, which is celebrated in over 40 countries across Europe. In 2015, 23 countries agreed to share a common theme to help raise the profile and awareness of the value of industrial and design heritage to people across Europe. Ireland will kick off the celebrations which will roll out through the rest of Europe in autumn 2015.

Be Part of It!



Kilkenny Castle will host a number of Heritage Week events including a talk on 27 August by Bettina Norton, OPW, about the Castlecomer coalmines, the connection with the Butler family and the influence of the mines and the Wandesforde family on the economy.

Hundreds more events will take place during National Heritage Week including many guided walks and tours. Local historians, geologists, academics and enthusiasts want to show you around their towns and



National Heritage Week:
22-30 August 2015.
 For more information visit
www.heritageweek.ie or call 1850 200 878





NEWMILLS CORN AND FLAX MILLS

TEXT: SEAN MCLOONE

"THE METAL FLOOR WAS VERY HOT SO THE MILLER USED WOODEN CLOGS TO PREVENT HIM STICKING TO THE FLOOR."

A mill has existed at Newmills since the 17th Century while a flax and corn mill has been located there as far back as the 1800s. In 1892 Patrick Gallagher purchased the complex from William Devine and so began the profitable business that lasted until the death of his son P.F. Gallagher in 1980. When Patrick bought the mill in 1892 the flax mill was working but the corn mill was not operating as a mill; it was used as a store only. Patrick restored the corn mill and installed a waterwheel about 1907. This is one of the largest working waterwheels in Ireland today. It is 25 feet in diameter and was made by Stevenson's foundry at Strabane in 1867. The location of the wheel between manufacture in 1867 and installation at Newmills in 1907 is, however, a complete mystery.

The wheel is powered by water from the river Swilly which is diverted a half mile upstream and directed to the millpond. The water is then carried along a headrace. The miller could control the wheel by opening or closing a trap door in the headrace. This was operated by a metal lever which extended from the small window on the gable wall. In turn this lever operated the trap.

A kiln was used to dry the grain with a furnace which was fuelled by mulled coal. This was used rather than turf as turf would flavour the grain. The grain was spread out on the perforated metal floor to a depth of 6 inches where it was turned and dried. When dried the grain was shovelled down the chute to the bottom floor. The metal floor was very hot so the miller used wooden clogs to prevent him sticking to the floor.

Then the grain was sieved clean and winnowed through

► Top image: **Corn Mill interior view.**

All images © Government of Ireland National Monuments Service
Photographic Unit

several shakers in the meal floor. Elevators containing metal buckets took the grain up and down through the system. At the shelling stone the outer shell of the grain was removed, passing on to a fan where the outer chaff was blown off. Then the elevator brought the meal up to the top floor where it was sieved and back down the elevator to the ground floor where it was bagged.

Sometimes the farmer could not afford to pay for the milling work. In this case the miller was allowed to mutter the grain, which means he held back 10 lbs of grain from every hundredweight bag; he used this as payment for the milling work.

The flax mill was re-built in the early 1940s. P.F. Gallagher took advantage of grants offered by the Dublin Linen Board which sought to increase linen production for use as part of the war effort in the production of camp beds and parachutes.

Before the flax arrived at the mill it went through a process called wretting. This meant that the flax was picked from the fields (rather than cut) and was gathered into bundles called beets. These beets were placed in a large lint dam and covered by slabs of stone. This process allowed the pectin in the flax to rot. After eight to ten days men would go into the dams, maybe neck high in water, and remove the beets which were then laid out to dry in a process called grassing. When the flax had dried it was brought to the mill.

The flax bundles were placed through rollers by two men, one of whom fed the flax through the breaker while the other man tied the broken flax into bundles. The bundles then proceeded down to the scutchers on the floor below. They inserted the flax into a series of rapidly rotating blades, a very dangerous process resulting in many injuries. In addition the dust generated was a health risk. The finished product from the scutching was known as live which went on to make very fine linen cloth. The scutchers were paid according to the amount of live they produced.

The Office of Public Works has restored Newmills to its former glory and today it is one of the finest examples of Industrial Heritage in Ireland. Guided tours showing the mill machinery at work and an audio visual presentation are available to visitors. Entry to the site is complimentary.

www.heritageireland.ie/en/north-west/newmillscornandflaxmills/

► Right: 'The Scutchers' exhibit at the Flax Mill.

Exterior view of Newmills Corn and Flax Mills, near Letterkenny, Co. Donegal.

The Waterwheel at Newmills.



A brand new TV series,
'Magical Sites', about Irish
archaeology for a young audience
began filming on May 11th, 2015



TEXT & PHOTOGRAPHS RTE

The series 'Magical Sites' is for RTEjr and will introduce Ireland's national monuments to youngsters aged up to 7 years old - and their families. Using a combination of visuals, sounds, music and drama in an age-appropriate way, the young viewers will discover the topography, structures and history of 15 key heritage sites. Sheila de Courcy, Controller RTEjr, is committed to exploring and reflecting the world in which youngsters in Ireland are growing up on the RTEjr channel: *"Throughout the country, sometimes in the most unexpected places, you come across traces of Ireland's rich history and archaeology. We want to introduce our young audiences to the excitement that comes with discovery of ancient sites and*

with the stories that they hold." She agreed an initial list of sites with the series' Executive Producer, Stephen Plunkett, who like de Courcy studied archaeology.

The two took a careful look at a long list of possible locations and in the end 15 sites were chosen from around the country. These range from megalithic tombs of the Neolithic period to medieval churches and castles. According to Plunkett *"we could have run the gamut of sites but, for a first series, we thought it best to explore a wide variety of places which the public will locate and enjoy quite easily, keeping in mind the myriad possibilities for further discovery at a later stage."* And so this series proposes to introduce small children to Neolithic

and megalithic sites, Early Christian Era settlements and medieval monasteries and castles – and the natural landscapes in which they occur. Many small children will not have had the opportunity to visit actual monuments in person so we propose to introduce these places to a new generation and also give them a glimpse of the original purpose of the monument.

Geraldine Creed is the director of the series: *"Every time you go to visit a heritage site it'll be magical. You'll really imagine the world of the people who lived before us coming alive. That's what the series is all about."*

Archaeological/historical material like this has never before been

presented in this entirely child-centred way on television. In each programme a group of children explore a national monument, often on their own. We see the monument and its geographical setting through their eyes. Because this audience learns through stories, each programme includes a short dramatic reconstruction illustrating some aspect of life as lived in the monument when it was originally built. For writer Dee Roycroft, this meant finding a story which small children could connect with and which was unique to each site: *"We are so lucky in Ireland, our history is literally embedded in the landscape. Each episode shows how children might interact with these sites; explore them, touch the stones, examine the carvings. And each one also has a moment of 'what if?' at its heart. What if this place came to life? What would you see? Who would you meet?"*

One of the very exciting elements the team has uncovered is the pride that local children take in their history and heritage. Accordingly, children from local schools and neighbourhoods will be taking part in the programmes and have entered into the filming process with great enthusiasm and a heightened awareness of the wealth of the archaeology all around them. 'Magical Sites' has been devised to meet the abilities, needs and interests of children aged under 7 and everything in the series will be age-appropriate and told from a child's point of view. The learning points will provide a springboard for further exploration of the sites with parents, guardians, friends, older siblings. The series will have the support of the multi-award-winning RTÉ Young People's production unit, which makes several hundred hours of programmes every year, and it will also feature on the RTÉjr website and mobile app, thereby reaching the widest possible audience. This is a very fresh, brave approach to the subject of archaeological heritage and it will offer something genuinely new and approachable for very young audiences. Throughout the planning stages the OPW has been very aware of the project's potential to reach the public in a new way and has been supportive of the project from the start.



► Images: Filming at Threecastles, Monasterboice, Trim Castle and Loughcrew.

'Magical Sites' will be broadcast on RTÉjr in the Autumn when it will also be available on the free RTÉjr app and the RTÉ Player. The series is supported by the 'Sound & Vision Fund' of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI).



ÓDARÁS
CRAOLACHÁIN
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BROADCASTING
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OF IRELAND



Lough Corrib Logboats

TEXT BY KARL BRADY

Lough Corrib is renowned for its salmon and trout fisheries, its beautiful scenery and the impressive range of ecclesiastical sites, ancient forts and castles that dot its islands and shorelines.

In recent years, a new dimension can be added to our appreciation of the lough with the discovery of a large number of well-preserved logboats beneath its sometimes placid waters, providing valuable new insights into the use and development of watercraft in Ireland over several millennia while also highlighting the rich archaeological potential of our inland waterways, and lakes in particular.

The logboats came to light as a result of hydrographic surveys undertaken by Trevor Northage, a marine surveyor who has been mapping Lough Corrib since 2008 with the intention of updating the mid-nineteenth century hydrographic charts of the lake. The side-scan sonar data collected during the surveys has also revealed a large number of newly discovered logboats and wreck sites.

To date the Underwater Archaeology Unit of the Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht has dived and investigated 14 logboats on the lakebed of Lough Corrib, ranging in date from c. 2,500 BC to the 12th century AD. A wide range of logboat forms are represented indicating both technological advancement in boat construction techniques over time but also that the boats were used for a variety of activities. Here we highlight one of the logboats from Lough Corrib, found at Carrowmoreknock.

The Carrowmoreknock logboat is one of the most impressive logboat finds from Lough Corrib and arguably even from all of Ireland. The level of preservation of the boat, the presence of well-preserved artefacts on board,

along with the beautifully crafted nature of the vessel itself makes this a unique and extraordinary find and would appear to represent a high status vessel that dates to the 11th century AD. The 6m long logboat is virtually intact with features which have not generally survived on previously discovered logboats, i.e. four intact seats and remains of two sockets in the gunwale to receive a pin to provide a pivot for an oar. The presence of seats, thole pin holes and two fragments of oars illustrate clearly that this boat was rowed rather than paddled.

Within the boat, some of the original cargo and belongings of the occupants or crew were also found, including three Viking style battle-axes with cherry wood handles still intact. An iron work axe, two iron spears, two oar fragments, a fossil rich stone and a carved red sandstone slab were also found in or around the boat. The red sandstone slab has the appearance of a rough out for a grave slab, or maybe it was planned to use it as a decorative or architectural feature on a stone church and it's likely that it was being transported to one of many nearby ecclesiastical sites, like Inchagoill, which are located around the lake.

The overall design of the boat and presence of weapons on board illustrates that it was not normally used as a cargo, fishing or ferry boat and with a full crew of four oarsmen and a helmsman there would have been very little space for cargo or additional passengers. It's possible that the boat belonged to a high status individual such as an important ecclesiastical figure, a local chieftain or one of the ruling elite with his warrior crew or a patron of the church gifting a stone slab to one of the local churches. It's also possible that such boats doubled up as a raiding boat or a war canoe, manned by well-equipped warriors who could move quickly around the Lough to patrol boating movement on the lake, exercise political control or carry out some of the numerous raids and naval engagements on Lough Corrib which are referred to often in the annals. Viking raids from Limerick are



► Image: Iron axeheads, Clydagh, Lough Corrib, Co. Galway. © National Museum of Ireland Photographic Department.

documented for the 10th Century, followed by internecine strife and warfare on the lake between the O'Connors and the O'Flaherty's in the 11th century.

The three Viking style battle axes discovered at Carrowmoreknock are presently on display at the National Museum of Ireland (Archaeology), Kildare Street, Dublin.

Acknowledgements

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► Images: Carrowmoreknock Logboats



Wellington Testimonial

Phoenix Park, Dublin – 200 years after the Battle of Waterloo

TEXT BY EILÍSE MCGUANE

The Wellington Testimonial is dedicated to Arthur Wellesley (1769-1852), first Duke of Wellington, an Anglo-Irish soldier and statesman, and one of the leading military and political figures of 19th century Britain. Wellesley was born at Mornington House in Merrion Square, Dublin, fourth son of the first Earl of Mornington. He spent much of his childhood at his ancestral home at Dangan Castle in Co Meath, attending school in Trim prior to his enrolment at Eton. Wellesley began his military career in 1787, and was appointed a colonel by 1796, serving in the Netherlands and India. Wellesley rose to prominence as General at the Battle of Vittoria in June 1813, defeating the French army, and eventually leading the allied powers of Spain, Britain and Portugal to victory in the Peninsular War (1807-14). Wellesley was awarded the title of first Duke of Wellington in 1814 and went on to lead the victorious Anglo-Allied forces at the Battle of Waterloo on 18 June 1815. The Battle of Waterloo is seen as a defining moment in European history. Wellington held a number of illustrious political positions, including the role of Prime Minister of the United Kingdom on two separate occasions.



- Top: Ink and wash drawings of the six shortlisted designs for the Wellington Testimonial.
- Right: Wellington Testimonial, Phoenix Park, Dublin.



► Above: Mornington House, Merrion Street (No. 24), the reputed birthplace of Arthur Wellesley in 1769.



► Top right: The three name plaques on the Wellington Testimonial: India (top), Waterloo (middle), Duke's Service to Civil and Religious Liberty (bottom).

Following Wellington's victory at the Battle of Vittoria in June 1813, a testimonial committee was founded in Dublin to initiate a public national monument in Wellington's honour, in order that he might 'enjoy the gratitude and applause of his contemporaries'. A committee was set up to decide the design and site of the proposed testimonial, which was estimated would cost around £20,000. A competition was organised, and models were made of six short-listed designs on a uniform scale, and exhibited at the end of 1814 at the Dublin Society's premises at Hawkins Street. The selected designs included two obelisks (by Thomas Hamilton and Robert Smirke), three columns (a Doric column by James Wyatt, and two Corinthian columns by Wilkins and Bowden) and a rotunda by Dr Hill.

Robert Smirke (1780 – 1867), an English architect who became one of the leaders of the Greek Revival style, was awarded the commission in December 1815 for his winning design of a massive obelisk, intended to be 220ft in height, which comprised sloping steps (20ft in height), a pedestal (37ft), and a tapered column (163ft). The pedestal was intended to have bas-reliefs on three of its four elevations,



► Above left: Obelisk on the Dangan estate, which apparently once boasted 25 obelisks and over 100 structures and follies, including grottos, toy forts, ponds, model boats, and ornamental canals. This obelisk is almost 45ft in height (13.5 metres) and was restored as part of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's Built Heritage Job Leverage Scheme in 2014.



► Above right: Wellington Monument, Trim, Co. Meath. The cut stone pedestal with Corinthian column is surmounted by a statue of the Duke of Wellington. It was designed by a local man, James Bel (1794-1872) while the statue was carved by the Cork-born sculptor Thomas Kirk (1781-1845).

and an equestrian statue of Wellington flanked by guardian lions to its other elevation.

Obelisks were a particularly popular form of public monument in the early-19th century, following the surge of interest in ancient Egyptian archaeology in the late-18th century. Napoleon's army carried out an impressive scheme of excavations during his Egyptian campaign in 1798-

1801, and laid the foundations for the study of modern Egyptology. It is unknown whether Wellington was consulted on the design of the Dublin monument, but he may have had a personal affection for the obelisk form, owing to the time he spent as a child at Dangan Castle in Co Meath, where the estate featured a number of obelisks and other follies.

Wellington Testimonial

A number of locations were proposed for the testimonial, including St Stephen's Green, the ground between the Royal Barracks and the river, the Rotunda Gardens, Mountjoy Square, St James' Market, and Merrion Square. It was chosen to erect the obelisk near the Battery Salute area of the Phoenix Park, due to its elevation, which allowed visitors commanding views of the city, and also views of the monument from the Royal Hospital at Kilmainham, where military personnel recuperated after the wars.

The contract to construct the Dublin monument was awarded to Cockburn & Williams in 1817, and the foundation stone was laid on the 2nd anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo on June 18th 1817. The stepped base, pedestal, obelisk and three statue pedestals were completed by 1820. Most of the money raised was spent on the masonry core and granite ashlar facing, leaving little or nothing for the proposed statues and bas-reliefs proposed for three elevations of the pedestal. Although the monument is an enormous height of 204ft (62 metres), it was built some 16ft (5 metres) shorter than intended.

The testimonial fund was revived in 1829, when Wellington passed the Catholic Relief Act during his term as Prime Minister. Work was resumed on the monument after Wellington's death in 1857, and the pedestals were removed. The bas-reliefs by J R Kirk, Thomas Farrell and John Hogan were unveiled in 1861, on the 44th anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone. The panels measure almost 7ft (2.1 metres) in height and 35ft (11.3 metres) in width, and were intended to be cast from the metal of a cannon captured at Waterloo, but were instead cast from gun metal captured during the Napoleonic Wars. The obelisk, which is faced in Wicklow granite, carries the locations of Wellington's various battles on each elevation of its shaft.

For a more detailed version of this article please see 'Building of the Month' (June) on www.buildingsofireland.ie



► Top: Perspective sketch of the Wellington Testimonial by Robert Smirke (1780-1867), dated 1815. It depicts the obelisk and base set on a truncated pyramid of steps. The sketch includes an equestrian statue of the Duke of Wellington on horseback (facing the city) flanked by lower pedestals surmounted with triumphal lions. The pedestals were constructed. However, due to lack of funding, the statuary was never created, and the pedestals were subsequently demolished c. 1860. Reproduced courtesy of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA20512)

► Below: Dangan Castle, near Trim, Co. Meath, seat of the Wellesley family, built c. 1750.



Inis Mór Monuments



Dún Eochla

CILLIAN DE GRÁS TELLS TALES OF THE MONUMENTS OF INIS MÓR



Dún Aonghasa

Images: Dún Eochla, Inis Mór and Dún Aonghasa © Raymond Fogarty

For as long as people have been living on the island of Inis Mór, it has been a destination for visitors. For prehistoric sailors it was a handy stop-off point on the journey up the west coast and a good opportunity to trade some copper in exchange for hides and dried fish. In the Christian era the island became a centre of learning, and prospective saints flocked to St. Éanna's monastery to study with the holy man. In later years pilgrims followed in the saints' footsteps, attracted by the promise of time off in purgatory and the forgiveness of their sins. For 19th-century Romantics Inis Mór was an icon of 'Irish' Ireland, an island untouched by modernity.

The most celebrated site on the island is Dún Aonghasa. Perched on the highest point of the southern cliffs, and close to the narrowest point of the island, the ancient fort dominates its environs. Whoever controlled Dún Aonghasa could control not only the island but the surrounding seas as well. Its massive ramparts would have been an intimidating sight for any trading ship looking for access to Galway Bay that was foolish enough to try and avoid giving the islanders their slice of the action.

There are two stages in the history of the fort. The earliest phase begins around 1100 BC when 14 acres were enclosed by two massive stone walls. This was the late Bronze Age, a period of increasing militarisation, when giant forts were being constructed all over Ireland and weapons form a major part of the archaeological record. Despite this, it was an age of conspicuous consumption and elaborate jewellery in bronze, gold and amber was highly prized, not least in



Teampall Bheanáin, said to be Europe's tiniest church. It was probably built in the 10th century, perhaps to house the holy relics of Beanán, a contemporary of St. Patrick's.

“Teampall Bheanáin is said to be Europe's tiniest Church”

In Mainistir is found Teampall Chiaráin, a foundation which prospered for 1000 years until the 16th century. There are several cross-inscribed stones, one of which seems to be an elaborate sundial. Local tradition says that any piece of fabric passed through the hole in the top will cure sore limbs!



“Na Seacht dTeapail, where St. Breacán is said to have expelled a pagan deity and taken over his site”

Perhaps the most important church site is Na Seacht dTeapail, the seven churches, where St. Breacán is said to have expelled a pagan deity and taken over his site. Today the graveyard contains a variety of medieval buildings, fragments of three high-crosses and a grave marked with a slab which reads 'VII Romani', said to be the resting place of Roman pilgrims to Inis Mór.

Nearby is Clochán na Carraige, a remarkable stone beehive hut, built using the same corbelling technique seen in Newgrange. This is said to have been temporary accommodation for medieval pilgrims visiting Na Seacht Teapail; therefore Clochán na Carraige may be the island's first B&B!

Caisleán Aircín stands testament to the island's more recent history. The castle faces out onto Cill Éinne harbour, which was the island's main port until the 19th century. It dates from A.D.1651 when Cromwell's victorious forces took control of Galway and stationed a force of 100 men on the island to guard access to the bay. Indeed even today the castle is known locally as 'Ballái Chromaill', Cromwell's walls. It was used as a prison for outlawed Catholic priests for a period in the 1650s, but was rarely occupied after 1700.

Images: Dún Eochla (top), Teampall Bheanáin, 'Sun dial' in Teampall Chiaráin (above)

neighbouring Co. Clare where one of the highest concentrations of Late Bronze Age jewellery has been discovered. Excavations at Dún Aonghasa revealed stone moulds that show at least some of this jewellery was produced on Inis Mór.

Archaeologists also discovered a hoard of hollow bronze rings, buried close to the cliff edge. This type of ring is unique to Ireland but their function is unknown. Were they buried to keep them safe? Or was their deposition an act of devotion, an offering to the gods of sea and sky, in whose domain Dún Aonghasa was situated?

The second stage in the history of the fort begins c.800 AD when the ancient walls were strengthened and added to. Today the inner wall stands 5m tall and almost 6m wide. An impressive *cheveaux de fris* was added, a dense band of jagged, upright stones,

surrounding the fort from cliff to cliff, making Dún Aonghasa an even more intimidating proposition for any would-be invaders.

Even though Dún Aonghasa is the most famous site on the island Inis Mór has an incredible wealth of archaeology besides. There are three other stone forts on the island, Dún Eognachta in the west, Dún Eochla in the middle and Dúchathair in the east. They date from the early medieval period and represent an incredible investment of blood, sweat and tears by their builders.

Then there are the medieval remains. Teaghlach Éinne is a church on the site of St. Éanna's monastery. Nearby are the base of a round tower and the remains of a high cross, symbols of the site's past status and importance. Perched on a ridge overlooking Cill Éinne harbour is



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SKELLIG MICHAEL

TEXT BY FRANK SHALVEY

Skellig Michael is one of Ireland's two World Heritage sites and is the stunning location for one of the most awe-inspiring and remote of the Monastic sites managed by the National Monuments Service of the OPW.

Located 12 km out in the Atlantic off the south-west Kerry coast, the Skellig as it is known (and its sister island the Little Skellig) are a favourite visitor destination and, despite their relative remoteness and difficulties with access, attract more than 12,000 visitors a year and many more sightseers who circumnavigate them and view them from the sea. Skellig Michael, as well as being a National Monument and a World Heritage site, is also a Special Conservation Area for birds and is home to many varieties of seabirds; visitors to the Island can easily view close up the thousands of puffins, guillemots, gannets and kittiwakes that inhabit the rocky crags and crevices.

Access to the Skellig is only available by boat and a number of local boatmen provide services to bring visitors from Portmagee in Co. Kerry, the main point of departure from the mainland. The sea crossing can often be difficult and access is by no means guaranteed, as the seas in the Irish South-west are often quite rough and unpredictable. Those lucky visitors who make it, however, will be rewarded with a unique glimpse of Ireland's most stunning monastic hermitage, with its drystone beehive huts perched

on top of the North peak vividly demonstrating how the monks lived, worked and prayed in this most remote and seemingly inhospitable of locations.

During the visitor season (usually from Mid May to the end of September) OPW guides live on the Island and, as well as providing essential safety management, they recount for visitors the story of the Skellig from earliest times (about 1200 BC) right up to the present, portraying the unique hardships of living on the Island and the devotion of the monks.

Visitors must, after disembarking at the Islands' single small pier, journey along the Lighthouse Road, the 19th century access around the foot of the Island which eventually leads to the Commissioners of Irish Lights Lighthouse at the south-western end of Skellig. About 10 - 15 minutes from the pier, walkers come to the small gathering area at



the base of the South steps, one of the three traditional points of access used by monks to get to the monastery on the main peak and the only one accessible to modern visitors. And it is here, after a final safety assessment by guides, that the demanding climb to the monastery site begins.

Approximately 620 natural stone steps, fashioned hundreds of years ago by the monks, lead upwards to the monument, switching sharply back and forth at various intervals as the route winds its way up the steep slope. Along the way to the monastery, puffins, one of the main bird species who inhabit the Island, sit in close proximity to the steps, looking on calmly as the visitors make their way ever upwards. Visitors are constantly astonished - and charmed - by how seemingly calm these birds are in the presence of humans. The puffins present many opportunities for wonderful photographs as they sit on rocks close to their nesting sites just off the steps, but visitors need to take care as striving for a better angle can sometimes lead the unwary to miss their footing, which is never desirable at these heights.

The safety of visitors to Skellig Michael is a paramount concern and a significant effort is made to make them aware in advance of how to properly prepare for their time on the island. The OPW have produced a safety film which is widely available to view online (see www.HeritageIreland.ie/en/skelligmichael/) and all people intending to make a trip are advised to see this in advance and to then listen carefully to the guide's safety advice once they have actually journeyed to the site.

Because of the unique challenge involved in managing so many visitors to this location, the OPW have decided, during the 2015 season, to host a special Workshop by the International Visitor Safety in the Countryside Group (see <http://vscg.co.uk/>) in June. The international participants, many coming from heritage organisations in the UK and Scotland, and an accompanying number of Irish organisations who are members of the Irish Chapter of VSCG, will visit the island to study at first hand how the OPW deals with visitor risk at Skellig Michael and how it manages the challenges and hazards involved in working in such a rugged terrain open to visitors. Skellig Michael has an unfortunate history in that there have been a number of fatalities in recent years and even a relatively minor fall at the site can result in potentially serious injuries because of the steep slopes and the heights involved.

Even though Skellig Michael remains one of the most difficult of OPW's Heritage sites to access, it remains - perhaps partly because of the challenge involved in getting there - a truly wonderful experience for visitors. It is difficult, once you have made the crossing, not to be both awestruck and moved by the story of the monks who, so many hundreds of years ago, put aside their fears and came in their small boats to make this their home. Visit Skellig Michael and you will be left with a memory that you will cherish forever - Ireland's greatest island hermitage.



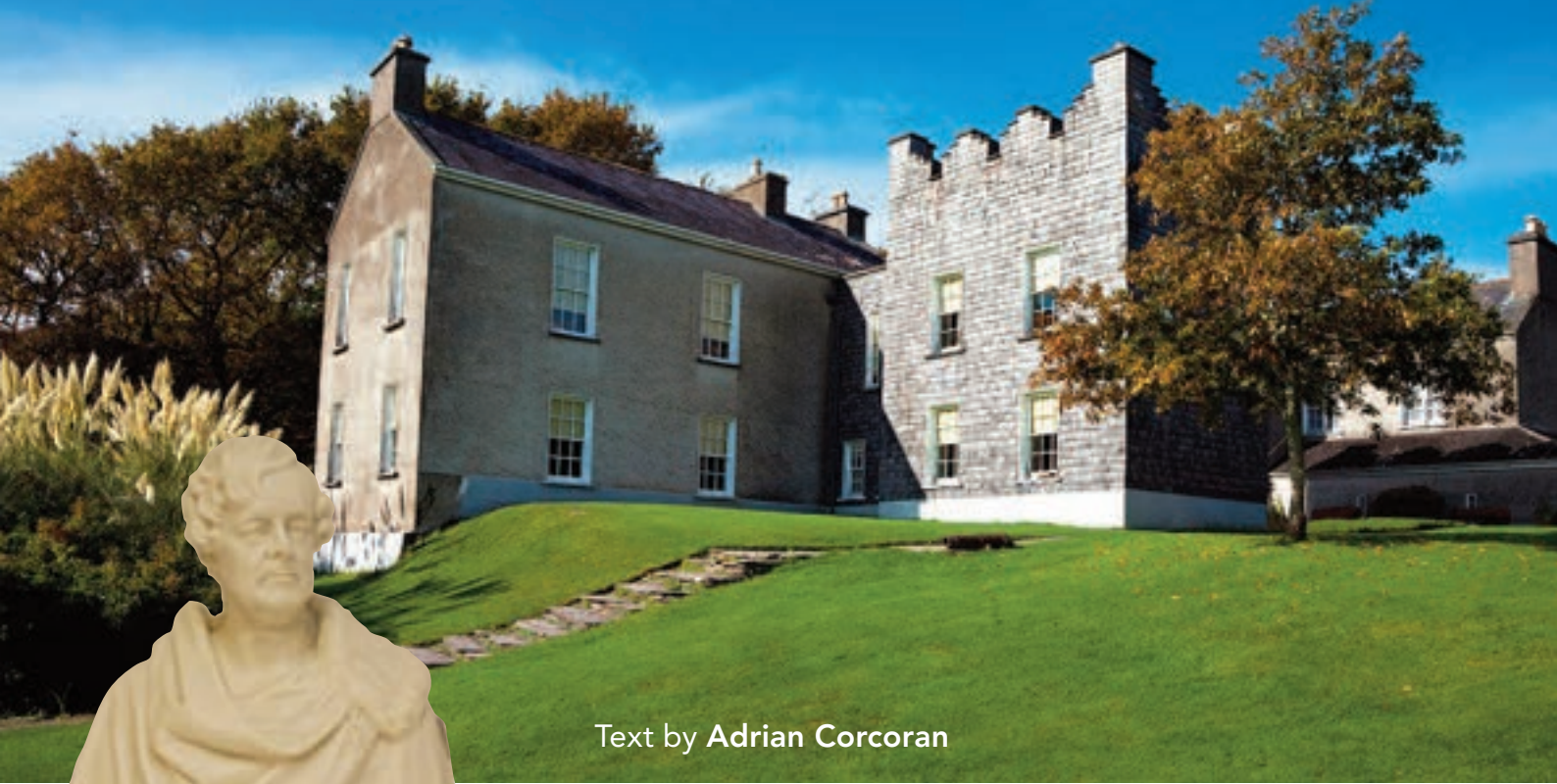
Images: Opposite page - A visit to the Monastery will entail a climb of 618 steps.

Top: Skellig Michael aerial view. © Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government

Centre: Sixth Century Monastic Settlement © Raymond Fogarty.

Above: Skellig Islands, 8 miles (12 km) off the coast of Portmagee in South West Kerry.

DERRYNANE HOUSE and National Historic Park



Text by **Adrian Corcoran**

"This is the wildest and most stupendous scenery of nature - and I enjoy my residence here with the most exquisite relish....I am in truth fascinated with this spot: and did not my duty call me elsewhere, I should bury myself alive here'.

Daniel O'Connell wrote this endorsement of Derrynane in 1829. His love of his childhood home was a constant pull for him throughout his life and was forever in his thoughts. Derrynane had been a seat of the O'Connell family since 1702 when Captain John O'Connell acquired the lease of lands and built the first house. His son Dónal Mór established a business, trading by sea between Kerry and France and, given the remote location, was able to avoid custom dues. He extended the original house or added

the three storey house which was described as a 'fair new house' in 1756. The house and lands were later inherited by Daniel's uncle Muiris na gCaipín [Hunting Cap] in 1770. He continued to build up trade and added further rooms to the original house, some still surviving. Daniel O'Connell had been adopted by the childless Muiris and Derrynane became his childhood home. In 1825 Daniel inherited Derrynane and made further alterations. He added the south wing containing a dining room, drawing room, study and library. The main entrance was altered and these rooms faced the sea and were filled with light.

At the time Daniel inherited Derrynane he was a barrister with an immense reputation and large practice, which he later largely gave up on his election to Parliament in 1829. He lived in Dublin with his family in fashionable Merrion Square but spent time each year in Derrynane. He became politically active from as early as 1800 when he vigorously opposed the Act of Union, whereby Dublin lost its Parliament to Westminster.

The early part of his political career

involved him in the campaign for Catholic emancipation, extending the same political rights to Catholics as those enjoyed by members of the Established Church. As a hugely popular public figure, Daniel contested a bye-election in Clare in 1828 but because he was a Catholic he could not take his seat. This generated much momentum which eventually led to the passing of the Emancipation Act of 1829 and earned O'Connell the sobriquet 'the Liberator'. When he took his seat in Parliament he was in a position to follow his main objective - repeal of the Act of Union.

'Daniel O'Connell was a leading supporter of the 1833 Act of Parliament which abolished slavery in the British empire'

During his career he campaigned for universal male suffrage and was a leading supporter of the 1833 Act of Parliament which abolished slavery in the British Empire. He supported the American Abolitionist movement, Jewish emancipation, reform of municipal government and the abolition of tithes. In 1840 he founded the Repeal Association and held a series of monster



meetings calling for the Repeal of the Act of Union. Some meetings were attended by several hundred thousand people and the authorities took a dim view of them, eventually leading to O'Connell being charged with seditious conspiracy resulting in a sentence of three months in Richmond Prison in 1844. On his release he was taken on triumphal procession through Dublin on an ornamental chariot.

In his latter years, he was increasingly in conflict with the use of force in achieving the objectives of the Repeal movement. The rise of the Young Irelanders marked the end of the Repeal movement. Daniel died in Genoa while on pilgrimage to Rome in 1847 and his body was brought back to Ireland where he now rests in Glasnevin Cemetery.

Today Derrynane House has re-opened following major refurbishment. The works were part-funded by Fáilte Ireland and were designed and project managed by the Office of Public Works. Phase one of the works concentrated on conservation and presentation of selected artefacts and phase two on accessibility of the house and collections. The house contains many artefacts associated with Daniel O'Connell and his family and includes a family portrait collection and much original furniture. Four main rooms are open to the public along with a new exhibition room, enhanced interpretation and a coach house containing the chariot constructed for his release from Richmond prison. Visitors can visit the theatre with audio-visual presentation and the tea room.

'The grounds are a nature lover's dream – trails, tidal flats, arboretum and ocean – a gorgeous place to spend the afternoon'



Silver platter bearing the inscription 'To Daniel O'Connell from the Catholics of the County of Wexford'

Above: The summer house erected by O'Connell as a private retreat. The "pointed" profile of the openings is rooted firmly in the Georgian Gothic trend and recalls the paper-thin Gothicism of the library at Derrynane House. Courtesy of Dept. of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government Photographic Unit.

Below: (L-R) Brendan Griffin TD, Patrick O' Connor-Scarreen, Kerry County Councillor and Minister Simon Harris visit Adrian Corcoran at Derrynane House.



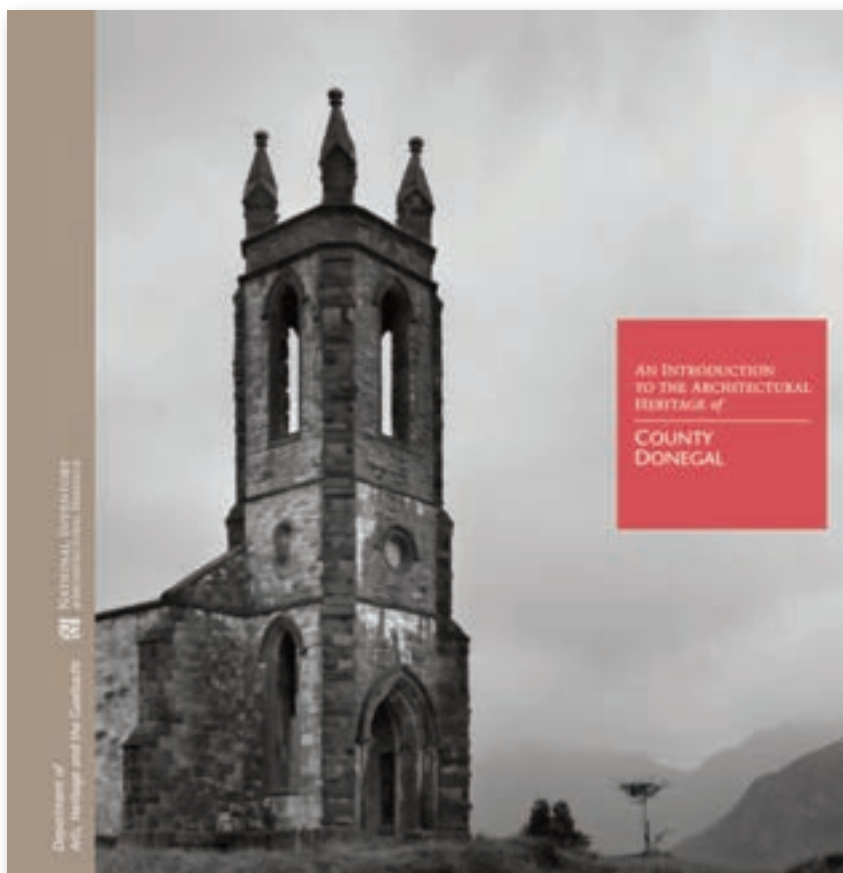
Derrynane is the ideal base for exploring the historic gardens, National Park and beaches. Captain John O'Connell did well in choosing his location as it is very well sheltered. Because of a micro-climate, winters are mild, allowing frost-sensitive trees and shrubs thrive. The gardens are extensive and include plants from South America, as part of the National Botanical Collection. There are many paths and trails through the grounds and another feature is the Summer House, which Daniel O'Connell used for quiet study and relaxation. Derrynane National Historic Park includes 1.5 km of shoreline and Abbey Island which is almost 40 hectares in extent and can be reached on foot except at high tide. The island contains Ahamore Abbey where many of the O'Connell family are buried. Within the Park is an Ogham Stone, ring fort and Mass Rock.

Architectural Heritage of County Donegal

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage survey of Co. Donegal was recently launched (17th of April) at Glenveagh Castle by Joe McHugh TD, Minister of State at the Dept. of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

The survey is published on the NIAH website www.buildingsofireland.ie and is accompanied by a publication *An Introduction to the Architectural Heritage of County Donegal*. It is the 32nd book to be published in the series. This book, covering the length and breadth of the county, celebrates the historical and architectural legacy of Donegal. This survey documents Donegal's wide variety of structures - ranging from fine country houses, to the many smaller structures that make up the streetscapes of our towns and add character to the rural countryside, including vernacular houses, bridges, mills, shopfronts, lime kilns, water pumps and post boxes. Donegal has arguably the greatest concentration and variety of surviving vernacular heritage of any county in the country. These buildings were built of local materials by local craftsmen; they respect the local topography and blend effortlessly into landscape and their style has remained consistent for many centuries. Another highlight of the survey are the striking modern churches by local architect, the late Liam McCormick, the finest collection of their type and date in the country.

At the launch, Minister McHugh emphasised the important role of the survey in assisting Donegal County Council in the future protection of the built heritage of their county. He added:



'If historic buildings are to survive as our legacy to future generations, they will have to be adapted to cater for the changing needs of their occupants.

The challenge is to manage change without sacrificing the intrinsic character of the building.'

An Introduction to the Architectural Heritage of County Donegal is available for sale (€12) online from www.wordwellbooks.com



Meenagory (c. 1820)

(Left) Donegal has perhaps the greatest surviving numbers of vernacular houses of any county in Ireland. This example near Buncrana is one of the better surviving examples. It is built on the direct-entry plan typical of the area, while the pegs to the eaves were used to secure ropes over the rounded roof.

Newmills Corn Mill (c.1800)

(Opposite page) Restored corn mill near Letterkenny that is now open to the public. There is also a restored flax mill to site; the combination of corn and flax mill to the same site is a phenomena mainly found in Ulster.

Opening Hours: 21st May - 30th September. Daily 10.00 - 18.00.



Buncrana Castle (1718) *(Above)* The most important of the early country houses on Inishowen. It was built or rebuilt by George Vaughan. Constructed in a rigid symmetrical plan with central breakfront, projecting end pavilions, and central scrolled pedimented doorcase.

Church of St Aengus (1965-7) *(Below left)* One of the influential modern churches built in Ireland. Its design is inspired by the Grianán of Aileach fort overlooking the site. It is one of seven churches in Donegal built to designs by Liam McCormick, who is considered the father of modern Irish church architecture.



Fanad Head Lighthouse (1886-7)

(Above) Lighthouses are among the most evocative of all building types in Donegal. While functional in purpose, they often employ a simple classical language. This example was built to designs by William Douglass, best known for the Fasnet Lighthouse off Cork.



© Mike Kennelly

PORTUMNA CASTLE



PORTUMNA CASTLE AND GARDENS

TEXT BY MARIE GIBBS

The name Portumna is derived from the *Gaelic* 'Port Omna' which can be interpreted as 'the landing place of the oak' or 'port of the oak'. Settled early in the 13th century by the powerful Anglo-Norman de Burgo family because of its strategic position as a bridging point across the River Shannon, Portumna developed into a thriving settlement.

Portumna Castle and Demesne, which occupies a magnificent location on the shores of Lough Derg on the River Shannon, cannot be precisely dated but we do know it was completed sometime before 1618 at a cost of ten thousand pounds. The question has to be asked, why was a house of its size, splendour and grand symmetrical setting built west of the Shannon in the early seventeenth century, when there was nothing else in Ireland to compare with it? Bernadette Cunningham's reply to this question in 'Clanricard's Castle - Portumna House, Co. Galway', edited by Jane Fenlon, sets the context in which the erection of Portumna Castle became possible and desirable. She explains its dual role "as the seat of the president of Connacht, that is to say as a seventeenth-century version of government house; and at the same time the residence of one of the leading 'Old English' magnates". Mark Girouard raises another important point in the same book, that the structure is "Irish and yet not Irish, a castle and yet not a castle, magnificent in scale and yet, compared to the great Jacobean palaces of England, relatively modest in size, it was a building that called out for explanations".

Portumna Castle is one of the very few remaining semi-fortified Jacobean Manor Houses in Ireland. Built by Richard de Burgo, fourth Earl of Clanricarde (1573—1635) and his wife Frances Walsingham, countess of Essex (d.1632), it has often been compared to a French château. Richard and Frances travelled extensively, mixing easily in European court circles, and incorporated into their English and Irish estates many European architectural and horticultural influences.

Portumna Castle's architectural importance lies in the fact that it was



► Top: Portumna Castle

► Left: Ground floor exhibition at Portumna Castle

built during a transitional period in Irish architectural history – a step away from the Irish tower houses of medieval times and moving towards aesthetically pleasing manor houses of the Renaissance period. Medieval landlords placed greater store on protection than on prestige. Medieval defensive features are preserved in the Guard towers and firing holes throughout the gardens, with the house itself protected by machicolations placed centrally over the two entrances and firing holes in the four corner towers. But there the comparison ends as Portumna is essentially, as described by Jane Fenlon, “a great, many windowed and gabled house”, a country mansion rather than a fortress.

The Irish de Burgos derive from William de Burgo, who came to Ireland with Prince John in 1185. A descendant of William the Conqueror, he was granted a large fief of land stretching between Limerick and Cashel. It was his son Richard, Lord of Connaught, who began the great infeudation of Connaught, building towns such as Galway, Athenry, Loughrea and later Portumna, which was settled by Richard the fourth Earl. Ulick, son of Richard, lived in Portumna Castle and for generations this was the main seat of the de Burgo family.

The castle had a relatively peaceful existence until 1826 when an accidental fire, which began in the basement, rampaged through the house destroying almost everything. The family, in due course, decided not to



restore the old style castle, but instead built a new manor house further into the forest park. Following the fire and the ravages of time the old castle degenerated into a roofless shell.

Since 1968, the Office of Public Works has carried out major conservation works. The building has been re-roofed and, based on extensive ongoing archaeological and historical research, other major conservation and partial restoration work, carried out by a team of skilled craftsmen, is proceeding in the Castle and the outer courtyards. The long-term objective is to preserve Portumna Castle for future generations to appreciate and enjoy as one of the most important architectural and historic houses in Ireland and one of significance in terms of European architectural heritage.

The ground floor of the building is now open to the public and houses an

exhibition on the history of the building and the de Burgo/Burke family.

The imposing façade of the castle faces north and is approached by a long avenue and formal gardens. This dramatic approach has three formal enclosures with three axially aligned gateways. The enclosures contain geometric and regular plantings with added topiary and an old shrub rose garden which all help to re-create a sense of the original 17th century setting. The recently restored 17th century walled kitchen garden follows the original plan and has been planted with fruit, vegetables, herbs, trees and shrubs combining to make it a real treat to the senses.

Portumna Castle is surrounded by many of the town's attractions including Lough Derg, The Irish Workhouse Centre, the River Shannon, Portumna Forest Park and the 13th/15th century Cistercian/Dominican Priory. The town itself has a number of local amenities, including a modern playground, picnic areas and a variety of local restaurants for refreshments.



► Top: Portumna Castle seen from the kitchen garden

► Left: The kitchen garden at Portumna Castle

Images © Government of Ireland
National Monuments Service
Photographic Unit

Irish Quilter's Showcase Exhibition

held at the Great Blasket Centre



This year was the first official year of National Quilting Week, which will run from 1st - 7th of June every year. To coincide with National Quilting Week, an inspirational exhibition led by Nikki Foley and other local artists was on display in the Great Blasket Centre from May 25th – 10th June. From patchwork quilted chairs to hand pieced quilts, there was something for everyone to see.

Within the Irish Quilters Showcase Exhibition there are 13 quilts made by some of the top quilters in Ireland. They were given the title of *The Wild Atlantic Way* and each person stitched their interpretation of the title. This Irish Quilters Showcase was organised by Paula Rafferty and Nikki Foley.



► Images: Some of the exhibits on display at the Great Blasket Centre during the Irish Quilter's Showcase Exhibition held from May 25th to 10th June, 2015.



- ▶ Top Left: Charles Fort Kinsale.
- ▶ Left & Below: Children's Art & Craft Workshops which will be held during July & August 2015.
- ▶ Main Photo: Army band at Trim Castle.
- ▶ Far Right: Tribal Drumming at Knowth.

Charles Fort

Kinsale, Co. Cork

Children's Arts & Crafts Workshops

During July and August 2015, a number of children's Arts & Crafts workshops will be held at Charles Fort National Monument. Through various themed art activities, children will learn about a particular event in history. Dates to be confirmed, but booking will be essential. For further information, please contact Charles Fort at telephone number: 021 4772263 or email: charlesfort@opw.ie



Heritage Week, 2015

Once again Charles Fort will host a number of events to celebrate National Heritage Week which takes place from 22nd to 30th August 2015. From music to a photographic display and a family picnic on the green to children's tours, all ages will be catered to. We will also be calling on families to enlist in the inaugural '*Charles Fort Family Challenge*'. So you think you know Charles Fort?.....but is your family brave enough to face a battle of knowledge against the Charles Fort guides? Sign up and find out!

Our new exhibition on the effects of the First World War on Charles Fort and Kinsale is now open on site.

Other activities focusing on the theme of 'Industrial Heritage & Design' and geared towards the under 12 age group will take place. For further information please contact Charles Fort or check out the website: www.heritageweek.ie

National Heritage Week

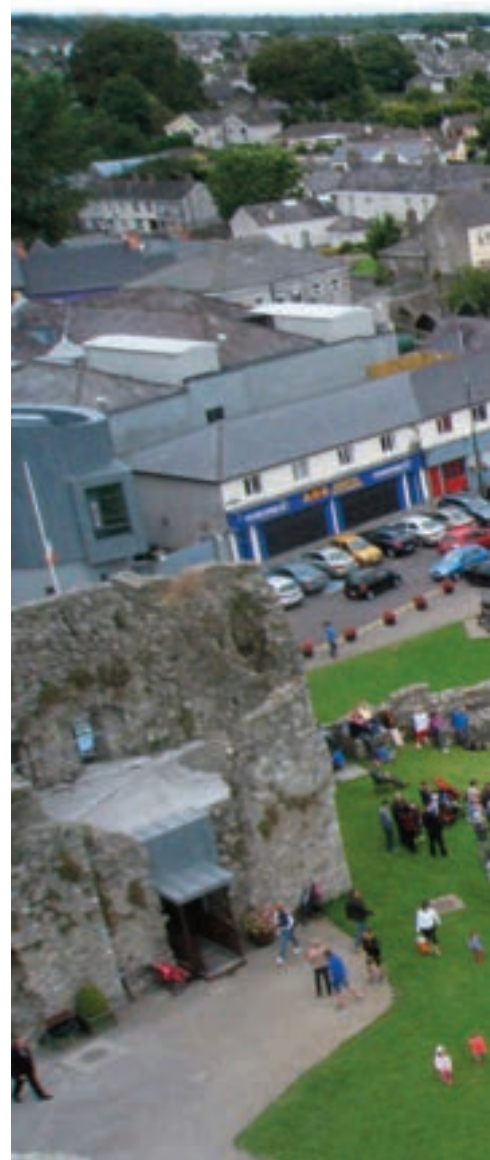
Discover the past. Build the future.

22-30 August 2015

An Chomhairle Oldhreachta
The Heritage Council

National Heritage Week is coordinated
by the Heritage Council

For more information
visit www.heritageweek.ie
or call 1850 200 878



Heritage Week Events in the Boyne Valley, Brú na Bóinne

Knowth

BEAT YOUR DRUM FOR HERITAGE WEEK

August 22nd

Come and be part of 200 drummers at Knowth to celebrate the launch of National Heritage Week. John Bowker of Tribal Spirit Drumming is one of Ireland's leading community drum facilitators and is renowned for his friendly and playful workshops. John is particularly skilled at creating a space where absolute beginners fully enjoy the magic and power of the hand drum! Suitable for ages 8 plus, no experience is necessary and all hand drums will be supplied.

Organised by Meath County Council and The Office of Public Works.

Trim Castle

August 23rd

THE ARMY BAND OF THE 2ND BRIGADE PERFORM A FREE RECITAL IN THE GROUNDS OF TRIM CASTLE



Old Mellifont Abbey

August 23rd

HAVE A GO AT ARCHERY, TASTE MEDIEVAL ALE AND MEAD AND DECORATE A MEDIEVAL TILE

Loughcrew

August 23rd

THE LOUGHCREW TATTOO

Get a temporary tattoo. Get a realistic temporary tattoo incorporating Neolithic designs! Safe, non-toxic and pain-free.



Heritage Week.ie

Hill of Tara Lecture Series 2015

Dedicated to the Memory of Dr Muireann Ní Bhrolcháin

The 2015 Hill of Tara Lecture Series will take place on the first four Wednesdays in July at 8.00pm in the Hill of Tara Visitor Centre. Admission is free but come early as seats are limited!

Dr Muireann Ní Bhrolcháin was a great friend to the Hill of Tara. She taught us all that Tara is the landscape of Early Irish Literature. It is the place where the most important mythological events take place. In July 2014, she had volunteered to give the first of the Tara Lectures in 2015 on the topic of Regicide. We always looked forward to her talks delivered with great energy and good humour. It was with great sadness that we learned of her death on April 14th 2015. We are dedicating this year's lecture series to her memory, celebrating the site nearest to her heart... The Hill of Tara.

Wednesday July 1st
'Curious Tales of Heroes, Kings and Saints at Tara'
by Dr Edel Bhreatnach,
Discovery Programme

Wednesday July 8th
'Tara in the Bronze Age'
by Dr Eoin Grogan, NUI Maynooth

Wednesday July 15th
'The Mound of the Hostages'
by Prof Muiris O'Sullivan, UCD

Wednesday July 22nd
'Pigs and Kings'
by Dr Mary Leenane, NUI Maynooth

Craft in Action

at Brú na Bóinne

Exhibition July 18-Aug 21



The 15th annual Craft in Action Exhibition at Brú na Bóinne Visitor Centre takes place daily from July 18th until August 21st.

This is an opportunity to meet the Craft Workers of the Boyne Valley and watch them create their work.

Among the crafts on display this year there is batik making, felt work, furniture, painting, cards, silver jewellery, wall hangings, appliqué pictures, free hand ink drawings on canvas, reed work, pottery, beaded jewellery, stained glass and weaving.

Admission to the Exhibition, which runs from 9.00am until 6.00pm, is free of charge.

Regular charges apply elsewhere.

All welcome!



THE GLEBE GALLERY / OFFICE OF PUBLIC WORKS PRESENTS:



TRINITY'S COLLEGE GALLERY: THE SWING OF THE SIXTIES

CURATED BY RICHARD WOOD

Venue: The Glebe House & Gallery, Churchill, Letterkenny
Dates: 4th July – 27th September, 2015
Time: 11.00am – 6.30pm (Daily) **Admission:** FREE
Contact: T. 074 913 7071 E: glebegallery@opw.ie
facebook.com/TheGlebeHouseAndGallery www.glebegallery.ie

The Glebe Gallery is delighted to exhibit a selection of 20th century works from the Trinity College Art Collections. Curated by Richard Wood for Lismore Castle Arts, the exhibition features key Irish and international pieces by Josef Albers, Karel Appel, Patrick Collins, Barrie Cooke, Carlos Cruz-Diez, Micheal Farrell, Robert Indiana, Cecil King, Roy Lichtenstein, Nano Reid, Patrick Scott, William Scott, Peter Sedgley and Victor Vasarely, accompanied by a portrait of George Dawson by Mick O'Dea and a student response by Barra Boydell from 1968.

For over 55 years, generations of students, staff and visitors at Trinity College Dublin have been introduced to the excitements and challenges of contemporary visual arts, at the moment of their emergence, through a picture hire scheme, known on campus as 'The College Gallery'.

Established by George Dawson, founder of Trinity's Genetics Department, in 1959/60 the picture hire scheme was run by Dawson and a group of student volunteers including Richard Wood, a Trinity student at the time. The purpose of the hire scheme was to lend art works to students in halls of residence. The scheme was later extended to staff and departments. With the passage of time the collection grew and students, encouraged by Dawson's enthusiasm, developed their own critical eye and became increasingly involved in the process of collecting contemporary art at Trinity.

Together with Dawson and other key staff members like Professor Anne Crookshank and Adrian Phillips, they traveled the length and breadth of Ireland and often further afield, feasting on 'the swing' taking place in the visual arts. Urban and abstract subjects began to dominate resulting in bold styles and techniques such as hard-edge minimalism and silkscreen printing, Op, Pop and Kinetic art, reflecting wider, pervasive social changes. Student imaginations were captured and the College's Modern Art collection was firmly established.

The Glebe Gallery would like to thank Lismore Castle Arts and Richard Wood who conceived and curated this exhibition, Catherine Giltrap, Curator of the University Art Collections, and Carolyn Kelly, Collections Management and Curatorial Assistant, Trinity College Dublin, for sharing this exhibition with us.



► Photo credit: Micheal Farrell, Study '66, 1966, acrylic on canvas, 91.5 x 80.5 cm, Trinity College Dublin Art Collections.

Dublin Castle Special Art Tour

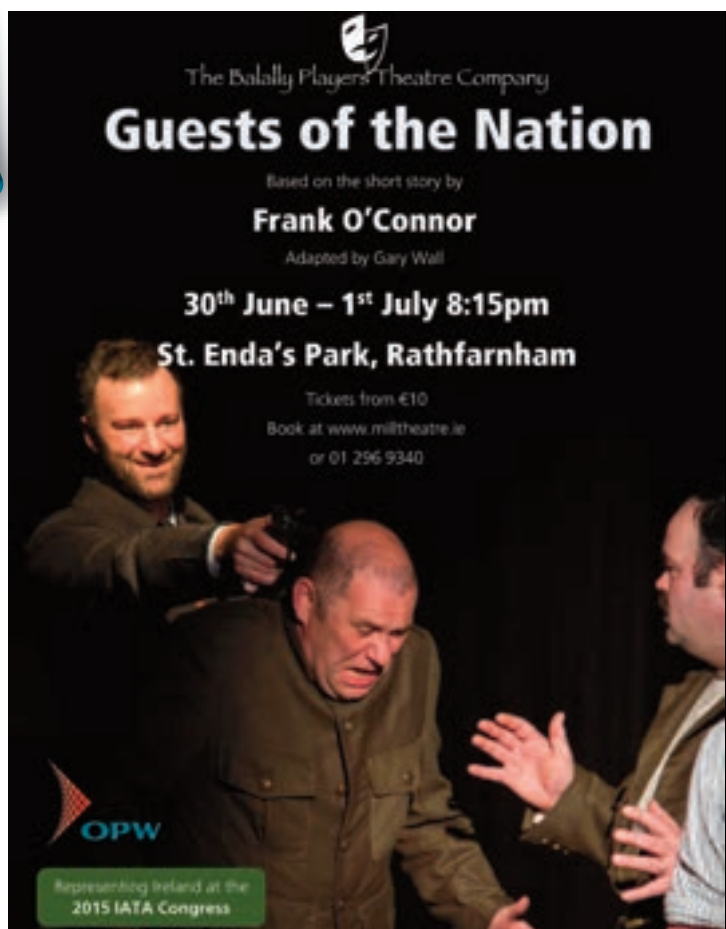
for Heritage Card holders,
with access behind the scenes
Sunday 28 June 2015 at 3.30pm

Please book by e-mailing dublincastle@opw.ie with 'art tour' on the subject line quoting your heritage card number. Alternatively you can purchase your card from <http://www.heritageireland.ie/en/Info/HeritageCards/> or arrive early on the day to purchase it in Dublin Castle. And remember: the Heritage Card covers free admission and tours to more than 50 heritage sites around Ireland for a whole year from the date of purchase.



Above: Art Tour of Dublin Castle

Below: Dublin Castle © Rob Durston / Fáilte Ireland



'Guests of the Nation' Play

Tuesday, 30th June and Wednesday, 1st July

Balally Players Theatre Company will perform their award-winning production of *Guests of the Nation* in the open-air at St. Enda's Park (Rathfarnham), Dublin.

Their production, based on a short story by one of Ireland's greatest writers, Frank O'Connor, was awarded second place at the All-Ireland One-Act Final.

The group is traveling to Belgium to represent Ireland with the play at an International Theatre Festival in early July.

They are being supported in St. Enda's Park by Rathfarnham Theatre Group who will perform their comedy, *Joining the Club*, directed by Maria Burke King.

Tickets can be booked through the Mill Theatre at www.milltheatre.ie or Tel: 01 296 9340.



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Main pic: Swiss Cottage.

L-R: Aughnacloy Castle, Battle of the Boyne Visitor Centre, Glendalough Visitor Centre, Kilkenny Castle.

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