

Group Updates from around the Network

Killereerin Heritage Society

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The following is a short report on our activities since the period of Covid 19 began, we seem to be very busy with heritage related work but have very little to show for our efforts so far.

Interviews

We are still waiting to finalise an interview with one of the elderly men in our parish but between him having been hospitalised after a fall and the present lockdown it seems it will be another six weeks before we can complete this. In the meantime, we have posted a copy of the interview to him to edit as he sees fit. We have identified a few more people we would like to interview as well in the future.

Training

- I also took part in a Social Media class online and am currently participating in another class which has just commenced on smartphone film-making which began this week. I found this class excellent. Pity I hadn't such knowledge when I made a short video of the above gentleman. A great big thank you to ICAN for providing this training to us and which I have passed to all members of our committee.

Golden Mile Signs

- Our Golden Mile signs need to be replaced as most of them are now illegible. We have re-edited and taken some out and we are ready to go with them.

Digital Mapping of our graveyards

- We have been manually recording and photographing our graveyard for the past three years or more but only recently were made aware of a new system which will enable our diaspora to locate their family graves online etc. We were unsuccessful in obtaining a grant but have decided to go ahead with the work anyway. The drone survey has just been completed we will proceed with the training required for the next step next week.

Website

- We also respond to requests via our website which are many and help out where possible. We were recently requested by Catherine Corless (responsible for Tuam baby research) for information regarding the Garda that served in this parish.
- We receive many genealogical requests and have been very successful in helping people to bridge the gap between the information they have and making the connection with others in the parish who can fill the gaps. This has led to wonderful connections across the globe and nationally. We have benefited greatly from this interaction which wouldn't happen without our website.
- Last but not least we are updating our files and organising photos. We hope to tidy up our website and upload new posts and do the same with our Facebook page.

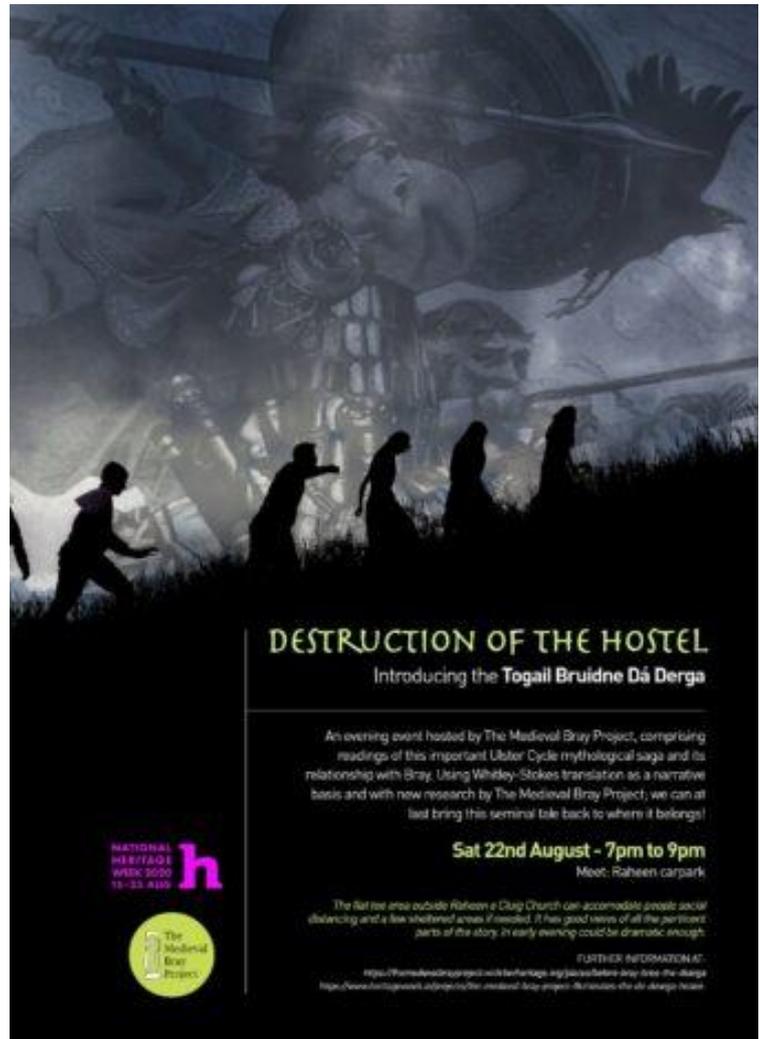
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THE MEDIEVAL BRAY PROJECT UPDATE

HERITAGE WEEK

As part of Heritage Week 2020, the Medieval Bray Project organised a lecture on the Togail Bruidne Dá Derga or the 'Destruction of Dá Derga's Hostel'. This is one of a series of tales set in pre-Christian Ireland and recorded by the monks in early medieval Irish monasteries. The earliest version we have now is probably from the 10th century but appears to be based on earlier written sources.

It is similar in some respects to the more famous Táin Bó Cuailgne saga, the Cattle Raid of Cooley, which features Queen Meabh. Unlike the Táin, however, the location of the Togail's action is not entirely clear, but there is a strong case that it was set in or around Bray, [as explained in this link to the story.](#)



Poster for Heritage Week Event – Cancelled and replaced by Zoom call



Fictionalised scene of battle during De Dearga times

The Heritage Week event was originally to be held outdoors at Raheenauclig, but changes in Covid-19 guidance meant that the central part of the event, a lecture by David McIlreavy, was held online. The slides for the lecture are available for download at the link below. The slides are divided into two parts. The first part gives an outline of the saga and the second, beginning at slide 16, deals with the context of the saga, as well as the possible origin of some of its passages and its underlying message. [Slides available here.](#)

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Possible site of the De Dearga Hostel – Loretto convent Bray built on a stoney outcrop – looking over the bay and within sight of local hilltops.

OLD CONNA GRAVEYARD

During some beautiful Summer evenings the energetic and enthusiastic Medieval Bray Project (MBP) volunteers were clearing out invasive weeds in the church space within the Old Conna Graveyard with a view to possibly reinstating the gravel interior and also gravelling the walkways to allow access to the rest of the cemetery . Weed barrier was laid in preparation for gravel within the church. The entrance pathway has also been cleared, and when COVID permits will be treated in a way similar to the church interior.



Beautiful engraving on headstone at Old Conna.

Along the way all of us were fascinated with the quality and variety of gravestones within this cemetery and drew heavily on the record kept of grave inscriptions by Brian J. Cantwell in the 1970's. [More info here](#)

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PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

It is sincerely hoped that the number of people who have responded to our posts on Facebook stating that they have family members buried in this cemetery will continue to keep an interest in the progress being made and it may be possible through Deansgrange to facilitate a day's access in the future. It is also our intention to involve the pupils from a local school in some artistic representations of selected gravestones.



Laying membrane at church interior after week clearance.



Salted reclaimed pathway at Old Conna Church.

Wicklow Heritage [link to an article](#) on the graveyard

Kilkee and West Clare Heritage and History Group

Our group has gone from strength to strength since the launch of the Website. We gave a presentation to our local Kilkee History Group of the new website and it was received with open arms and led to our first achievement.

This first achievement was the amalgamation of the Kilkee History Group and the new Kilkee Heritage Group which was a great endorsement by our community. We agreed to change our name to both link it with the old History group and the need for extending the area of our group from not only Kilkee but into the surrounding area of Loop Head. The new name agreed was Kilkee and West Clare Heritage and History Group. Members of the enlarged group have agreed to do various topics for publication.

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The second big achievement was the opening of the Facebook Page and from a start in April 2020 to now we have over 1,200 members. The main aim of the Facebook page is to drive people to our website kilkee.clareheritage.org. We have now created, using Facebook, a conversation with our audience by doing regular posts like "Do you know your Kilkee? What is this? Where is this?" created by John Williams which has been a huge success. A series on old Lawrence photos on topics in the area like Bathing Boxes and West Clare Railway created by Robert Brown. A Natural History section with topics like guillemots, basking sharks, curlew and wild flowers created by Robert Brown. We also start a story and you have to go to website to get the full account eg "Outing to Kilkee leads to Tarbert Drowning Disaster 1893".

The outcome of the Facebook page has led to old photos, old postcards, documents been uploaded which starts a conversation and the local heritage is recorded and saved. Also leads to posts which are not reverent and have to be delegated which is done by Robert Brown.

John Williams responds to all the relevant posts as he is a great local historian and adds information and guides members to the Website. The website has also now got a great article direct to the website from someone who came across the site by the Facebook page. It has also gone worldwide and become a Genealogy hub for descendants from the area.

We will be starting a Video series in New Year as Robert Brown has received a scholarship awarded by Loop Head Tourism to join their Digital Marketing and Digital Video Training and along with John Williams will be creating a bimonthly series built around a changing monthly topic. The tourist group wants the Heritage site to bring visitors to Loop Head by creating a need to come and explore our area.

Exciting times !!!!!

Woodlawn Heritage Group

It has been a difficult year for getting things done though we did have a small Heritage Week Event - a tribute to Late Michael John Kilgannon, a founder member, by unveiling a plaque put up at Woodlawn station in his memory and we thank Marie Mannion, Heritage Officer, Galway County Council Community Grant Scheme for contributing. The Kilgannon family & some Heritage Group members attended - masks were removed only briefly for photos & numbers were in compliance with restrictions on the day.

For Heritage Week, we concentrated on the Heritage of Education. We highlighted school roll book information which is already on website, and created a topic specifically for Heritage Week 2020. We posted info every day on Facebook.

<https://woodlawn.galwaycommunityheritage.org/content/category/topics/heritage-week-2020>

Clarecastle & Ballyea Heritage & Wildlife Group

Clarecastle & Ballyea Heritage & Wildlife Group project was announced as Winners for the National Heritage Week Awards, in a new category of County Awards :

"Clarecastle on film in the 1950s" <https://www.heritageweek.ie/projects/clarecastle-on-film-in-the-1950s> The film had been featured on the main RTE 1 News.

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Griffith's Revision/cancelled Books for Clarecastle Village 1855-1934 and two neighbouring townlands have been transcribed and can be viewed [here](#).

Abbey & District Heritage

Abbey Heritage is probably one of the smallest Heritage Groups in this vastly expanding iCAN Family! It will take us some time to get to know everyone but we look forward to reading all your websites and maybe getting a few new ideas.

Currently we are revisiting our own website and Eileen is busy working on genealogy and enjoying the learning. She also keeps the Abbey Heritage Facebook page alive! Also we are doing some research on the Leabhar Breac, the ancient Irish manuscript written before 1411 and that was located in our local Monastery of Kilnalahan, Abbey, for most of the 17th century. In 1789, this manuscript was purchased by the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin where it now belongs.

While people express great interest in the website and enjoy reading the stories submitted and reminiscing on days gone by when new photographs are published, we have found that despite many promises, they are slow to search for and share their own treasures! Maybe some of you have ideas on how best to encourage this.

We are enjoying the Digital Skills training at present and want to pay tribute to Lorna in the Museum and Marie in the Galway County Council Heritage Office for the training they organise from time to time which has been most helpful and much appreciated.

Glens of Lead Report, October 2020

The Glens of Lead website is a record of the rich history of the mining heritage of the three valleys, Glendasan, Glendalough and Glenmalure, Co Wicklow and the people who worked in the mines.

The site has given us an opportunity to record the endeavours of the Glens of Lead to promote research into the unique mining and social history of Glendalough and its hinterland and recording and presenting that unique history. The site allows for that rich industrial heritage to be explored under the categories: People, Places and Topics.

While this history goes back over two hundred years the fact that there are still former miners residing in the locality means we have a living history and this was highlighted on the recently aired *Nationwide* programme when members of our group were interviewed. Details about the programme, along with photographs taken on the day have been uploaded to the site. A combined history walk and talk with poetry reading took place on Culture Night in September. This event also features on the site.

As the Glens of Lead group has been in existence for a number of years a considerable amount of material on the mines has been produced and recorded. Much of this has been uploaded onto the website but additional material has yet to be sorted and uploaded. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 restrictions a committee colleague an essential worker who was due to assist with the website has been unable to do so due to work commitments. Time and personnel are the issues with this.

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'Roundabout Shannon' Update – 28/10/2020

Shannon Archaeological & Historical Society & Dúchas na Sionna

Activities have been fairly limited over the summer, but we have still been busy in Shannon with two major projects underway:

- The Hastings Farmhouse Restoration Project continues to be a main area of focus for our two groups. A good portion of time was spent on making applications for grant funding. We have been successful in securing small amounts of grant aid but were hopeful of a Heritage Council grant. Unfortunately, we were not successful but are still hopeful that a pending grant application may yet come through and continue to explore new avenues for funding including a GoFundMe project. A video was submitted for Heritage Week and we led a historical walk/talk along an old road in Shannon culminating in the launch of The Other Clare, the annual journal of the Shannon Archaeological & Historical Society at Hastings Farmhouse. More info [here](#).
- The Shannon Town Community Wetlands project created a video for Heritage Week which was shortlisted for the Water Heritage Award. See the [video](#) here.

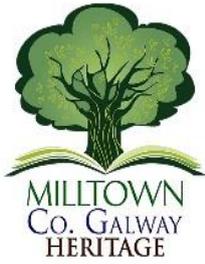


Work over the summer consisted of creating some seating areas near the ponds out of logs and currently work is ongoing on cutting back the summer growth and general tidy up of the site. Concrete bases have been installed for four information display boards and three benches. The project is being included in a nature programme for TG4 about nature and what it meant to people during the lockdown. Filming took place in late September.

Milltown Heritage Group

Milltown Heritage Group have been involved in numerous projects over the last few months. The heritage group are anxious to preserve and protect the 15th century Bardic School in Kilclooney. This project has recently received significant funding from the Community Monuments Fund for a conservation plan. Our heritage officer Marie Mannion and our Galway Community Archaeologist Bernie Doherty worked with Ann Sheridan on the submission of the funding application.

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Milltown Vision Plan 2040 is now published. Milltown's rich heritage is highlighted including the ICAN project, cataloguing project of our heritage museum and the digitisation of graveyards.

Fran and Tony Murphy continue to look after genealogy queries. Numerous people have visited our village and found the sites of their ancestral homes as a result of research undertaken. Also, people have contacted us looking for copies of our local history book 'Milltown Sketches'.

Footage of former President Mary McAlessee visiting Milltown for the official opening of Milltown Community Centre was taken 15 years ago by Paul Murphy. This [short video](#) is now available to view on our website.

[George Garvey](#), retired school teacher who was interviewed as part of our Oral Heritage Project was interviewed by his grandson earlier this year. This interview is now uploaded on our website.

[Logainm](#) posted on Twitter where the name of our townland Musicfield aka Gortnagunned possibly got its name from.

Cataloguing project of our museum collection is in progress. Lorna met with Margaret and Pauline to discuss the transfer of data to an Excel file.

At the recent National Heritage Week Awards, Milltown's Heritage Food project won the County Award and were National runner's up in the 'Relearning Skill's category. Members of our group attended a virtual ceremony organised by the Heritage Council and presented by Anne Cassin.

Glendalough Heritage Forum

The website saw a lot of traffic over Heritage Week as we created seven short films (four professionally produced) about the Forum and Glendalough. These were put on YouTube and links were added on our site. We have had over 10,000 hits on these since.

We are currently creating new content by looking at artists, poets and songs associated with Glendalough and have had great luck sourcing images of paintings from the Dublin Auction houses - they take hi-res pics of all paintings they sell. They then own, and are happy to share, these images with us.

We also recently had an excavation of an old cottage site at the fork in the road entrance to Glendalough owing to a road-widening scheme. I was able to source images of the cottage, one including the owner, and the archaeological director of the dig has agreed to write an article for the website. We will have the archaeological report, images, drone footage, finds and now the owner's details from a number of parish and national records. We may even be able to get some digital recreations of the house. It will be an interesting article indeed.

We are currently looking at ancient manuscripts associated with Glendalough, including the Book of Glendalough and the Drummond Missal, with a view to creating an article on these.

We made contact with the Assistant Keeper of Antiquities this week with a view to getting hi-res images of all the National Museum finds featured in the new NMI exhibition. They are looking favourably on our request and we should have these and an article from the NMI to add to the site soon.

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We also added a short film of excellent quality drone footage of Glendalough taken in lockdown. This was created by the photographic unit of the National Monuments Service in May. It is narrated by our NMS archaeologist and forum member Chris Corlett and is a wonderful piece on the history of the valley.

That's it for now - best wishes from Glendalough!

Louisburgh-Killeen Heritage

We have been busy with our social media posts on Facebook & have seen a huge increase in inquiries on Genealogy related topics.

We are part of a voluntary led initiative to keep our community connected during lockdown since March 2020 by hosting a weekly TV show on Facebook. We started out with about 100 followers & now have over 3,500 followers with some posts reaching 80,000 people organically. I am happy to discuss our project in more detail with anyone interested in exploring a virtual TV show. Or check us out on Louisburgh Community TV on Facebook & YouTube.

We are thrilled to have been allocated a staff member to help with our online recording. We applied to our local Rural Social Scheme for a support person to work on our digitalising of the local parish booklet. This person will work one day a week for us & we are delighted to be receiving training from Hassan for this person. This means that we are gaining invaluable help while offering training to the support person who is now able to upskill & perhaps have more opportunities in the future.

Scattery Island Heritage

Our plans for the website are to gather stories, pictures and audio clips relating to Scattery Island. We have uploaded a fair bit on the site already just not launched yet. We have categories as follows;

- Home Page
- People
- Place
- Time
- Legends & Lore

One of our members Rita McCarthy also has audio clips uploaded and both her and Eve have posts and photos on their under each category. There are a few more photos to add and fine tune, then we should be good to go.

MOYCULLEN HERITAGE - OCTOBER REPORT

Our 25th anniversary celebrations were sadly a non-event this year due to Covid restrictions – we will just have to pretend Moycullen Heritage will be 25 in 2021 or even 2022!

Moycullen Heritage and Oughterard Heritage partnered with the Pallasboy Experimental Archaeology Project in 2019 for the creation and launch of a replica 2,400 year old logboat – the

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video of the event is now complete and on our website More info [here](#).

We were very sad to record the unexpected passing of Miriam McKiernan, one of our committee members, and a former secretary 2007-9. Her family acknowledged the importance of our heritage group to Miriam by having us do the readings at her funeral mass.

We held our AGM 2020 online via Zoom on 13 October. As a result of making the meeting accessible worldwide, our newly elected committee for the year has representation from 3 continents (our 'international recruits' live in San Jose California and Melbourne Australia).

Our main focus projects for 2020/2021 will be:-

'Down the Line' – Midland Great Western Railway Through Moycullen – A Railway Heritage Audit 2020/2021. We chose this topic to coincide with the European Parliament Committee on Transport and Tourism dedicating 2021 as the *European Year of Rail*.

Moycullen Heritage DNA Project – A GoFundMe campaign for the purpose of being able to provide free autosomal DNA testing kits to approx. 20 seniors who represent long established Moycullen families. Combined with documentary sources, or as a substitute to lack of records, these test results will increase diaspora descendant's chances of linking with their Moycullen roots. The campaign raised €470 within its first few hours despite not even being officially launched yet!

A Fusion of Heritage – Identifying all the nationalities in our community and having an online showcase during Heritage Week 2021

We hope our later two projects will embody the very nature of the proposed 2021 National Heritage week theme of '*Inclusive Heritage/Heritage for Everyone*'.

Ancient Rathdown (Greystones)

We're working on:

- The WW1 dead of Greystones - those who served and died
- The La Touche family - the slavery connection
- Old buildings of Greystones
- Previous excavations at St. Crispin's
- Greystones - the de Valera, Collins, Beckett and Jack B Yeats connections
- The 2 Bronze Age enclosure sites along Three Trouts Stream - 2 fulacht-fiadh-type pot boilers, gully systems, stake-holes, flints and pottery have been found. We've contacted the archaeologist.

Galway Community Archaeology Project Update

There is a number of Advisory Films produced to help people with identifying RMPs in their locality. Thanks to Abbey Heritage and Milltown for their input.

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I also produced a few little films - One on [Tower Houses](#) and identifying their features, and one on [Crannogs](#) for Heritage Week. Feel free to share on social media/your websites.

Congratulations to Pauline and Milltown gang on their recent achievements and well done to you for all your work promoting our work and putting the sites forward for the awards.

If anyone wants advice regarding a recorded monument that may require maintenance/conservation or if your group had been working on a project and may require funding for conservation works contact me with details and I can advise on putting their projects forward for funding to The Heritage Council/ Community Monuments Funds. It is envisaged that there will be a call for projects in the New Year.



Skehana and District Heritage Group **Update for ICAN meeting on Tuesday, November 3rd, 2020**

Because of the lockdown we only had 2 actual meetings of our group in July and August, but members are working on various projects.

Main Highlights:

Heritage Week: 15th – 13rd August, 2020

During Heritage week, Jimmy Laffey from our group posted on our Facebook page 9 days of links to various sources of information that are available for local history research. It proved to be very popular and useful.

- 1) Using the Census records
- 2) Births, marriages, deaths and the records in the Irish Genealogy.ie webpage
- 3) Griffith's Valuation
- 4) The Tithe Applotment Books 1823 – 1837
- 5) Historic Map Locations NUI (places.galwaylibrary.ie)
- 6) The Down Survey – Jimmy Laffey has produced a very useful guide to this information
- 7) John Grenham website: John conceived, developed and managed by renowned genealogist, John Grenham. You could consider this to be an All-In-One resource given that it covers so much of what you might need to commence tracing your roots, your ancestors and your own place. John offers both the research data and the associated advice and tips on how to access and use this data.
- 8) Shane Wilson databases (old historic maps etc), Taylor & Skinner maps, Lewis maps and surname distribution are of immense value to researchers. It is advisable to take some time to become familiar with the search facilities to fully avail of its benefits. We suggest browsing the townland, Poor Law Union, Parish, Barony administrative areas to establish the precise location you are interested in. Such details are always important when researching.

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- 9) Online tutorials, which were commissioned and funded by the Heritage Office, Galway County Council. Created by Clare Doyle, an accredited archivist and genealogist, who has done magnificent research, each short video is now freely available to view on your phone, tablet or desktop.
- Jimmy is also researching and working on the Blakes of Mullaghmore family and Windfield House history

Culture Night: Friday 18th September, 2020

Skehana and District Heritage group created a **Virtual Culture Night**:

Local and not so local people (musicians, readers, singers and a Seanchai) were filmed in their own homes and a video was live streamed and available ([here](#)) to view. It got a huge reaction and was watched by people overseas as well as local people. At short notice it was a great success.

An Currachán Jameson burial site at Skehana



- Great works have been carried out in making an access roadway to this historic site
- The Pernod Ricard Company, owners of the Jameson brand has also come on board with support for the project.
- This is an ongoing project and will be further researched
- At a future date will organise a commemoration event at the site

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Townlands research:

- Each member is trying to work on the Townlands research as best they can.
- Jimmy Laffey has achieved a lot in his research to date
- Marian is working on 4 Townlands as well as incorporating the information in a study of the Ffrench Family of Monivea Castle and associated history of sites in Monivea.



Old photographs:

- Emma Laffey is continuing to collect old photographs and is uploading them on our Facebook page.

Online Courses on Zoom:

- Marian is taking part in a few online courses: **Reading Your Local Landscape – 6 sessions of talks all on Zoom and it's a wonderful resource.**
- Marian is also taking part in a course run by the **Irish Archaeology Field School in Wexford** and this is a series of 5 talks by experts in the field of archaeology (ceramics, Zooarchaeology, Geoarchaeology with particular emphasis on the site at Carrick, Co. Wexford). All this is facilitated by Galway County Council.

As we are a small group, we hope to resume our meetings when Covid 19 restrictions are lifted. We do not have a dedicated Heritage centre.