

## **iCAN: Group Updates March 2021**

Hi everyone,

Here are the updates from our groups across the network, listed in alphabetical order.

### **Abbey & District Heritage Group, Co Galway**

Researching other websites – very good material on the Wicklow site

Learning from the wide variety of suggestions coming from Lorna

Time spent on Zoom and on-line training

Upskilling on genealogy - Eileen

Main project for this year is having an old Irish book written about the south-east Galway area and first published in 1932 translated into English and Modern Irish. Work is proceeding well on this and translation has been completed. We have proof-read the first draft and are now consulting with the designer and publisher as we hope to have the book published later in the year.

### **Clarecastle & Ballyea Heritage & Wildlife Group, Co. Clare**

Historian Skills with Tomás Mac Conmara - over 4 weeks - interesting and enjoyable but found the sessions a bit too long on Zoom (Eric)

Facebook/Instagram training with Hassan. – interesting, but a bit too much on the theory and workings of the two media. A practical user workshop would be of benefit especially to hear from people in the iCAN community who make great use of social media - (Eric)

Trinkets or Treasure by Gillian O'Brien - interesting talk and I have followed up with a few items directly with Gillian (Eric & Catherine)

Through my involvement with Clare Roots Society, I arranged for Jane Halloran Ryan, Chairperson of CRS, to give a talk on Genealogy to the iCAN Group.

We have engaged with Hassan on how to upload an Illustrated Timeline for the Clarecastle & Ballyea Parish over the past 12,000 years overlaid on a live map. The initial work has been done over the past month or so but decisions on presentation are being worked on, so early days yet. Skills developed in this exercise may be applied to other projects such as a digitised Clarecastle Heritage Trail, Big Houses audit etc.

## **Claregalway Historical and Cultural Society, Co Galway**

We've applied to the Galway County Council 2021 Cultural Development scheme for funding to document all of the previously unrecorded minor place names, field names and locally-known toponyms associated with the cultural landscape of the parish of Claregalway. All data to be retrieved and available on an online portal. We'll be working with Dr Enda O'Flaherty Archaeologist and Archae-geophysicist on this project.

Regrettably our museum still remains closed to the public due to the level five restrictions.

## **Donard Imaal History Group, Co. Wicklow**

The group was ap. 1 year old when Covid-19 entered our lives. It hasn't had a gathering or field trip for a year now. The result is that Karen and myself have continued working on the website with very little communication from the members. As the group has a high age profile, it is practically impossible to keep in contact.

However, we have forged ahead publishing 30 articles, have 10 ready to go and plan to publish 3 of these shortly. While our approach is community orientated we have a policy of covering subjects of a wider interest e.g. Pandemics; Napoleon and the bogs of Ireland; The N81; Post Cards commemorating the 1916 uprising; Lime Kilns in Ireland.

We have impromptu meetings which have been greatly productive – some of our best ideas come from a chat at the crossroads. A structured meeting happens approx every 8 weeks to discuss draft articles, decide on a publishing schedule and ensure a variety of subjects are chosen, discuss ideas for new articles. We proof read each other's posts.

We put a lot of effort into engaging with the community and encouraging participation. To date this has yielded 8 articles all of which required considerable input from us. The remaining 32 articles came from ourselves and 1 other person who is on tap to produce material on request. Every group needs a secret weapon! Our plans to interview some of our elderly locals are on hold due to Covid 19. This oral history is in danger of being lost the longer we are restricted.

We realise the need to develop a social media presence and hope to have 2 more people on board to develop this via Facebook and Twitter. We are linked to the Donard-Glen community information Facebook page and received good reaction. While we have set up a Facebook page, we need assistance getting it up and running.

Our experience so far is positive but we certainly would appreciate a bigger team to share the responsibility for different aspects e.g. social media; webpage management; sourcing articles; and maintaining a link with our community. It has been encouraging to receive feedback via the comments tab on the webpage.

## **Galway Community Archaeology**

I am currently busy helping various groups with Heritage Council Applications and Community Monuments Fund Applications. If any group requires information or support

with applications regarding archaeological sites or projects please feel free to contact me. Also, I have been referring groups to the talk you very kindly recorded last December, which has helped in advising other groups outside of ICAN.

Training with Hassan (Introduction to Video Content & Editing) was very enlightening, I now just need the time to put the training into practice.

Galway Community Archaeology Project this year hopes to prepare a project on various sites and monuments throughout the county. I will be approaching Galway groups who may be interested in contributing to 'Galway through the Ages'. (I hope to use the Our Irish Women Project as a template!)

Looking forward to seeing you all at the next meeting.

## **Glendalough Heritage Forum, Co Wicklow**

We have just had an Archaeology Ireland Heritage Guide (no.92) published this week. It will accompany all issues of Spring 2021 edition of this popular magazine. We will also have a second part published with the Summer edition. These will be added to our website in due course.

Having been invited to comment, we are in the throes of offering a submission to the 'Glendalough and Wicklow Mountains National Park Visitor Experience and Management Masterplan' outlining key errors or omissions in the Draft for Consultation.

Regarding our website, we have a small number of articles being compiled as we speak. Two are art-based and one is based on a recent archaeological dig in the valley.

We have started planning our Heritage Week events and are currently looking at outputs for our website from these events which will include our annual excavations, a potential project involving postcards and some other kernels of projects.

## **Glens of Lead, Co Wicklow**

### **Slideshow presentation of mining sites**

The Irish Mountaineering Club gave a slideshow presentation of some of the mining sites in the Glendassan and Glenmalure Valleys in February which showed the results of numerous fieldtrips they had made to the area. Photographs of some of the tunnels, flooded with water but passable, were displayed. A very lively Q and A followed with the President of our committee, Robert Carter, a former miner, giving great insight into the workings of the mines and explaining some of the artefacts shown during the presentation. One of our committee is liaising with the IMC to acquire the photographs of the tunnels for the Glens of Lead website, acknowledging their origins.

### **iCAN-IAI Introduction to Video Content**

This course, run over three sessions by Hassan Dabbagh, delivered a great insight into getting started on making a video; from creating the story board, establishing what the outcome should be, to the equipment needed, both hardware and software, to editing, to

producing the final product with music and titles. The delivery was done in a very friendly and easy manner, belying the amount of preparation and professionalism that went into preparing the sessions. I would recommend future sessions for groups interested in recording the heritage of their local areas.

### **Facebook training**

I have done training in setting up a Facebook page for the Glens of Lead website with Hassan Dabbagh which, as usual has been excellent. Patience and encouragement along the way has made the entrance into this media very possible for this Luddite!

### **Glendalough Tourism Masterplan**

A consultation process with the local community is currently under way in the Glendalough and Wicklow Mountains National Park with a view to preparing a tourism strategy to improve the visitor experience and the traffic management in the area. Covid-19 has meant that engagement with the local community has been online and not in person. However, during the course of a zoom meeting last week the Glens of Lead put forward the aims and ambitions of the group in relation to the rich industrial mining heritage of the valleys. The group has now been invited to attend a meeting dedicated to discussing the full spectrum of heritage in the Glendalough area later this month.

## **Greystones Tidy Towns, Co Wicklow**

We have spent a lot of time preparing our website for going live. This should happen shortly.

Previous excavations at the Rathdown site. We've consolidated contact with Chris Smal, founder of Friends of Historic Rathdown, and with archaeologists Patrick Neary and Margaret Gowen - so hopefully they will each give us something in writing or an interview. Ongoing.

We intend to follow up on the Bronze Age enclosure sites found near the Three Trouts Stream (Bronze Age and Early Christian artefacts have been sent to the Museum.) Two fulacht- fiadh-type pot boilers, gully-systems, stake-holes, flints and pottery shards have been found here.

Greystones - the deValera, Collins, Beckett and Yeats connections. Ongoing.

The La Touche family - their slavery connection. Ongoing.

Greystones - the WW1 dead. Complete.

Greystones - the boatyard. The schooner "Bellevue" built there with local timber that sailed back and forth to Wales with coal. Ongoing.

## **Kilkee and West Clare Heritage Group, Co Clare**

Training carried out by Robert Brown with Hassan on video making and editing. Superb course and our group will be producing short videos about heritage and some appropriate interviews. Have started putting articles from our website on our Facebook page possibly on a weekly basis with link to website and requests for input. Our first article went up last week

and huge response so far. I (Robert Brown) have had difficulties with our Facebook page having been removed as administrator by an unknown person. I am in the process of trying to sort out the problem.

### **Killiererin Heritage Society, Co Galway**

Website – Although, we have not put up much on our website since the last meeting, we have been extremely busy dealing with queries and interacting with people which has proven very useful.

- Since our last meeting, Killiererin has been in contact with a gentleman in Dublin whose ancestors are from the parish. He made contact through the website as he saw an article about his uncle and we have been in constant contact every since. He has provided us with a lot of information and some priceless photos, one of which is the earliest photo we have of our village. He has also been a great source of information and he has loads of questions through our Parish History that we are trying to answer for him. We are liaising with him on an ongoing basis and he has further photos that he will get developed for us once restrictions are eased.
- Through our website, we have also been in contact with another gentleman from Dublin with no connection to the parish but with an interest in postal history. When clearing out some items in his house, he found a letter in its original envelope that someone must have given him. The postal mark is clearly visible and it is dated 1898 from Ballyglunin Post Office which closed last year. I am working on that at the moment trying to put some context to it before I put it up on our website (as per our Historian skills course).
- We have been posting on Facebook a little bit more and trying to name people in photos that were sent by the first gentleman above.
- We have increased our interaction with other groups and made useful connections along the way.
- Last but not least, we have been attending classes online and learning loads that we need time to put into practice.



### **Milltown Heritage Group, Co. Galway**

- Volunteer Ireland selected Frank Glynn for a special national award following his nomination by Milltown Heritage Group. This prestigious award represents the extraordinary contributions that Frank has made to Milltown's Community, including

Milltown Tidy Towns, Milltown Heritage and Milltown Development Co. [A video](#) of Frank receiving his award is uploaded onto our website.



- [A photograph from 1965](#) of a group from Milltown's ICA was submitted by local man Micheal McHugh. This has generated an interest in our parish as people try to name everyone.
- A history of Milltown written by Fr Stephen Blowick in 1943 is available to [view on our website](#). Our primary schools were informed so they can utilise it as an educational resource.
- Our cataloguing project is progressing, and information is in the process of being transferred into a spreadsheet format.
- We have been successful in helping people with queries in relation to their ancestry. This service is ongoing.

**Training sessions that we attended included:**

Remote Interviewing hosted by the Oral History Network of Ireland and iCAN
Digital Skills by GK Media / Galway County Council
Reading Your Local Landscape – Galway County Council
Basic Video and Audio Editing – GK Media /iCAN
Hosting & Tagging Images Online & Data Analytics Using Flickr – Brenda Smith / GCC / NUIG
Photo Retouching and Colour Manipulation using GIMP – Brenda Smith / GCC / NUIG
Winter Evening Talk Series – iCAN
Funding Webinar – GCC and Galway PPN (2 <sup>nd</sup> Feb 2021)
History Skills Course by Dr Tomas Mac Conmara / iCAN
Support calls with Hassan Dabbagh, NMI on video conferencing

Creative Photography – Martin McDonnell / GRD

Facebook and Social Media – Hassan Dabbagh (iCAN)

***Thanks to Lorna, Marie, and Hassan for their continued support***



## **Moycullen Heritage Group, Co Galway**

### **Genealogy**

Our group has launched the “[Moycullen Heritage DNA Project](#)”. This exciting new collaboration between Moycullen people and their relations around the world promises to not only add to the store of knowledge of Moycullen's rich history but to re-link our area with its diaspora using the families recorded in the [Blake Census](#) as an anchor for the project. The project to date has raised €670, from which DNA kits were purchased to provide free testing to some elder representatives of long established Moycullen families. Already diaspora have had positive matches to these anchor families, many genealogy questions answered and movement of people during the 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> centuries being identified.

### **Website**

Our article on [Moycullen Bogs](#), a designated natural heritage area, has influenced [Diverse School Travel UK](#) to add the area to one of their 3 itineraries for Ireland.

Content from our website, leading to direct correspondence with our group, has assisted Emeritus Professor Liam Kennedy of Queens University Belfast and his group in the research of the effect of the famine on different parishes in Ireland. They have this week kindly shared with us two reports on ***Moycullen's Baptisms, Marriages, Deaths and Revenues 1786-1823*** and ***Moycullen's Baptisms, Marriage and Deaths 1837-1882***, which we will be sharing on our website in the next few days.

### **Townlands Project**

Recording of the histories of our townlands is ongoing, with 10 townlands near completion. Walter McDonagh from our group will give a brief overview at upcoming iCAN meeting.

### **Heritage Week**

We have secured the speakers for our first talk of Heritage Week 2021 – Author Jim Herlihy and Education Officer at Galway City Museum Brendan McGowan will share the stage (most likely online!!!!) for a balanced talk on Republican and Crown during the war of

independence – title to be decided, and in the meantime it is hoped to solve the question of who actually killed [John Geoghegan](#)!

### **Railway Project**

We have just secured funding to carry out an audit that will identify and assess the railway heritage assets of Moycullen and recommend a strategy for appropriate conservation, restoration, interpretation, educational access and learning opportunities. The experience of procurement procedures in applying for funding was a steep learning curve for our group, but the award of over €17,000 via the Rural Development LEADER Programme 2014-2020 will go a long way in producing some great heritage content for our website, which will include paper survey, field survey (GIS based system compatible), drone footage, photogrammetry, oral history and an investigative underwater dive. Several recent factors have expedited our wish to record our local rail heritage:

- Creating a timely and topical project to coincide with the European Union's current work towards designating 2021 the European Year of Rail.
- Pending changes to local landscape, with the building of the Moycullen Bypass, could see some remaining visual aspects of the rail existence disappear.

### **Scattery Island Heritage Group, Co. Clare**

Main areas we have been busy with of late are as follows:

Online training: some of our members have taken part in the historian skills training and Oral History training. Very beneficial we felt.

We have linked up with other groups through the forum, and need to do this more!

The archive website itself has kept us very busy as I have been getting invaluable help from Hassan navigating my way through the sound cloud, audacity, and uploading audio. As a result the site has become much more vibrant we feel. We have been getting positive feedback verbally from the local community. So thanks to Hassan for his never ending patience! We have made links with local history groups, NMI, Dúchas, Co. Library, Irish Life and Lore and have had some contributions from the USA through the website. Our secretary Caroline put a lot of work into press releases promoting the site in newspapers, and newsletters. She is also reviving the group's Facebook page in order to further promote the site and advertise posts. We feel that this website will be a large part of the work we undertake into the future, and we hope to build its profile and make further links with heritage and preservation focussed organisations through it.

We are interested in some training for another two members on updating and maintaining the site when that becomes possible. Lorna is already looking into this, and is ever available to us with help and advice on a myriad of topics, which is greatly appreciated and can't be easy! Thanks Lorna.

We are delighted with the website, training and support it has become a springboard from which our group has gained a new focus and energy.

We are applying for the community heritage grant, and hope to link up with some of the other Clare groups in relation to this application. Our treasurer and myself are working on this.

I think that covers the main points, apart from our regular zoom meetings and our hopes to meet in person again in the near future!

### **Shannon Archaeological & Historical Society and Dúchas na Sionna, Co. Clare**

The Hastings Farmhouse Restoration Project continues to be a main area of focus for our two groups. Applications for funding are currently underway. We were very fortunate that Congella McGuire applied for a Heritage Council Grant for us to carry out a Conservation Plan and was successful in securing 75% of the cost. We are also presently compiling an application to CLDC for LEADER funding to carry out a Feasibility Study and we are very hopeful of success there too. After much lobbying Clare County Council are proactively engaging with us about the restoration. This has given us renewed optimism that the project will actually happen in the near future.

Both John and Olive have taken part in the training workshops organised by iCAN. John on the video and audio editing and Olive on the audio editing and social media workshops. We are both signed on for the advanced video and audio training. We have thoroughly enjoyed the workshops and are gaining expertise that we can bring to our heritage projects in Shannon and County.

The Shannon Archaeological & Historical Society is taking part in the country wide Placenames Project to gather minor field and placenames. We recently hosted two of our young members in giving an online lecture outlining the project and their part in it. iCAN and the Roundabout Shannon website were mentioned during the lecture. We have two more lectures in our current series of lectures, the next one on March 24<sup>th</sup> at 8.00.p.m when Mary Cahill, former keeper of the National Museum will talk to us about the circumstances surrounding the Great Clare Gold Find at Mooghaun.

The Shannon Wetlands Project will feature in the second of a two- part nature documentary on Tg4. *Cumhacht an Náduir* will be broadcast at 9.30pm on Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> March and Wednesday, 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021, on TG4.



### **Skehana and District Heritage Group, Co Galway**

No meetings have been held since August, 2020.

Jimmy Laffey, Emma Laffey and Marian Hardiman have been active in various projects

### **Facebook and webpage updates:**

Currently, Jimmy Laffey is updating our Facebook and Webpage with many interesting items. <https://www.facebook.com/skehanaheritage>

<https://skehana.galwaycommunityheritage.org/>

There is a series of stories running at present on Mary Farrell (nee Forde) of Cuddoo West and Kilconnell, Ballinasloe. Now aged 96, she tells her story of growing up in an East Galway rural area in the Townland of Cuddoo West. It is a very detailed account of her childhood, school, the houses at the time, her leaving home and working in hotels, local Elections, the division of lands by the Land Commission, her travels to England to work, her return and meeting her husband and rearing eight children in Kilconnell, Co. Galway, the arrival of electricity to homes, the GAA etc.

Mary was always a great reader. She was always interested in books, history, politics, sport and in current affairs and these interests were also shared by her late husband. Her articles each week have received a huge reaction and people look forward to reading the next episode. Her memory is amazing and the details she still remembers are astounding!

It has now also being posted on our webpage and is being added to each week until it's completed.

### **Blakes and Jamesons:**

- Jimmy Laffey is working on the history of the Blakes and Jameson family connection with Windfield. The Heritage Group has received support and some funding from Pernod Ricard towards the enhancement of the Jameson grave site at Windfield – much of the work has already been completed with access road cleared (with great help from local volunteers), cleaning of the grave site and large headstone as well as signage to the site. An ecclesiastical site at this site is to be further researched.

### **Old Photographs:**

Emma Laffey has continued to post the old photographs but this has been difficult with Covid 19 restrictions

- Emma has also written her own Wallace/Carty family history and it has been published in the Navan Historical Society journal.
- Emma has also posted many beautiful seasonal photographs on our Facebook page.

### **Townland & local history research:**

Marian Hardiman is continuing her research on the Ffrench Family of Monivea as well as 4 of the local Townlands. New information is constantly being discovered which broadens the research including the discovery of previously unknown artifacts of local interest.

During the Lockdown many cyclists and walkers have discovered their own areas and are interested in the local history.

Marian has also photographed and posted photographs of local scenes.

### **Proposed Galway to Athlone Cycleway:**

- The Skehana and District Heritage Group has been active in supporting the proposed Galway to Athlone Cycleway (there are 5 routes proposed) with many members submitting the advantages of the route through Monivea and Skehana on to Mountbellew, Ahascragh to Ballinasloe.
- Many historic features were outlined and photographs were sent in to support this great proposal which would be a great amenity in this area of East Galway.

### **Monivea Heritage Association:**

Marian joined the newly formed Monivea Heritage Association (set up November 2020). It is a very active group and it will have much in common with the Skehana Heritage Group as both areas were part of the Ffrench estate. We have had 3 meetings on Zoom to date, the articles posted to date have received a lot of attention and support. A GoFundme account was set up for necessary expenses – i.e. Insurance, webpage set up etc. It set a limit of €1,000 and this target has been reached.

An application has been made for the Built Heritage Grant to carry out urgently needed major repairs to the roof of the Ffrench Mausoleum due to water leakage (also to include repairs to the stained-glass window following a break-in) and a matching amount has also been promised by the Catholic Church.

### **Courses attended online by Zoom:**

Marian has taken part in a few online courses and talks which have been very informative and interesting.

- Historian Skills series by Dr. Tomás Mac Conmara - facilitated by ICAN

Galway County Council facilitated many courses including:

- Gardening for Biodiversity by Joanita Browne in conjunction with Laois Co. Council
- Digital Skills Workshop by Gary Kelly
- Wexford Library talk about Griffith Valuation 1855
- Irish Field School of Archaeology about the Norman site at Carrick in Wexford outlining the pottery and finds of the archaeological digs at this Anglo-Norman site.

It is hoped that, depending on the Covid 19 restrictions in place, that a meeting can take place in the coming months.

## **The Medieval Bray Project, Co Wicklow**

### **Challenges**

Chair stepping back for a while, events being cancelled, re-focus needed/mainly an active group, funding for projects, adding to committee, changing bank accounts, finding out what the group is interested in besides activities.

## Achievements and Projects

Derelict building covers in dibond completed and fitted, containing photographs 19c and sketches and photos from older structures including Oldcourt Castle and Raheen a Cluig.





The 2nd Excavation results have been signed off, delay was in dating one of the objects and we are in the process of breaking down the information further for the website.

In Christmas week we used the window available to have 3 tonnes of gravel delivered for our graveyard project at Old Conna. It needs another 2 tonnes - so that will be a challenge.







The go-ahead has been given for a series of medieval panels to be worked in tapestry for display locally - The Bray Crafters are completing this.

Grant being sought for project to provide for an access survey, design, manufacture and installation of interpretative materials at Raheen Park, surrounding the ruined medieval church and enclosure known as Raheencluig. (Map of area for the installations below).



Figure 2 Aerial mapping of Raheen Park, car park at top of frame. The proposed location of the interpretative materials are marked in red.

## **Website**

- Community Archaeology article has been updated on the Website - January.
- Contributor Poem about Bloodybank received 13/3/21
- History of renovations - Leask etc., article November
- Inputs being worked on: Poem re Battle of Bloodybank, editing of article from Randolph Jones re Battle of Bloodybank, O'Tooles, O'Byrnes, Oldcourt Castle, Knights Templars (was ready and revisions now being completed) - David is publishing this - might as well wait.

### **Woodlawn Heritage Group, Co Galway**

The website has been used as a source of information for the campaigns for the proposed Athlone to Galway greenway. The video which was made last year thanks to Creative Ireland and National Museum of Ireland was a great 'showpiece'. Again, thank you.

Myself and Michéal Kilgannon availed of the media training by GK Media. Very informative and great to have support there as needed.

Michéal also attended the Historian Skills course and the Oral History Remote Interviewing session.