

GALWAY FIELD MONUMENTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

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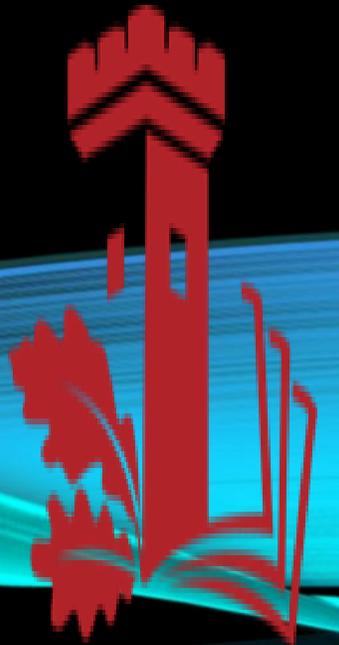
17 February 2022



An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council



Local Authority
Heritage Officer Programme



ARCHAEOLOGY IN CONTEXT

- Archaeological heritage includes all the material remains of past societies and cultures, both above and below ground (preserved in soil and peat) and also underwater.
- The island of Ireland comprises **c138,000 recorded** archaeological monuments
- There are **c12,500** recorded archaeological monuments in the County of Galway

LANDSCAPE FEATURES

- Ringforts: These are the most common monument type on the landscape and most often under threat. They are known by several names (fort, rath, dun, lios, fairy fort)
- Ringforts are usually circular but can be oval or D-shaped. One (univallate), two (bivallate) and sometimes more (multivallate) protective banks of earth (rath) and/or stone (cashel/caher) enclosed the farmstead. A single gateway allowed entry. Their size (20-60m in diameter) suggesting they were occupied by one extended family.
- Hillforts usually enclosed larger areas, and generally pre-date the ringfort/early medieval farmstead.
- Multi-period use of sites is common – Bronze Age hillforts enclosing an iron age fort with late medieval burials/ children's burial ground



DWELLINGS

- Crannógs are enclosures built on islands in shallow lakes, marshy areas and wetlands. The islands may be man-made from layers of wood, peat and stone. The structures may have been used as permanent or seasonal dwellings, industrial and/or places of refuge. Recent excavations and research have revealed multi-period sites dating from prehistory. The example shown is on Lough Acalla near Kilconnell, County Galway.



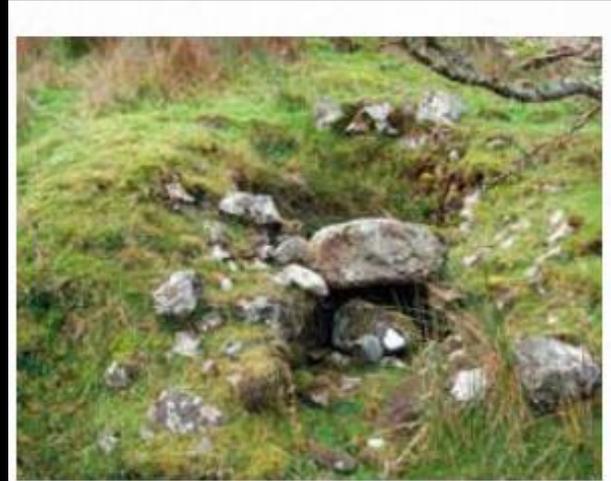
PREHISTORIC BURIAL MONUMENTS

- Wedge Tombs were the last type of megalithic burial tombs to be built in Ireland. Most were constructed between c.4300 and 4000 years ago. They are usually built with 2-3 sidestones and a backstone arranged in a wedge shape and covered with a flat capstone. Some have traces of a cairn that may have surrounded the chamber such as that illustrated at Doorus, near Kinvara, County Galway.



FOOD AND REFUGE

- A Souterrain is a man-made underground passage. They vary in length and can have changes in level and small chambers. They are frequently associated with ringforts. It is thought that they were built as places of refuge and goods storage. They range in date from c. 2700– 900 years ago.
- Fulacht Fiadh are kidney shaped mounds of burnt and fire-cracked stone usually found close to a water source. When in use, a pit was dug, lined with wood and filled with water. Stones heated in a nearby fire were placed in the water to bring it to boiling. It is believed that meat was then cooked in the water, but it may also have been used for bathing or even beer making! The discarded stones form the left over mound. The method was in use from about 4,000 years ago.



EARLY MEDIEVAL ECCLESIASTICAL REMAINS

- Early Medieval Ecclesiastical Sites are characterised by a number of features. The 'termon' or holy area was enclosed with a circular embankment of earth and/or stone. Within the area was a small, simple, rectangular oratory with a west doorway, plain east window, a steeply pitched roof and projecting gables or antae. Other typical features of the site can include a graveyard, cross incised slabs, saint's bed, round tower, bullaun stone(s) and a holy well.





EARLY MEDIEVAL ECCLESIASTICAL REMAINS

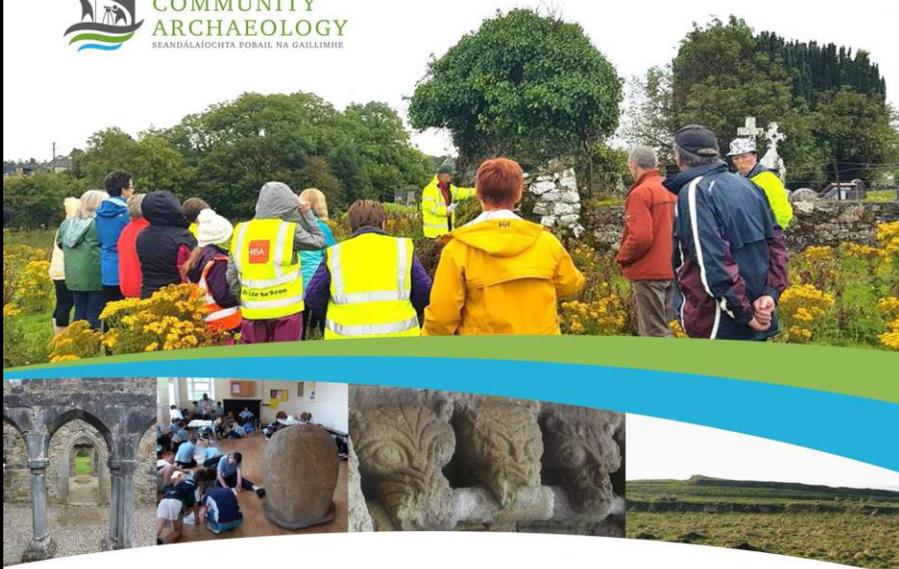
- Bullaun Stones have depressions on their surface which are usually circular. In local tradition the stones are often associated with a saint and the water that collects in the depression with a cure for an ailment.
- Holy Wells are often associated with ecclesiastical sites and are the focus of devotion. The wells vary greatly in shape and ornamentation from simple springs to stone housings with steps. There may be a tradition of votive offerings being left in the well (coins) or on surrounding trees (rags) and a cure associated with the water. Complex rituals associated with a visit to the well and pattern days, usually the anniversary of the saint connected to the well, can survive.



CLIMATE CHANGE & ARCHAEOLOGY

- Predicted changes to the Irish climate will have implications for archaeology including:
 - Rising sea levels, flooding and coastal erosion along with wetter winters and drier summers, increasingly powerful storms can be expected to give rise to structural damage to our archaeological heritage.
 - This will mean the loss of ground adjacent to structures, exposure and erosion of archaeological sites, and collapse of unstable masonry elements.
 - Other slow-onset risks identified include the loss of historic landscape features and decay of building fabric.
- 388 coastal archaeological sites in county Galway are at risk of being lost due to erosion. (Kiaran Moylan, *Rising tides, a threat to Galway's coastal archaeological landscape (MA, NUIG)*)
- Destruction wreaked along Connacht's coastline in the recent storms has exposed archaeology dating back to the Neolithic period on Connemara's Omey Island. Large linear archaeological deposits of up to a metre thick have been exposed on the western and northern shorelines of the tidal island off Claddaghduff. (Jan 13, 2014, *Irish Times*)

GALWAY COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGIST



The Galway Community Archaeologist provides advice and support relating to archaeological monuments in the community. She is available to answer your queries on maintenance, preservation, education and promotion of our diverse range of archaeology which spans over ten thousand years. Now available to liaise with educators, community groups, farmers, individuals and custodians of Galway's archaeological heritage.

Contact: Bernadette Doherty
Carra, Bullaun, Loughrea, Co. Galway

Mobile: 086 100 3888

Website: <https://field-monuments.galwaycommunityheritage.org/>

Email: g.c.archaeology@gmail.com

Facebook: Galway Community Archaeology

This project is funded by Galway County Council and The Heritage Council



GALWAY COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT

The primary objectives of the Project are to:

- (i) Promote awareness, knowledge and understanding of the local archaeological resource among individuals and community groups in the county.
- (ii) Promote heritage best practice in relation to researching and undertaking works relating to archaeological heritage.

Galway Community Archaeology

Awareness, Appreciation, Management

a member of...



GALWAY COMMUNITY
HERITAGE

home

about us

contribute

publications

archaeology

community archaeology



Welcome

This is the website of Galway Community Archaeology. Here you can browse through our collection of local historical and archaeological sites and material, which includes photos, old documents and also the knowledge shared by local people.

Find out [more about us](#) or [get in touch](#).

ADVANTAGES OF COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT



Sliabh Aughty Field Club

Public group · 498 members

- **Link** between custodians and Departments
- **Available** to answer calls, e-mails & general queries from public – steer them in right direction lessening queries to LA, NMS, Heritage Council. Some-one to **Listen**
- Take away fear factor '**Red Tape**' associated with archaeological sites and their preservation and promotion
- Forge **partnerships** within communities, schools, colleges, landowners, farming groups, NMS, Museums, Local Authority.
- **Advice** on funding, assist in applications
- **Promoting** best heritage practice, create **awareness** and **appreciation**
- **Communication** at grass roots level
- Always open to **learning** and sharing knowledge where applicable
- **Contribute to Local Authority, Heritage Council and Government responsibility in delivering plans**

REACHING OUT TO PEOPLE

- Seminars
- Heritage Week Events
- Schools & Colleges
- Communities & Farmers
- Citizen Science Projects
- Website
- Social Media
- Visible in community



**GALWAY COMMUNITY
ARCHAEOLOGY**
SEANDÁLAÍOCHTA POBAIL NA GAILLIMHE Presents...



12.30pm | Wednesday 23rd June | 2021

ARCHAEOLOGY & CLIMATE CHANGE

Lunchtime Talk | Book online now...
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/archaeology-and-climate-change-tickets-158705260707>

Explore effects of climate change on various sites and monuments.
Glimpse at community projects throughout County Galway.

SPEAKERS ON THE DAY...

Fergal McNamara MArchSc MRIAI Grade 1 Conservation Architect	Dr. Gordon Bromley B.Sc., M.Sc., Ph.D. Department of Geography, Archaeology and Irish Studies, NUJ Galway. Introduction to the how and why of climate change.	Michael Gibbons MAI, Independent Field Archaeologist. Current research is focussed on documenting the extraordinarily rich upland and coastal archaeology of Connemara.	Bernie Doherty Galway Community Archaeologist
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Galway Community Archaeology Project
For further information please visit: <https://field-monuments.galwaycommunityheritage.org/>
Facebook: www.facebook.com/GalwayCommunityArchaeology
Mobile: Bernie Doherty 086 1003888 Email: g.c.archaeology@gmail.com

Galway Community Archaeology Project is funded by Galway County Council and The Heritage Council.



CMF PROJECT: ABBEYGORMICAN CHURCH

Prior to undertaking works



After Works



ARCHAEOLOGY & CLIMATE CHANGE: TAKE HOME POINTS

Ballinastack Film

Eugene Morgan, landowner and custodian

Gary Dempsey, Digital Heritage Age



Ballinastack Megalithic Tomb and Children's Burial Ground
Eugene Morgan, landowner and custodian of site highlights the importance of this megalithic tomb and burial ground

Community Monuments Fund 2020

Abbeygormacan

Ballinastack 3D Imagery

Ballinastack Film

Ballinastack Megalithic Tomb

Ballinastack Megalithic Tomb and Children's Burial Ground

Community Monuments Fund 2020

Share this



- Communication & Awareness
- Knowledge
- Management
- Protection
- What is valued and by whom?
- Not everything can be saved but it can be recorded. (Scottish Model <https://scapetrust.org/>)
- Importance of the Community Archaeologist Project
- Community Monument Fund, Heritage Council Funding, LEADER funding
- No dedicated fund for owners of archaeological sites (that are not also protected structures)

GO RAIBH MILE MAITH AGAIBH!

- Useful resources:
- <https://field-monuments.galwaycommunityheritage.org/>
- <https://field-monuments.galwaycommunityheritage.org/content/new-contributions/archaeology-climate-change-seandalaiocht-agus-an-tathru-deraide>
- <https://field-monuments.galwaycommunityheritage.org/content/community-archaeology/advice-for-community-groups/archaeology-in-the-community>

