

# Decade of Commemorations 2013-2023

## Commemorative Programme for County Kildare



### Commemoration in Kildare

The aim of the programme is to establish the most appropriate way in which to mark the centenaries within the county. The nature of the programme would be expansive, delivering a series of commemorative events, school programmes, publications, etc., but with the unique intention of creating a legacy of research and/or cultural and artistic material for future generations. The delivery of the programme should be inclusive, appropriate and sensitive, to take account of all aspects of life in Co. Kildare in the period 1913-1923.

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***Message from the Mayor of Co. Kildare, Cllr. Fiona O'Loughlin***

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of our nation and the momentous events of the most significant decade in our history it is fitting that we develop a strategy that is comprehensive, inclusive and respectful. It should be broad, accurate and appeal to every citizen of this county.

We owe it to that generation of Irish men, women and children, that we commemorate this history with pride and enthusiasm and that we do justice not only to their ideals and aspirations, but to their memory and sacrifice. In future years County Kildare will be remembered for how we commemorated the centenaries of 1916, the Great War, War of Independence and Civil War. It was not just a time of great political change and upheaval, but of social change and radical progress, as women took their rightful place at the polling station, the dreaded workhouses were abolished, tractors appeared in the countryside and Irish people took control of their own destiny, economy and everyday lives.

It is our duty, not merely to commemorate these historic events, but to understand, debate and embrace them; to create a lasting legacy for future generations as only we can. Let us celebrate the legacy with pride and dignity, with thought and creativity. Let us remember and be remembered. We are proud of our county and our people and their role in the great events of this historic period. This strategy will offer a foundation for further discussion and development and is intended to outline possibilities as well as identify key events within the decade.

***Message from The Chief Executive, Peter Carey***

Kildare County Council is committed to developing a strategy of commemoration in line with the national programme being unveiled for the Decade of Commemorations. The aim of the strategy in Kildare is to establish, in the most appropriate way, a programme to mark the centenaries within the county. The nature of the programme will be expansive, delivering a series of commemorative events, school programmes, publications and cultural events., but with the unique intention of creating a legacy of research and/or cultural and artistic material for future generations.

We wish to engage with all the people of the county to deliver the best possible programme and to ensure it is inclusive, appropriate and sensitive. The process will be ongoing and will allow all sections of the community to respond and put forward their ideas, hopes and plans. This is an opportunity for all of us in County Kildare to commemorate these great events and celebrate our history.

# **DECADE OF COMMEMORATIONS 2013–2023**

## **Commemorative Programme for County Kildare**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The decade from 1913 to 1923 was the defining period in modern Irish history which culminated with the achievement of Irish independence and the foundation of the Irish Free State.

It was a time of great change, the effects of which impacted on the lives of people throughout the country from all walks of life; a period of war, rebellion and political upheaval which also witnessed monumental changes in social and economic circumstances, basic human rights, franchise and constitutional government.

The Commemorative Programme for County Kildare shall mark the centenary of key historic events that will occur between 2013 and 2023 with particular emphasis on 1916-2016. It will focus on all aspects of life in Kildare:

- social
- cultural
- economic
- political
- industrial and agricultural
- educational

### **2. Commemorative Programme for County Kildare**

The Commemorative Programme will take note of national policy and national commemorative projects, but it will ultimately focus on County Kildare.

The aim of the programme in Kildare is to establish the most appropriate way in which to mark the centenaries within the county. The nature of the programme would be expansive, delivering a series of commemorative events, school programmes, publications, etc., but with the unique intention of creating a legacy of research and/or cultural and artistic material for future generations.

The delivery of the programme should be inclusive, appropriate and sensitive, to take account of all aspects of life in Co. Kildare in the period 1913-1923.

### **3. Community Participation**

The Kildare Commemorative Programme will reach out to Kildare people, locally, nationally and internationally, as it attempts to commemorate the period and its people within this momentous decade. It is important to draw on existing material, but likewise to uncover and add new accounts and perceptions of the decade that changed this country forever.

The programme will embrace all mediums and art-forms in an attempt to deliver a worthy series of events and activities and will seek the participation of local communities and organisations throughout the process. To do this effectively a framework for advice and support will be established to explore, amongst other things, the availability of financial aid which would make use of existing channels such as the Heritage and Community Grants Schemes. It is important that activities are appropriate and relevant to the overall theme.

### **4. Guiding Principles**

- The programme should be inclusive, comprehensive, honest and objective and recognise the varied themes which presented themselves during the entire period.
- Events and projects should have a relevant, verifiable historical context though the development of these projects should not be limited in format or focus.
- It must actively engage with all organisations, but particularly with local communities and people.
- Therefore it should promote all aspects of our history sensitively, yet proudly, catering for all the citizens of the county.
- It should serve to inform and educate, preserve and promote the history of the county in its broadest sense.
- Delivery of the programme should be the responsibility of the appointed Decade of Commemorations Committee and administrative staff provided for within the parameters of the programme.

It is recommended, due to experience with other commemorative projects, planning issues, cost, and local territorial focus and bias that it is not helpful to pursue a programme of memorialising the county.

Therefore, it is proposed that the programme disengage from requests for commemorative plaques, busts, monuments and other memorials, naming of public

facilities and places as being problematic and which could divert interest and focus from the overall commemorative strategy.

This does not preclude individual committees and other organisations from funding and erecting relevant, individual memorials in accordance with current planning guidelines.

## **5. Strategic Objectives**

- Establish a representative Committee to oversee the administration of the Commemorative Programme.
- Establish and administer a budget on a year by year basis which should explore corporate and national funding strands.
- Engage with the wider community and help support the development of a varied, relevant and appropriate programme of commemorative events.
- Include people of all ages and from all backgrounds while reaching out to the Kildare Diaspora across the globe.
- Look for possible partners to develop and deliver the programme. Focus on existing groups and events across a wide spectrum of shared interests and outcomes, such as, local history groups, heritage centres and Maynooth University, Easter Parades, Kildare Reader's Festival, etc.
- Promote where possible goodwill and mutual respect and recognise the importance of our language and traditions as organs of pride and celebration to enhance our sense of place.

Possible partners might include:

- Maynooth University
- The County Kildare Archaeological Society
- The County Kildare Federation of Local History Groups
- Kildare, Athy and Kilcullen Heritage Centres
- Curragh Military Museum
- Kildare Fáilte
- Kildare Education Centre
- Kildare Library & Arts Services
- Kildare County Council
- County sporting organisations and facilities
- County Kildare Heritage Forum
- KFM Radio
- Local community organisations

## **6. Decade of Commemorations Committee**

The Committee would be named the County Kildare Decade of Commemorations Committee.

The Committee would be essentially a working committee appointed by Kildare County Council from elected members and staff from within the Library, Arts and Heritage Departments of Kildare Co. Council. It would meet periodically with representatives chosen by the proposed partners and other interested or invited organisations.

A method for public consultation might be agreed by the Committee to bring the proposed strategy to the widest possible audience.

The Committee will engage at national level to take advantage of available national funding, help and advice.

A person or persons would need to be appointed to oversee the administration of the Commemorative Programme.

## **7. Strategic Actions**

Kildare County Council will provide leadership and will maintain a positive role in delivering a commemorative programme.

The County Kildare Decade of Commemorations Committee will engage at national level but focus on local events and activities with the proposed partners and other organisations, members of the public and local communities when appropriate, to deliver the following strategic actions:

- Organise a series of lectures, presentations, exhibitions, class visits and other events to commemorate the period 1913-1923.
- Prepare a Timeline/Chronology of important events for the period. This will serve to make information/research more accessible, easier to understand and help with the delivery of the overall Commemorative Programme.
- Explore the possibility of developing a number of key projects, e.g. major 1916-2016 parade/event, a re-enactment of the 1919 All-Ireland Football Final, re-creation of the Dan Donnelly fight on the Curragh in 1815, publications, artwork, etc.
- Facilitate small grants for local projects (through existing grant schemes, e.g. Festival Grant, Community Heritage Grant Scheme) with an inclusive focus.

- Work with schools and educators to bring the period to life within the classroom through poetry, art and the Irish language with a possible debating competition to focus on the issues of the day.
- Organise outreach projects for schools and students to cater for Leaving Cert. Special Projects, etc., which might focus on the commemorative period.
- Examine the body of literature and other media and art forms, relating to County Kildare which was published during the period 1913-1923 or pertaining to the period and publish the results online.
- Use film, photographs and other visual media to create presentations and exhibitions and to engage with the public. Screen films and documentaries relating to the period.
- Aim to provide an appropriate legacy of the Decade of Commemorations 2013–2023, e.g. end of programme publication.

## **8. Estimated Budget**

The established committee and various partners will necessarily be astutely aware of the overall national strategy of commemorations and will require further information on possible national strands of funding as this information becomes available.

It will be immensely important to be cognisant of possible available funding strands and draw down such funds to enhance the countywide programme. Any budget agreed locally could be used as matching funding to leverage other funding at national level.

The total allocation would include the two years already accounted for; admin and direction of strategy for the remaining years and publication of a commemorative book, which would be a legacy for future generations.

It is envisaged that the programme would be wrapped up and projects finalised within 2023.

Annual budgets need to be agreed but these could be further supplemented by existing programming budgets within Kildare Library & Arts and KCC Heritage Dept., by providing focus through annual programmes, such as The Kildare Reader's Festival, Heritage Week events, etc. Indeed programmes, projects and events for 2013 and 2014 have been funded to date by these budgets which greatly reduces the overall cost of funding the commemorative strategy.

A budget for 2015 of €30,000, from KCC has been identified to begin preparations for the forthcoming year and key events and areas of focus need to be quickly identified to make it a success. Part of the funding would be used to administer and



co-ordinate actions and strategy as laid out in the Commemorative Programme, specifically for the funding of a facilitator/administrator.

### **9. Historian in Residence**

While the overarching principles, strategy, budget, themes and type of event may be decided by the appointed Committee, the programme of events would be co-ordinated on a yearly basis by a county coordinator. We feel this might be best served by the creation of a post of Historian in Residence based loosely on similar appointments of Artist or Writer in Residence.

The Historian in Residence should be resident within the county and have a proven track record in historical research and publication with a focus on the history of County Kildare.

They would be responsible for working with the Committee to identify, themes, events and notable figures; co-ordinate research to present to schools and local communities; arrange suitable and relevant lectures, presentations and seminars to promote the Commemorative Programme. They would report back to the Committee and administer the programme on a regular basis.

Ultimately the research undertaken and content delivered over the decade would add greatly to our understanding and knowledge of all aspects of life in Co. Kildare during this seminal period in our history.

It would be important to make this research available for future generations and to present it in a professional publication which would be the lasting legacy of the Commemorative Programme.

The publication will seek to give an insight into social, economic and political happenings in the county during this time period. This will provide a greater awareness, knowledge and understanding of what was happening in the county during this very important period of our history and must be preserved for future generations in an accessible manner.

The format of this publication would be decided in conjunction with the committee and might be a stand-alone publication focusing on each year or a composite publication with chapters being written by noted academics that have a thorough knowledge of this time period in the county from their own research perspective.

Responsibilities might include lectures, presentations, seminars, research, publication, liaison/partnerships and administration.

## 10. Commemorative Programmes, Themes and Lecture Series

To make information/research more accessible, easier to understand and help with the delivery of the overall Commemorative Programmed it is intended to prepare a Timeline/Chronology of important events for the period, which might be usefully developed along major themes as in other counties.

YEAR	THEME
1913   2013	Kildare and the Lockout
1914   2014	Women, Political Change and WWI
1915   2015	Kildare's Changing Landscape
1916   2016	1916 The Kildare Dimensions
1917   2017	Social Conditions & Political Change
1918   2018	The Great Flu and End of WWI
1919   2019	Sport, Democracy and the People
1920   2020	Changing Times: Black and Tans
1921   2021	Truce and Transition
1922   2022	Birth of a Nation; End of Workhouse
1923   2023	End of Civil War: New Beginnings

Practical examples of projects might include (not an exhaustive list)

- Prepare future generations by conducting school debates, possibly named in honour of the signatories of the Proclamation - these could be recorded for posterity and the winning entry published in 2023
- Collect artefacts
- Oral recordings with regard to relevant topics or key figures
- Prepare a 1916 commemorative booklet
- Commission commemorative medal for posterity for primary school children and other demands where necessary
- Lecture series; Mobile exhibitions; Website and social media
- Re-enactment with primary school children of the 1919 All-Ireland Football final; Re-enactment of the Dan Donnelly fight of 1815
- Create a piece of drama or theatre; commission a book of fiction or poetry
- Short film; screenings; documentaries
- Commissioned music pieces

- Art in its broadest sense of literature, painting, sculpture, etc.
- Identify possible exceptional and unique themes which might prove beneficial to tourism, development in the future such as the county's association with Ernest Shackleton

## Appendix 1: Key figures and events of the period 1913-1923

<b>1913</b>	<b>2013</b>
<b>Kildare and the Lockout</b>	
Death of Emily Lawless 1913, author and historian descendant of one of the great Kildare families	
Celbridge, Leixlip and Maynooth particularly hit by Lockout of 1913	
<b>1914</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>Women, Political Change and WWI</b>	
The Curragh Mutiny (March 1914)	
Charles Fitzclarence (Kill) VC winner killed in action Nov. 1914	
John McCormack records 'It's a Long Way to Tipperary' Nov. 1914	
A remount stable was created at the Curragh Standhouse to supply horses	
Countess Mayo and Lady Weldon members of the gentry set and active in the county re. war effort	
Lord Mayo - most prominent Unionist in Southern Ireland	
Kildare hosted the Curragh Camp, Naas Barracks, Newbridge Barracks and Kildare Barracks; Naas Barracks was the Depot for the Royal Dublin Fusiliers	
Belgian refugees in Celbridge workhouse.	
<b>1915</b>	<b>2015</b>
<b>Kildare's Changing Landscape</b>	
Kildare is home to the Irish National Stud - the first Stud being handed over to the British Government in 1915	
The Irish Derby is 150 years old in 1915	
Admiral de Robeck (Naas) - Dardanelles 1915	
Dan Donnelly; Lusitania; Waterloo; Gallipoli	
<b>1916</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>1916 The Kildare Dimensions</b>	
Domhnall Ua Buachalla (1875-1963) led the Maynooth Company to Dublin to take part in the 1916 Rising	
The Fenian, John Devoy (1842-1928), born in Greenhills, Kill, exiled in New York, head of Clan na Gael, USA, and financier of the 1916 Rising	
Teresa Brayton, poet and nationalist	
John Vincent Holland, from Athy, won a VC in WWI	
Ernest Shackleton and Antarctica expeditions: <i>James Caird</i> sets sail on day of Easter rebellion	
<b>1917</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>Social Conditions &amp; Political Change</b>	
A convalescent home established at Firmount, Clane. Troops treated at Curragh Military Hospital and Curragh Military Graveyard hosts many memorials to WWI.	
<b>1918</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b>The Great Flu and End of WWI</b>	

	Art O'Connor (1888-1950), of Elm Hall, Celbridge, TD and Director of Agriculture 1918-21
	Athy-Wolfhill colliery/railway opened Sept. 1918
	Two Sinn Féin TDs returned for Kildare in 1918 General Election
	Royal Flying Corps based at Curragh
	Stained glass window at Carnalway: other plaques and memorials dotted throughout the county
	Clongowes College had more students per capita killed in WWI than Eton
	Great Flu of 1918-19 - highest death rate in the country
<b>1919</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>Sport, Democracy and the People</b>	
	Eamon Broy (1887-1972), from Rathangan, Michael Collins' spy in the headquarters of the Dublin Metropolitan Police G Division
	Jim Dunne (1902-1973), Kill, a descendent of John Devoy, active from 1917-23 and OC Kildare Flying Column during the Civil War
	Punchestown cancelled on two occasions during War of Independence, 1919 and 1920
	1919 Kildare wins All-Ireland for second time (Kildare v Galway)
	Two Sinn Féin TDs returned for Kildare as members of first Dáil in 1919
<b>1920</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>Changing Times: Black and Tans</b>	
	Greenhills Ambush; reprisal attack in Naas
	Council Elections
<b>1921</b>	<b>2021</b>
<b>Truce and Transition</b>	
	Co. Kildare location for internment camps in Newbridge and several camps at the Curragh from 1916-1923 - Rath Camp opened 1921
	Footballer Matt Goff, took part in Stacumney Ambush
<b>1922</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Birth of a Nation; End of Workhouse</b>	
	The handover of the British Military HQ in Ireland (covered by Pathé News)
	Kildare Mutiny (1922)
	Co. Kildare was the scene for the single largest execution during the Civil War (through the whole period) in Ireland
	Famous footballer Squires Gannon, interned in Newbridge
	Annie Moore republican activist
	Newbridge Internment Camp was the scene for the largest prison escape in Irish history
	Kildare Board of Health
<b>1923</b>	<b>2023</b>
<b>End of Civil War: New Beginnings</b>	
	Hunger Strikes in internment camps; Curragh escape; Release of prisoners

## Appendix 2: Projects funded which relate to the theme of Decade of Commemorations

Group Name	Project	Location
County Kildare Archaeological Society	One day seminar 'They called it the Great War'	Kildare
Kilcullen 1914 Commemoration Group	Researching Kilcullen and World War I	Kilcullen
Kildare	Mock World War I Trench at the KCS	Kildare
Maynooth & Kildare 1916 Commemoration	Exhibition of the Maynooth and Co Kildare involvement in the Volunteers 1913	Maynooth
Maynooth Local History Group	Maynooth People and WWI	Maynooth
Russell Library NUI Maynooth	Chaplains and World War I	Maynooth
Teresa Brayton Heritage Group And Pope John Paul II Library NUIM	Collaborative outreach project to promote the work of Teresa Brayton	Kilcock and Maynooth
The Maynooth 1916 Centenary Committee	Maynooth 1916 Commemoration	Maynooth
Athy Heritage centre	Exhibit on World War I	Athy
Riverbank Arts Centre	Kildare Reader's Festival 2013 focused its main segment on The Lockout while in 2014 it featured the <i>In Time of War</i> lecture on 18 Oct.	Newbridge

### Kildare Library & Arts Services

In 2013 staff from Kildare Library & Arts Services visited primary and secondary schools throughout the county with a presentation on Kildare and the Great Lock-Out.

2014 presentation to over 2,500 students on Kildare and WWI.

2015 Presentations underway on Thomas McCormack - Lusitania Survivor; Dan Donnelly, etc. Oral recordings of descendants of five key people from Kildare involved in 1916.

## **Appendix 3: Heritage Week 2014**

### ***Irish Volunteers in Kildare: An Exhibition in Maynooth Library***

showcasing memorabilia

from Maynooth volunteers who assembled from 1913 to 1914

### ***Teresa Brayton: Literary Nationalist***

This exhibition, hosted by NUI Maynooth and showcasing memorabilia from the Kildare County Library Service, celebrates the political and literary career of Teresa Brayton.

### ***Our Unfortunate Sons***

Commemorative concert to remember the men from Kilcullen and District who went to the Great War.

### ***Maynooth College 1914-1918: An exhibition at the Russell Library, NUI Maynooth***

An exhibition of documents, photographs and memorabilia relating to Maynooth College during the First World War, including correspondence about the conflict and the recruitment of Irish army chaplains

### ***Kildare: In Time of War, 1914 - 1918, With Emphasis on your Locality***

In this illustrated lecture from author James Durney we explore the impact of the Great War on the people of Kildare. Each lecture will focus primarily on the local area in which the talk takes place.

### ***Maynooth College 1914-1918: An exhibition at the Russell Library, NUI Maynooth***

An exhibition of documents, photographs and memorabilia relating to Maynooth College during the First World War, including correspondence about the conflict and the recruitment of Irish army chaplains

### ***Maynooth 1916 Centenary Walking/ Train tour***

Walking/train tour telling the story of 15 Maynooth men's role in the Easter Rising 1916. We will be getting the train to Dublin at 18.20 proceed to GPO Dublin.

### ***Preparing for War: Relics at the Curragh***

Visit to the Curragh Military Museum and WWI trench complex on the Curragh Plains.