



Monaghan 1916 - Brought Back to Life

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FOR DETAILS

1-2 Hill Street, Monaghan, Ireland

tel: +353 (0) 47 82928

email: comuseum@monaghancoco.ie

www.monaghan.ie/museum



www.facebook.com/monaghanmuseum

Opening Hours

Monday - Friday 11am - 5pm

Saturday 12pm - 5pm

FREE ADMISSION AND
EVERYONE WELCOME



Padraig Pearse

Monaghan County Museum in partnership with Monaghan County Library Service, Monaghan County Council's Corporate Services, Youth Services, Arts and Heritage Services and Monaghan Municipal District, The Courts Service of Ireland along with the invaluable assistance of Comhairle na nÓg and the Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children came together to produce Monaghan's main event



Padraig Pearse reads the Proclamation on the steps of Monaghan Courthouse



Chief Executive Eamonn O'Sullivan and Chairman of Monaghan County Council Cllr Noel Keelan

commemorating the 1916 Rising on Saturday April 30th. The centre of Monaghan Town was taken back in time to a place where the county was still part of the British Empire and where the news of the Rising in Dublin was met with fear and anger rather than celebration by the majority of the population.

This was a major event with over four thousand people moving through the site on the day. The focus for this historic day of remembrance and exploration was inclusivity. Rather than watching from the fringes, everyone stepped into history through the vast array of imaginative and interactive events. A wide range of re-enactors were on parade playing the parts of Irish Volunteers, Irish Citizen Army, Cumann na mBan and British Army members. The huge crowds spoke to these people and interacted with them and got the chance to speak to the men and women who were there in Dublin during that fateful week, hearing first-hand accounts of their experiences.

Throughout the site the curious public could print their own proclamations, find out about fashion from the era, join the Volunteers and try on their uniforms, go back to



Printing workshop

school in 1916 and meet the strict school master or sit back and listen to the travelling minstrels who were plying their trade. They could also visit the travelling cinema and enjoy some of the earliest films ever made in Ireland as well as enjoy the famous *Mise Eire*, which was first released in 1959, depicting some of the stunning early moving pictures shot during the Rising in Dublin.

Plays exploring various parts of the 1916 story were available for everyone to enjoy including a celebrated piece by world renowned local playwright Eugene McCabe titled *Pull Down a Horseman*.

The centrepiece for the day was the County Courthouse that was transformed into a barricaded GPO. As a climax to the event, Padraig Pearse, flanked by James Connolly and a wary collection of rebels burst out of the doors of Monaghan's GPO and read the proclamation to a stunned crowd of thousands, plastered it to the pillar of the building and then retreated back into their stronghold.

This incredibly successful event will now form part of the history of the county as we continue to mark the centenary of a year that changed Irish history forever.



Minister Heather Humphreys addressing the crowd



Men and Women of 1916 ready to tell their stories



Images from the day of commemoration and celebration of the Rising in Monaghan

From a Whisper to a Roar – Exploring the untold story of Monaghan 1916



Pictured at the launch of the exhibition Padraic Horgan exhibition designer, Adge King Director MCC, Prof. Terence Dooley, Eamonn O'Sullivan Chief Executive MCC, Cllr Noel, Keelan Cathaoirleach MCC and Liam Bradley Curator Monaghan County Museum

There was a packed house at the launch of Monaghan County Museum's new exhibition *From a Whisper to a Roar – Exploring the Untold Story of Monaghan 1916*, which commemorates the tumultuous events that happened a century ago, changing forever the socio-political landscape of the county.

Monaghan 1916, when the whisper of an Irish Republic exploded into a roar following the bombshell of the Rebellion. A never before told story about the lives of Monaghan people caught up in the Rising as well as the Monaghan people who fought in the British Army during the Battle of Somme. This ground breaking exhibition looks at life in the county during this turbulent time and how these violent and chaotic events affected everyone in Monaghan and changed their lives forever. Monaghan County Museum has been working in collaboration with renowned historian and Monaghan man, Professor Terence Dooley of Maynooth University to research and develop this gripping story of passion, sacrifice and patriotism.

In this exhibition we investigate how the people of Monaghan who were from both Nationalist and Unionist backgrounds dealt with the initial shock of the 1916 Rising and we see how the tremors of the

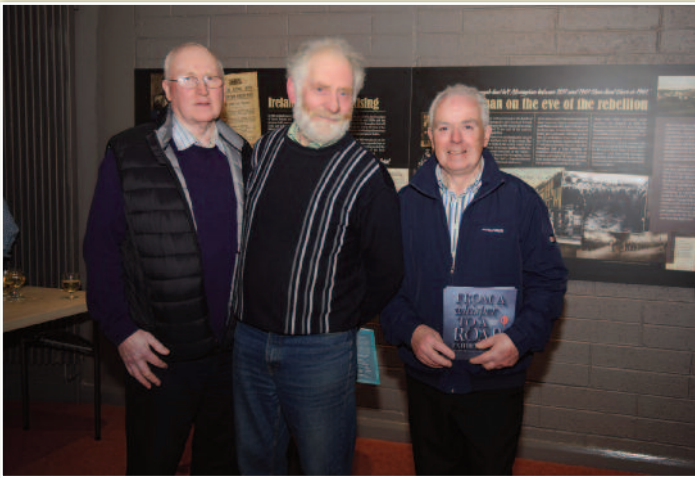
rebellion eventually started shaking the county to the core, forever changing the future of Monaghan and the country.

For many in Monaghan though, both Nationalist and Unionist, the summer of 1916 brought their focus to the battle fields of France. Thousands of men from Monaghan signed up and went to fight in the British Army during World War I. Many of them formed part of the 36th (Ulster) Division who went over the top on the first day of the Somme offensive on July 1st and never came back. For the men who were lucky enough to survive, the Monaghan they came home to was a very different place.

The museum received notification recently that the exhibition has been shortlisted for a major national award under the Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards 2016. The winners will be announced at a gala reception on November 24th.

The exhibition has also been an award winner through the Public Sector Magazine Awards where the display has been credited as one of the very best in the country.

This award winning exhibition will run until the end of February 2017.



Artefacts on display and images from the opening night

Monaghan and the Somme Remembered



Curator Liam Bradley sets the scene on the morning of the first day of the Somme

Friday, July 1st 2016 marked the 100th anniversary of the first day of the Battle of the Somme. It was commemorated in Monaghan by a poignant and emotional event held by Monaghan County Museum at Peter's lake in the centre of town, timed for exactly 7:30am, the moment that the first waves of men were ordered over the top a century ago. The event included a brief re-enactment, where those present were ordered by local archaeologist Felim MacGabhann, dressed and playing the part of a Captain in the Royal Irish Fusiliers to step out over the trench which was symbolised by a row of sandbags near the lake shore. He blew a whistle, which had been used during that era by hundreds of commanding officers to signal the moment of attack along the front. This was followed by a moment's silence that was punctuated only by the breeze bustling through the trees that surround Peter's lake and the glimpses of early morning sunlight that beamed through the leaves.

The Battle of the Somme was one of the largest battles of the World War I, fought between the 1st of July and the 18th of November 1916 with over 1.5

million casualties. In the summer of 1916 Monaghan families both Catholic and Protestant were very concerned about the fate of their sons at the Front. Many of these Monaghan men were fighting in the 36th (Ulster) Division, which had formed part of the massive army of men, over 100,000 strong, who had gone over the top at 7:30am on Saturday, July 1st 1916. On the first day of the offensive, the British Army suffered over 57,000 casualties, 5,000 of whom were from the 36th (Ulster) Division. The 1st of July 1916 went down as the bloodiest day in British Army history.

In total around 2,500 Monaghan men served in the Great War. There were notable contributions from some families: seven Roberts brothers from Killybreen in Errigal Truagh all joined the British army at different stages; seven sons of Sir Thomas Crawford of Newbliss served, and three of these were decorated for gallantry; four Steenson brothers from Glaslough volunteered and two were killed. In all nearly 540 Monaghan men were killed in the war, about half and half Protestant and Catholic.



*A moment of silence marking the 100th Anniversary of the Somme
Monaghan County Council Cathaoirleach PJ O'Hanlon lays a wreath of poppies in memory of the Monaghan men who fought and died at the Somme and throughout World War I*



In the summer of 1916, around 100 Monaghan men were killed at the Somme.

the Great War



PRIVATE THOMAS HUGHES VC

Private Thomas Hughes of Carronea, Castleknock, of the 6th Connaught Rangers, was awarded the Victoria Cross due to his actions on the 2nd September 1916. Hughes had been awarded at Gallipoli in France as part of the Gallipoli campaign but despite his injuries he single-handedly captured an enemy machine gun position, killing two Germans and capturing four prisoners. The Nationalist-dominated Castleknock Board of Guardians agreed to present him with an address of welcome, one member proclaiming: "Our Monaghan should not allow that proud of him - Ireland should be delighted with the record of this young hero." He died in January 1942 and is buried in Broadland, County Monaghan.



LIEUTENANT T.J. KENNEDY

Never reached Monaghan in September 1916 that Lieutenant T.J. Kennedy of the 8th Battalion of the Royal Leinster Fusiliers had been killed in action. For two years before the war, he had been Managing Director of the Northern Standard.



MAJOR DAVID NELSON VC

Born in Stranorlar, County Monaghan. He entered the Royal Field Artillery in 1904 but later transferred to 1st Battalion of the Royal Leinster Fusiliers. On 16th November 1914, Nelson was the first soldier to be awarded the Victoria Cross in the First World War for leading his men into action under heavy fire at Ypres on 21 September, and while severely wounded continuing with them until all the ammunition was expended, although he had been ordered to retire to rest. He was hospitalized in England, where he was married, before returning to France. In April 1918 he was severely wounded in action and died on 8th April at Lillers, where he is buried.

THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME

Break of the Somme. Assault of the Essex Division, July 1st 1916. By James Peasey Beale.

Image courtesy of Belfast City Hall



Charge of the Essex Division.



Private Thomas Hughes receiving his Victoria Cross from King George V on the 2nd of June 1917.



THE VICTORIA CROSS

The Victoria Cross is the highest award for gallantry that a British and Commonwealth serviceman can achieve. The VC was introduced on 29th January 1856 by Queen Victoria to honour acts of valour during the Crimean War.

