

# Mayo Commemoration Strategy 2013 – 2023

Prepared by the **Mayo  
Commemoration Strategy Committee**

Recommended by **MAYO  
COMMEMORATION STRATEGY  
COMMITTEE** and **CULTURAL,  
EDUCATION, HERITAGE AND  
CORPORATE AFFAIRS STRATEGIC  
POLICY COMMITTEE**, at meetings on 13<sup>th</sup>  
June, 2013.



Approved by Mayo County Council at meeting on 8/7/13.

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## **Introduction**

The decade from 1913 to 1923 was a defining period in modern Irish history and has shaped the political landscape of today. These years saw a series of momentous events in Ireland, and beyond, which changed the course of Irish history and led to the foundation of the state.

Among the main events of the decade from 1913 to 1923 are the First World War, the 1916 Rising, the War of Independence and the Civil War. The role played by the labour movement at this time is pivotal, as is the role of Irish women in helping to lead the way in the fight for universal suffrage. This period in the country's history is one characterised by great heroism as well as great suffering. All of these events contribute to one historical whole, they did not happen independently and they can not be evaluated or remembered in isolation. The coming decade will witness a series of commemorations that will give us pause to reflect on where we have come from and where we are going.

## **National Context**

Over the coming years, the Government will be working at home and abroad to commemorate these events and to honour those who were part of them. A national commemoration strategy committee has been established and it is envisaged that there will be many events happening nationally to mark these centenaries. The Mayo Commemoration Strategy will seek to build on and compliment the national commemorations events, along with events that are being planned elsewhere by other bodies.

## **Commemoration in Mayo**

Mayo County Council has established a Mayo Commemoration Strategy Committee. The aim of this committee is to consider the most appropriate manner to mark the centenaries locally, and to devise a series of cultural, historical and educational events accordingly. The emphasis of the Mayo Commemoration Strategy will be on the role of Mayo and Mayo people in these momentous events and will also reflect on what was happening in the county at the time.

The Mayo Commemoration Strategy committee will consult widely with universities, with educational and cultural bodies, state agencies and government departments, local historical associations and committees and with individuals, where appropriate. The committee will work with our diaspora communities, and will aim to secure the participation of local communities and people of all ages in the commemorations.

Over the coming decade, Mayo people at home and abroad will remember our shared history. We will look back on the events which shaped us, from the 1913 Lockout to the First World War, and to the 1916 Rising and beyond. The decade of commemoration will be marked by community engagement, and a programme of educational and commemorative events. There are many more stories of the period, that reflect the intertwining of our history and our lives which hopefully will be uncovered during the commemorative period. We look forward to marking the milestones in the country's and county's history with a series of events over the coming years. We will remember those times not just in exhibitions, books/publications and lectures but also through art, music and storytelling. Mutual respect will be central to all commemorative events and historical accuracy should be paramount.

Through this commemoration, it is hoped that all Mayo people at home and abroad, come together to commemorate our past and cherish our present in a way that enables us to share and create hope and expectation for the future.

A listing of the milestone events of the period are given in Appendix 1, with special reference to those events which took place in Mayo; this is not however an exhaustive list.

### **Notable Mayo Figures of the Period**

A number of notable figures connected with this period were from Mayo, including Tom Maguire (1892 - 1993) from Cross, an Irish Republican, who held the rank of commandant-general in the Western Command of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and led the South Mayo flying column; Dr Kathleen Lynn (1874 - 1955) born in Mullafarry, outside Killala who was Chief Medical Officer of the Irish Citizen Army, suffragette, doctor and founder of St Ultan's hospital in Dublin's Charlemont Street; Major John MacBride (1868 - 1916), born at Westport Quay, who was an Irish Republican executed for his participation in the Easter Rising; Ernie O'Malley (1897 -1957), who was born in Castlebar and was an Irish Republican Army officer during the Irish War of Independence and a commander of the anti-Treaty IRA during the Irish Civil War. O'Malley wrote three books, *On Another Man's Wound*, *The Singing Flame* and *Raids and Rallies*. The first describes his early life and role in the War of Independence, while the second covers the Civil War. The literary quality of these books and O'Malley's career after the political conflicts distinguish him from other IRA men who also penned memoirs of the times.

A number of other publications have dealt with the role of Mayo and Mayo people in these events. Notable among these publications are *The flame and the Candle* by Dominic Price; *Remembering Mayo's Fallen Heroes* compiled by Michael Feeney; *The Battle of Tourmakeady - Fact or Fiction* by Capt. Donal Buckley; and the soon to be published *The Men will Talk to Me, Mayo Interviews* by Cormac O'Malley. A number of documentaries have been produced including one about Kathleen Lynn, entitled *Kathleen Lynn - The Rebel Doctor*.

### **Jackie Clarke Collection**

Mayo is extremely fortunate to have within the county, in the town of Ballina, the Jackie Clarke Collection. The collection has over 100,000 items, comprising many rare and important books on the history of Ireland, manuscripts, photographs, legal papers, pamphlets, hand-bills, newspapers, news-sheets, circulars, reports, autograph books, letters, periodicals, cartoons, maps, minute books, theses, articles and proclamations including 1916 and the rarer 1917 proclamation. The first item dates from 1617 and the material spans 400 years. It is envisaged that the Jackie Clarke collection will be a focal point for much of the commemorative period from 1916 to 1923.

In relation to some of these historic events, e.g. World War I, much work has already been done through the Mayo Peace Park Committee.

### **Programme of Actions**

The Mayo Commemoration Strategy sets out a list of actions that will be undertaken over the 10 year period to commemorate the decade. This strategy does not seek to duplicate other work that has already been carried out, but seeks to build on and compliment commemoration events that are being planned elsewhere by other bodies. The strategy also aims to encourage and initiate new research, and to raise awareness of research relating to the period that has already been undertaken. This research will inform events that will take place during the commemorative period.

Mayo County Council intend to mark the period with one major event for each year, along with a number of smaller events, and also to support events planned by other groups in the county. Each year an annual work programme will be developed which will set out the commemorative events that will take place during that year.

	<b>Strategic Action</b>
1	Organise a commemorative lecture series focusing on various themes or events of the period e.g. War of Independence in Mayo, Notable Mayo figures of the Period etc.
2	Research and document the social history of Mayo during the period 1913-1923, including undertaking documentary research, interviewing local people and recording oral histories.
3	Encourage and facilitate research in partnership with third level institutions and The Jackie Clarke Collection on selected aspects of the role of Mayo and Mayo people in the events of the decade.
4	Develop and hold a series of exhibitions relating to the period, to include exhibitions of artefacts held within the County.
5	Host lectures, plays and touring exhibitions relating to the period that have been developed nationally.
6.	Carry out an audit & compile a listing of all published and unpublished material relating to the period, including books, articles in historical journals, unpublished research theses, & make available on Mayo Co. Co. website.
7	Develop a Decade of Commemoration Map of Mayo, depicting the locations relevant to the major events of the period. To examine the possibility of erecting a major 1916 monument to mark the Centenary of the 1916 Rising in County Mayo.
8	Research how events during the 1913 to 1923 period were reported in the local papers at the time.
9	Produce a publication on the history of Mayo County Council during the period 1910 - 1919.
10	Work with communities and support any appropriate commemorations planned locally.
11	Promote and support commemorative events that are being organised nationally.
12	Encourage screenings of films and documentaries, and staging of plays relating to the period, in local Arts Centres.

13	Research the historic photographs which exist from this period and compile a photographic exhibition.
14	Organise an annual schools competition, in partnership with the VEC and Mayo Education Centre, on poetry, essay or art, focusing on the relevant events of each year of the commemorative period.
15	Research the material relating to Mayo from 1913 to 1923 that is currently held in the Irish Folklore Archive.
16	Develop a Mobile Phone Application, in partnership with NUIG, relating to events of the period, including local ambushes.
17	Produce a booklet on the history of the decade based mainly on the <i>Story of Mayo</i> .
18	Initiate an online wiki chronology of events to which members of the public can contribute.
19	Explore the role and activities of the GAA in Mayo during the period.
20	Consider the provision of funding for major strategic events during the commemorative period.
21	Utilise the resources of the Jackie Clarke Collection to commemorate events of the decade.

## Appendix I: Chronology of Events 1913 - 1923

Date	Event
<b>1913</b>	
<b>September 1913</b>	<b>Dublin Lockout</b> 25,000 workers locked out for refusing to sign non - union pledge directed against the ITGWU.
<b>Formation of the Irish Volunteers.</b>	
<b>1914</b>	
<b>2 April 1914</b>	<b>Cumann na mBan founded</b> as women's auxiliary to the Irish Volunteers.
<b>3 August 1914</b>	<b>World War 1 begins.</b>
<b>1915</b>	
<b>1916</b>	
<b>24 April 1916</b>	<b>Easter Rising.  </b>
	<b>Kathleen Lynn - chief medical officer during 1916 Rising.</b>
<b>5 May 1916</b>	<b>Major John MacBride executed.</b>
<b>9 May 1916</b>	<b>Round-up in Mayo (over 40 arrested).</b>
<b>1917</b>	
	<b>Irish political prisoners in English jails. How many from Mayo?</b>
	<b>Mayo's soldiers in WW1.</b>
<b>1918</b>	
	<b>Spanish Avian Flu Pandemic</b>
<b>9 April 1918</b>	<b>Conscription introduced in Ireland. Resistance in Mayo?</b>
<b>15 June 1918</b>	<b>Martial law imposed throughout most of the south and west of the country. In Mayo?</b>
<b>11 November 1918</b>	<b>World War 1 ends.</b>

14 - 28 December 1918	General election; Sinn Fein secures 73 of Ireland's 105 seats. Mayo results? Éamon de Valera elected in Mayo East (and East Clare).
1919	
21 January 1919	Dail Eireann formed and Declaration of Independence.
	The start of the War of Independence - Belmullet man one of first two RIC men shot.
29 March 1919	Resident Magistrate J.C. Milling shot at Westport, Co. Mayo (dies shortly afterwards).
3 June 1919	Local Government (Ireland) Act; boroughs to be divided into wards containing at least six councillors, to be elected by P.R.
18 June 1919	Dail Eireann establishes 'arbitration courts' to deal with land disputes.
20 September 1919	All republican newspapers suppressed.
30 September 1919	Number of reported police and military raids on private houses for past nine months reaches 5,588.
1920	
15 January 1920	Local government elections give Sinn Fein, other nationalists and Labour control of 172 out of 206 borough and urban district councils.
14 February 1920	I.R.A. unit under Ernie O'Malley captures R.I.C. barracks at Shantonagh, Ballytrain, Co. Monaghan, the first such barracks taken in Ulster by the I.R.A.
25 March 1920	'Black and Tans' arrive in Ireland.
17 May 1920	First Dail Courts held in Ballinrobe Town Hall.
12 June 1920	Elections to county councils, rural district councils and boards of Poor Law Guardians result in overwhelming Sinn Fein success.
28 June 1920	'B' and 'C' Companies of the Connaught Rangers mutiny in the Punjab.

<b>29 June 1920</b>	<b>Dail assembles for the first time since October 1919.</b>
<b>28 September 1920</b>	<b>Liam Lynch and Ernie O'Malley lead I.R.A. capture of military barracks in Mallow, Co. Cork (the only military barracks captured by the I. R.A. during the War of Independence).</b>
<b>21 November 1920</b>	<b>'Bloody Sunday'</b>
	<b>Three republican prisoners, Ernie O'Malley, Simon Donnelly and Frank Teeling, escape from Kilmainham Jail, Dublin.</b>
<b>10 December 1920</b>	<b>Martial law proclaimed in Counties Cork, Kerry, Limerick and Tipperary.</b>
<b>1921</b>	
<b>1 April 1921</b>	<b>As awards to seven Irish counties in respect of burnings, lootings and shootings reach £4,300,000, rates are drastically increased; in Co. Waterford alone an average increase of 35 per cent is levied. Mayo??</b>
<b>3 May 1921</b>	<b>Government of Ireland Act.</b>
<b>12 May 1921</b>	<b>Tourmakeady Ambush.</b>
<b>May 1921</b>	<b>Partry Ambush</b>
<b>13 May 1921</b>	<b>Nominations close for general elections to parliaments of Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland.</b>
<b>19 May 1921</b>	<b>Kilmeena Ambush.</b>
<b>2 June 1921</b>	<b>Carrowkennedy Ambush.</b>
<b>11 July 1921</b>	<b>Truce in the Anglo - Irish war comes into effect.</b>
<b>11 October – 6 December 1921</b>	<b>Anglo - Irish conference in London.</b>
<b>6 Dec 1921</b>	<b>Anglo - Irish Treaty signed in London.</b>
<b>1922</b>	
<b>7 January 1922</b>	<b>Dail Eireann approves the Treaty (64-57).</b>

<b>9 January 1922</b>	<b>de Valera resigns presidency of Dail Eireann.</b>
	<b>Evacuation of British troops and disbanding of R.I.C.</b>
<b>21 February 1922</b>	<b>Enlistment begins into police force of the Provisional Government; at first known as Civic Guard - the first member of the force is Patrick Joseph Kerrigan of Co. Mayo.</b>
<b>16 June 1922</b>	<b>General election in Free State area: Pro-Treaty, 58; Anti-Treaty, 36.</b>
<b>27 - 28 June 1922</b>	<b>Start of the Civil War.</b>
<b>15 October 1922</b>	<b>Army Emergency Powers becomes effective, empowering military courts to impose death penalty; 77 Republicans are executed in the Free State between 17 Nov. 1922 and 2 May 1923.</b>
<b>25 October 1922</b>	<b>Constitution of the Irish Free State enacted by the Dail; comes into force on 6 December.</b>
<b>27 October 1922</b>	<b>District and parish courts established outside Dublin city.</b>
<b>17 November 1922</b>	<b>First executions of the Civil War 'Irregulars'.</b>
<b>6 December 1922</b>	<b>Saorstát Eireann (Irish Free State) comes into existence.</b>
<b>11 December 1922</b>	<b>First meeting the Free State Senate.</b>
<b>1923</b>	
<b>1 February 1923</b>	<b>Burning of Moore Hall.</b>
<b>28 March 1923</b>	<b>Local Government (Temporary Provisions) Act abolishes work - house system in the Free State, providing alternatives through local authorities.</b>
<b>24 May 1923</b>	<b>Civil War ends.</b>
<b>1 July 1923</b>	<b>Number of military prisoners in Free State officially estimated at 11,316.</b>
<b>27 August 1923</b>	<b>General election in Free State; Cumann na nGaedheal 63; Sinn Fein, 44.</b>
<b>19 September 1923</b>	<b>Fourth Dail assembles (until 23 May 1927).</b>
<b>14 Oct-23 November 1923</b>	<b>Several hundred Republican prisoners on hunger strike in Free State.</b>

## Appendix II

### **Membership of Commemoration Strategy Committee**

Cllr. Al McDonnell (Chair)  
Cllr. Eugene McCormack  
Cllr. Rose Conway-Walsh  
Cllr. Joe Mellett  
Cllr. Michael Kilcoyne  
Cllr. Cyril Burke  
Cllr. Peter Flynn  
Cllr. Margaret Adams  
Cllr. Peter Clarke  
Mr. Tony Deffely  
Ms. Mary G. Duffy  
Mr. P.J. Lynn  
Mr. Joe Queenan

### **Appendix III Public Consultation**

List of those from whom submissions were received:

Mr Michael Lang, NUIG  
Mayo Peace Park Committee (Noel Byrne)  
Mr Michael Feeney  
Mr Terry Reilly  
Mr Tony Deffely  
Cllr Joe Mellett  
Mr Peter Jordan