



Wedge tomb at Doorus Demense, Kinvara, Co. Galway.

All the obvious archaeological features are marked on the 6 inch OS and Discovery series maps. Detailed descriptions of these monuments can be found in the County Archaeological Inventory. The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) for the county will contain a record of the monument type and location (which is marked on the accompanying maps). Information is therefore relatively easy to access on these monuments.

Graveyards are an important focus of local community heritage and many groups have undertaken specialised surveys recording headstone inscriptions. From the natural history viewpoint graveyards are often wildlife havens. Take note of species rich grassland, listing as many plants as possible and don't forget the lichen-covered headstones, which also may indicate the use of local geological resources. Are there examples of vernacular gravestone art and stonemasons marks or names? What type of boundary surrounds the graveyard and what shape is it?

The Galway County Graveyard Survey (2006), funded by Galway County Council and the Heritage Council is recording such information and it will be available in database format.



Lichen covered headstone at Meelick

CATEGORY 4 **Built Heritage**

In general the 18th/19th century 'Big House' originally the home of the local landed gentry is what first comes to mind at a local level when architecture is mentioned. These houses are an important aspect of the local heritage and should be examined and the architectural features of the house and associated buildings recorded using photos, sketches and descriptive notes.



Ice House at Marble Hill, Ballinakill, Co. Galway

In addition the local environmental heritage audit should include

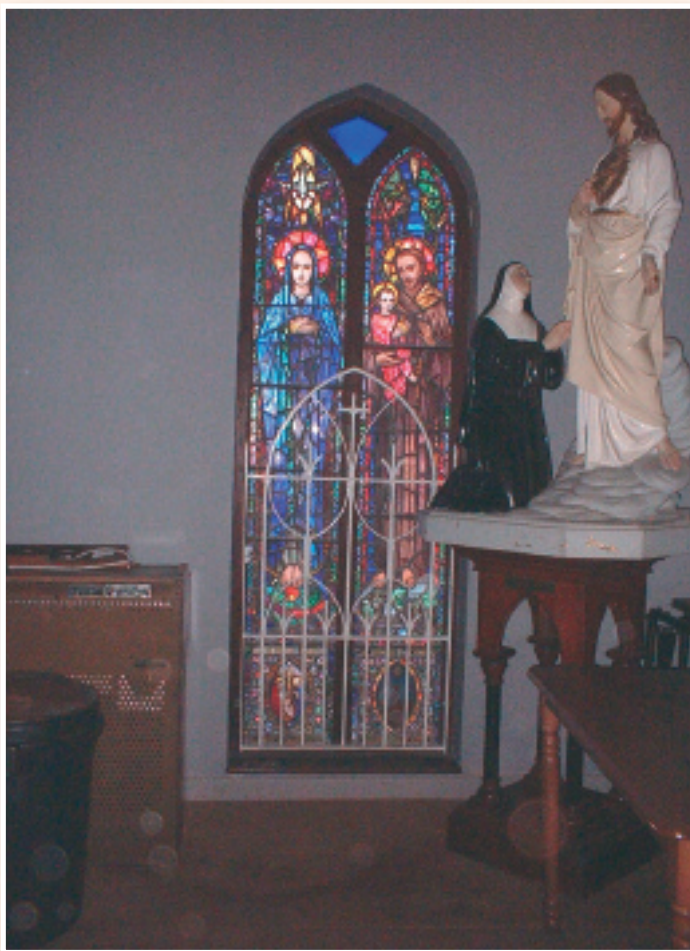
- vernacular houses
- farm buildings
- estate buildings and walls
- public buildings
- industrial buildings
- gates, piers, railings
- postboxes
- water pumps
- bridges
- railway architecture
- waterways architecture.



Post Box Kilbeacanty, Co. Galway

Vernacular architecture is most often portrayed in the traditional house style. Take note of the position of the hearth, rooms, door, chimneys, the type of roof (hipped, half-hipped, gable), roofing material, stone and mortar used. The form and layout of farm buildings and their grouping around the residential house is also of interest and often displays regional variations.

Public buildings will include schools, churches, workhouses, courthouses and post-offices. The ecclesiastical heritage of East Galway have been the subject of a recent publication (Harbison, 2005) and one of the most interesting aspects to arise from this study is the wealth of stained-glass tradition in rural churches. Don't forget to document the interior features of these buildings as well as the exterior!



Harry Clarke stained glass window Kilconnell, Co. Galway

Industrial buildings such as watermills may include features such as the mill race, drying kilns, tuck mills and machinery. After careful auditing of the resource, the restoration of such a mill has become a focus for Williamstown Heritage Group in North Galway.



Templetogether Mill, Williamstown, Co. Galway

Take note of settlement patterns past and present within your local area. Is there any evidence of old villages or clachan-type settlements? Watch out for old placenames, field names and sub-townland names. How does the local settlement pattern of today compare with that of the past?

CATEGORY 5

Traditions, Placenames and Folklore

During the field survey, talk to as many local inhabitants as possible. Enquire about any local traditions and stories that may be linked to features on the landscape e.g. the tradition of tying rags to the tree at Clonfert Cathedral, stories associated with holy wells etc.



Rag Tree, Clonfert, Co. Galway

The townland name very often refers to a landscape feature e.g. Cloonmore – *Cluain Mor* - the big meadow, Derry – *Doire* – oakwood, *Cill* – church, *Lios* – enclosure/ringfort. Try to decipher what your townland name refers to. Some areas still retain field names – but these are rarely recorded. Wherever possible enquire about such names and record them on your map.

Collect any folklore about the local area that you may hear. If possible record some of the stories of the people in the community. Sean O'Suilleabhain's classic book '*A Handbook of Irish Folklore*' provides very useful guidelines. It is very often at local level that nuggets of information about a special interest item will be found surviving only in the oral tradition. It is your chance to uncover these gems and record them for everyone in your parish and for future generations.

The National Folklore Collection at University College, Dublin is a very useful source of information both in manuscript and photographic format. The Schools Manuscripts collection consisting of essays written by local schoolchildren in 1938 often contains descriptions of local heritage features and local stories. It can be accessed at the County Library.



Local music, song and dance should also be noted and explored. Video and audio recordings should be made where possible.