

# ATHENRY

## WALLED TOWNS DAY 2016

A detailed illustration of a medieval battle scene. In the foreground, a knight in a red and white surcoat with a gold circular emblem is engaged in combat. Behind him, a man with a long blonde beard and a red tunic is shown in a dynamic pose. To the right, several soldiers in chainmail and helmets are visible, some holding spears and shields. The background is filled with the chaos of battle, including more soldiers and a red flag.

**CELEBRATING  
THE 700<sup>th</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE BATTLE  
OF ATHENRY**

**BATTLE  
REENACTMENTS**

**MEDIEVAL CRAFTS**

**INTERACTIVE  
EXHIBITS**

**ARCHERY &  
CHILDRENS' CRAFT  
ACTIVITIES**

**SUNDAY  
21<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST  
2016**

# ATHENRY CHRONOLOGY

## 1178 ~ 1597

1178	Title Baron of Athenry created for Piers de Bermingham	1400	Pope Boniface IX granted bull of indulgence to those who visited priory in Athenry and contributed to its upkeep
1227	Richard de Burgh (aka de Burgo, later Burke) awarded lordship of Connacht	1423	Priory burnt accidentally. Pope Martin V granted bull of indulgence to those who contributed to repair of Athenry priory
c.1237-1240	Construction begins on Athenry Castle	1484	St Mary's Church made collegiate by Archbishop Donat O'Murray of Tuam
c.1240	St. Mary's Collegiate Church founded	1574	Sons of Earl of Clanricard capture and burn town/destroy St Mary's Church. Sir Henry Sidney, Lord Deputy, begins repairs, including North Gate. Queen Elizabeth I gave priory/lands to provost and burgesses of Athenry for 26s 6d a year
1241	Dominican Priory of SS. Peter and Paul founded; thought to be finished in 1271	1576	Henry Sidney proposes construction of inner wall to reduce town size
1244	Right to hold a fair granted to Athenry	1577	Town captured and burnt again by sons of Earl of Clanricard – proposed inner wall abandoned
1249	Athenry attacked by the O'Conors	1583	Map of town shows dividing wall less than half finished
1310	Murage charter granted for 3 years – funds for maintenance and repair of town walls	1597	Red Hugh O'Donnell attacked and destroyed Athenry
1316	Battle of Athenry – 10 <sup>th</sup> August, William de Burgo and Richard de Bermingham's forces defeat King of Connacht Felim O'Conor		
1324	De Burgo family fund rebuild of priory church		
1380	Athenry one of eleven towns represented at parliament		
15th cen.	Market cross – only example in Ireland of late medieval Gothic cross of 'tabernacle' or 'lantern' type		



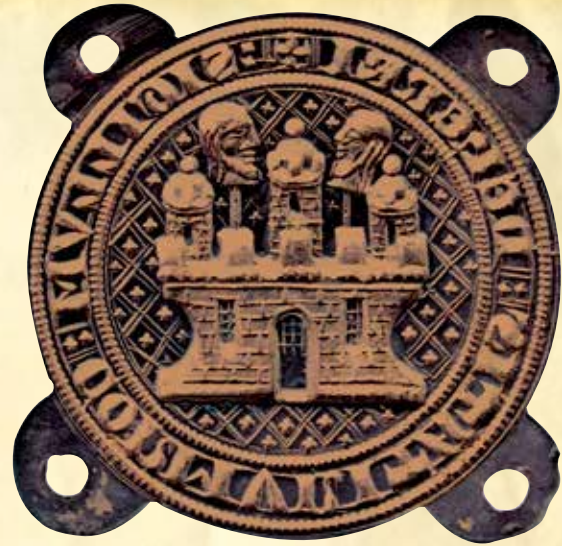
# THE BATTLE OF ATHENRY

In 1315, Edward Bruce led an army of Scots into Ulster, and during a year's campaign, captured Dundalk and Carrickfergus. His brother, Robert Bruce, King of Scotland, landed in Ireland, setting off two more years of turmoil and stimulating the repair of the walls and gates of Anglo-Norman strongholds throughout Ireland.

Athenry had been granted a three-year murage grant in 1310, perhaps to repair or otherwise fortify the 14<sup>th</sup>-century walls; and the Battle of Athenry may have stimulated further improvement of existing defences.

On August 10<sup>th</sup>, 1316, an Anglo-Norman force under the command of William de Burgh and Richard de Bermingham defeated an Irish Gaelic army led by the King of Connacht, Felim O'Connor, who had the support of other local Irish chieftains. O'Connor was killed, as were other local Irish nobles. The destruction of an army of fellow Gaels was also a set-back to the Scots; their incursion continued for another couple of years only to end in defeat at the Battle of Faughart in 1318 and the death of Edward Bruce.

Medieval Athenry was twice the size of medieval Galway, and its unusually large circuit may have been the result of undue optimism or perhaps a reflection of the competition which existed between de Bermingham and his overlord, de Burgh. Probably the town didn't grow sufficiently to warrant such a large enclosure.



**The seal of Athenry, commemorating the townspeople's victory over the Irish Chieftains in the Battle of Athenry, 1316.**

In the 1570s, the sons of the Earl of Clanricard – a family descended from the original de Burghs – attacked Athenry and ultimately prevented the construction of an inner wall that would have reduced the size of the walled town by about a half, a strategic response that would have made it easier to defend with the garrison that was available.

And better defences were certainly required. Because in 1596, Athenry was sacked and burnt by the Gaelic Irish chieftain, Red Hugh O'Donnell. This time the destruction was so complete that the town never really recovered until the modern era.

# Athenry Community Park

**1:30PM**

**Official launch of Athenry's Walled Towns Day by Cathaoirleach Michael Connolly**

**1:30PM ~ 5:00PM**

**Claiomh 1316  
Presentation**

**Come and  
Meet Animal  
Magic's Birds  
of Prey**

The living history group Claiomh will recreate a live and authentic image of Ireland's medieval past.

Come and meet Animal Magic, a wonderful attraction of wild birds of prey.

**Full Contact Medieval Combat Team**



Experience a medieval combat tournament based on King Rene of Anjou's 15th century Tournament Book.



# Athenry Community Park

## Loughrea Craft Club



Loughrea Craft Club present a special children's craft activity celebrating 1316-2016 anniversary

## Fuinneamh Drumming Workshop



Learn to beat the medieval drums with Fuinneamh, a great activity for all the family.

## Irish School of Sword Fighting



Meet the swordsmen of the Irish School of Historical Combat. Watch displays of combat and discover the art of swordsmanship with this unique re-enactment group.

## Dig It!



Come and Dig It! With Dr Jim McKeon. A great chance to experience an archaeological dig.

## Jack Pinson Bowyer & Longbow Displays



Watch Jack Pinson as he demonstrates the ancient art of bow making.



# Athenry Community Park

**Gliondar Stilt Walkers**



**Cormac O'Reilly  
Stonecarver**



Discover the skills of a stone carver with Cormac O'Reilly and take part in his workshops.

**The Art of  
Beekeeping**



Galway Beekeepers Association.

**Medieval Craft Displays**



Discover a world of Anglo Norman medieval crafts.

**Melanie Lorien**



Harvest knots workshops.



# Athenry Community Hall



**2:30PM**

**The Irish Harp**



The Irish Harp: The story behind the Symbol with Una Ni Fhlannagain.

**3:30PM**

**Dr. Christy Cunniffe**



The Dominican Priory, Athenry's hidden treasure, marking 800 years of the Dominican Order.

**4:00PM**

**Joe Mannion 'Battle of Athenry 1316'**



# Athenry Heritage Centre

**1:30PM-4:30PM**  
**Mircat Archey**  
**Demonstrations**



Dave Hodson, Mircat Archery.  
Discover the traditional skills  
of archery and learn the art of a  
Master Bowyer.

**2:30PM-4:30PM**  
**Medieval**  
**Photobooth**



Dress up in the medieval costume  
and enjoy a memory of your day.

**2:30PM-4:30PM**  
**Defence &**  
**Heraldry**



Defence & Heraldry with Dr. Anne  
Carey. Make your own Trebuchet  
and decorate your family crest.

**2:15PM & 3:30PM**  
**Dog & String Theatre**



**Tales of the Forest**



Azal the  
Artist  
introduces  
the landscape  
of the forest  
in this new

production from Dog and String  
Theatre. With help from the  
audience he creates a picture of  
the environment they are about  
to enter. On the edge of the forest  
lives a small community-the  
pompous king , the scheming  
butcher, the poor farmer and his

wife. When treasure is found the  
inhabitants show their true colours.  
The forest has enough for everyone's  
need but not everyone's greed.  
This is an interactive and comical  
show for children aged 4-10  
and their parents incorporating;  
storytelling, traditional glove  
puppetry and life sized puppets.  
This show highlights the  
resourcefulness of the country  
people who outwit the king and  
the schemers who want to make a  
profit at their expense.

EVENTS AND PROGRAMME TIMES MAYBE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

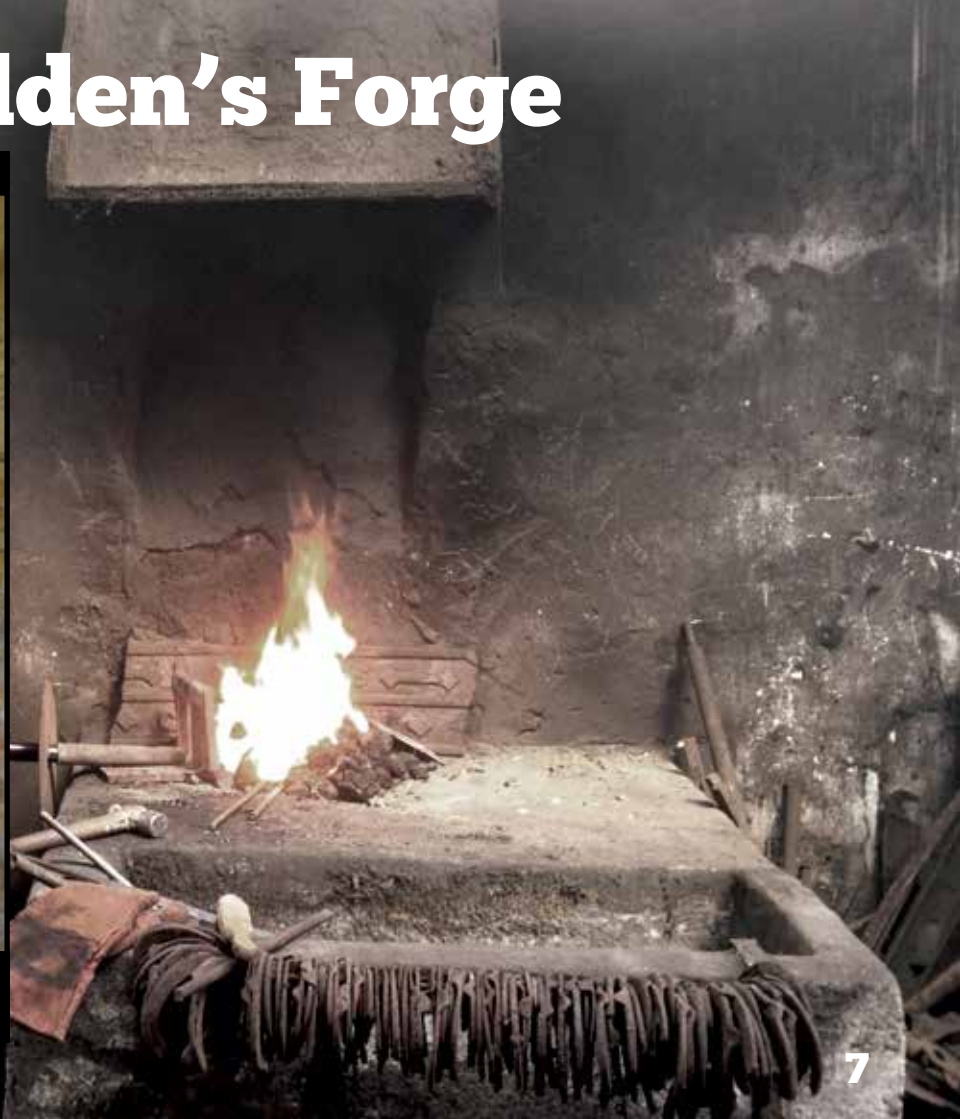


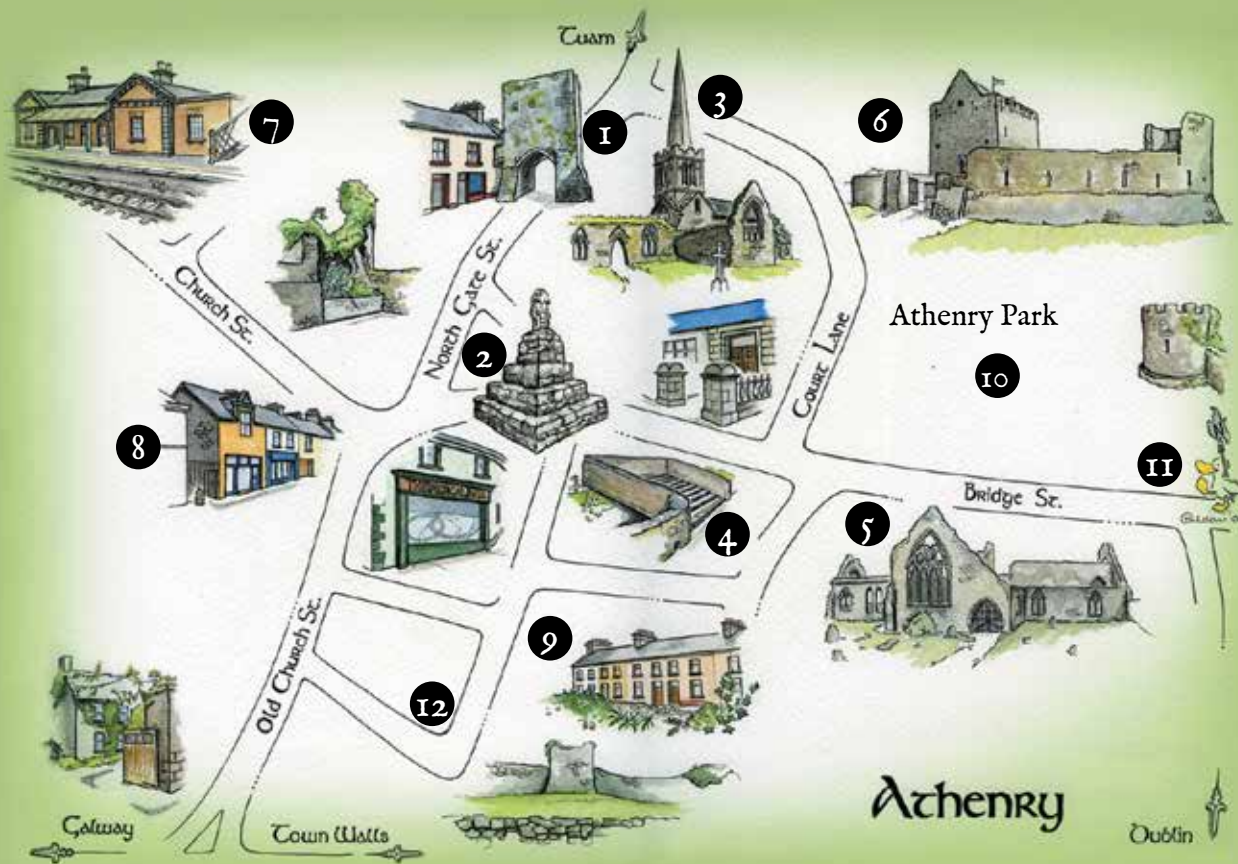
# Madden's Forge

**Charlie Gallagher ~ Balcksmith**



Meet Charlie Gallagher, the only swordsmith in Ireland, in the restored Madden's Forge. A place that was an integral part of Athenry life for centuries.





1. North Gate
2. Market Cross
3. Athenry Heritage Centre
4. Handball Court
5. The Dominican Priory
6. Athenry Castle
7. Train Station
8. Burgage Plots
9. Mid 19th Houses
10. Athenry Park
11. Madden's Forge
12. Community Hall

Map courtesy of  
Galway East Tourism  
'Wayfinder Project'  
[www.galwayeast.com](http://www.galwayeast.com)



Established in 2006, Walled Towns Day has become a calendar event which attracts thousands of visitors to member towns of the Irish Walled Towns Network. This free family event reflects the medieval history of Ireland and is designed to be inclusive to all. Over the last ten years Athenry's Walled Towns Day has been part of this national event which attracts over 4000 people on the day. The programme demonstrates the Anglo-Norman connection with Athenry and increases the awareness, knowledge and understanding of this medieval town. Walled Towns Day showcases Athenry and its walls as a great heritage, educational and community resource. The event also creates a strong link within the community and raises awareness of its rich architectural features. In addition to this, Walled Towns Day is an important tourism festival which attracts visitors both domestically and internationally to the best preserved medieval town in Ireland.

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

**Alan Burgess**

Athenry Heritage Centre

Ph: 091 844661

Email: [athenryheritagecentre@gmail.com](mailto:athenryheritagecentre@gmail.com)

Web: [www.athenryheritagecentre.com](http://www.athenryheritagecentre.com)

**Marie Mannion**

Heritage Officer

Galway County Council

Ph: 091 509198 Web: [www.galway.ie](http://www.galway.ie) Email: [mmannion@galwaycoco.ie](mailto:mmannion@galwaycoco.ie)

[heritage.galwaycommunityheritage.org](http://heritage.galwaycommunityheritage.org)



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe  
Galway County Council



**[www.athenryheritagecentre.com](http://www.athenryheritagecentre.com)**

**[www.galwaycommunityheritage.org](http://www.galwaycommunityheritage.org)**

