

Killimor Trail

An Overview of the Parish and the Village

Welcome to Killimor, a village which is situated on the N65 between Portumna and Loughrea and stands roughly in the centre of the parish. Killimor Parish consists of forty six townlands, and covers an area of nine thousand, two hundred and twenty statute acres. The name Killimor is an anglicised form of the Irish *Cill Íomair*.

The initial settlement, that later evolved as Killimor, developed at the intersection of two major topographical features – the Kilcrow river and the esker network, both of which were important routes in earlier times.

The early history of Killimor is difficult to ascertain, as very few references exist. What is known, however, is that a religious foundation that sprang up there is reputed to have been established by St. Iomar. The name *Cill-Íomair* means the Church of Imor.

Killimor is also spelled with the letter “e” at the end, and is also known as Killimor-Bologue. Some experts think that the word Bologue means a loaf or a yearling heifer. Again it is said that the word Bologue was post fixed to Killimor to distinguish it from Killimordaly, a parish lying in the barony of Kilconnell near Athenry.

Killimor can boast of a wealth of archaeological sites and monuments in the various townlands in the parish such as forts, children’s burial grounds, corn mills, souterrains, stepping stones, bullaun stones, eel weirs, limekilns, and a tunnel which is situated in the townland of Ahanduff. A full listing may be found on archaeology.ie and on the Ordnance Survey Map.

With the passage of time and changing circumstances, the face of the whole parish has altered. Old homesteads have been abandoned or demolished and many new houses have been erected. Roads are tarred to accommodate the volume of traffic passing through and to allow easy access to the various townlands. The population has dwindled, nevertheless, Killimor still has a very vibrant community. We have a modern primary school on the outskirts of the village, on the Loughrea road, to provide for the educational needs of the children. Our hurling pitch is on the Kiltormer/Ballinasloe road, providing a venue for matches and the training of teams. A Nursing Home stands in the townland of Magheramore to cater for senior citizens in old age!

The village of Killimor has changed dramatically over the years. In 1894 the commercial life of the town was recorded in Slater’s Directory which named the people and their various trades. These trades included dress makers and tailors, grocers, victuallers and bakers, boot and shoe makers, weavers, carpenters, blacksmiths and saddlers, delph dealers, general merchants, a postmaster and a miller. One sixty nine year old person’s status was given as “washwoman” while another occupation was recorded as “lodging/housekeeper”. The 1901 and 1911 Census Returns provide a wealth of information on family names and their various circumstances of each homestead. Many of the family names recorded then are no longer in the area. Some, thankfully, are still to the good. They include Byrnes/Byrne, Duffy, Kirwan, Matthews and O’Meara.

Today in the village we have a Church, a School, a Garage, Supermarkets, Restaurants, Public Houses, a Post Office, Hair Dressing Salons, a Beauty Salon, a Health Clinic, a Pharmacy, a Community Centre, a Culture and Heritage Centre, a Library, a Fitness and Recreation Centre, and a Garda Barracks.

St. Joseph's Church

As you arrive in Killimor from Portumna, on the N65, you will see St. Joseph's Church situated on your left, at the east end of Killimor village in the townland of Garryad. Going in the main avenue you will notice the New Cemetery on the left, while further on, to the right, are memorials to priests who are interred in the Church Grounds.

The Church, St. Joseph's Centre and the Parochial House stand on about a half statute acre of ground. Church records indicate that the building of the church began in 1835 and was completed by 1842. However old men of the parish maintained that the original plot, given by Lord Dunsandle, was one statute acre and contained two gardens.

The church is cruciform in shape and the tower was added in 1895 when a donor presented a 20 cwt. bell. As you go the main door to the nave take note of the Stations of the Cross, donated by a Mr. James Miller of London, displayed on the walls of the nave and the transepts. Interior renovation of the church was carried out as a Jubilee Project for the year 2000. The objective was to retain all that was good while ensuring that the Sanctuary area is suitable for the celebration of Mass and the administration of the Sacraments.

Of particular interest in the sanctuary, is the marble altar donated by Dr. George Madden of London, who was a nephew of Very Rev. J.J. Madden, P.P. Killimor, 1930-1951. The altar was consecrated in 1955 by a native of Killimor, Most Rev. Dr. Patrick Winters, Bishop of Tanzania. The baptismal font dates from 1835 and is carved from limestone which came from Partry, Co. Mayo. Situated for many years near the main door, the font is now in the sanctuary area. Note the Mass Gong (bell) which supposedly came from a monastery in France circa 1912-13. The ambo, the chair and the flower-stands were formed from marble left over after the removal of the front altar-rails during the renovation project in 2000. The gilt sanctuary lamp was presented to the church by Mr. Daniel Nolan in 1911.

The stained glass windows will catch your attention. These, together with the seats, were donated by parishioners and others, who wished, through the inscriptions, to have their loved ones remembered. We now move to the porch on the right. The black plaque to the left over the door commemorates three priests who were interred in front of the altar, outside the altar-rails. The slabs over their resting places were covered over during renovations. Their names are now recorded on this plaque - Rev. John Walsh, Rev. Malachy Green, C.C., and Rev. Michael Keating. A granite holy water font, bearing the inscription "Pray for the Parents of Vincent O'Meara", stands in the porch.

These are some of the beautiful features that can be seen in St. Joseph's Church which has stood on this spot since 1835.

St. Joseph's Centre

You now leave the church and see St. Joseph's Centre. This amenity, or pastoral space, was officially blessed and opened by the Bishop of Clonfert, Dr. John Kirby, Fr. Ciaran Kitching, P.P. and Fr. Noel Lynch on Sunday, August 5th, 2007.

As we go in the main door we see a statue of St. Joseph the Worker, which was carved in oak by Vladimir Simik from Slovakia and donated by Seán Treacy and Family. The first door on the right leads into an office and the next door is the entrance to a Multi-Purpose & Meeting Room. On the large window in the latter room are tributes to Killimor Fás C.E. Team, Tony Dervan 1948-2005 and Tom Mullarkey 1938-2006. To the left of the corridor is a Counselling Room and the door directly ahead leads into the Meditation & Prayer Room. The window here was a gift from Joan Kinirons in memory of her uncle, Ambrose Larkin, Derrysiskal. Note the statue called "Respect", a carving from bog oak by Kieran Tuohy, husband of Bernadette Moran, formerly of Derrysiskal, Killimor.

Trinity Church

We can leave the Church Grounds by walking down Chapel Avenue past the estate of five Houses for the Elderly which was officially opened by the then President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, on March 4th, 2009. This space was formerly the site of the Catholic Curate's garden and house. Alternatively, we can walk or drive out the main avenue and turn left towards the Main Street. We then see the next point of interest which is Trinity Church on the right, at the east end of the village.

This church is an important link with the past and was constructed to serve the number of Protestants in the parish in the mid 19th century. In its day it was one of the smallest and most picturesque in the Diocese, being a Chapel-of-Ease or church building erected to accommodate worshippers who were unable to travel to the main Church in Eyrecourt. The fine stone used in its construction was reputedly transported from a quarry in Ballinasloe by horse and cart, by various families including McVales, Horsemans, Johnsons and Howards. The Church was of Gothic design, built of the dark stone of the locality, 'with quoins and dressings of the white limestone of Ballinasloe'.

Inside, the benches were simple and the roof open-stained and varnished. The chancel window was filled with stained glass which showed an open Bible and appropriate text "The Lord is my Light". Trinity Church, it appears was opened on Wednesday 21st January, 1863, by the Bishop (un-named), who recited the Litany and afterwards preached an appropriate and touching sermon. The Service commenced with the singing of the 100th Psalm; Morning Service was read by Rev. T.H. Cross and the Lesson for the Day was read by the Venerable The Archdeacon of Clonfert.

After the opening ceremony a collection was made in aid of the building fund; the contribution, including that from people unable to attend, amounted to almost £17. The Bishop and clergy were then entertained by J.P. Watson, Esq., at Stowlin House.

Many members of the Royal Irish Constabulary serving in the parish, together with their families, worshipped at Trinity Church. Other families who attended services there were: Richard Johnston, Harriet Johnston and Arthur Johnston who were farmers in the area about 1888 and 1889: Alfred Borraine Persse, Gladys Persse and Geraldine Florence Persse,

Ormond View, Ballycrissane, 1899; Henry Edwin Thomas Sparling, Norah Maud Sparling and Matilda Sparling who were merchants in Killimor circa 1891; William Arthur Carr, who was a coachman in Hearnbrook around 1898, together with George, Keith and Mary Carr.

With the decline of Church of Ireland families in the area, it was no longer feasible to keep the Church open. After religious services were discontinued in the Church, the building was used for some years as a sub-office by Bank of Ireland, Portumna. The bank closed this particular facility circa 1988. The Church building was also used as a venue for participants in Fleadh Cheoil, Co. na Gaillimhe, in the years 1987, 1988 and 1993.

The Representative Church Body eventually sold the premises to Brendan Lynch on 23rd November, 1992.

The Main Street

After Trinity Church, the first exit to the right, the L4308, leads to the neighbouring parishes of Quansboro, Eyrecourt and Laurencetown. An exit to the left in the centre of the village, the L4315, can be used as one way to go to Tynagh, Gorthanumera and Abbey/Duniry. This exit also leads up to Mass Hill or *Cnoc an Aifrinn* in Treananearla, where, during the Penal Laws in the 17th century, Catholics in the parish of Killimor-Bologue attended Mass. The Diocesan Archives record the presence of St. Brigid's Well in Treananearla. The water of this well had curative properties for the eyes and for sterility, and was supposed to prevent the onset of sickness.

Ballycahill Mill is also located up this road. The Valuation House Books, dating from the period 1832 – 1840, show that Bryan McDermott, miller, had a corn and tuck mill at Ballycahill. The County Council Rateable Valuation books, covering the period 1895 to 1915, named James Nolan as occupier of the mill, which is described as a corn mill. Nolan was succeeded by Francis W. Lynch who, in turn, was succeeded by Michael Dillon in 1915. The mill is now owned by the D'Arcy family who have converted it to run as a hydro-electric station supplying the family home, farm and a workshop with power.

Killimor Culture & Heritage Centre

To the left of exit L4308 we see Killimor Culture & Heritage Centre. This two-storey building contains a Heritage Room, Offices, a Library and a hair-dressing salon. The Centre was officially opened by the then Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, on November 23rd, 2001. The site was the original home of the Soughley Family who were associated with Killimor Parish for over four hundred years. The village water-pump and a weighing scales stood in front of the house for many years. Much more information on the lives and times of the Soughley Family, and indeed of Killimor Parish, can be accessed in our award winning publication *Killimor: Our Parish and Our People*.

A small thatched building, called Stuart's Barn, was situated on the opposite side of the street. It is believed that the Barn was used as a church, until the erection of the present church, after the Medieval Parish Church, on the site of the Old Cemetery, fell into disuse.

Killimor Community Centre

As we continue up the street, we see Killimor Community Centre on the left. It started out its life as an old garage, which was later adapted to make a small cinema. It was then bought, by a local committee and, by voluntary work, was rebuilt and extended, to make, what was at the time, according to opinion in Killimor, the nicest Dance Hall, in the county. In 1979/ 1980, the Hall, as it was then known, was extended to its present size. In 1983/ 1984, the Hall was vested in the parish and it was duly handed over. It has been refurbished in recent years though the main structure remains the same. It has been decorated and painted and new kitchens installed. It is now known as Killimor Community Centre and is maintained and run by Killimor Development Society.

We now cross the street and to the right, opposite the Community Centre, we pass the area where Fitzpatrick's Public House (now under new ownership) was located. A weigh-bridge was situated on the side-walk quite near Fitzpatrick's and was used to weigh cattle, pigs and loads of hay and corn during fairs and markets. This premises will be long remembered as the public house where the first *sliotar* or hurling ball was made.

Larkin's/P.C. Curley's

We now come to what was known as Larkin's/P.C. Curley's. Patrick Larkin was born to Patrick and Celia on that premises about 1866. He immersed himself in the game of hurling and was instrumental in writing the first codified Rules of hurling, which became widely known as "The Killimor Rules". P.C. Curley, from Kiltormer, married Bridget Larkin, sister to Patrick, and the premises was then called P.C. Curley's. The building was once a hotel of note, with commercial travellers, cattle dealers and others lodging there. It also housed a fine drapery shop, millinery, grocery and bar.

Kiltormer/Ballinasloe Road

We now move up past the traffic lights. The exit to the right, the L4322, brings you to Kiltormer and Ballinasloe. The Hurling Pitch, Gymnasium and Holy Family Nursing Home are located on this road, within walking distance of Killimor Village. A further point of interest is that there was a mill on the left in Slateford, called Hardy's Mill. The Valuation House Books (1832 – 1840) show Joseph Hardy was in occupation of a corn mill here. Unfortunately, little or nothing remains today to show that there was ever a mill here. Should one wish to drive further on to the townland of Loughil, a double bullaun stone can be seen. According to local tradition, the holes in the stone are the impressions made by St. Iomar's knees as he knelt and prayed.

Old School Site

We retrace our steps and head back up the village. Opposite the L4322 exit is the site of the "old" old school, a two-storey building which was officially opened, though unfinished, on January 7th, 1861. The school was demolished, to make way for a more modern one, in 1963. This second school is now the old school as it has been superseded by a state-of -the-art new school on a new site. The surrounding grounds of the 1963 school have been developed and the sign inside the entrance to the spacious parking area reads: Killimor Recreation & Fitness Astro Turf. Plans are in the pipe-line for further development of the remaining ground and the unoccupied building.

Fairs in Killimor

Looking to the right as we leave old school grounds we visualise the scene on the Main Street on Fair Day.

The fairs in Killimor were about the biggest in East Galway excepting Loughrea and Ballinasloe. There were thirteen fairs held each year, two in January and one in each of the other months, and were attended by all the leading exporters and dealers in Ireland.

On the eve of each fair, prospective vendors arrived in Killimor, selected an area of the sidewalk of the street and put up a pen in which they displayed their animals next day. Owing to the dearth of lorries, tractors and trailers, some people employed men, known as drovers, to convey their animals to and from the fair. The most memorable of these drovers were Waltie Meers from Loughrea and O'Mearas of Borrisokane. Many farmers drove their own stock along the roads, with animals making the odd foray up a boreen or through an open gate! And so began the fair in the early morning. Buyers strolled around, seeking a bargain, and judging the qualities of various animals. Teeth, horns, neck, flank and udders were carefully studied and assessed; good points were praised by vendors and were castigated by buyers. Prices were offered and refused and finally the bargain was sealed with much spitting on, and slapping of hands. Money was handed over later in the day and the luck penny given to the buyer. Animal noises, raised voices of the bargain makers and general commotion pervaded the atmosphere. The odd loose animal was known to wander in through a shop door, causing consternation.

Travelling salesmen, known as "cheap jacks", peddled their wares at the fair, either in "standings" or in the open. They were blessed with the "gift of the gab", thereby enticing customers to their stalls to buy new or second-hand clothes, boots, harness or farm implements. A "stand", selling an assortment of sweets such as Bull's Eyes, Peggy's Leg and Liquorice was in a conspicuous position near O'Meara's gable end. Butchers did a particularly brisk trade on fair days with men buying fresh meat for home consumption.

Entertainment was provided by Ballad Singers who also sold ballad sheets for 1d. each. Though common at fairs in some areas, there is no account of Faction-Fighting at Killimor fair though the odd argument may have arisen! There were at least three Gardaí and a Sergeant present on the street, just in case! Hunger was assuaged at what were then called "Eating Houses", where customers availed themselves of a fry or a mutton chop. Bargains being completed – or not, as the case may be, men retired to the local hostelrys to quench a mighty thirst, discuss the affairs of the day, hurling matches and political matters. Some may have imbibed "one over the eight" before merrily setting out for home. The aftermath of the fair was not very pleasant, especially for those charged with cleaning the street and carting away the animal excrement.

Certain fairs in Killimor proved very important. One such fair was when women, who did not usually attend fairs, had a bonham bought for them. This particular bonham was fed and nurtured by the woman of the house and eventually sold, providing money for the house or for personal use. Of particular significance was the November Fair, which, in older times, was a three day event and was known as the "Old Fair Day" or the "Fair of the Bush". Cattle were walked from surrounding areas, but mostly from West Clare, Gort and Ardahan, arriving on 21st November. Fair Day was on the 22nd when cattle were brought out to the Fair Green (near Hearnbrook) for which a toll was collected by a local man named Johnny

Connors. He had the Toll Rights, which were authorised by Galway County Council. He also had an official agreement with P.V. O'Meara for the use of the scales (situated to the west of O'Meara's Public House) to weigh the cattle on that particular day. Any unsold stock were brought back from the Fair Green into the town and sold later in the day or on the following day. Cattle were then driven to Ballinasloe Railway Station for transport to various locations.

There was no pig fair as such in Killimor, but pigs were collected every Tuesday. They were weighed on O'Meara's scales and brought by lorry, by the various dealers, to the factory for slaughter. At every fair cartloads of bonhams were sold opposite Soughleys, now the Heritage Centre. The story goes that the bonhams were often washed with buttermilk to make them look good!

The question may be asked nowadays - How did traffic get through the town during the fair? In truth, there was very little traffic in the 1950s and 1960s. Cars and other vehicles became plentiful in the 1970s, but by then, the fairs had become defunct and marts had taken over. The last fair in Killimor was held in the early 1970s. The reason for the decline in fairs was due to a degree, to the scarcity of manpower, young men having emigrated to England to work. To add to that, many townspeople countryside, objected to the inconvenience and hygiene aspects involved. So began the era of the Marts.

Scoil Náisiúnta Iomair

Leaving the old school grounds we go left and face for Hearnbrook. The new parish school, Scoil Náisiúnta Iomair, is on the right, outside the village, on the Loughrea road. It was officially opened by An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny and blessed by the Bishop of Clonfert, Dr. John Kirby, on May 24th 2013. In addition to the usual classrooms this building contains a music room, a library and museum, rooms for occupational therapy and for learning support and resource teaching, offices and staff room and a recreation hall.

The Inquisitive Hare, on the school grounds, will attract your attention. This sculpture was designed and created by Donncha Cahill, in consultation with the school staff and pupils. In his Proposal Donncha stated "the hare looking through the telescope represents the quest for knowledge and information, while also acting as a guardian for the school and the Killimor area. It makes reference to the area and the scholars and pilgrims that may have travelled across this highway, and the stories and experiences they brought with them." The hare stands on a stack of books and the books incorporate simple designs along the spines, which were suggested by the pupils and teachers. The base, on which the hare stands, has additional designs which were devised by the pupils.

The Pound and Fair Green

We now veer slightly left and follow the old road towards the Cemetery. The Pound, which was used to impound stray animals until they were claimed by their owners, and the Fair Green, were both situated in this area in olden times. The exact location of each can be seen on the Ordnance Survey Map.

Medieval Cross

The site of a lost Medieval Cross is located in the fields east of the Medieval Parish Church. Nothing survives of the Medieval Cross either; local folk tradition maintains that it was taken away on a cart by a group of men from Lorrha, who regarded it as their right to do so, due to the belief that St. Íomar came from Lorrha. However, despite this apocryphal story, at least part of the cross survived on the site up to the latter part of the twentieth century. The surviving fragment, photographed by Jim Higgins in 1986, has since disappeared from the site. It was late medieval in date. The cross, which was carved from limestone, bore a full figure of the Crucified Christ carved in high relief. The Killimor Cross is one of a number of graveyard and wayside crosses found in Clonfert Diocese. Higgins argues that the Killimor Cross was a close parallel to the Market Cross in situ in the Market Square at Athenry. It is in the context of a market cross that we should also view the Killimor Cross, as the field in which it was located is indicated on the various editions of the Ordnance Survey map as a Fair Green. It seems implicit from this evidence that a fair and market took place

The Old Cemetery

We now see the Old Cemetery. A monastic settlement associated with St. Íomar, it is situated on an elevated setting on the northern slope of an east-west aligned gravel-ridge or esker, to the west of Killimor village. The site consists of a large graveyard, in the middle of which are the ruined remains of a medieval parish church. This graveyard was extended in the past; a drop in ground level east of the church indicates the original extent of the graveyard.

There are upwards of three hundred and sixty burial plots and three hundred and forty memorials in The Old Cemetery. The surnames on many of the older memorials are still recorded in the parish today. These memorials provide a visual record of burials in the parish from the mid seventeenth century to the present day. Over this time various styles of memorials were erected in the graveyard, with each generation providing a particular form of remembrance for their loved ones. However, it is certain that many, many others were also interred there who have no memorial to show their final resting place in the graveyard or in the old church located therein. A badly damaged seventeenth-century grave-slab survives within the chancel of the church. This high status grave-slab bears the name of William O'Tressy (Treacy) who died in 1649. Although the slab lies in three separate pieces and some of the inscription is missing, it can be established that the stone was commissioned by his father, Thomas Tressy. Against the inside of the west wall of the church is the next oldest memorial, which was erected by Michael McDermot, in memory of his daughter, Margaret, who died in 1775 at just sixteen years of age.

The memorial erected by Laurence Broderick, in memory of his father Hugh Broderick, who died in 1831, is a classic example of the skill of some stonemasons around this time, with this memorial bearing beautiful calligraphy and iconography.

There is a tombstone lying inside the east wall of the church erected by the Reverend L. Dillon, Parish Priest in Ballinasloe at the time, in memory of his father Patrick Dillon, who died in 1840. This stone is unique in the graveyard due to the fact that of all the memorials there, it is the only one with embossed (raised) lettering. It only became commonplace for stonemasons to sign their works in the early 20th century. However, the earliest signed example in this graveyard is on the memorial of Hugh Larkin, who died in 1797, and is signed by the stonemason Michl. Reddan.

Some memorials are very interesting in that they may state the occupation of the deceased, as in the case of John Robinson N.T. which tells us that he was a National School Teacher. The inscription on the Walsh memorial indicates that Rev. Thomas Walsh C.C. was a Catholic Curate, while the memorial erected to James Kilkenny, who died in 1889, aged twenty two years, tells that he was a member of the Royal Irish Constabulary. Information on social attitudes and pertaining conditions maybe gleaned from memorials. An example of this is on the memorial to Catherine Clarke, who was interred in 1889, erected by her husband John and declaring “erected by John Clarke of Redmount Hill as a tribute (sic) of conjugal love.” Another example of social attitude is the memorial to Anne Madden, erected by her husband Edward Larkin, and interred in 1844, the footnote of which reads:

“Ed. Larkin Rev. John Larkin his son
And the rest of the family are now
In U S America”.

Standing near the north western corner of the graveyard is the memorial to Patsy Shiel who was obviously very interested in trucks, as the memorial is adorned with an image of one on the right hand side. The symbol to the left represents his, and his wife Carmel’s membership of Comhaltas Ceoltóiri Éireann. A few metres to the south west of where the side wall of the church once stood, is the memorial to Francis Larkin, who was obviously a life long hurley maker and hurling fan, as the engraved crossed hurleys are on both sides of the memorial.

During the Millenium Year 2000 a memorial to the deceased children of the parish was erected in the Old Cemetery.

Killimor Medieval Parish Church

The Medieval Parish Church that provided for the cure of souls at Killimor is situated west of the village, in the townlands of Killimor and Boleybeg, in the Old Cemetery. The site is located immediately to the south of a narrow roadway which was once the principal public road from Loughrea to Killimor village, before a new bridge was built to the north east over the nearby Kilcrow River. Access is gained via a gateway and a pedestrian stile along the northern wall of the cemetery.

Since the church and graveyard are located on the northern slope of an esker, the church, in its intact form, would have been an impressive site. Precise dates for its construction are not recorded. Though much of the masonry is covered in ivy, the church can be broadly dated by its architectural features. A high medieval date for the church is suggested perhaps of late twelfth or early thirteenth century, with later medieval modifications. The main evidence for these dates lies in the eastern gable and the short adjacent sections of north and south walls, both bearing opposing window openings. While the masonry style of the east gable may

suggest an early date, the ogee headed window in the gable, is of late medieval date, suggesting the building was the subject of enhancing and possibly enlarging works in the fifteenth century. The west gable is plain and largely featureless, suggesting an upper floor and it is of a different masonry style to the east gable. It is possible that this gable was rebuilt to facilitate the enlargement of the church.

The north and south walls in the central portion of the church are non-extant and there are no clear indicators of the positions of doorways. It appears that there was a chapel abutting the south wall of the church building, of which no trace now survives. At the time of his visit there in 1839, O'Donovan was told that it had been destroyed some years earlier and that it had an association with the Mulcare, later changed to Carey, family.

Killimor is mentioned in the papal documents in the fifteenth century and these are the earliest references in the historic record to the settlement, dealing mainly with administrative issues. The records also give an indication of the position of the O'Tracey family in Killimor and in particular their relationship with the church there. The earliest known grave slab in the church, dating to 1649, bears the name William O'Tressy.

A detailed study of the history of this Medieval Church was carried out by Dr. Christy Cunniffe and can be read in *Killimor Our Parish and Our People*, Chapter 1, Part 2.

The Holy Well

John O'Donovan, in his Ordnance Survey Letters 1838, noted the presence of the Holy Well in the Killimor/Boleybeg area. He stated that it was "still considered sacred, but the natives of Síl Anmchadha who are becoming less and less credulous every year, never perform turrises (or pilgrimages) at it, nor even take off their hats when passing by it, which argues a great falling off from the piety of their ancestors". This is a very significant statement as it implies that the place was a site of local pilgrimage on St. Iomar's feast day or Pattern Day which, according to tradition, was on November 22nd.

The Holy Well has disappeared and its supposed site is now marked by a modern Marian Grotto in the car park opposite the Old Cemetery.

Hearnsbrook Demesne

Hidden amongst a grove of mature trees Hearnsbrook House has stood on the outskirts of Killimor for almost 200 years. A lesser known, middle sized country house and estate, Hearnsbrook is located approximately half a mile from Killimor village and about six miles from Portumna.

The gates, both single and double, are separated by Ashler piers and details on the cast iron railings include a recurring shamrock, rose and thistle motif. The hinges on the double gates were designed as large fistful hands.

Hearnsbrook Demesne, at its zenith, contained many other important elements such as an entrance avenue lined with narrow cast iron railings, multiple trees and shrubs, orchards, out-offices, the steward's house, coach house, gate lodge, the farm yard and back entrance gateway.

On the west side of Hearnsbrook House, where the land tapered downwards to the river, there once was an artificial lake. Within this lake were two islands, Flower Island and Sally Island. A narrow timber railed pedestrian bridge provided access to Flower Island. Another small footbridge crossed over the main avenue at a narrow point known by the present owners, the O'Toole family, as the 'Dardanelles'. This bridge facilitated crossing over the avenue on a short pathway called 'The Ladies Walk'. A ford in the river to the rear of the house was known as the 'turf bridge' and many people used this route to transport their turf across the demesne from the bog at Moneeneevena and other surrounding bogs. A mass path leading from Cloncona made its way up through the farm yard at the steward's house and joined the main avenue leading out the gates and on towards Killimor church.

The name 'Hearnsbrook', which had many spelling variants, probably arose from the original (O') Hearne family who resided here for many generations and who commissioned the construction of the house itself.

Hearnsbrook House, a visual symbol of wealth, was built circa 1820 and it is believed that its construction was commissioned by Edmund Hearne, who was the land owner at the time. Hearnsbrook House is a cut-stone building with a rendered lime façade. The front door is approached by long broad steps and has a surmounted semicircular fanlight. A document from 1863 described the house as a Mansion-house which contained four public rooms, seven family bedrooms and every other accommodation for a large establishment. Tripartite sash windows are to be found throughout the house and the glass used in the window panes was spun glass or crown glass.

Containing many small rooms, storage and living quarters, the basement of Hearnsbrook House covered a large area and would have been a hive of activity in times gone by and reminds us of the Upstairs/Downstairs situation prevalent at the time. The basement had many hallways, interconnecting rooms and a kitchen, cellar, cool room, pantry and laundry. A two storey section to the back of the house provided some of the servants' accommodation and access points to the main house. Interior bell buttons were situated throughout the house and were connected to bells in the basement which rang to gain the attention of household staff. Other staff on this estate would have included a steward or land agent, a gate-keeper, a butler, a gardener, a coachman and labourers. Some of the land on this 2,000 acre estate was leased out to tenants who paid their rent in money or in kind.

The Hearne family became the land owners at Hearnsbrook during the mid 1600s and the family seat remained there until Eliza Louisa Dillon Hearne died in 1853 leaving Hearnsbrook House and estate to her husband George Dillon Hearne Kirkaldy.

George's second wife became known as Mary Elizabeth Dillon Hearne Kirkaldy. For some length of time in the 1850s and 1860s there was a school on the estate whose patroness was Mrs. Kirkaldy. In 1863 Hearnbrook was advertised as being available to rent . In September of that same year William C. Birmingham Trotter, Esquire, and family arrived to take up residence in Hearnbrook and were there for two to three years. By 1894 Aeneas James George Mackay is listed as the private resident in Hearnbrook. His sister, Lilian Mackay, married a Scottish lawyer called George Macphail. This marriage to Macphail saw the entire estate leave the long associated Hearne Dillon Kirkaldy family line.

Within the next few years arrangements were made to begin the division of the estate under the Land Commission Acts. The lands were purchased by local families and those who had worked the land as herdsmen, tenants and farmers. Hearnbrook House and demesne were sold in 1928 to Austin J. O'Toole. The farm is currently owned and run by Noel O'Toole and his wife, Bernadette.

Conclusion

Our walking tour of Killimor is now completed. We hope you enjoyed the experience and that you have gained some knowledge of our rich heritage. Slán agus Beannacht.