

FAMINE CONFERENCE

Reflecting on the
Great Famine:
*A Commemoration
Conference*

FREE EVENT

Irish Workhouse Centre,
Portumna, Co. Galway

Date: Saturday, 9 May 2026

Time: 9am – 5pm



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council



OPW



The
**IRISH
WORKHOUSE
CENTRE**



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Reflecting on the Great Famine: A Commemoration Conference

Irish Workhouse Centre Portumna Co Galway

Date: Saturday, 9 May 2026 Time: 9am – 5pm

09.00am – 09.20am Registration Tea/Coffee

09.20am – 09.30am Official opening of Conference
by Cllr David Collins, Cathaoirleach of the county
of Galway

Chair of morning lectures:

Dr Mark McCarthy, Senior Lecturer & Programme
Chair in Heritage, Atlantic Technological University,
ATU Galway City, Dublin Road Campus, Galway

09.30am – 10.15am *From Silence to Commemoration. How should we
remember the Great Famine?*
by Professor Christine Kinealy

10.15am – 11.00am *Irish Famine in Contemporary Art: Local History;
International Subject*
by Niamh Ann Kelly

11.00am – 11.30am Break Tea/Coffee

11.30am – 12.15pm *The piper in the poorhouse: Musicians in the
aftermath of the Great Famine*
by Michael Kelly

12.15pm – 1.45pm Lunch

Chair of afternoon lectures:

| Dr Christy Cunniffe, Irish Workhouse Centre, Portumna

1.45pm – 2.30pm

Elite women and philanthropy during Ireland's Great Famine, 1845-52

by Rebecca O'Regan

2.30pm – 3.15pm

The Role of Vice Guardians and the Poor Law during the Great Famine

by Dr Gerard Moran

3.15pm – 3.45pm

Tea/Coffee

3.45pm – 4.45pm

Panel Discussion: Professor Christine Kinealy, Kathleen Villiers-Tuthill and Cian Moran

4.45pm – 5.00pm

Closing remarks

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON ANY OF THE ABOVE EVENTS PLEASE CONTACT:

The Irish Workhouse Centre, Portumna, Co. Galway H53 EK74.

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Website: irishworkhousecentre.ie



or

Galway County Council Heritage Office

Email: heritage@galwaycoco.ie

<https://heritage.galwaycommunityheritage.org/content/category/topics/national-famine-commemoration-portumna-2026>

The conference was funded by the Commemorations Unit, Department of Culture, Communications and Sport, and Galway County Council. It was programmed by the Irish Workhouse Centre and the Heritage Office, Galway County Council, and supported by several community and heritage groups in the county of Galway.