

Celebrating
National Heritage Week

THE BULFIN HERITAGE CYCLE RALLY 2018

A HIGH NELLY HERITAGE CYCLE
IN THE "WHEELRIMS OF WILLIAM BULFIN" (1864-1910)

75 KM TWO DAY EVENT

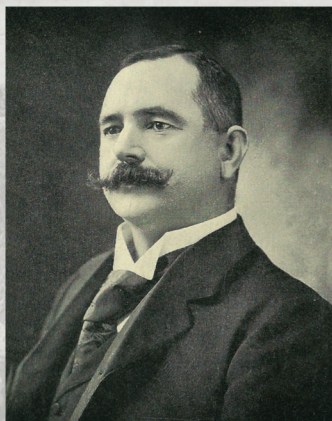
SOUVENIR
PASSPORT

CYCLIST NAME: _____



*A Gently Paced
Country Roads & Culture Trail*

William Bulfin



William Bulfin was; a journalist, travel writer and proud Irish Nationalist, who was born in Derrinlough, Co Offaly in 1864, the fourth son in a family of nine boys and one girl, the children of William Bulfin, of Derrinlough, in Offaly, and Ellen Grogan of Croghan, Offaly. He attended the Classical Academy and the Presentation Schools in Birr, and the Royal Charter School at Banagher when it was under the head-mastership of Dr. King Joyce. His maternal uncle, Father Vincent Grogan, was Provincial for the Passionist Fathers of a province that included a monastery in Buenos Aires.

William Bulfin, the younger, emigrated to Argentina in 1884, with his elder brother, Peter. But they turned their backs on the city, and moved on out to the Pampas. Hundreds of Irish emigrants from Longford and Westmeath had already settled in Argentina. They had with them letters of introduction to the Passionist Fathers in Buenos Aires. The Bulfins went to the ranch (estancia) of one of these, Juan Dowling, a native of Longford. There he met the woman whom he would eventually marry, Anne O'Rourke (originally from Ballacurra in Westmeath). Out on the pampas his preference was for the company of either the gauchos or the Irish, and observing both his own fellow countrymen and the hard-riding Spanish-Indian cowboys, he began to write homely sketches and stories about their lives for Southern Cross, a weekly paper in Buenos Aires, owned and edited by Michael Dineen from Cork.

Having returned from Argentina in 1902, William set off on a journey that took him through the highways and byways of Ireland on a steel framed bicycle made by Pierce Ironworks in Wexford.

Rambles in Eirinn" is an insightful book written by William Bulfin about his cycling experience. The travelogue was published in 1907 and proved to be a resounding success, extending to a 4th edition in 1915.

William Bulfin

The book paints a vivid picture of the history and heritage of the Irish countryside, just after the turn of the 20th century. Bulfin had an intimate knowledge of the Irish landscape along with an innate passion for the historical importance and heritage value of places such as Tara, Skryne Valley, Vinegar Hill, the old Monastery of Roscrea, The Rock of Dunamase, Slievenamon and The Glen of Aherlow. For him these places were sacred ground, evidenced of a land that existed long before his time.

"The more you see of Ireland the more cautious you become about making any definite statement as to which part of it is the most beautiful."

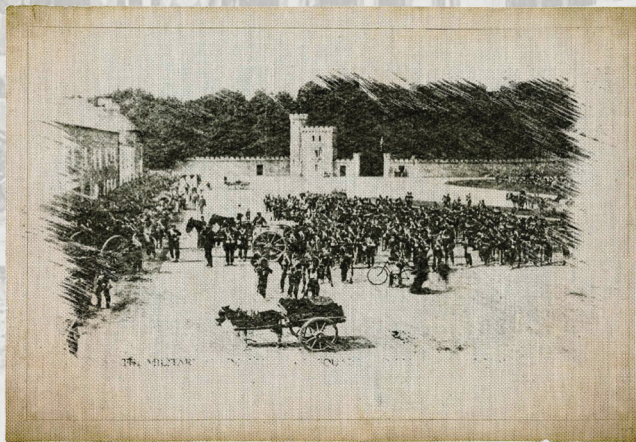
William Bulfin - Rambles In Eirinn



Durrow

Durrow, Co. Laois. The great oak forests that once covered ancient Ireland gave Durrow its name, which comes from Daurmagh Ua nDuach, or the Oak Plain of the people known as the Uí Duach. The Normans adapted that name to Durrow when they founded a borough on the Erkina River in the early 1200's. This small, self-governed settlement was so successful that in 1245, King Henry III granted Geoffrey de Turville, Bishop of Ossory, the right to hold a yearly fair in Durrow, as well as a market every Thursday. The way Durrow looks today is largely due to the Flower Family, Viscounts Ashbrook, who gained ownership of the town in the early 1700s. They built Castle Durrow and granted permits for many of the fine Georgian and Victorian houses that still line Durrow's streets.

Over the next two centuries, Durrow prospered. Stagecoaches rattled over the bridge and stopped at the nearby coach house. Local businesses sprang up, including a brewery, a flour mill, a malting enterprise and a factory that made high quality bricks and tiles. Durrow was hit hard by the great cholera outbreak of 1832, but managed to bounce back and thrive. Years of development meant that by 1926, only a fraction of Durrow's forests remained. In recent years local people have worked to preserve Durrow's beautiful setting, as well as its architecture. Today, visitors can enjoy woodland walks as well as strolls down Durrow's fine streets.

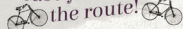




FRIDAY AUGUST 24TH
AT 11:45AM

The Bultin Heritage Cycle Rally will arrive at the, Irish Fly Fishing & Game Shooting Museum, at 11:45 am, for a Heritage Talk by Walter Phelan, a tour of the museum, and a 'Fish & Game', period breakfast, whilst being entertained by a combination of Irish & Austrian traditional/folk music.

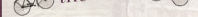
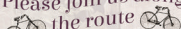
Please join us along
the route!



ROUND TOWER &
HERITAGE CENTRE
FRIDAY AUGUST 24TH AT 3PM

Heritage Talk – O' More Family History.
The round tower of Tmahoog was built sometime in the 1100s, on the site of a religious community founded by Saint Mochua (a 7th-century warrior who converted to Christianity) around 600 AD. The tower rises almost 30 metres high and is more than 17 metres wide at its base, with walls that are nearly two metres thick. Inside there are five different floors, all of which were reached by ladders.

Please join us along
the route



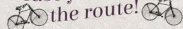
EMO COURT
SATURDAY AUGUST 25TH

11AM DEPARTING

TREACY'S, THE HEATH

Departing to music of "March of the High Kings of Laois"
(with Owney McRory O'More).
Medieval Chariot Ride/High Nelly
Cycle to Emo Court, followed by
guided tour of Emo Court & Gardens

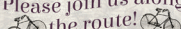
Please join us along
the route!



BALLYROAN
PASS OF THE PLUMES
SATURDAY AUGUST 25TH
AT 2:45PM

The Bultin Heritage Cycle Rally will arrive at Ballyroan, for a 1599, Pass of the Plumes battle re-enactment, at Rockview Walkways & Resource Centre. "Owney McRory O'More soldiers" will intercept "Earl of Essex soldiers" in period outfits of Plumaged/Feathered head dress. Heritage Talk with Willie McGrath. Irish & Austrian Traditional/Folk Music and Dance. (Light refreshments served).

Please join us along
the route!



Castle Durrow

The castle was built in the early 18th century (1712-1715) when domestic architecture in Ireland was developing an independence from the need for defence and economy that had characterised earlier construction. Houses were built for living in luxury and showing of good taste.

The new Protestant aristocracy was beginning to enjoy the lands that they had inherited. The fashion of this new era dictated that inherited land should now separate the burden of agriculture from that of class and create elegant mansions that could not in any way resemble the farmhouse type buildings of the previous age.

Castle Durrow is a piece of Irish History embodied in stone. As a building its massive solidity is combined with an old-world charm and elegance that is distinctive and attractive. It is the creation of an Anglo-Irish landlord family, a relic of an age that has vanished forever. Castle Durrow is a country house of importance that still stands in close to its original condition and is one of the few 18th century houses for which precise building records survive.

The legacy of Castle Durrow is its unique sense of proportion, restrained good taste, and a spaciousness that has largely disappeared from present-day living.

Colonel William Flower commenced with the construction of the Manor in 1712. The Flower family assumed residence of Castle Durrow in 1716 and continued to expand and improve their estate on various occasions during their 214 year reign. Past research indicates that the Ashbrook family were generally regarded as benevolent landlords and of course the largest employer of Durrow Village.

In 1922 the banks finally foreclosed and the Flower family were forced to relocate to Britain. The castle was sold to Mr Maher of Freshford, County Kilkenny who was primarily interested in the rich timber reserves of the Estate and sold off most of the beautiful old oak trees to Britain. By 1928 the old hard wood forests of Durrow were scarce.

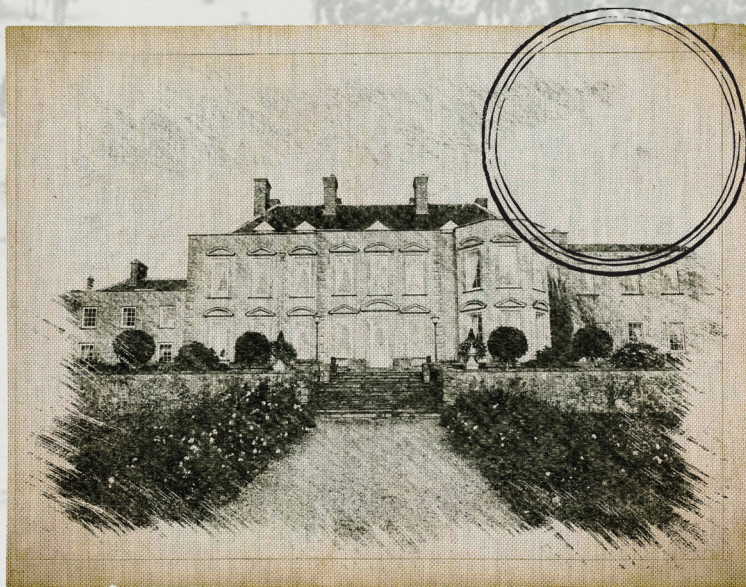
The Land Commission divided up the arable portions of the property and the Forestry department took over many of the woods for further plantation.

During this time the great manor house remained entirely empty.

The Bank of Ireland acquired the town and consequently for the next 40 years house property in Durrow was purchased from that bank.

In 1929 with the Bishop's approval the Parish of Durrow acquired the Estate for the purchase price of £1800 and Castle Durrow was transformed into a school, St. Fintan's College and Convent. The establishing of a school at Castle Durrow was testimony to the fact that beautiful buildings of the past could be used in the modern world. The Presentation order ran the castle as a closed convent before they opened up the castle as a primary and secondary school which stayed open until 1987.

In the 90's, Peter and Shelly Stokes purchased Castle Durrow and began its' renovations. This was a bigger job than originally thought; the roof had to be completely replaced, new wiring & plumbing was put in through the whole castle, and Irish oak floors with underfloor heating. New wooden sash windows were made for the castle to replace the old rotten ones. The stained glass windows, fire places and magnificent plastered ceilings were all restored. Furniture for the entire house was handpicked from Irish and European auction houses and many family heirlooms and antiques can be found dotted around the grounds. The family manage the daily running of the castle and they are an intricate part of the charming homely feel.

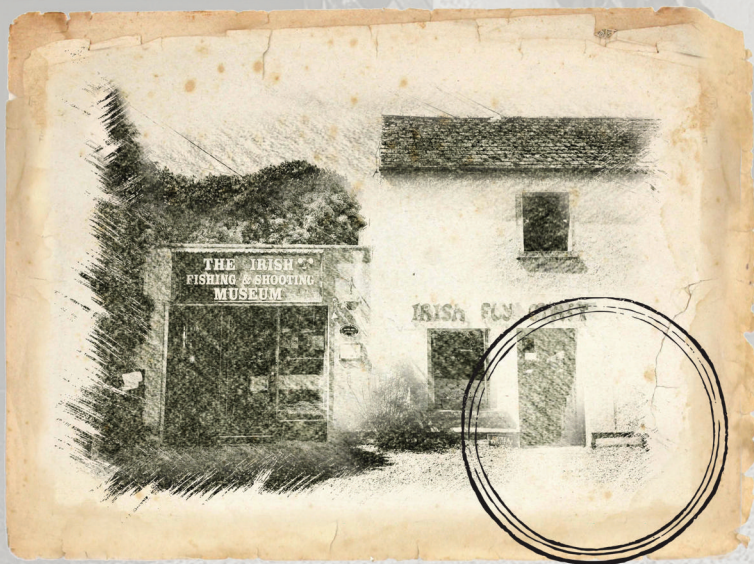


Attanagh

Irish Fly Fishing & Game Shooting Museum

Museum curator, Mr. Walter Phelan. Walter founded the museum in 1986, and has continuously added to his amazing collection of artefacts. These include guns, tackles and rods, as used by the affluent society of yore, who hunted and fished for pleasure. Also on display are the more basic contraptions of hunting, such as a hollowed out cow horn, used to carry fishing bait, by ordinary people; who no doubt hunted and fished to feed themselves and their families. And the conflict of rights between the land owners, and those that illegally hunted their estates, is vividly illustrated by one of the museum's more macabre features – the man trap!

Among the many wonderful things to see at the museum are the Gamekeeper's Room from the 1800's, a Gunsmith's Workshop, Fishing and Game Shooting Room, the Trophy Room, the Clay Pigeon Room, the Boat House, the Library and the Hatching Room.



Heywood Gardens

Heywood Gardens is the site of two garden types: the great park created by Frederick Trench in the late 1700s and the small interlocked formal gardens created by Sir Edwin Lutyens and Gertrude Jekyll in the early 1900s.

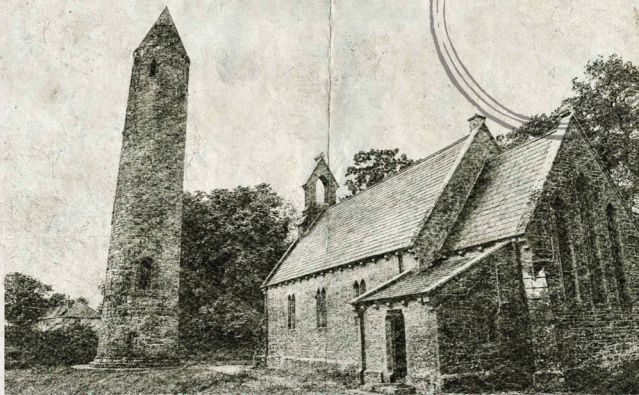
After Trench built Heywood House in 1773, he landscaped the area between his house and the village of Ballinakill. Inspired by his Grand Tour of Europe, Trench moved hills, dug lakes, planted trees and placed follies. His results were considered to be the most exquisite romantic landscape of their time.

In the early 1900s, Colonel Hutchenson Poe hired the eminent architect Sir Edwin Lutyens to create formal gardens around Heywood House. The gardens were probably landscaped by Gertrude Jekyll. Although the house is gone, the gardens are among the best surviving example of Lutyens' work in Ireland.



Timahoe

Round Tower & Heritage Centre



The round tower was built some time in the 1100s, on the site of a religious community founded by Saint Mochua (a 7th-century warrior who converted to Christianity) around 600 AD. The tower rises almost 30 metres high and is more than 17 metres wide at its base, with walls that are nearly two metres thick. Inside there are five different floors, all of which were reached by ladders.

In times gone by, Timahoe Round Tower was a beacon for travellers looking for the monastery. Bells contained within its stones would be rung to call the monks to prayer and perhaps to signal when the monastery was under attack. The tower stands in a picturesque setting, across a footbridge that crosses the Bauteogue River. Nearby, a former Church of Ireland building is now used as a community facility, while a ruined 17th-century castle contains elements from a 15th-century church. (discoverireland.ie)

G's Gourmet Jams

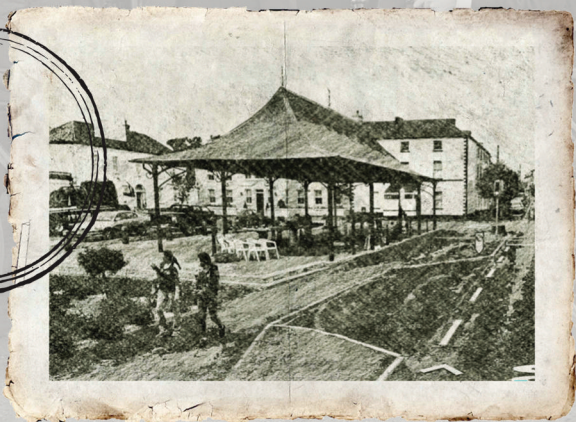
Sandwiched in between our calls to Heywood Gardens and Timahoe Round Tower & Heritage Centre is our courtesy call to G's Gourmet Jams. Get your visit to G's stamped here!



Stradbally

Evening Market Fare, at the Old Bandstand

The Old bandstand is a unique building which has stood in the centre of Stradbally since 1899, and is a rare and architecturally significant example of a pagoda style corrugated structure. (Laois Partnership)



Treacy's Restaurant, The Heath

Treacy's is one of Ireland's oldest traditional pubs and one of its best known landmarks, famed for its quality food, golden straw thatched roof and unique character.

The restaurant serves the best in home cooked food all day. Ingredients are locally sourced and freshly prepared in house by top chefs. This is quality home cooking at it's best.

The restaurant is the home of Irish Hereford Prime steaks. A visit to Treacy's promises you a unique experience whether its for a quick lunch or leisurely dinner in the restaurant, or a pint of Guinness in the bar which is over 200 years old.

Established since 1780, Treacy's is one of the oldest premises in Ireland whose tradition has been continued and maintained in the same family. The seventh and eighth generation of Treacy's now serve its customers.

Today it lies just off the M7 motorway, an easily accessible and convenient stop for tourists and weary travellers alike.



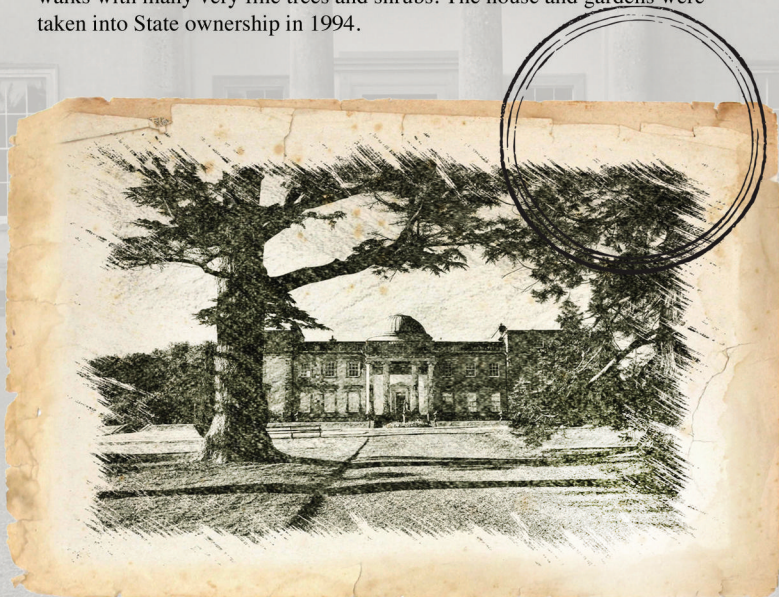
Emo Court

We head for Emo Court after breakfast, and a heritage talk on the Battle of Mullaghmast, at Treacy's Restaurant.

Emo Court, located near the village of Emo in County Laois, Ireland, is a large neo-classical mansion, formal and symmetrical in its design.

Architectural features of the building include sash-style windows, pavilions, a balustrade, a hipped roof, and large dome. It was designed by the architect James Gandon in 1790 for John Dawson, the first Earl of Portarlington. It is one of the few houses to have been designed by Gandon, another including Roslyn Park, Sandymount.

During the middle of the 20th century it was owned by the Jesuits, it was then acquired and extensively restored by Mr. Cholmeley-Harrison in the 1960s. The house is surrounded by beautiful gardens and parkland which were first laid out in the 18th century and contain formal lawns, a lake and woodland walks with many very fine trees and shrubs. The house and gardens were taken into State ownership in 1994.



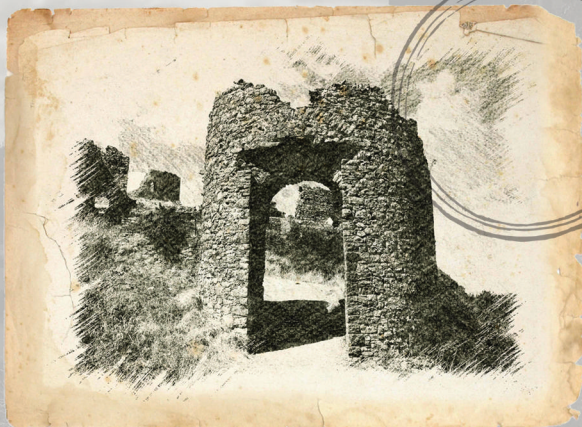
The Rock of Dunamase

The first known settlement on the rock was Dun Masc, or Masc's Fort, an early Christian settlement that was pillaged in 842 by the Vikings. When the Normans arrived in Ireland in the late 1100's, Dunamase became the most important Anglo-Norman fortification in Laois. It was part of the dowry of Aoife, the daughter of Diarmud Mac Murrough, King of Leinster, when she was given in marriage to the Norman conqueror Strongbow in 1170.

When Isabel, the daughter of Strongbow and Aoife, wed William Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, Dunamase was part of her marriage portion. It is likely that Marshal carried out some building on the rock, when he lived there between 1208 and 1213, though most of the castle is earlier.

The castle was successively held by Marshal's five sons before passing to the Mortimer family, through Marshal's daughter, Eva de Braiose, who passed the castle to her daughter Maud, on her marriage to Roger Mortimer. All the Mortimer's lands, including Dunamase, were forfeited to the Crown in 1330. Shortly afterwards the castle appears to have passed into the hands of the O'Moores and was eventually abandoned.

Local tradition has it that the castle was besieged and blown up by the Cromwellian generals Hewson and Reynolds in 1651. While there are no contemporary records of these events, it is probably the best explanation for the ruinous state the castle lies in, as we see it today.



Ballyroan - Pass of the Plumes

The Battle of the Pass of the Plumes took place on the 17th May 1599. The Fort of Maryborough had been under siege by the native Irish, namely Owny MacRory O'More, for some time and had previously been relieved by the Earl of Ormond. The Earl of Essex landed in Ireland in April 1599. He was the commander of Queen Elizabeth's forces and was on an expedition southwards through Leinster to subdue the Munster Geraldines. On the way he intended to relieve the garrison in Maryborough (now Portlaoise).

Essex and his forces took Athy and headed towards Maryborough via Stradbally. En-route from Athy to Stradbally Essex marched through Blackford Pass where Owny O'More had been entrenched with his small army. Wisely, Owny withdrew ahead of Essex's men while closely observing their movement. They reached Stradbally that evening the 15th May.

The next day he relieved and reinforced the garrison at Maryborough and returned to his men encamped at the foot of a hill named Croshy Duff, near Lamberton Demesne. Owny O'More and his men were securely posted on the hills around, covered by thick wood. Here they planned their attack.

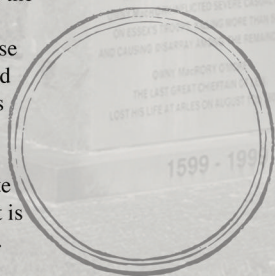
On the 17th May, the Earl of Essex en-route to Kilkenny decided to march through the Pass of Cashel. They marched wearing their helmets of brightly coloured plumage (feathers) and were ambushed by Owny's men. They attacked the army train and rearguard and the ensuing battle lasted 2 hours.

The result was the death of a large number of Essex's men while more fled. Essex's chronicler, a man by the name of John Harrington, claimed that Essex lost 2 officers and a few privates. On the other hand the Irish chronicler, O'Sullivan-Beare, claimed Essex lost 500 soldiers.

The Pass of Cashel where the battle took place became known as Bearn na gCleiti or the Pass of the Plumes, because of the plumage of the English helmets left on the battlefield. There is an old house known as Ned Duff's, near the site of the battle and it is believed that in the digging of the foundations for this house, that many human remains were exhumed.

In 1999, a monument was erected to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the Pass of the Plumes. It is located in the nearby area known as Cashel Cross.

From AskAboutIreland.ie



Abbeyleix Heritage House

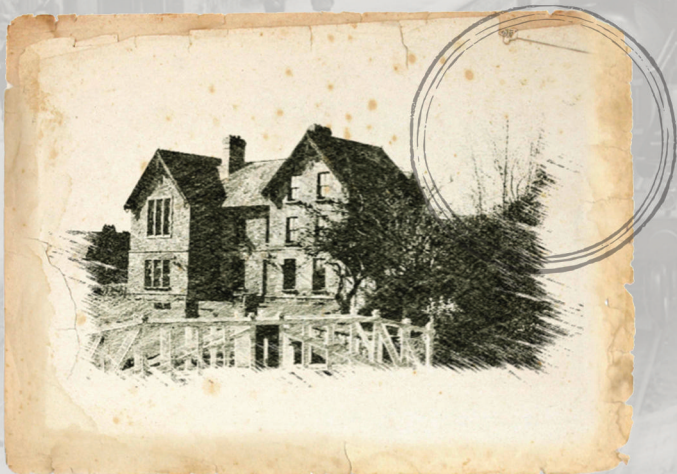
The museum at Abbeyleix Heritage House tells the story of the town from ancient pre-history, up to the twentieth century.

The original town of Abbeyleix grew up near the River Nore, on the site of an early Christian abbey. The town developed under the protection of a twelfth century Cistercian monastery.

In 1562, Queen Elizabeth granted the abbey and associated lands to Thomas, Earl of Ormond. Over the next century, the village grew to contain 52 families. However, regular flooding from the River Nore made the town an unhealthy place to live.

When the de Vesci family acquired Abbeyleix in 1750, they decided that the town would have to move. The de Vescis levelled the old town of Abbeyleix and moved its people to a new planned town. Abbeyleix prospered in its new location and by 1837, had grown to 140 houses. Local farmers traded at the Market House and business premises lined its crescent. Over the next century the main industries included flour mills, a brewery, and a factory that made carpets used all over the world, including on the luxury liner *Titanic*.

Lady de Vesci looked after poor widows in the Alms House on Temperance Street. The destitute were admitted to the Workhouse, which opened in 1842.



Hylward's Rural Heritage Museum

A wonderful opportunity to view the museum artefacts, ahead of it's official opening in 2019.



"Over the sodden roads, homewards from the last ride of a seven months' holiday that can never die in my memory. The bare branches were dripping and the dead leaves were slippery, and the patches of broken stone were bristling with trouble for long suffering tyres. The white mists were rising off the valleys. The whistle of the curlew came down the chilly wind. The call of the wild geese came over the hills. It was very lonely, yet there was sadness unutterable in the thought that it was soon to be left behind. 'Goodbye, goodbye, and come back again-come back again.' Each landmark that rose to view seemed to have some kind of message like that. From every one of them some pleasant memory was appealing-calling, calling. "Come back again, Come back to us, sometime-won't you?" Oh, the heart-cry of the Gael. It is heard so often in Eirinn that the very echoes of the land have learned it."

("Rambles in Eirinn" William Bulfin 1907)

William returned to Argentina in 1904 where he received the Papal title of Knight of St. Gregory for his work on behalf of the Irish Catholic Diaspora. He came back to Ireland again on the first day of the new year, 1910.

Exactly one month later he died in his own home at Derrinlough Co. Offaly aged 46 years.

Ashbrook Arms, Durrow

The building was originally one of the Bianconi coach houses built around the country, where weary 18th century travellers could rest on long journeys. It was purpose built by Lord Ashbrook, landlord at Castle Durrow, in 1777. The building was lovingly restored in 2005, and returned to pristine condition as a guest house and restaurant, by Sean and Rosezita Murphy.

Bianconi's Coach Service (Courtesy of Laois County Library)

From the early-18th century, Durrow was serviced by His Majesty's mail coaches. These coaches ran between Dublin and Cork, a journey which, it is recorded, took 20 hours. Sadly, little is known about the old service even nationally, but its halting site in Durrow from 1832, beyond doubt, was The Red Lion (Now The Ashbrook Arms). This coach route is shown on sheet 29 of the Ordinance Survey Map of 1841, and was also referred to by the Leinster Express of September 8th 1832, in its report on the Cholera epidemic. Wilson's book, "The Post Chace Companion," was written for the lady or gentleman travelling by coach at this time. It mentions places of interest en route and names the occupiers of Estate Houses.

This old service was superseded in 1842 by Bianconi's famous long cars. These cars travelled daily from Mountmellick to Kilkenny, leaving Mountmellick every morning at 5 o'clock carrying mail and passengers. Its arrival time at The Red Lion Hotel in Durrow was 9 o'clock where Mr. Richard Forde, Bianconi's agent, had fresh horses ready. As speed was of the essence, a frequent change of horses was necessary - generally every eight to ten miles. On approaching the town, the driver sounded a trumpet. Horses fully harnessed ready to make the quick change were immediately led out and were waiting when the car arrived. The tired horses were unyoked and the fresh team continued the journey to Ballyragget.

On the return trip, the car left Kilkenny at 2 o'clock in the afternoon and arrived in Durrow at 4:30. Passengers for Dublin travelled to Mountmellick to catch the Limerick/Dublin coach, or to Kilkenny to connect with the Cork/Clonmel/Dublin line. Bianconi's Coaches departed Kilkenny every morning at 5:45 a.m. for Carlow and Dublin. The fare for passengers travelling to Dublin inside the coach was £1.6.0d, and for those outside exposed to the elements 10/0d. This service continued to operate for almost 30 years, but in the end became a feeder system for the railways. Bianconi's long cars were nationally known as 'Bians', an abbreviation of the founder's name, who was born in 1786, and died in 1875.



IRISH COUNTRY ROADS & CULTURE TRAILS
REQUESTS ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,
TO ALLOW THE BEARER, A PARTICIPANT IN THE
BULFIN HERITAGE CYCLE RALLY 2018,
TO PASS FREELY AND WITHOUT HINDRANCE WITH
THEIR “HIGH NELLY” BICYCLE FOR THE DURATION
OF THIS CYCLE, AND TO AFFORD THE BEARER ALL
NECESSARY ASSISTANCE AND PROTECTION.



The



BULFIN



HERITAGE CYCLE RALLY 2018

HERITAGE
ON A HIGH NELLY

