

# Mayo Heritage

Newsletter

North Mayo Heritage Centre

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YouTube



*Winner*



National  
Heritage Week

A Heritage Council programme

*Photographic Competition*

*Sunset at*  
**Moyne Abbey,  
Killala**

by David Hicks

*Congratulations*



The  
North Mayo  
Heritage  
Centre

Are you interested in  
**TRACING YOUR MAYO ROOTS?**

If you are interested in professional help to research your family history or are curious about your ancestry, why not contact us?

Tel: 096 31809 Email: [northmayo@gmail.com](mailto:northmayo@gmail.com) or visit [northmayogenealogy.com](http://northmayogenealogy.com)

Cover image: Sunset at Moyne Abbey, Killala, Co. Mayo by David Hicks – winner of Heritage Week Photographic Competition 2023

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## Placenames

The key purpose of placenames is to establish identity. Additionally, they provide helpful insights into our ancestors' lives, their knowledge of environments and their folk beliefs.

In Ireland, loyalty to a place of origin is remarkably strong. The history of that loyalty dates back thousands of years, as shown in the vast collection in The Book of *Dinnseanchas*, (meaning lore of places), which was first composed in the sixth century. It details how places such as fortresses, raths, cities, plains, mountains, lakes, and rivers acquired their names.

Over time, Irish placenames changed and were deformed. The primary reason for this was the method used when placenames were transposed phonetically out of the Irish language into English.

This occurred in the first three decades of the nineteenth century, after the Act of Union (1800) had brought the administration of Ireland under the control of London. The first step in that administration was to measure the country, a process which the Ordnance Survey began in November 1824.

At that time, local taxes were based on the Valuation of Townland units. Detailed mapping of townlands was required to make the tax system more equitable. This data was recorded in Namebooks which are now stored in the National Archives of Ireland, in Dublin City. During this process used by the British to understand the original Irish placenames, they became distorted recorded versions, as English spellings were forced on Irish language placenames. As a result, Irish placenames lost their meanings, identity and the layers of history associated with them.

However, the rise of Nationalism in the 1900s brought renewed interest in the Irish language. The Gaelic League published a book in 1905, written by Seosamh Laoide. The book was called *Post-Sheanchas* and it provided the Irish language form to the names of the Post Offices throughout Ireland.

Around the same time Dublin Corporation also began erecting bilingual street nameplates.

During 1946 The Placenames Commission or *An Coimisiún Logainmneacha* was established by the Department of Finance to advise Ordnance Survey Ireland and the government of what the Irish name of places should be. Today, The Placenames data base of Ireland is a useful resource when researching Irish placenames. It is available online at [www.logainm.ie](http://www.logainm.ie) and is a record and archive of placenames in Ireland. It was created by Gaois, Fiontar & Scoil na Gaeilge, Dublin City University in collaboration with the Placenames Branch of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.

[www.irishgenealogy.ie](http://www.irishgenealogy.ie)  
[www.logainm.ie](http://www.logainm.ie)  
[www.libraryireland.com](http://www.libraryireland.com)  
[www.osi.ie](http://www.osi.ie)

### Extract from the Ordnance Survey Letters of 1838

A brief history of the townland of

## MOYNE

(*Maighin*, a little plain).

Located in the south-east of the parish of Killala. Bounded on the north by Kilroe and the high water mark; east by Abbeylands and the parish of Ballysakeery; south by Ballysakeery parish and Crosspatrick townland; and west by Killala (Bishop's Demesne) and Killala Town Plots East. It contains 394 acres, 1 rood, 36 perches, including 0 acres, 3 roods, 9 perches of water. The property of Sir William Palmer. Assistant Agent, P. Nolan, who holds a large portion, and resides in a neat cottage in the east part, of the townland; the remainder is held by tenants on a lease of 3 lives at 27 shillings per acre, yearly. There are 5 farmers and 3 cottiers. Soil, good heavy clay, producing oats, flax, potatoes, etc. Two fairs are held yearly, on the 25<sup>th</sup> July and 14<sup>th</sup> October, for the disposal of horses, cows, sheep, pigs, etc.

### MOYNE ABBEY

Moyne Abbey (*Mainistir na Maighne*) is a medieval Franciscan friary located near Killala. It was founded at some point before 1455, by McWilliam Bourke family as a friary and consecrated in 1462. Like Rosserk Friary, it was burnt by Sir Richard Bingham, Elizabeth I of England's governor of Connacht, in 1590.

It's believed friars continued to reside there until about 1800. Its east window displays fine switchline tracery. It is one of most impressive ecclesiastical ruins in Mayo and a National Monument.

[Sacredlandscapes.ie](http://Sacredlandscapes.ie)  
[Mayo-ireland.ie](http://Mayo-ireland.ie)

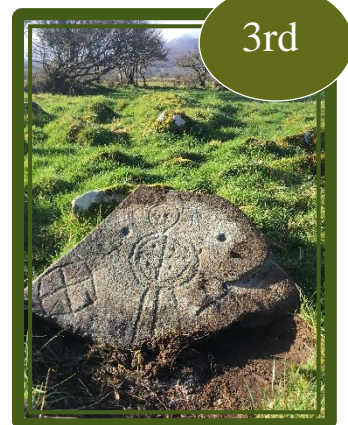
As National Heritage Week 2023 draws to an end, we announce the winners of our 'Mayo Heritage' Photographic competition.

**1<sup>st</sup> place:** Sunset at Moyne Abbey, Killala by David Hicks (see cover)

**2<sup>nd</sup> place:** Pottery class at O'Dwyer Arts Centre, Lismiraun, Co. Mayo by Adam Kaczmarek (below)



**3<sup>rd</sup> place:** Knappamanagh Stone, Knappamanagh in, Aughagower, Co. Mayo by Aiden Clarke (below)



*Congratulations to  
all three winners.*

Our first prize winner will receive a book hamper consisting of carefully chosen books of local interest valued at over €70.