Foreword

Toisc go raibh gach cearn den tír buailte go dona ag an Ghorta Mhór eagraítear Cuimhneachán bliantúil ar bhonn uainíochta sna ceithre cúigí i ndiaidh a chéile ón uair a rinneadh an chéad Chuimhneachán riamh i mBaile Átha Cliath sa bhliain 2008. Beidh Cuimhneachán 2015 á reáchtáil i gcúige Uladh dá bharr.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is proud to host the Annual Famine Commemoration 2015. The remembrance of those who died or had to leave these shores is an important element in fostering an appreciation of the impact that the famine had and how this continues in modern Ireland.

No county was left unscathed by the famine; research undertaken by museum staff has uncovered first-hand accounts of the suffering and tragedy which unfolded during those years. Reports relating to famine relief across Down and Armagh relay the sense of destitution and distress in places like Crossgar, Downpatrick, Forkhill and Donaghmore. Workhouses in Newry, Kilkeel, Downpatrick and elsewhere accommodated “paupers…, miserable spectacles,… emaciated and reduced in strength” (Downpatrick Recorder 13 February 1847).

This programme of events has been put together to explore further the social, cultural, linguistic, economic and political legacy of the famine. We are privileged to have contributions by renowned authors, historians, artists and academics. Our local school children and students will have opportunities to engage with the human stories of the famine and respond creatively.

The official ceremony of commemoration will be a fitting and poignant reminder of the devastation and loss experienced by millions of people in the years 1845 – 1849 and beyond. I look forward to welcoming you to the Albert Basin in Newry for the ceremony on September 26th at 2pm. The maritime heritage of the city of Newry is represented at the chosen location for the event, it being the site of so much industry linked to the ships which would transport the dispossessed on their journeys to better and more prosperous lives.

We have formed partnerships with cultural, community and educational agencies and groups in order to ensure as wide an audience as possible for these events, which are happening in libraries, museums, arts centres and schools. I would like to acknowledge our partnerships with Libraries NI, Linenhall Library, C2KNI, Greater Mourne Good Relations Forum, Newry City Tours, Gaeláras Míc Ardghail, Newpoint Players, National Museums of Northern Ireland, The Mitchel Conference Committee, and Newry Maritime Association.

Councillor Naomi Baillie
Chair, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
Programme of Events

**Wednesday 23 – Friday 25 September**

**Understanding the Impact of the Great Famine in Ulster**

Newry and Mourne Museum at Bagenal’s Castle

1pm–3pm

Free

Declan Carroll: 028 3031 3178
declan.carroll@newryandmourne.gov.uk

A history course with Dr Gerard MacAtasney, aimed at secondary schools and adults. While much has been written about the impact of the Great Famine/An Gorta Mór, there still remains the perception that Ulster escaped relatively lightly from the effects of the catastrophe. This short course will examine conditions during the Famine years in the linen stronghold of Country Armagh and the thriving industrial metropolis of Belfast. By way of contrast, the years of hunger in County Leitrim, a county bordering the province, will also be examined. The course aims to address the belief that Ulster was immune to one of the greatest human disasters of the nineteenth-century.

**Wednesday 23 – Friday 25 September**

**“John Mitchel and the Legacy of the Great Famine” conference.**

Canal Court Hotel, Newry

Starting Wednesday 23 September at 7pm Canal Court Hotel. For further information contact tommyfegan@gmail.com

**Thursday 24 September**

**Songs of loss and emigration**

Bell Gallery, Sean Hollywood Arts Centre

7.30pm

Free

028 3031 3180

artsreception@newryandmourne.gov.uk

Len Graham, Pádraigín Ní Uallacháin, Henry McDonald, Mick Dunn and Patricia Flynn will lead a seisiún with an invitation to all interested singers to either come along to listen, or to participate. The creative response to the Famine and the social life at the time has included poetry, song, novels, visual and performing arts. This event will mine the rich seam of stories through song which have been passed on through the song tradition in English and Irish. Songs of loss through emigration and yearning for home form a vital part of the singing tradition and these well-known voices will highlight the best of the canon.

**Thursday 24 September**

**Marita Conlon McKenna live broadcast from Warpoint.**

Broadcast from Windermere Live

St Dallan’s Primary School, Warrenpoint

Aisleain McGill: 028 3031 3180
aisleain.mcgill@newryandmourne.gov.uk

This production, in association with EA Productions and C2K will feature a live videoconference from St Dallan’s PS in Warrenpoint. The main guest on the day will be Marita Conlon McKenna who is the author of one of the most popular books in schools on the island of Ireland – Under the Hawthorn Tree. This book captures the hardship and horror of the Great Famine. Other links with guests and experts are being planned as part of this videoconference. This is a schools’ event – not open for the public.

**Monday 21 – Friday 25 September**

**Understanding the Impact of the Great Famine in Ulster**

Newry and Mourne Museum at Bagenal’s Castle

1pm–3pm

Free

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**Wednesday 23 September**

**Lecture: ‘Ar an Trá Fholamh – ó Scéal go Script Scannáin’**

Gaeláras Mhic Ardghail, Newry

7:30pm

Dr. Art Hughes – Reader – Irish and Celtic Languages Research Institute, University of Ulster. ‘Ar an Trá Fholamh’ is the title of a short story written by Seosamh Mac Grianna from Rannafast and set during the Famine – translated as left destitute, or high and dry. This is a powerful piece of Irish literature and Art Hughes details the difficulty of scripting this emotive tale for the screen. This event will be presented in Irish with simultaneous translation available for those without the language.

**Tuesday 22 September**

**‘The Great Famine and the Irish language’ – Dr. Fionntán De Brun**

Newry and Mourne Museum at Bagenal’s Castle

7.30pm

Free

Declan Carroll: 028 3031 3178
declan.carroll@newryandmourne.gov.uk

The Great Irish Famine is generally regarded as having dramatically precipitated the decline of the Irish language. Yet scholars are revisiting the question of language use in Ireland in the 19th century, as is most recently evident in Nicholas Wolf’s study An Irish-Speaking Island State, Religion, Community, and the Linguistic Landscape in Ireland, 1770–1870 (2014).

This talk will consider this linguistic landscape as part of an examination of how Irish speakers reacted to the crisis as it unfolded. For example, how did poets and scribes describe the situation as it appeared to them? And how useful is the oral testimony of survivors as this was passed down to us after the catastrophe?
Programme of events

**For further information contact:**
jmcarevey1@hotmail.com

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**Saturday 26 September**

**Annual Famine Commemoration 2015**

**Albert Basin, Newry**

2pm

This will be the highlight of the Council's Famine Commemoration programme. The Official Ceremony will feature musical performances, poetry readings and unveiling of an historical plaque as well as contributions from local school children, community representatives, and the Chair of Council alongside Senior Government Representatives.

The Annual Famine Commemoration will culminate in a wreath-laying ceremony and a minute's silence in remembrance of those who were lost through death and emigration.

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**Friday 25 September**

**The Great Hunger**

**Sean Hollywood Arts Centre**

7:30pm

£8 / £6

028 3031 3180

The Great Hunger is a dramatised version of the epic Patrick Kavanagh poem performed by Peter Duffy. Following an invitation to perform in the Irish Cultural Centre in Paris in October 2013, The Great Hunger commenced a country wide tour with performances in Galway (Town Hall Theatre), Waterford (Theatre Royal), Drogheda (Droichead Arts Centre), Kilkenny (Watergate Theatre), Tallaght (Civic Theatre), Derry (Playhouse Theatre), Armagh (Marketplace Theatre), Coleraine (Riverside Theatre) and Ratoath (Venue Theatre). That tour ended with a standing ovation at a sold out performance in the Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival in Belfast in May 2014. The production has garnered some really good reviews on the way:

"A treat for the ear, the eye and the imagination"

Down Recorder

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**Saturday 26 September**

**"Under the Hawthorn Tree"**

**event day**

Ulster American Folk Park, 2 Mellon Road, Castletown, Omagh, Co Tyrone BT78 5QU

10am–5pm

028 8224 3292

Come to the Ulster American Folk Park on Saturday 26 September to experience the effects of the Great Famine on a typical family. Based on the well-known book by Marita Conlon-McKenna, visitors will follow in the O'Driscoll family's footsteps. Discover Mary Kate's secret herbal cures, taste famine foods, visit the Land Agent's house and travel on an emigrant ship. This trail will recreate the story of the Famine and open your eyes to the reality of life in Ireland at the time.

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**Friday 25 September**

**St. Mary's University Workshop**

**Gaeláras Mhic Ardghail, Newry**

7:30pm

Dr. Seán Mac Corraidh – Irish Medium Post Primary PGCE Co-ordinator – St. Mary's University College Belfast will facilitate a workshop on An Drochshaol agus Traidisiún Amhránaíochta na hÉireann (The Famine and the Irish Singing tradition) in which the songs of the Great Hunger will be discussed. This event will be presented in Irish with simultaneous translation available for those without the language.

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**Friday 25 September**

**Newry City Tours**

**Outside Newry Town Hall**

2pm

Free

WWW.newrycitytours.com

(Booking via website address only)

Join Martin Murtagh on a short walking tour highlighting how Francis Carvill's shipbuilding industry and work as a famine agent ensured the safe passage of thousands who left these shores during the famine years.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme of events</th>
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<td>In our final session, we will examine how Irish people around the world participated in local and national politics, and the ways in which they led and supported movements for change, including campaigns both for and against Irish independence. We will also think about the ways in which Irish people encountered discrimination, but also how they were instrumental in the alienation of others. In certain ways, these activities have been shaped by popular conceptions of the Famine as the great tragedy in Ireland's history that callously scattered its sons and daughters far and wide. We will conclude our workshop by reflecting on the experience of the Famine migrants and the ways in which their struggles continue to shape the identity of the Irish diaspora.</td>
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<td><strong>sunday 27 September</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Retracing the Steps in Warrenpoint</td>
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<td>Performance begins at 2pm on Promenade, next to Baths. Unveiling of plaque at 4pm: Opposite The Lough and Quay</td>
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<tr>
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<td><a href="mailto:aisleain.mcgill@newryandmourne.gov.uk">aisleain.mcgill@newryandmourne.gov.uk</a></td>
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<td>This is a public event, featuring specially-commissioned performances which will recreate scenarios which would have featured in the exodus of people from Warrenpoint in the wake of the Famine. The walk from Newry and the surrounding villages towards Warrenpoint Harbour would have been a poignant journey. The Lady Caroline set sail from there to New Brunswick, Canada and the passengers embarking at Warrenpoint knew that there was little chance they'd ever see their friends and families again.</td>
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<td>Dr. Eamon Phoenix lecture:  &quot;The Famine, Ireland, and County Down&quot;</td>
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<td>Kilkeel</td>
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<td>7:30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>For further information contact Suzanne Rice: 028 3031 3065 / 077 9388 3664</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:suzanne.rice@newryandmourne.gov.uk">suzanne.rice@newryandmourne.gov.uk</a></td>
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<td>028 3031 3065</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:kerri.morrow@newryandmourne.gov.uk">kerri.morrow@newryandmourne.gov.uk</a></td>
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**KEY**
- Venue
- Time
- Phone
- Email
- Admission
- Duration

**Wednesday 16 September**
- "Relating Ulster’s Famine experience: an exercise in myth-making?"
- Crossmaglen Library
- 7pm
- Free
- 028 3086 1951
- crossmaglen.library@librariesni.org.uk


**Libraries NI**

**Monday 24 August - Saturday 12 September**
- "From Home to Here: Stories of Migration Old and New" Exhibition
- Newry City Library
- Available to view during Library opening hours
- Free

**September**
- "The Great Famine" Exhibition
- Newry City Library
- Available to view during Library opening hours
- Free

**September onwards**
- Other resources
  - From 1 September Famine Information packs will be available for consultation in the Heritage Gallery, Newry City Library, which will include a copy of an original Famine relief ticket, dated 1847 (and signed by James Harshaw, who was involved with a local Famine Relief Committee). There are also transcriptions of the Harshaw diaries (handwritten by Crossle) from our unique Crossle collection, which includes cover of the Famine period. There are frequent mentions to James Harshaw attending Relief Committees, providing relief to local people, as well as mentions of local deaths. Famine Commemoration bookmarks will be available at Newry City Library as part of Libraries NI programme of activities during September, and Warrenpoint and Newry City Library will each hold a Junior Reading Group during this period, where group members will be able to read and discuss books related to the topic of the famine.

**Thursday 3 September**
- The Great Famine In Ulster, Talk By Dr. Gerard MacAtasney
- Newry City Library
- 6:30pm
- Free (Booking is Advisable)
- 028 3026 4683
- newrycitylibrary@librariesni.org.uk

Dr Gerard MacAtasney has published widely on the Great Famine in Ireland. Born in Lurgan he has a BA Hons from QUB; Masters from QUB; Masters from UUJ; PhD from University of Liverpool. He has lectured throughout Ireland and in America and England.

**Sunday 4 October**
- Ulster Folk and Transport Museum
- Famine and Family: a tour looking at family life during the Irish Famine
- 12pm and 2pm
- 1 hour
- Normal Museum admission costs apply
- For workshops Contact Lauraine Lindsay: 028 9039 5091
- Learning staff will guide you and your family through some of the homes in the rural area of the Ulster Folk & Transport Museum, telling the stories of households, from the Landlord to the Cottier, and how they coped with the hardships of the time. There will be opportunities to ask questions of characters from the period, who will share the stories of their life and the hardships they endured. If you wish, you can then ask your own questions of each character. NB: This tour takes place outdoors and requires a lot of walking. Due to the nature of our exhibit buildings access for wheelchairs and pushchairs is limited. Suitable for ages 8+.

**Programme of Events**

- Libraries NI
- Crossmaglen Library
- "Relating Ulster’s Famine experience: an exercise in myth-making?"
- Crossmaglen Library
- 7pm
- Free
- 028 3086 1951
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**Libraries NI**

**Monday 24 August - Saturday 12 September**
- "From Home to Here: Stories of Migration Old and New" Exhibition
- Newry City Library
- Available to view during Library opening hours
- Free
Programme of events

**Monday 21 September**

"Not The Same Sky" by Evelyn Conlon, Book Launch
Newry City Library
2pm
Free (Booking is Advisable)
028 3026 4683
newrycity.library@librariesni.org.uk

Born in Co. Monaghan, Evelyn Conlon is an Irish novelist and short story writer. She has been writer-in-residence in colleges in many countries and at University College Dublin. "Not the Same Sky" tells the story of Irish Famine Orphans of the 1840s who were sent to Australia.

**Saturday 19 September**

The Great Irish Famine and Its Consequences
Warrenpoint Library
12.30pm
Free (Booking is Advisable)
028 4175 3375
warrenpoint.library@librariesni.org.uk

By Francis Xavier McCorry

This talk is by the author of "A Portrait of West-County Down: Past and Present", who will discuss the pre-famine poverty which existed in West County Down, farming practices in the locality, the impact of the famine and its consequences. Francis Xavier McCorry, historian, author and lecturer, has forty years of local history publications under his belt. He counts a number of well-respected historians such as Cormac O'Grada as admirers.

**Thursday 17 September**

A Famine Link: The Hannah, By Kevin Murphy
Newry City Library
12:30pm
Free (Booking is Advisable)
028 3026 4683
newrycity.library@librariesni.org.uk

Kevin Murphy will retell the story of The Irish famine ship "The Hannah" which attempted a harrowing Atlantic crossing from Ireland to Quebec in 1849, only to encounter an iceberg. The captain abandoned the sinking ship and its nearly 200 passengers, many of whom miraculously survived 17 hours on the frozen ice. Kevin has undertaken extensive research, lectured widely, and contributed to many historical publications.

Copies of Evelyn Conlon's Not the Same Sky will be placed at strategic locations throughout Newry, Mourne and Down District, with an email address attached, so that whoever finds the book and reads it, can email a review. The finders will be encouraged to attend the book launch in Newry library.
Monday 14 September

Hungry for Change – The Effect of the Great Famine on Irish Migration, by Dr. Ann McVeigh

Linenhall Library, 17 Donegall Square North, Belfast
1pm
Free Lecture
028 9032 1707
info@linenhall.com

Examining the suffering inflicted upon the population of Ireland from 1845 to 1852, explaining how emigration became the only option for many faced with famine.