

# Féile Dúthalla 2010 - National Heritage Week Ireland



Día daoibh go léir agus cead míle fáilte ar an turas. This tour has been organised by Féile Dúthalla 2010 with the very kind assistance of the Aubane Historical Society and Fr. Seán Tucker to mark and celebrate National Heritage Week Ireland 2010 in the Duhallow Region.

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*Dotted around the landscape are a number of fascinating monuments. About 4,000 years of human activity and culture well in evidence as we view the ancient sites and monuments on this tour.*

*Wikipedia tells us that **Ogham** (English pronunciation: /'oʊ.əm/ or /'ɒɡəmə/; Old Irish: *ogam*, pronounced [ˈɔ̌ɣamˠ], Modern Irish [ˈoːmˠ or [ˈoːəməˠ]) is an Early Medieval alphabet used primarily to write the Old Irish language, and occasionally the Brythonic language. Ogham is sometimes referred to as the "Celtic Tree Alphabet", based on a High Medieval *Briatharogam* tradition ascribing names of trees to the individual letters. The marks on the edges of this pillar stone (left) are characters from an alphabet that was used in fifth-century Ireland.*



*Known as ogham, the 25-letter alphabet was supposedly inspired by Ogma, god of eloquence. Ogham was carved and read from **BOTTOM** to **TOP**. (Also carved, occasionally, right to left). Also written as *ogam orogum*, it is pronounced "AHG-m" or "OH-ehm." Ogham served as an alphabet for one of the ancient Celtic languages. Its origin is uncertain: it may have been adapted from a sign language. Current understanding is that the names of the main twenty letters are also the names of 20 trees sacred to the druids. Some authors have suggested the existence of a 13 month calendar which shared some of these names.*

*Other features of the tour we will see – Some interesting architectural features of some buildings in the town of Millstreet, Carnegie Hall, The Banks, St. Patricks Church and also High Mill Lane & the Republican Monument in the square*

*Clara Mountain Bus Tour with Fr. Seán Tucker  
Sunday August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2010*

	R		N		Q		I
	Z		S		C		E
	NG		V		T		U
	G		L		D		O
	M		B		H		A

*The Ogham Alphabet*

*A 15th century treatise on Ogham, The Book of Ballymote, confirms that ogham was a secret, ritualistic language. However, there is no direct evidence that the Ogham alphabet was used [in antiquity] for divination or any other magical purposes. The Ogham alphabet is shown here*



## The Knocknakilla Stone Circle

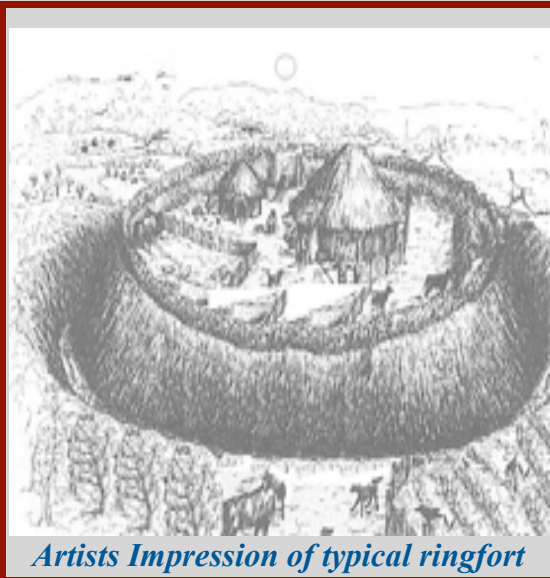
*Stone circles have a fascination for visitors. Often they have hauntingly lovely settings away from from modernity as here on the northern slope of Musherabeg. The circle is small and consists of 5 stones, one horizontal or recumbant as it is called. It was erected approximately 4,000 years ago & was excavated by Professor Gogan in the 1930's. The complex also includes a tall slanting pillar 14' outside the pillar but associated with it and a radial stone cairn. About 200 sites are known*

*throughout Ireland - the main concentration in west Munster (Cork/Kerry) & in the Sperrin Mountain region of Tyrone.*

*A Characteristic of the Cork/Kerry one is that they are nearly all orientated in the NE - SW axis. Were they used for astronomical observations, ritual activities, seats of judgement or whatever? If the stones could only speak they could answer these tantalising questions.*



## Liscahane Ringfort



*Artists Impression of typical ringfort*

*There are about 45,000 ringforts scattered throughout Ireland. This is one of a dozen which we will pass on the tour. Typically a ringfort consists of an earthen bank enclosing a level area on which stood the house of the occupant and perhaps other domestic buildings. In most cases the material for the bank or rampart was obtained by digging a ditch or fosse outside it. This was an effective and economical way of using available resources. Rath and Lios, Dún and Cathair are the Irish names for this umbrella English word. Rath & Lios referred to earthen*

*structures and Dún and Cathair to stone forts. Ringforts were erected between 600 - 1000 AD and were the protected farmsteads of wealthy farmers of Early Medieval times. The surrounding rampart provided protection from marauding wild animals and cattle raiders. Placenames frequently retain Lios and Rath elements & the farmer's name. More information on the Liscahane Soutterain excavated in 2003 can be found at [www.excavations.ie](http://www.excavations.ie)*

## Kilmeedy Disused Burial Ground & Holy Well

*On this tour we will pass two disused burial grounds & sites of early churches. At Kilmeedy within a D-Shaped enclosure we have the foundations of a medieval church, numerous grave markers, burial vault of the early Leaders. Adjacent are a Holy Well and Dallyun Stone. The site is associated with St. Ita of Kileady and the well is known as Tobar Slanán & is visited on Good Friday and other days.*

### **Extract from Fr. Seán Tucker's Book – The Origin & Development of Millstreet Parish Origin and evolution of Millstreet Parish during the second Millennium.**

Millstreet is one of 53 parishes in the Diocese of Kerry and one of four parishes in NW Cork, included within the diocese. Since the early beginnings of the parish it has changed its name, place of worship and geographical extent at least three times:- From 1450 until the first quarter of the 20th Century, it was known as Drishane.- Prior to that date, it was called Kilmeedy.- It is now known as Millstreet.- The first church was located at Kilmeedy, the next at Drishane, at the north end of the old cemetery. Since the early 1800's the church has been located at the West End of the town.- Cullen was a separate parish for over 500 years and in the past included part of Kilcorney. It was only attached to Millstreet about 1806. Today Millstreet Parish comprises three congregations - Millstreet, Cullen and Ballydaly - with churches serving each community.

*(The book is available from the Aubane Historical Society <http://aubanehistoricalsociety.org>)*



## Kilmeedy Castle



*This early 15<sup>th</sup> century Tower House was erected by the 2<sup>nd</sup> son of Teig McCarthy of Muskerry. It is a rectangular tower of 5 storeys with limited defensive features, arrow loops, bartizans on the NE & SW corners of the Tower, a guardroom and probably a battlemented rooftop. The hall or living quarters were on the 3<sup>rd</sup> level and there are wall passages and access stone stairway intact to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor and a garderobe w.c. in the NW angle of the Tower. Tower Houses and fortified dwellings were built between*

*1400 - 1650 as homes for the Irish and Anglo Irish Chieftans. Other McCarthy strongholds in the vicinity were at Drishane & Doneen. Here we will have our light picnic and refreshments before heading on to see some more sites including - a modern windfarm - panoramic landscapes & a former Great House and grounds.*

## Mount Leader

*The tour will conclude with a visit to the now delapidated home of the Leader family. Erected in the 1830's it was a typical example of the great house or home of the Protestant Ascendancy. Finely set and beautiful landscaped surroundings, it has all the trappings of the lifestyle of the nobility. The Leaders were an influential family in the Duhallow region during the 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and had a number of other good homes viz. Keale, Rosnalee etc., etc.,*



*The tour officially ends here and a traditional music session will follow.  
Hoping the tour was enjoyable & interesting - Go raibh míle maith agaibh go léir.*

**Handout compiled by Fr. Seán Tucker & Tadhg de Brún**