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Cumann Uaigheann na Laochra Gael
Uimhir Bhosca 7105, 74 Sraid Dama, Baile Átha Cliath 2
National Graves Association
Box 7105, 74 Dame Street, Dublin 2
1926 Caring for the graves of our patriot dead of all generations 2010

Cumann Uaigheanna na Laochra Gael Feabhra 2010

A chairde

Bliain ghnothach agus rathuil i 2009 do Chumann Uaigheanna na Laochra Gaeil. Geofar eolas ar sceimeanna agus feachtais na bliana i dtuarascail an Runai www.nga.ie. Deanann (C.U.L.G.) N.G.A. an chuid is no de'n obair go ciuin seachtain indiaidh seachtaine i.e. uaigeanna ar laochra ata caillte agus ata gaoichuram N.G.A. a dhieisiu agus a chothu.

Beimid ag leanint ar agaidh i 2010 leis an obair seo. Faoi lathair taimid ag obair chun seadchomthra naisiunta i Sraid Ui Mhorgha (Moore St.) I mBaile Atha Cliath a shabhail. Ta seandalai (architects) ag obair faoi lathair faoi threoir N.G.A. chun dearadh (design) nua a chumadh do cheann de sheadchomharta 1916. Ta pleananna a phleigh freisin chun seadchomhartha Wolfe Tone i Bodenstown a fheabhsu.

Ta faisneis le fail ag gach einne anois ar ar ngreasan www.nga.ie. Ta beirt ag obair ar seo faoi lathair.

Is mian liom aris cur I gcuimhne do gach ball (member) den chumann agus do gach duine a thugann taca duinn nach nglacann muid taca airgeadais o aon Rialtas na o aon dream pholaitiuil. Taimid ag brath go hiomlan ar ar mbaill fein, ar na daoine a thugann tacaoiocht duinn agus ar an ngrath phobail sa tir seo agus I gcoigrioch chun chur ar ar gcumas leanuint leis an obair.

Cailliuint mhor e bas Paddy Ryan (Padraig O Rianin) i 2009. Bhi se ar choiste N.G.A. ar feadh blianta fada agus rinne se sar-obair don choiste. Leigh faoi Phadraig I dtuairise an Runai www.nga.ie. Ar dheis De go raibh anam Phadraig.

Dean teangmhail linn, ma ta ceisteanna agat le chur orainn no ma ta tu ag lorg aon eolais agus breathnaigh freisin ar ar ngreasan www.nga.ie.

Gabhaim, buiochas thar cheann N.G.A. (C.L.U.) do ar luch leanuna agus do na daoine uiligh a thugann taca duinn.

Séan Ó'Faoláin, Cathaoirleach

A Chairde

2009 was certainly a busy (and successful) year for the National Grave's Association. The secretary's report outlines some of the projects and campaigns of the year. Although, there was widespread media coverage of many of the projects, the major work of the NGA goes on quietly, week in week out. That is, the care and maintenance of the graves and memorials of Ireland's patriot dead that are in the care of our association.

2010 sees the continuation of all this work. Already we are involved in yet another campaign to protect the national monument in Dublin's Moore Street. Architects are working, on our instructions, to produce a major new design to improve one of our 1916 monuments. Plans are being discussed to improve Wolfe Tone's monument in Bodenstown and so forth.

Two members in particular are working on a major revamping of our website at www.nga.ie. It is a resource crammed with information now available to everyone.

I remind all members and supporters that the NGA accepts no financial support from any government or political body. We are totally dependent on our own members and supporters and the general public, both at home and abroad, to continue our work.

2009 also saw a major loss to the NGA of our long standing committee member, Paddy Ryan. Paddy sadly passed away on 21st November 2009. Please read the secretary's report about Paddy. Ar dheis De go raibh a n-ainm.

Finally, please look at our website at www.nga.ie and please contact us with any queries or information.

Sean Whelan, Chairman



Kathleen Cork and Mary Casey, unveil the headstone of James Mountain.

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In a year of unprecedented woes, bank bail-outs, scandals and massive job losses, The National Graves Association once again has demonstrated a resilience to cope.

2009 was a year of great achievements. Sadly, they were all over-shadowed with the sudden death of Paddy Ryan. There are people far better than I to write about this soldier of the rear guard. It is true to say that Paddy was revered throughout the Republican movement. Paddy was on the N.G.A. committee for a long number of years. He also represented the association on different committees; to name but a few, "The Forgotten Ten Campaign", "The Sean Russell Project" and "The Save 16 Moore Street Committee". Sean Dougan and Paddy unveiled the Sean Russell monument on Sunday, 28th June 2010 in Fairview Park. This was to be Paddy's last public function on behalf of the N.G.A. Paddy's attributes were many – honesty, loyalty, a determination to challenge, a commitment to the end and yet a modest manner befitting the Fenians past.

Paddy Ryan; was an uncompromising Republican who never deviated from his principles. He believed in the ideals of Wolfe Tone, Padraic Pearse, Liam Lynch, Sean South and Bobby Sands. **A 32 County Irish Republic-A Sovereign State.** I will miss Paddy Ryan. I feel privileged to have known Paddy, I feel honoured to have served with him. Ar dheis De go raibh a anam.

In early 2009, the committee set about the task of preparing for an An Bord Pleanala Oral Hearing re 16 Moore Street.

The "Save 16 Moore Street Committee" went separate ways. The strains were evident a long time back. Elements of the said Committee were prepared to negotiate with the developer – a view strongly opposed by the N.G.A. Jim Connolly and Paddy Cooney supported the position of the association. They distanced themselves from others on the Save 16 Moore Street Committee. The independence of the Association enabled us to challenge the proposed infringement to the designated National monument.

The week long oral hearing commenced on Monday, 20th April in the Gresham Hotel, O'Connell Street, Dublin. The N.G.A. was represented by a company called "Plan Design Associates" from Killala, Co. Mayo. The team was made up of Orlagh Cawley, Michael Conmy, Sean Whelan and Loretta Clarke. A number of County Reps attended throughout the week, Eamon Griffin, Peggy Galligan, Geraldine McCabe and Veronique Crombe (France).

It was an experience for me in that it was my first Oral Hearing to attend. The down turn in the economy was not evident; with an array of solicitors, architects, consultants and barristers on the developers' side!!!

Prior to arriving at the Oral Hearing room, I had a mishap. On enquiring as to the location of the Oral Hearing I was directed to a room by the Porter. I noticed that a nameplate on the door was that of one of the Developers. I politely knocked on the door and entered. On entering the room I found former members of the "Save 16 Moore Street Committee" breaking bread. Their reaction can only be described as similar to a child who was caught with their hand in the Cookie jar. Red faced and coughing as a result of a sudden intake of



Save Moore Street Campaigners

breath, they gesticulated, sandwiches in hand, that the Hearing was in fact further down the corridor.
D.H.S. Developer's Hospitality Suite.

Sean Whelan introduced the team, giving a brief account of the Association's history. Loretta Clarke made a number of points re: the developers. Loretta reminded all present of our role … "The N.G.A. stands alone. We are an autonomous body. Nobody on our board can be a member of any Political Party. We owe allegiance only to those who died for Irish freedom".

Orlagh Cawley then proceeded to read a detailed submission prepared by Plan Design Associates. Orlagh's impact was very evident from the outset with the previously slouched members of the developers' team suddenly taking notice. Boxes and File's were brought in as Orlagh continued to read the submission. Scurrying from one table to another, resembling the posture of the hyena, the developers team listened intently. The week long Hearing was educational, an "eye-opener" and very much David and Goliath experience.

On the 24th April, the last day, Loretta Clarke requested a minute's silence for the men and women of Easter Week, in light of the date. The Madam Inspector agreed to this. The developers' team got to their feet very gingerly, occasionally glancing at each other. All stood,

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with the exception of one Dublin City Council employee.

It was a memorable week – a great week for a voluntary organisation, The National Graves Association. We will be forever indebted to Plan Design Associates. They gave their services free for the whole week. This was against the back drop of family commitments and concerns for loved ones in hospital. As a gesture of our sincere appreciation, the Secretary presented Michael, Orlagh and Loretta with a bronze statuette of Cuchulainn.

Details of the week's hearing are on the N.G.A. Website.



Charlie McLouchlan delivers oration

Sadly, in April, the Association received the news of the passing of Michael McEvilly.

Michael was a member of the N.G.A. for a long number of years. A native of Castlebar, Co. Mayo, he was a Republican with a fountain of knowledge in all aspects of Irish history. He was always willing to assist the N.G.A. re: projects and made available materials/information that were of national interest. Ar dheis De go raibh a anam.

On Saturday, 9th May, 2009, the N.G.A. marked the grave of Fenian, James Mountain, in St. Joseph's Cemetery in Ballyphehane, Cork.



Plaque erected in North Main Street, Cork

A number of relatives were present. The committee members are indebted to Kathleen Cork for her co-operation and diligence in contacting relatives and supplying background information on James Mountain. Manchester Rep., Charlie McLouchlan delivered an informative and moving oration. James Mountain (great-great-granduncle) of Kathleen Cork, along with Mary Casey, unveiled the headstone.

After the ceremony the Association travelled to 74 North Main Street, Cork, where a plaque was also unveiled to James Mountain. Plaque details – James Mountain, 1819 – 1868. Young Irelander and Fenian, lived at Number 72". (72 building since demolished, hence 74). The committee wish to thank Cork County Council, John Dwyer, Cork Rep., for their assistance. We would especially like to thank Charlie McLouchlan, for without his help, determination and perseverance, this day would not have happened. Charlie worked closely with Kathleen and ensured that **"Cork's First Fenian"** was truly honoured. This project was solely funded by the NGA.

May also brought the sad news of the passing of David Burke (Lawrence, Massachusetts, U.S.A). David was National Director of the A.O.H. and was involved in a lot of committees on Irish matters. He had a great grá for the National Graves Association. I met David on a number of occasions in Dundalk and Dublin and kept in contact by phone over the years, a man with a booming voice and a patriot heart. Ar dheis De go raibh a anam.

Annual work, like maintenance of graves continued. Liam Culbert took on the role of caretaker of



Liam Culbert tending the grave of Wolfe Tone

Bodenstown. He attended regularly to the duties of maintaining the grave of Wolfe Tone.

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On Sunday 28th June, the National Graves Association proudly unveiled the new bronze Statue of I.R.A. Chief of Staff, Sean Russell.



The new statue of Sean Russell

There were many Republicans of different shades in attendance. The oration was delivered by N.G.A. Chairperson, Sean Whelan. Sean's oration dealt with the role of Sean Russell from 1916 up to his death. He defended the name of Russell and criticised the slanderous remarks made by some people who deceived the public by claiming to be representative of the journalism profession. Gutter snipe journalism is alive and well in the 26 counties. Sean also challenged the audacity of some political figures who selectively chose to forget their fascist forefathers. The scurrilous remarks made by the above resulted in the monument being attacked by a group of yobs. Needless to say, the offensive remarks were removed. The enclosed commemorative booklet details the life of Sean Russell.



Paddy Cooney reading "The Dead March Past" by Brendan Behan



Sean Whelan, Chairman, NGA.

The committee are indebted to Ruan O'Donnell, Robbie McGowan (Glasnevin Monumental Works), all associate members, Dublin City Council, Superintendent Pat Whelan, Kenny Burke (Drogheda) and Willie Malone (Kilmainham Foundry). Willie Malone, a renowned Dublin sculptor, has worked with the Association on a number of projects. The Sean Russell statue is a work of art; it depicts a soldier, a committed revolutionary, an Irish Republican Patriot. Willie's artistic flair and great knowledge of working with bronze is highly respected. The Death of Cuchulainn Statue –



Paddy Lennon, Chairperson for the Sean Russell Commemoration

Oliver Sheppard (1865-1941) stands in the G.P.O. Dublin to mark the 1916 Rising. Willie in June 2002 was commissioned by the Office of Public Works to cast a second Death of Cuchulainn Statue. This work of art now stands in the State Apartments Dublin Castle.

Finally, the committee would like to thank everybody at home and abroad for their support and donations. The success of this project is down to hard work, determination and the generosity of the general public and our supporters.



Willie Malone, Kilmainham Foundry

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In November the association's response to the Poppy debate generated a lot of interest. So much so that as we go to print the debate continues. There was a deafening silence from the green hue of Political Parties in the south. However, this changed at the Ard Fheis of some Parties. While the letter may not have been read out, the contents were usurped and carefully spun to appease all. The position of the National Graves Association is clearly stated in Sean Whelan's excellent letter.

A Chara

The debate about whether or not to wear a British poppy in Ireland has once again engaged the general public.

The same arguments for and against are once again presented. The most cited argument in favour seems to be "Remember those Irishmen who perished in WW1". The most cited against seems to be a belief that wearing a poppy in Ireland is an attack on those who support the concept of the Irish Nation State and an insult to those who died fighting for it. Many of these and other, controversial points can be laid to rest simply by reading some of the ample information on the wearing of the poppy provided by the Royal British Legion. They and they alone produce and distribute the poppy.

On the legions official website they state that virtually all of the survivors of WW1 are now deceased. They then go on to state that the poppy should be worn to support all the British Military Service Personal who served in all conflicts since 1945. The wearing of the Poppy is to honour ALL current and former British Soldiers, Sailors and Air Men in all conflicts. This is stressed again and again by the British Legion and repeated by British Politicians and commentators. To further emphasize this point the Legion dedicates the wearing of the poppy each year to serving soldiers. This year it is dedicated to those in Afghanistan and last year it was dedicated to "our heroes in Basra". This means that wearing the Poppy in Ireland honours all the British Soldiers who committed all the atrocities in Ireland. You can not conveniently isolate the wearing of the Poppy in Ireland to WW1 and WW2. You can not simply ignore the fact that you are honouring the Black and Tans, the Murders of Bloody Sunday (both), the executioners of 1916 and so forth.

Every year some media commentators tell us yet again that we should wear a poppy to remember the Irish soldiers who died in WW1. Indeed we should remember. We should remember that no Irish soldiers died in WW1. Unfortunately tens of thousands of British soldiers, recruited in Ireland did loose their young lives in that terrible conflict. We should also remember the many Irish soldiers who did die at the time of WW1. They died in Ireland, most died fighting the British army, some were executed, while some were simply murdered.

There was much publicity recently when the Grangemockler G.A.A. club in Tipperary held commemorative events dedicated to "our greatest son" Michael Hogan. The Hogan stand in Croke Park is named in honour of him. Michael Hogan was but one of the 14 civilians shot dead in Croke Park by British soldiers on November 21st 1920, an event that quickly became known as Bloody Sunday.

This year the G.A.A. celebrates its 125th anniversary a truly great achievement. The association has had to adapt and compete with the many codes of sports now so readily available to our youth. This weekend will see the Republic of Ireland team play France in Croke Park a week before the anniversary of Bloody Sunday. I am sure some people will pause on the night to remember. I hope they choose to remember the victims' of Bloody Sunday especially the children, rather than the uniformed thugs who murdered them.
"Lest we forget"
Is Mise

Sean Whelan (Chairperson), National Graves Association
Box 7105, 74 Dame Street, Dublin 2.

NATIONAL GRAVES ASSOCIATION
List of Events 2010

January:	Proposals regarding projects for 2010.
February:	Work Parties Re; graves/memorials. Work to commence on Bodenstown.
March:	Saturday 6th March Tess Kearney 10th anniversary commemoration Glasnevin cemetery Dublin assemble N.G.A. plot 12 p.m.
April:	Good Friday Plaque unveiling to Captain Robert Monteith. Glanageenty Ballymacelligott County Kerry. Main Speaker John Houlihan N.G.A. Kerry Rep! Easter commemorations wreath laying at a number of N.G.A. graves/memorials.
May:	Tour of Glasnevin cemetery. For details please contact 087 2282033.
June:	Bodenstown commemorations not N.G.A. Associate members interested in assisting re: commemoration days please contact 087 2282033.
July:	Annual General Liam Lynch commemoration. Details nearer date.
August:	N.G.A. tours of Glasnevin cemetery.
September:	Work parties re: graves/memorial.
October:	Weekend tour of Longford/Roscommon. Details nearer date.
November:	Annual Mass 7th November. 90th anniversary commemoration Terence McSwiney and Kevin Barry. Details nearer date.
December:	Saturday 5th wreath laying ceremony in memory of Volunteers Rory O'Connor. Richard Barrett, Liam Mellows and Joseph McKelvey. Republican Plot Glasnevin cemetery.

*** Please note above events may change.
Please contact 087 2282033 if you have any queries.
*** Check Bank Holidays: re Tours of Glasnevin.
Prices re: Bus tours will be available nearer date.

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In July the association was honoured to assist Art O'Laoghaire in commemorating Philomena Plunkett. The following article by Art gives a brief account of Philomena Plunkett and of the commemoration day.

Philomena (a.k.a. Mimi, Niamh) Plunkett O Leary, eldest child of George Nobel Count Plunkett, died in 1926, at the relatively young age of 40. No doubt if she had lived to a ripe old age, she would have had the opportunity to give her account of her part in the War of Independence. But as it is, there are only brief references to her in some of the histories of the period.



Alexandra Ni Laoghaire, Zach (hidden) and Leon O' Farrell unveil headstone.

We do know that she was a courier for the IRB, that Joe sent her to New York with messages for John Devoy to bring to the German Embassy, and that subsequently Devoy wrote an eloquent obituary when he heard of her death.

We also know that for a few years after the rebellion she was Secretary of Cumann na mBan with Min Ryan; that she toured the country to mobilise support for Cumann na mBan and organised campaigns on behalf of Irish prisoners of war, including her two brothers George and Jack and she would have worked on her father's election campaigns.

In 1918 she married Diarmuid O Leary, also a political activist. His father was from Enniscorthy, and his mother from Cork, but he grew up in London, where he organised the South London Irish Volunteers. They had two children: — Colm and Rory. Tragically after only eight years of marriage, she died in December 1926, and Rory died in the following March, they were buried in Glasnevin. A decade later Diarmuid's parents, James Aloysius and Catherine, were buried in the same grave. We know very little about James and Catherine, but I do have a letter to James from Michael Davitt, thanking him for a donation, which is some indication of his political commitment.

It is hard to imagine the grief Diarmuid went through, burying his wife and then a few months later his younger son, so it is understandable that he never managed to put a headstone on the grave. It remained unmarked for over eighty years.

However earlier this year, on 11th July, this was finally rectified. At a small ceremony in Glasnevin, her youngest great-grand children: Nora Alexandra Ni Laoghaire (7) and twins Leon and Zach O Farrell (8) unveiled a headstone on her grave. Cumann na mBan and the National Graves Association, with her great-grandson Phelim (12) provided a colour party.

In attendance were her six grandchildren, eight of her great-grandchildren, and her four surviving nephews and nieces, George's children. A piper, Tim Doyle, from Bray, played a lament.



Piper Tim Doyle plays lament, watched by Alexandra Ni Laoghaire and Zach O'Farrell.

The family want to express their appreciation to Cumann na mBan, to the National Graves Association and to Robbie McGowan of Glasnevin for all their help.

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News In Brief

On 1 December 2009, the NGA honoured victims of the "Irish Holocaust", 1846 -52, with a wreath laying ceremony at the viewing point on Dun Laoghaire's East Pier. It was here that the Loughlinstown Workhouse orphans embarked for a new life in Australia. Hundreds of poor girls, aged from 16 years upwards were thus sent abroad.
We remembered them near a place with several monuments celebrating imperial associations, recognisable to most passers-by. The ordinary Irish people of that time also deserve recognition, however.

The committee throughout 2009 dealt with many enquires from the Public and assisted where possible. While the last year was difficult; it was rewarding to have achieved so much, particularly in cases where organised opposition was met. Sadly, the situation for many Families in 2010 is one of continued financial difficulties and rising costs. With the downturn, many Voluntary organisations will experience cash flow problems, to put it mildly. The present cutbacks have resulted in easy targets like special-needs teachers, rural community based groups, the sick, the elderly and generally the less well off to carry the burden. Irelands name has been sullied by the banking profession, developers and public representatives. The lavish life style of the elite has revealed a total disregard and a contemptuous attitude towards the ordinary man and woman in the street. The proclamation of 1916 states "We declare the right of the Irish people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies, to be sovereign and indefeasible." It also mentions of "cherishing all of the children of the nation equally". Public representatives have failed, they have shirked their responsibilities and neglected their duties to the nation and the Irish People!

Finally, I would like to thank the committee, associate members and county representatives for their support in 2009! I would also like to thank Sean Whelan, Aidan Lambert, Aoife O'Cathaoir, and all who contributed to the Annual Report. The committee has decided that this will be the last list of events in this format. In future the website will carry all information re: commemorations and news. If members are not email friendly please let us know! We will endeavour to forward on a report.
Is Mise
Matt Doyle, Secretary

William Francis Roantree

A Kildare man with a colourful life story

William Francis Roantree was born in Leixlip in 1828; he joined the American Navy and also spent time in Nicaragua. He became a member of the Fenian Brotherhood around 1860 and acted as a money courier from the American to the Irish organisation, travelling between New York and Dublin. On the arrest of his predecessor, Roantree became organiser of Fenians in infiltrated regiments in the British Army in 1864, proving highly successful. A member of the Fenian inner circle, Roantree was arrested during the Irish People seizure of September 1865 and sentenced to penal servitude, spending time in jails in Ireland and England. His health broke down under heavy quarrying work in Portland Prison, Dorset, and he was transferred to the Invalid Prison in Woking. Roantree was among those Fenians released on condition of going into exile in January 1871 and emigrated with his family to Philadelphia. He continued his Republican involvement in his new home, assisting in the famous Catalpa rescue in 1876. The following year, he acted as marshal at the funeral of John O'Mahony from New York to Glasnevin.

William Roantree returned to Ireland sometime around 1900 and worked for Dublin Corporation. He was much respected by a younger generation of Republicans and remained a flamboyant character. In 1909, he gave the oration at the unveiling of a monument to the Fenian chief, James Stephens, expressing the hope that the many neglected Fenian graves in the cemetery would be attended to. By an irony of fate, his own headstone was only unveiled in 2009.

In Glasnevin on Sunday September 6th 2009 the grave of William Roantree was marked with a limestone slab. Aidan Lambert (N.G.A) assisted Joe Eaton, a relative of William Roantree, in marking this patriots grave.

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Paddy Ryan



The late Paddy Ryan, R.I.P., at the General Liam Lynch Memorial,Knockmealdown Mountains, County Tipperary.

The National Grave Association is a voluntary body, with no party political affiliations.
We operate as an autonomous body. The National Graves Association is a registered company.
Contact details National Graves Association, Box 7105, 74 Dame Street, Dublin 2.
Tel: (087) 2282033 / (01) 8621928. www.nga.ie email addresses: matt@nga.ie or donations@nga.ie

The committee is made up of people who are dedicated to honouring the men and women of every generation who died in the cause of Irish Freedom. Each member gives his/her time on a voluntary basis.

Cumann Uaigheann na Laochra Gael

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