

UI Mhaine

Traditional homeland of the O'Kelly



"Ireland's Hidden Heartland"

Hy Many Way - Ui Mhaine - O'Kelly Clan -
Battle of Aughrim.

Some background

According to the Annals of The Four Masters reference to a clan which was to develop into the the ancient Gaelic family of Ó Ceallaigh dates back to the late 4th century. Their territory became known as Ui Mhaine, meaning the land of Mhaine Mor, our ancestor. The O'Kelly lordship lasted for approx 1200 years and ended with the Composition of Connaught in 1585. At that time the principality consisted of 800,000 acres, arbour 1200 square miles. This was their sphere of control but their sphere of influence was much greater and lasted up to the battle of Aughrim. The defeat at Aughrim singled the end of Gaelic Ireland.

The Kelly Clan Association was formed in 1995 with the view of maintaining and researching the history and culture of this great family. The clan is currently going through a period of re organisation with exciting plans to develop into a locally known and internationally recognised organisation. We feel our objectives would be greatly aided if we had a physical presence in a suitable premises in our traditional homeland. This would become our focus point and allow us to run frequent lectures and talks - display artefacts - etc. We feel that the development of the Beara Breffine way and the planned new cycle way. but in particularly the Hy Many Way section offers an exciting opportunity to market the unique features and events, history and culture of Ui Mhaine - O'Kelly Country.

Marketing Opportunities

*1/. Hy Many Way - 2/. Ui Mhaine - 3/. O'Kelly
Clan 4/. Battle of Aughrim.*

Each of the above offer a unique and exciting story. A combination or bundle of all four would hit a greater market with many spin off benefits.

1/. The Hy Many Way.

60 km of beautiful flora and fauna, river views, fishing etc. All through O'Kelly country

2/. Ui Mhaine

The traditional territory of the O'Kelly clan for 1200 years.

3/. O'Kelly Clan

Second most prominent surname in Ireland is Kelly. 69th most prominent name in USA, and 18th in both Canada and Australia.

Failte Ui Ceallaigh - The O'Kelly welcome. Precursor of Chaed Mile Failte. (Appendix 1)

Our clan stats show

42% of membership are local

33% are from north America

35% combined north America and Canada

10% Great Britain

4/. The Battle of Aughrim 1691.

The end of Gaelic Ireland.

Of particular poignancy to the O'Kelly clan. Our folklore has it that 400 O'Kelly's died in that battle. (Appendix 2)

The diverse history and heritage of this walk and principality must appeal to;

the walker,

people on a roots trail,

O'Kelly's local and international wishing to reconnect

and military historians.

This is an exciting project with great potential for growth and employment. A lot can be learned from the experience of the successful Rathcroghan Visitor Centre in Roscommon. Figures available to me give a snap shot of the potential visitors and growth a properly resourced project could attract.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Number of Service Users	7,507	9,065	10,106	13,325	19,594	22,259
% annual increase in number of Service Users	N/A	21%	11.5%	32%	40%	14%
Number of Tour Visits	1,600	2,321	2,604	3,327	3,762	3,884
% annual increase in number of Tour Visits	.5%	45%	12%	28%	13%	3%
% annual increase in income generated	62%	35%	30%	33%	21%	26%

Table 0.1 – Visitor, Tour and Income statistics Rathcroghan Visitor Centre (2014-2019)

Conclusions

The overall package of the Hy Many Way - Ui Mhaine - O'Kelly Clan - Battle of Aughrim, has a lot to offer.

The development of the Beara Breifne Way by Failte Ireland as part of Irelands Hidden Heartland is to be commended. In particular the Hy Many Way section is of great interest to the O'Kelly clan. The walk, stretching from Portumna in the south to Ballygar in the north is all through the ancient territory of Ui Mhaine, the homeland of the O'Kelly. The visitors on their walk pass through beautiful peaceful countryside but that peace was shattered in 1603 when the O'Sullivan clan were attacked at Aughrim. Again 88 years later Aughrim was to be the blood bath of the Williamite Wars. These are indeed gems of Irelands history which have been slumbering in "Ireland's Hidden Heartland".

The O'Kelly clan are very willing to be part of this exciting venture and to take part in developing opportunities and employment in their traditional heartland of Ui Mhaine.

Regards



J G Kelly

Uachtaran

Muintir Ui Ceallaigh



Appendix 1

Failte UI Ceallaigh

The O'Kelly Welcome

“A blessed, long living, great, courteous welcome,
An affectionate, charitable, just, proper, true
hearted welcome,
A welcome and twenty, and I add
hundreds to them,*
Like the surge of the stream is my welcome to
you”.

These were the words of welcome at Christmas time 1351 when William Bui O'Ceallaig - Chief of Ui Maine, addressed the assembled poets, writers and artists of Ireland on arrival at his great feast at Knockcroghery, Co Roscommon. The gathering was known for William Bui's hospitality and generosity.

*A hundred thousand welcomes.
Chéad mile fáilte

Appendix 2

Battle of Aughrim 1691.

The Castle of Aughrim to which we return, was once a spot of fatal celebrity for Catholic Ireland. It was around the ruins of this old Castle that was defeated the Irish national army under the reign of James II. by the combined forces of his son in law William III. composed of English, French, Protestant, Dutch, and Danish soldiers, on the Monday the 12th of July 1691. Ireland lost on that day 8 thousand of her devoted sons, of whom a multitude of officers and private soldiers belonging to her first families, all killed on the spot or mortally wounded facing the enemy. The regiments bearing the name of O'Kelly were nearly annihilated; two of the direct ancestors of the writer of the present Memoir, father and son, and numerous cousins of the name fought on that forlorn day.