

The Garrai Mòr

Ballafada Road
Ballyconneely
County Galway
Eire

PLACES TO VISIT

About Ballyconneely

Welcome to Ballyconneely. This peninsula, jutting into the Atlantic between Clifden to the north and Roundstone to the South, contains some of the most Tranquil; unspoilt and interesting countryside to be found anywhere in the country. It's name translates from the Irish as Conneely's Village and is based on the old civil parish of Ballindoon which in turn was named from the old fort or castle on Doon Hill built by the McGeogegan family to celebrate the restoration of free trade in the late 18th Century.

The peninsula is virtually ringed by beaches – from the Coral Strand at Derrygimla (look west out of the window), west and north to Knock, Mannin, Dunloughan and Truska, and east and south from Keeraunmore, Aillebrack and Ballyconneely Bay to Calla, Dolan and Murvey. As well as being ideal for bathing (weather permitting), some of those beaches provide excellent bases for shore fishermen.

Ballyconneely has been to the forefront in many historic projects and events. As early as 1854 the First salmon farming operation in either Britain or Ireland was carried out on the Dohulla Fishery. More famously on Sunday June 14th 1919, the first transatlantic flight ended in the Derrygimla Bog, (look east out of the window – my grandmother, Mary Flaherty witnessed this) about two miles from Ballyconneely Village. Capt. John Alcock and Arthur Whitten Brown had flown their twin-engined Vickers Vimy plane from Newfoundland, Canada, in just over sixteen hours. They landed virtually within yards of the Marconi Wireless telegraph Station, set up by Guglielmo Marconi, the Italian pioneer of wireless telegraphy in 1905, and from where the first transatlantic wireless message was sent to Cape Breton in Nova Scotia in 1907.

Mannin bay



Kylemore Abbey- Letterfrack

Home of the Benedictine Nuns is situated in the Kylemore Pass in Connemara. The house was originally built in 1868 by Mitchell Henry as a gift for his wife Margaret. The design is neo-gothic and the house displays all of the decorative features of the period.

The Benedictine Nuns bought the house in 1920 having fled their convent in Ypres, Belgium in 1914. They immediately set about re-establishing their international boarding school for girls (they had run a very successful school in Belgium for 300 years) which is still very much alive today.

Kylemore is open to visitors from March to October (on request throughout the remainder of the year). Visitor facilities include a visitor centre, an exhibition housed in the main reception rooms of the house and a video which takes the visitor through the varied history of the house and the people who have lived there.

Visitors may relax in the restaurant or browse in one of the best Craft shops in Connemara and watch the unique Kylemore Abbey Pottery being made in the studio. The jewel in the crown of Kylemore is the miniature cathedral - known locally as the Gothic Church. The church, which was built by Mitchell Henry in 1870, is considered a building of national importance. It has just undergone extensive restoration work, which took over three years to complete. The exterior of the church is of a rather dark limestone which contrasts with the light Caen sandstone of the interior. Marble columns line the walls, the use of three distinct marbles, green Connemara, pink Kilkenny, and black Armagh add to the overall richness of the design. The sandstone is ornately carved with no motif or design repeated.

Phone: 00353 9541068



Connemara National Park - Letterfrack

Situated in the heart of the west of Ireland in County Galway, Connemara National Park covers some 2,000 hectares of scenic mountains, expanses of bogs and heaths, and grasslands. Some of the Park's mountains, namely Benbaun, Bencullagh, Benbrack and Muchanaghtare part of the famous Twelve Bens range. Entrance to the Park is on the Clifden side of Letterfrack Village. The Park grounds are open all year round and the visitor centre is open from May to the end of September. Arrangements can be made for visiting groups, in particular schools, at other times of the year by telephoning 095 41054. The development of the Connemara landscape over 10,000 years is exhibited in the visitor centre with 3D models and large scale displays. Other facilities available are an audio-visual show, picnic areas, heritage site information, tea -room, nature trails, nature walks and talks and a series of activities during the summer especially for younger visitors.



What Do And See In The Park:

- ❖ New Exhibition of the Connemara landscape
- ❖ Audio Visual Show of the Park
- ❖ Herd of Connemara Ponies
- ❖ Two Self-Guiding Nature Trails
- ❖ Nature Mornings & Art Afternoons for Children
- ❖ Connemara Pony Display
- ❖ Nature Talks
- ❖ Picnic Areas (Indoor and Outdoor)
- ❖ Interactive Multimedia Heritage Information
- ❖ Guided Nature Walks for Everyone

Phone: 095 41054/ 41006 Fax: 095 41005

Inishbofin Island

Lies five nautical miles off the coast of Connemara. It is 5km x 3.5km and can be reached by ferry from Cleggan. Inishboffin has one of the best deep Harbours on the West Coast, has safe, sandy beaches and is a favourite spot for diving, swimming, canoeing, sailboarding and wind-surfing. The island is ideal for hill-walking, rock-climbing, cycling or angling. Irish traditional music has taken Inishboffin to its heart with world class musicians visiting the island regularly.



Sea Angling & Cruises

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Fully Insured and Licensed and Bord Failte Approved.

Details of Rates Tel: (353) 95 43473

The Sky Road

About six miles long and the journey is well recommended as the breath-taking scenery of Connemara can be seen along it.



First Non-Stop Transatlantic Flight Monument

On the Errislannan peninsula is a monument, shaped like a tail-fin, to commemorate the First Non-Stop Transatlantic Flight

On June 15th 1919 John Alcock and Arthur Whitten-Brown flew 1900 miles from Newfoundland in a Vickers Vimy biplane. After sixteen hours and twenty-eight minutes they crash-landed in the Derrygimlagh bog, close to the Marconi station. This event is best described in the words of Albert Millar who was eight years old at the time:

"I was getting ready to go to Sunday school when I heard a commotion and rushed out onto the street. I looked up and saw this thing flying very low between the houses. The pilot was waving down. According to John Alcock he was looking for a place to land and saw what he thought was a green field, but was in fact the bog.



After Sunday school I came home and the whole family drove out in my father's pony trap to the bog. As we walked up the railway line (which linked the Marconi station with the road) we met two farmers coming down. My Father asked did they see the plane. 'We did, Sir, it's a hell of a yoke'. I ran ahead of my parents and saw the plane lying in the bog. I ran back and said 'I've seen the hell of a yoke lying in the bog but it has no wheels'."

The rest is history. The monument points down to the exact spot in the bog where Alcock and Brown landed. (The view from the Alcock & Brown memorial is amazing)

Ballinahinch Castle

The castle at Ballynahinch is the historical heart of Connemara. Here came the O'Flaherty's when they took Connemara in the Middle Ages. Though they also had four other castles, the fifth one at Ballynahinch, in the centre of their lands, was always the most important. As the English gained ascendancy, Ballynahinch passed into the hands of one of the leading Galway families, the Martins. They built the castle in its present form, replacing the old Celtic longhouse used by the Gaelic chieftains before them.



Richard Martin was the most famous of the Martin clan. Besides being a skilled duellist, he was also famous, as a member of British parliament, for legislation to prevent cruelty to animals (and so received his alternate

nickname of "Humanity Dick".) Thomas, his son, struggled valiantly to protect his tenants against the ravages of the Famine, and himself contracted the famine fever and died. The granddaughter, Mary, a great romantic known as the "Princess of Connemara", left Ballynahinch impoverished and died obscurely in a tenement house in New York City. Ballynahinch was rescued from ruin by an Indian Raj who lovingly restored the castle and the grounds over the years. Then it became a hotel, widely known for the exceptional salmon and trout fishing on its property. John O'Connor manages the castle. His assistant, Des Lally, is a local historian, steeped in the legends and lore of this romantic castle.

Connemara Golf Club

In Connemara the wind blows hard and clear and bright sunshine alternates with deep shadows under moving clouds to show up the beauty of this wonderful environment.

The natural terrain and unspoilt environment offers the visitor a wonderland of sights, experiences, adventure and activities. The championship links course is of the highest quality and offers a challenge as good as any golfer is likely to find anywhere.

The greens are amongst the best in the country, due in no small way to the professionally trained greenkeepers.

Connemara Golf Club is noted for its difficult back-to-back par five finish, has a rich variety of tests to excite lovers of links golf, from a tight dog-leg opener, through a treacherous par three at the sixth, and a long par four at the eighth (the toughest hole on the front nine), to a roller-coaster back nine all the way home!

Type of Course: Links Length: 7,200 yds
No of Holes 27 Par 72

Facilities Full bar and restaurant facilities; clubhouse and pro shop; Tuition available. Professional: Hugh O'Neill. Also available is a practice fairway, green and putting green.
Visitors are welcome 7days
Club hire, Caddy car hire, Golf carts and buggy hire.

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Clifden

Clifden is the largest town in Connemara, and is viewed as the region's capital. In August the town hosts the Connemara Pony Show, centred around the distinctive Connemara Pony, which is unique to this region.



Clifden Castle



Marconi Site, Derrygimlagh



One of the great geniuses of our time, had a great deal to do with putting Connemara in the history books again – Marchese Guglielmo Marconi – the great Italian who prepared the world for global and inter-global travel and microwave transmission.

Marconi built a station near Ballinaboy and sent, in the year 1907, the first radio signal from Clifden to Canada. Marconi regularly sent signals from Clifden to Cape Cod.

Using kites flown from a ship to support the aerial, he obtained signals from Clifden at ranges of four thousand miles by day and nearly seven thousand miles by night.

Ashford Castle



Ashford Castle in Cong - The former home of the Guinness Family has beautiful gardens to visit. The picturesque village of Cong was the location for the "Quiet Man".

Aughnanure Castle



Oughterard, worth visiting on your way back to Galway City. Aughnature Castle stands stately on the outskirts of Oughterard and only a short stroll along a winding country lane from the Waterfront House and the Oughterard Golf Course. The word 'Aughnanure' itself comes from the Irish "Achadh na n-lubhar" which translates to "The Field of Yews", as the area is surrounded in woodland containing, amongst others, an abundance of Yew trees.

Standing on what is virtually a rocky Island, the Castle is a particularly well-preserved example of an Irish tower house. The Castle was built in the 16th century as a stronghold of the O'Flaherty clan, and is renowned for its double bawn.

Galway Races (Seasonal – a must if you're here)



The Twelve Bens



Connemara is well known for its sights for mountains. The mountains stretch from 'Joyce Country' in the north of Connemara which runs as far as the 'Maam Turks' to the 'Twelve Bens' which is exactly in Connemara's central area. Connemara has its high mountains but its highest would have to be 'Benbaun' , with its height of 730 metres.

Along with these mountains they follow with lakes, rivers and areas with bogs, where the local men and women cut turf for the winter fire. You can enjoy long walks and drives along these mountains. They have trekking paths running along their sides for hill walkers, experienced or in-experienced.

If you would like more information on any of the above, please contact Tim and Kay Mackew at the details below and we will do our best to answer any questions you may have:

E-mail: timandkay@connemarahome.com