

Everyone has a story to tell. Every story is important. Memories that provide insight into the cultural heritage of our county are collected and treasured by
Cuimhneamh an Chláir.

Cuimhneamh an Chláir

The Clare Oral History and Folklore Group

Some of *Cuimhneamh an Chláir*'s objectives are....

- To intensively and comprehensively record, collect, preserve and share the memories of the Clare's elderly people.
- To stimulate increased, accessibility, interest and engagement in the traditions, customs and cultural heritage of county Clare.
- To train and mobilise local volunteer recorders (cúairteoirí) in order to enhance and develop social inclusion and community development across Clare.
- To develop and conduct oral history and folklore projects important to the historical record of the people of County Clare.
- To provide a diverse, coherent, and integrated body of sources for use by scholars, students, and the interested public.
- To conduct its collecting and processing activities in accordance with the highest standards.

Cuimhneamh an Chláir's programme will develop through a series of separate projects which will be conducted as funding allows.

Two approaches are planned:

- Area, e.g. North East Clare
- Theme, e.g. fishing, community, local fairs, rambling houses, seasonal customs

Also *Cuimhneamh an Chláir* will allow for emergency work where a record is identified as valuable and vulnerable.



Tadhg O Murchú recording folklore

Mission Statement

Cuimhneamh an Chláir aims to tell the story of Clare through its oral history and folklore, by recording, documenting and archiving the memories, experiences, customs, traditions and practices of the county from the local people's own perspective. In so doing, it is motivated by a sense of urgency, mindful that our current elderly population may represent the last link to an older way of life in Clare. It intends to provide a platform for the dissemination of this material through co-operation with community groups, schools, third level institutions, and the broader public.



Ta muintir an Chláir ag dul ar ais ar cúairt!

Email clarememories@eircom.net for more details

Cuimhneamh an Chláir

The Clare Oral History and Folklore Group

*Preserving the memories of county Clare's
past for the future!*



Currach builder John 'Cully' Marrinan, Kililkee, 1954

"History records that the distinguished Bishop Cormac O Cuileannáin, shortly after he ascended the throne of Munster about 900AD, compiled a glossary of old Irish words, which were then becoming obsolete... ..".

- A.R.E

What is *Cuimhneamh an Chláir*?

Cuimhneamh an Chláir (Memories of Clare) is an independent, not-for-profit, community based organisation that aims to record, document, archive and share the memories, experiences, customs, traditions and practices that characterise county Clare. We are motivated by a sense of urgency, mindful that our current elderly population may represent the last link to an older way of life in Clare. We intend to provide a platform for the dissemination of the material we collect through co-operation with community groups, schools, third level institutions, and the broader public.

Who are *Cuimhneamh an Chláir*?

The members of the group are volunteers from all across county Clare and range from diverse professional backgrounds including teachers, archaeologists, folklorists, historians and community activists.

Who is being interviewed?

We are determined to record all elderly people in Clare who are willing to offer us their memories. However, *Cuimhneamh an Chláir* will necessarily prioritise according to age and vulnerability.

What is being interviewed?

Memories, experiences, customs, traditions, stories, legends, oral history and folklore of county Clare.

How are interviewees selected?

Multi-thematic approaches will be adopted as well as identifying individual interviewees across Clare. You are invited to nominate anyone you know who has an interesting story to tell or who may be able to contribute to the project.

Who will do the interview?

Cuimhneamh an Chláir have established a network of trained *Cúairteóirí* (Volunteer recorders) who are skilled in comfortably recording elderly people and know the local area and topics that may be covered.

What questions will be asked?

Where themes are not identified before the interview, a 'life interview' is conducted that covers in general chronological order, the life and times of the interviewee. The interview is voluntary so the person being interviewed can decide what he or she would like to talk about.

Who will own the record of the interview?

Cuimhneamh an Chláir. *Cuimhneamh an Chláir* will hold the interview in trust for future generations of Clare people. Each participant must sign a release form so that copies of the interview can be made, now and in the future.

Does the person being interviewed get a copy of the interview?

Yes. Each person interviewed will receive a copy for their personal use and to pass on to their family.

What will *Cuimhneamh an Chláir* do with the interview?

The first thing *Cuimhneamh an Chláir* will do is protect it. The recording will be transferred onto a computer server, where it will be archived. Also, the conversation will be typed up and held in print on paper.

Cuimhneamh an Chláir will use the recordings conducted, to develop various educational initiatives across the county. We will work in conjunction with national and secondary schools, community and local history groups as well as the broadcast and print media in order to generate increased interest in the customs, traditions and social culture and folklore of county Clare.

How is *Cuimhneamh an Chláir* funded?

Cuimhneamh an Chláir is an entirely voluntary group that is dependent on fund-raising and sponsorship to achieve our many objectives.

What is Folklore?

Traditional tales and stories, fairies, banshees, old folk beliefs in supernatural creatures. It is also family lore, folk songs and music, folk art, pottery and carving. In addition, folklore is the traditions and customs of our families and our communities.

Areas of interest for *Cuimhneamh an Chláir* include:

- Oral literature – legends, tales, proverbs, sayings
- Social customs, - wakes, fairs
- Occupational folklore – blacksmithing, boatbuilding, farming practices, meitheal, thatching, folk architecture
- Material Folklore – pottery, woodwork, jewelry, stone sculpting

What is Oral History?

The collecting and recording of the memories and experiences of an individual or group. The passing of knowledge from one generation to the next. It enables us to see the human side of historical events, rather than relying solely on books and records. It also allows us to challenge assumptions about our recent past by asking direct questions to people who lived through those times.

How is contact made?

When the nomination form is received or an interviewee is identified, a first contact is made with either the contributor or another contact person as we are advised. A time and place for the interview is agreed. Every effort is made to suit the contributor. The interviewer will show ID that confirms he is a fully trained *Cúairteóir* or *Cuimhneamh an Chláir* volunteer.

Become a *Cúairteóir* with *Cuimhneamh an Chláir*!

The possibility of becoming a *cúairteóir* is open to anyone in Clare who is willing to undergo sufficient training and assessment and who will adhere to the principals and ethics of *Cuimhneamh an Chláir*.

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