



Open Agenda

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Lahardane drawing up plans for Titanic centenary in 2012

WITH the 100th anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic now only four years away the north Mayo parish of Addergoole (Lahardane) has begun making extensive plans to commemorate the 11 young local people who lost their lives in the tragedy.

Fourteen teenage passengers from Addergoole were on the magnificent White Star liner in April 1912 when it sank, its bow punctured by an iceberg. Only eleven survived.

Addergoole suffered the highest proportionate loss among passengers. It probably carried 100 men and 100 women for the voyage.

For many years, a commemorative Mass has been celebrated in St. Patrick's Church, Lahardane, each April 15, the day the Titanic went down.

At 2.20 a.m. the exact time of the sinking, a bell in the church grounds rings for twenty five minutes. There are two slow bells for each of the

eleven parishmen lost and three beyond parish. It thus totals 14.

With the centenary approaching, Addergoole Titanic Society has begun suggestions and committees programme of activities and hope to involve both Mayo County Council and Castlebar Urban Council in the initiative.

The Society has written to the Mayo County Manager, Des Mahon, highlighting the comparatively large number of Mayo people who were on the liner when it sank.

The fourteen passengers from Addergoole and two crewmen originally from Castlebar, William Duffy, (Chief Engineer's Clerk) and Francis Young (Steward).

The Addergoole Titanic Society have suggested the following provisional list of activities for 2012.

• Publication of a book of newspaper articles located on the Addergoole 14 starting with the articles published in the immediate aftermath of the disaster in the Connacht Telegraph and Western People.

• The commissioning of a commemorative sculpture to be erected in the grounds of St. Patrick's Church.

• The creation/collection of material for a series of seminars on the Addergoole 14.

• The collection and publication of "Titanic Stories" as recalled by relatives of the Addergoole 14.

• Explore the possibility of arranging a commemorative main excursion from Foxford to Carrig using as far as possible the timetables in place in 1912.

One of the three young passengers from Addergoole who survived was Delia McDermott from Knocklismaugh.

As part of her preparations for the great journey to America, she travelled one day to Crossmolina to buy new clothing. One of her purchases was a smart new hat. She liked the hat so much that she took the hat to her cabin to recover it from her cabin in the ill-fated Titanic. Delia, despite diving with death on the double in order to retrieve her cherished

millinery, was one of the lucky ones.

In March, 10 of the remaining passengers, including Delia McDermott, then 24 years old, booked their passage with Thomas Dumas of Castlebar. Three others booked with another travel agent Mrs. Walsh of Lismahall Street.

The other two passengers from Addergoole, who survived were Anne Kelly and Annie McGowan. After writing to Quennowry (Cobh) the Mayo group were assigned to the third-class quarters and kept mostly

to themselves during the voyage, spending the days on deck in the fresh air and sunshine.

They were all asleep when the vessel, ploughing along at 23 knots, struck the iceberg. The impact did not disturb those in the third class cabin and they only knew there was a problem when a steward roused and told them the ship had struck something but added there was no danger.

Immediately the news of the sinking reached Castlebar, one of the local agents for the White Star line, Thomas

Duncan, who had booked most of the Lahardane group, went to the head office in Liverpool and received the following reply.

"Returning to your telegram re: Titanic, deeply regret to say that latest word is disaster. Estimated about 470 souls, mostly women and children, saved."

Later accounts, which all confirmed the shocking tragedy, were given as positive news, were to the effect that the survivors sustained little and the death toll including the wedding band of 1,400.