

The scene at Lahardane Co. Mayo at 3.15 am, April 15, as their Titanic memorial ceremony concludes



North Mayo village remembers its heavy Titanic toll

A LITTLE VILLAGE in the west of Ireland would at first glance seem a strange place to be commemorating the sinking of the Titanic. However when you hear that fourteen of Titanic's passengers came from this tiny hamlet, Lahardane in County Mayo, you can appreciate why the villagers turn out each year to honour their unfortunate neighbors...

98 years ago, fourteen young men and women from Addergoole, County Mayo, set out by side-car from the village of Lahardane, between Pontoon and Crossmolina, over the 'Windy Gap' to Castlebar, on their way to Queenstown (Cobh), to board The Titanic, on their journey to a new life in America.

Only three of them made it, all women, the rest having perished when the Titanic sank at 2.20am on the morning of the 15th of April 1912. Addergoole's loss was probably the greatest suffered in the Titanic tragedy by any small community in Europe.

Their journey of bravery and hope is recalled each year in the village of Lahardane with a unique commemorative hour of bell-ringing, story-telling, songs and poems at precisely the time the Titanic sank, organised by the Addergoole Titanic Society.

The dead of The Titanic may have slipped away into the dark, icy waters of the North Atlantic but they will never be forgotten in Addergoole, as confirmed when the lonely bell tolled in the darkness of an early morning in April.

The free-standing bell tower at St. Patrick's Church was erected in 1937 by the Gaelic scholar and folklore collector Mícheál Ó Tiomnaidhe (Michael Timoney), and here the bell was given three slow knells for each of the eleven drowned, followed by three faster, more joyous rings for the three women who survived.

Over 150 people from the locality, from Connaught and other parts of the country were present as the people of Lahardane and Addergoole ensured that their Titanic victims were not forgotten, just two years short of the centenary of the great ship's sinking.

● Our thanks to Brian Nolan and Mick Molloy of the Addergoole Titanic Society for the information.



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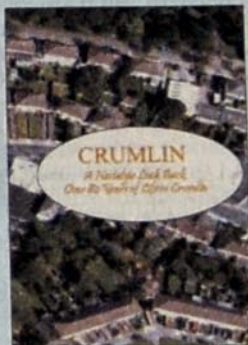
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