

## **Public Call for Submissions -**

### **Submitted by Sligo County Council as part of the Decade of Centenaries**

#### **Significant Sligo Historical Events and Themes (1918 – 1923):**

- 1918 Representation of the People Act and elections
- 1918 Countess Markievicz
- 1918 Sligo Cumann na mBan
- 1918 World War One ends
- 1918 – 1919 The Black Flu Sligo
- 1919 Volunteer Martin Savage killed in action
- 1919 Sligo Municipal Elections PR
- 1920 Republican County Council
- 1920 Frank Carty Jail Break
- 1920 Tubbercurry, Achonry, Ballymote, Black and Tans
- 1920 Cliffony Ambush
- 1920 Connaught Rangers India Mutiny
- 1922 - 1923 Civil War in County Sligo
- 1922 Sligo Noble Six and Rockwood
- 1923 Sligo post Partition Unionist and Republican

With the 1913 Port Strike, World War One and Easter 1916, Sligo men and women played a significant role in the shaping of Irish and European history in the first half of the decade 1913 – 1923. Sligo's role in the second half of the decade of commemoration is no different with the period 1918 to 1923 seeing the ending of World War One and the continuation of the Independence movement, an Anglo Irish Treaty, partition and the subsequent Civil War.

Sligo in particular is a County which was greatly impacted by this period of history with Sligo Town changing from being a Garrison town with a strong history of Unionism alongside an equally strong Independence movement throughout the County. Partition was to have a major effect on both Unionist and Nationalist alike.

A significant number of Sligonians fought in World War One with one recipient of a Victoria Cross Private Martin Moffatt, while an equally large number played a major part in the fight for Irish Independence led by Countess Markievicz, Martin Savage, Linda Kearns, William Partridge and Alec McCabe amongst others.

During the 1918 – 1923 period day to day life for people in Sligo changes while the different wars rage, ordinary life is altering beyond recognition. Over 360 died from the effects of Spanish Flu, the decline and fall in European Empires begins and the changes in class politics continue throughout Europe.

At this time also two prominent Sligionians Eva Gore- Booth and Countess Markievicz play a leading role in the fight for Women's Suffrage culminating in the election of Countess Markievicz as the first female member of the House of Parliament and subsequently the first woman appointed as a Minister in the first Dáil.

Sligo's electoral landscape is changed with the enactment of the Sligo Corporation Act 1918 and with the election in 1919, Sligo is the first local authority in Britain or Ireland to utilise voting by proportional representation.

While the first half of the decade of commemoration deals with the establishment of the Labour Movement and the divisions between Unionism and Nationalism the second half becomes more complicated and controversial with the War of Independence and the Civil War. As with most Civil Wars they are not as easily dealt with from a commemorative point of view as invariably viewpoints can still be painful and raw even after many generations have passed. The fact that for many years after the Civil War there was very little reconciliation did not help matters and did not lend itself to the healing process.

This period of Sligo's history will be examined and commemorated in the context of the changing National scene and International events which had an effect on the World history. (see appendix A)

Sligo County Council will work in partnership with the National events and programmes which will hopefully be organised over the coming years. Sligo County Council would welcome a similar line of funding as given in 2016 for the Centenary of Easter 1916. Many of Sligo's significant historical events should be included in the national list alongside those indicated in appendix A.

Sligo County Council will attempt to commemorate those significant historical events from the period 1918 to 1923 listed above under guidelines laid out in the Expert Advisory Groups Second Phase Mission Statement. (See attached)

Sligo County Council will recognise the significant roles played by Sligo men and women in this period in an inclusive and balanced way and will attempt to commemorate their memory in such a way that is respectful of their ambitions and viewpoints.

In the coming anniversaries Sligo County Council will recognise the effects of this period of transition on all citizens both participants and non-participants no matter what their beliefs or political viewpoint.

In order to oversee this process Sligo County Council intends to re-establish the commemorative committee of elected members from all parties to co-ordinate the implementation of a programme of events, commissioned works, exhibitions and publications.

Sligo County Council will aim to document the history of Sligo for this period and try to leave future generations a legacy of reconciliation and greater understanding of our collective histories.