Fingal to mark Centenary of the Death of Thomas Ashe

The Centenary of the Death of Thomas Ashe will be marked by a series of events across Fingal over the next two weeks.

Ashe was the commander of the Fifth Battalion Fingal Brigade of the Irish Volunteers and led them to the only rebel victory during the 1916 Rising at the Battle of Ashbourne. Having been initially sentenced to death before having that sentence commuted to life imprisonment, he was released in June 1917 under an amnesty for Republic prisoners. He died three months later on September 25 while on hunger strike in Mountjoy Prison after being re-arrested for sedition.

His body lay in state in Dublin City Hall, surrounded by a guard of honour from the Fingal Brigade, and thousands came to pay their respects. Thousands also lined the streets on the
day of his funeral and followed his coffin as it was escorted by uniformed Irish Volunteers to Glasnevin Cemetery where Michael Collins gave the graveside oration.

A Kerryman, Ashe came to Fingal in 1908 as Principal of Corduff National School near Lusk. An avid supporter of the Irish language and Irish culture, he was a member of the Gaelic League and co-founded the Black Raven Pipe Band and the Round Towers GAA club in Lusk and these two organisations will be involved, along with the Fingal Old IRA Commemorative Society, in this month’s commemorations as Fingal marks the 100th anniversary of his death.

Paul Reid, Chief Executive of Fingal County Council, said: “Fingal County Council believes that the story of Thomas Ashe should be one that is known by everyone in Ireland, not just in Fingal. Ashe’s name should be as famous as Pearse, Connolly, de Valera, Collins and Markievicz. Local groups and communities have worked hard to keep Ashe’s legacy alive and Fingal County Council greatly appreciates this and is supportive of this.”

The Mayor of Fingal, Cllr Mary McCamley, said; “During the 2016 Commemoration the Council did a lot of work to promote the story of Fingal and the 1916 Rising. People are now more aware of what happened and the role carried out by people like Thomas Ashe. This has led to a strong interest in marking the centenary of his death and Fingal County Council is assisting this in a number of ways.”

One of the major projects undertaken by Fingal County Council during 2016 was its sponsorship of TileMedia’s drama documentary, *Fingal’s Finest*, about the activities of Ashe and the Fingal Volunteers. As part of the Ashe centenary celebrations there will be a special screening of the film on Sunday, October 1, during Fingal’s Festival of History in Newbridge House, Donabate.

The Festival of History, which will run from Friday, September 29 until October 1, is a three day festival looking at different events that were happening in the world 100 years ago and also examining the history of Newbridge House. In addition to the screening there will be a talk on Thomas Ashe by Brian Arnold on the Friday evening.

An exhibition on Thomas Ashe by Fingal County Archives & Local Studies Library will be on view in The Atrium at County Hall, Swords, from Friday September 22.

There will be a State Commemoration on Friday, September 22, in Glasnevin Cemetery, which will see the unveiling of a specially dedicated panel on the 1916 Necrology Wall, while locally there are number of events organised by the communities of Corduff and Lusk to mark the occasion.

The centrepiece of the local celebrations will be a day-long event on Saturday, September 30 in Lusk, which will see the unveiling of a Thomas Ashe sculpture at the corner of Hand’s Lane and Ministers Road.

The next few years mark the centenaries or other anniversaries of a number of significant events for people with strong associations to Fingal. Fingal County Council will shortly begin a consultation process to ask communities, groups and individuals to help identify what Fingal should be commemorating from 2018 up to 2023. Meetings will be arranged and the
Fingal County Council Online Consultation Portal used to let people have their say. Those interested in participating should email heritage@fingal.ie to indicate their interest.

The Centenary of the Death of Thomas Ashe takes place as part of Fingal County Council’s Creative Ireland programme. For further information, you can contact Colm McQuinn colm.mcquinn@fingal.ie / 01 890 4496, Gerry Clabby gerry.clabby@fingal.ie /087 284 1224, Helena Bergin Helena.bergin@fingal.ie /01 890 5609.

Further information on Fingal County Council’s Creative Ireland programme can be obtained by emailing creativefingal@fingal.ie or calling 01 890 5097

ENDS

The following is a comprehensive list of events that have been arranged to mark the Centenary of the Death of Thomas Ashe.

**Friday, September 15 to Sunday, September 17**
**Fingal Fleadh & Fair at Swords Castle & The Atrium at County Hall, Swords.**
- Thomas Ashe Exhibition by Colm McQuinn, County Archivist, in Chapel of Swords Castle
- Thomas Ashe Sessions in The Atrium at County Hall on Saturday September 16.
- Fingal’s Finest screening on Saturday, September 16 in The Atrium at County Hall

**Friday, September 22**
**Thomas Ashe Exhibition at The Atrium at County Hall, Swords**
- Created by County Archivist Colm McQuinn and open to the public from 9am to 5pm

**Friday, September 22**
**State Commemoration of Centenary of Death of Thomas Ashe, at Glasnevin Cemetery, Dublin 9.**
- Unveiling of panel to Thomas Ashe on 1916 Necrology in Glasnevin Cemetery
- This is strictly an invite only event.

**Saturday, September 23**
**Lusk Community Council Exhibition and Talk at The Cottage Community Centre**
- Opening of Thomas Ashe Life and Times Exhibition and talk at 2pm by Principal Anna McKeown of Corduff National School on “Thomas Ashe: A Revolutionary Teacher”

**Sunday, September 24**
**Fingal Old IRA Commemorative Society Annual Commemoration at Battle of Ashbourne Monument, Rath Cross, Ashbourne, Co. Meath**
- March by Fingal Volunteer’s Colour and Parade Party and Black Raven Piped Band to church
- 12.30 Mass in Ashbourne at Donaghmore Parish Church
- March to Battle of Ashbourne Monument for laying of wreath, keynote address by Minister Regina Doherty and raising of Tricolour
Monday, September 25
Ceremony for Pupils and Staff of Corduff National School, Lusk
- Ceremony followed by 3km “March for Ashe” from Corduff School to Lusk Green.

Friday, September 29 to Sunday, October 1
Fingal Festival of History at Newbridge House, Donabate
- A three day festival looking at different events happening in the world 100 years ago and also the history of Newbridge House.
- Talk on Friday evening on Thomas Ashe by Brian Arnold
- Screening of Fingal’s Finest on Sunday afternoon.

Friday, September 29
Thomas Ashe Commemoration by Lord Mayor of Dublin and 1916 Relatives Association at Dublin City Hall, Dublin 2
- Talk on the Funeral of Thomas Ashe
- Screening of “Fingal's Finest”
- This is a strictly invite only event

Saturday, September 30
Thomas Ashe 100th Year Anniversary Celebrations in Lusk organised by Thomas Ashe Community Group
- 11:00 - Procession from Corduff National School to Round Towers GAA grounds led by Black Raven Pipe Band & 5th Battalion Group
- 12:00 - Sports Events including juvenile matches and a special match between Round Towers' first team and Kerry team.
- 15:30 - Unveiling of Thomas Ashe Sculpture at corner of Hand’s Lane & Minsters Road
- 16:30 - Screening of “Fingal’s Finest” along with Irish Dancing and Drama Group
- 17:30 - Historical talk by Maurice O’Keeffe
- 19:00 -Traditional Music Event

For more information contact:
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