

History in the air on all fronts

■ Claregalway Castle sees launch of major new book on Tudor Connacht in the 16th century

IT was a step back in time on every front - the launch of a major new historical work looking at the Galway landscape of the sixteenth century... launched in the surrounds of a beautifully restored Anglo-Norman tower that was built a century before that!

Because it was in the majestic and historic surroundings of Claregalway Castle that Dr Joe Mannion's new book, *Anglicizing Tudor Connacht: The expansion of English rule in the lordships of Clanrickard and Hy Many*, was officially launched by Professor Emeritus Steven G. Ellis of the University of Galway last Friday evening.

This substantial work begins at the start of the sixteenth century, when the South Connacht lordships of Clanrickard and Hy Many lay beyond the effective control of the Tudor government.

Clanrickard was ruled by the Burke dynasty, descendants of the thirteenth-century Anglo-Norman conquerors and colonists of Connacht, while Hy Many was governed by the indigenous Gaelic Irish O'Kelly lords.

So it was fitting that the launch should take place in the beautifully restored 15th cen-

tury Anglo-Norman tower house in front of a room full of history enthusiasts from across the county and beyond.

The occasion proved to be a wonderful opportunity for networking among like-minded individuals, and sales of Dr Mannion's book were brisk throughout the evening.

Following the customary signing of copies of the book by the author, the attendees were treated to some high-quality addresses by a panel of noted speakers.

Dr Eamonn O'Donoghue initiated the proceedings by outlining the connections between the Burkes of Clanrickard and Claregalway Castle, a most appropriate venue for the launch of a book in which the Clanrickard Burkes feature so prominently.

Marie Mannion, Heritage Officer for County Galway, was next to speak, and she emphasised the significance of the book in the overall context of County Galway.

She also pointed out that it was much more than a local study, being of regional and national importance as well, on account of the broad range of topics and regions covered in the book.

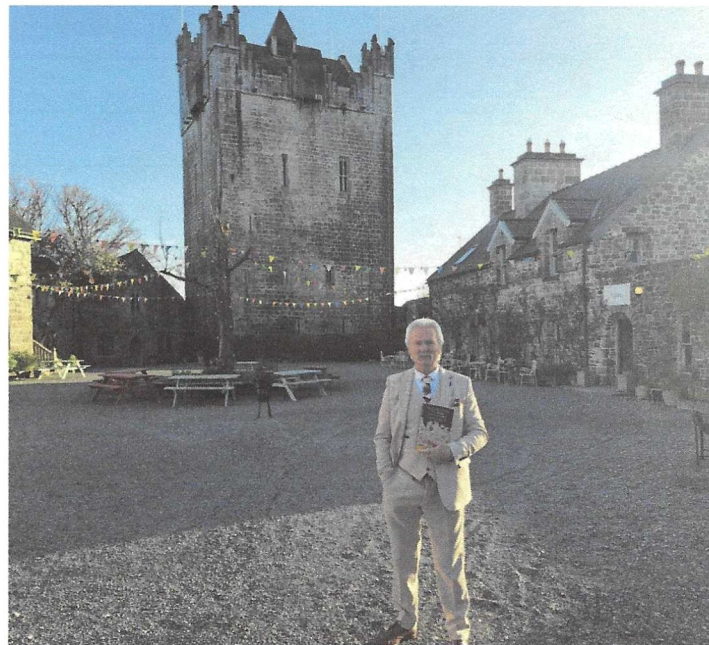
Donal Burke, Manager of the Irish Workhouse Centre in Portumna, then spoke from the perspective of the Burkes of Clanrickard.

Having had his fact-filled website burkeseastgalway.com archived by the National Library of Ireland in 2017, he was in an ideal position to share aspects of the history of his ancestral Burke family with the audience.

Joe Kelly, the current President of the Kelly Clans Association, then spoke on behalf of O'Kellys of Hy Many. He outlined the aims and objectives of this voluntary organisation and introduced his listeners to some of the more notable members of O'Kelly clan from medieval times up to the present day.

The keynote speaker, Professor Emeritus Steven G. Ellis, then addressed the audience and gave an insightful summary of the various themes incorporated into the book.

He also outlined the importance of the book as a source of information on the process of anglicisation in the western region during the sixteenth century, not only in the lordships of Clanrickard and Hy Many but also in the broader context of the province of Connacht as a



Dr Joe Mannion, author of *Anglicizing Tudor Connacht*, with the magnificently restored Claregalway Castle where the book was officially launched in the background.

whole.

The proceedings were then brought to a close by Dr Mannion, who was gracious in his praise of those who had helped in one way or another during the course of his research and writing of the book's manuscript.

He also thanked those who had helped to publicise the launch, and the speakers who had contributed so much to the success of the event.

He concluded by sharing with the audience some of the very positive feedback that he had received from people who

had read the book, here in Ireland and as far away as America and Australia.

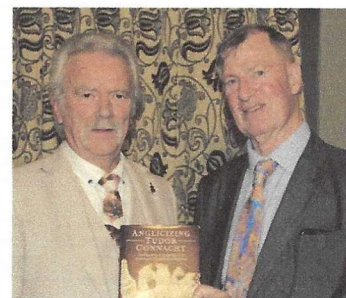
The book is for sale in all good bookshops, or directly from Four Courts Press: <https://www.fourcourtspress.ie/books/2024/anglicizing-tudor-connacht/>



Speakers and organisers of the official launch of *Anglicizing Tudor Connacht* in Claregalway Castle (from left) Dr Lydia Mannion, Richard Casey, Joe Kelly, President of the Kelly Clans Association, Donal Burke, Manager of the Irish Workhouse Centre, Portumna, Dr Joe Mannion, author of the book, Professor Emeritus Steven G. Ellis of the University of Galway who officially launched the book, An t-Ollamh Máirín Ní Dhonnchadha, Dr Eamonn O'Donoghue, Master of Ceremonies, and Galway County Heritage Officer Marie Mannion.



Doctors in discussion... Dr Christy Cunniffe in conversation with Dr Joe Mannion at the launch of Joe's new book in Claregalway Castle last Friday.



Dr Joe Mannion, author of *Anglicizing Tudor Connacht*, with Professor Emeritus Steven G. Ellis of the University of Galway who officially launched the book in Claregalway Castle last Friday evening.