



# BLOOMFIELD MAUSOLEUM

Conservation Repairs 2022

EMERGENCY CONSERVATION REPAIRS  
TO BLOOMFIELD MAUSOLEUM,  
BORRISNAFARNEY, COUNTY OFFALY

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## Bloomfield Mausoleum RPS 65-07, NIAH 14946011

Creative Ireland Funding with additional assistance from Built Heritage Investment Scheme, the Follies Trust, The Moneygall Development Fund, local fund raising and the Select Vestry.



2016 External view

### Description

Detached single-cell mausoleum, built c.1830, with interred remains of the Bloomfield family. Set within graveyard at Borrisnafarney Church of Ireland church. Pitched stone roof with moulded stone coping to gables. Snecked stone walls with buttresses and arcaded cornice to north-east and south-west sides. Pointed arched door opening with tooled stone surround, hoodmoulding and studded timber door having metal cruciform hinges. Plaster to interior walls with bricked-up shelves bearing name plaques of those interred.

They read 'Thomas Ryder Pepper 1828; Mrs Bloomfield 1828; Mrs Ryder Pepper 1841; Lieutenant General Benjamin Baron Bloomfield 1846; Harriot widow of Lieutenant General Benjamin Baron Bloomfield 1868'.

### Appraisal

Located within the graveyard at Borrisnafarney Church, the stone built mausoleum is the resting place of members of the Bloomfield family, one of whom was the founder of the early nineteenth-century church. The execution of the design in the Gothic Revival idiom creates an austere, yet aesthetically pleasing memorial. Fine workmanship is seen in the stone roof, where slabs overlay one another, also in the stone arcading to the side elevations and again in the solid double entrance

doors with metal studs. The interior name plaques, that commemorate those who lie there, ensure that history will not forget them.



2016 Internal view and Mrs Bloomfield Plaque (1735-1828)

Over time, the local group became concerned for the structural stability of the mausoleum, as the buttresses appeared to have come away from the main structure. As a temporary measure, the building was strapped to secure the structure.



#### 2021 Group assessing the structure with Southgate Conservation Engineers

The local group engaged Southgate Conservation Engineers to assess the structure and propose recommendations for repairs. A Condition Assessment, Recommendations and Method Statement was prepared in December 2021. It set out a detailed description of each element of the structure and proposed a phased approach to repairs.

**Phase 1 – Buttress repairs:**

Six buttresses surround the structure. These are cut stone with a kneeler stone approximately half way up the buttress. The buttresses have shifted recently, predominantly on the right hand side of the mausoleum and the rear left corner. The buttresses appear to have shifted downwards and outwards away from the structure likely due to subsidence and the lack of a suitable foundation. The buttresses have been recently held in place by high tension strapping which has also served to pull the leaning buttresses somewhat back into their correct positions. It is possible the buttresses are largely decorative as they appear to have minimal ties into the main structure.

**Recommended Works External required repairs to the Buttresses**

Stainless Steel tie plate and M20 rod to be cored into wall behind kneeler stone and kneeler stone put back in place, this is for the two central buttresses on either side of the structure. For corner angled buttresses x2 Stainless Steel tie plate and M20 rod running from the centre of the buttress behind the kneeler stone and into the masonry. Other works to include careful underpinning of each buttress with a concrete pad and repointing of buttresses in lime mortar.

Funding was secured through **Creative Ireland, Built Heritage Investment Scheme, The Follies Trust, The Moneygall Development Fund, local fund raising and the Select Vestry.**

**Works commenced in March 2022 with B&D Rainey Ltd.**



*Steel rod and plate underway to buttress and new underpinning, 30 March 2022*

Detailed Interim Report provided by consultants



*Kneeler stone carefully removed, for plate. Plate and tie-rod inserted 05 April 2022*



26 April 2022 – works practically complete

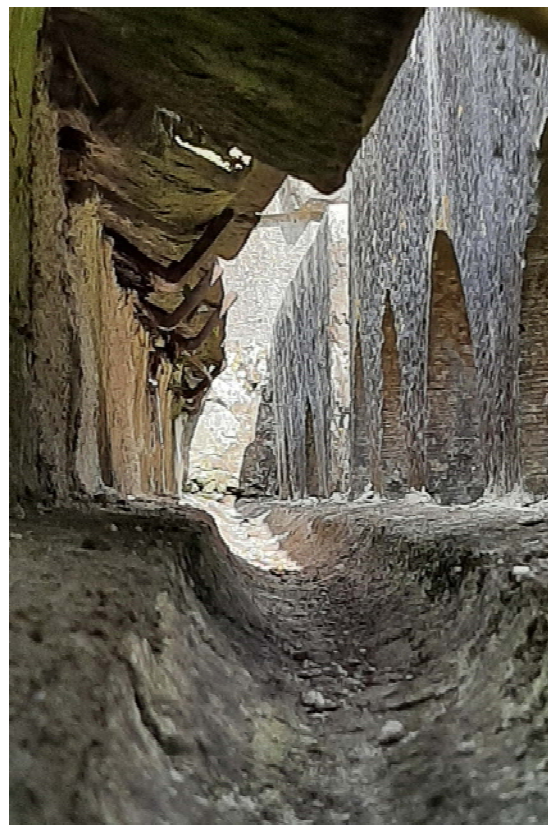


*Kneeler stones returned and surrounding joints repaired with lime mortar*





Further works considered to relieve some of the issues around the high-level tracery that was fixed historically with wrought iron cramps. These had corroded causing opening of cracks. Further works to this area will be required in Phase 2.



*Large, heavy stone flags cover the roof behind this high-level tracery or apron, and they slope down into an inner gutter. Note the arched stone-work, inner gutter and over sailing stone flags fixed with metal cramps.*

The valleys have been cleared and cleaned of debris, the joints pointed in an NHL 5 and the finished surfaces protected in a Remmers water repellent.



**Extract from Southgate Conservation Engineers, Final Report:** Stabilisation and conservation works have successfully been carried out to the Bloomfield Mausoleum at Borrisnafarney Church. Prior to the project the buttress' were leaning out of position and at a risk of collapse. While the original scope was focused on emergency stabilisation works, it was found additional grouting was required to the buttress' and also the project has managed to secure and stabilise the buttress' and surrounding stonework and also return function rainwater goods and valleys to the building. By using tie plates and rods and helibars the buttress' are now tied into the masonry of the main structure and this along with carefully installed concrete underpin to each buttress has now stabilised the structure and allowed for the unsightly straps to be removed. The conservation works to the valleys and the installation of cast iron hoppers and downpipes has returned functioning rainwater goods to the structure.

Further works in the next year or further years in a Phase 2 are recommended and should focus on the replacement of iron dowels to the arcade stones on either side of the building and rebedding of these stones on new mortar tied with stainless steel dowels. The end coping stones will need resetting and the upper sections of several of the buttress would require repointing and repair. Overall, this years project has been a successful project and demonstrates a good example of what can be achieved using best practice to stabilise and conserve a structure which was at risk of imminent collapse. This project was partially funded by the Built Heritage Investment scheme, Creative Ireland, The Follies Trust and The Moneygall Development Fund.





Cast iron rainwater goods



