Músaem Chontae Mhuineachain
Monaghan County Museum

MONAGHAN COUNTY MUSEUM

IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE NATIONAL ROADS AUTHORITY

LIFE AND DEATH IN MONAGHAN

RESULTS FROM THE N2 CARRICKMACROSS BYPASS EXCAVATIONS 2003

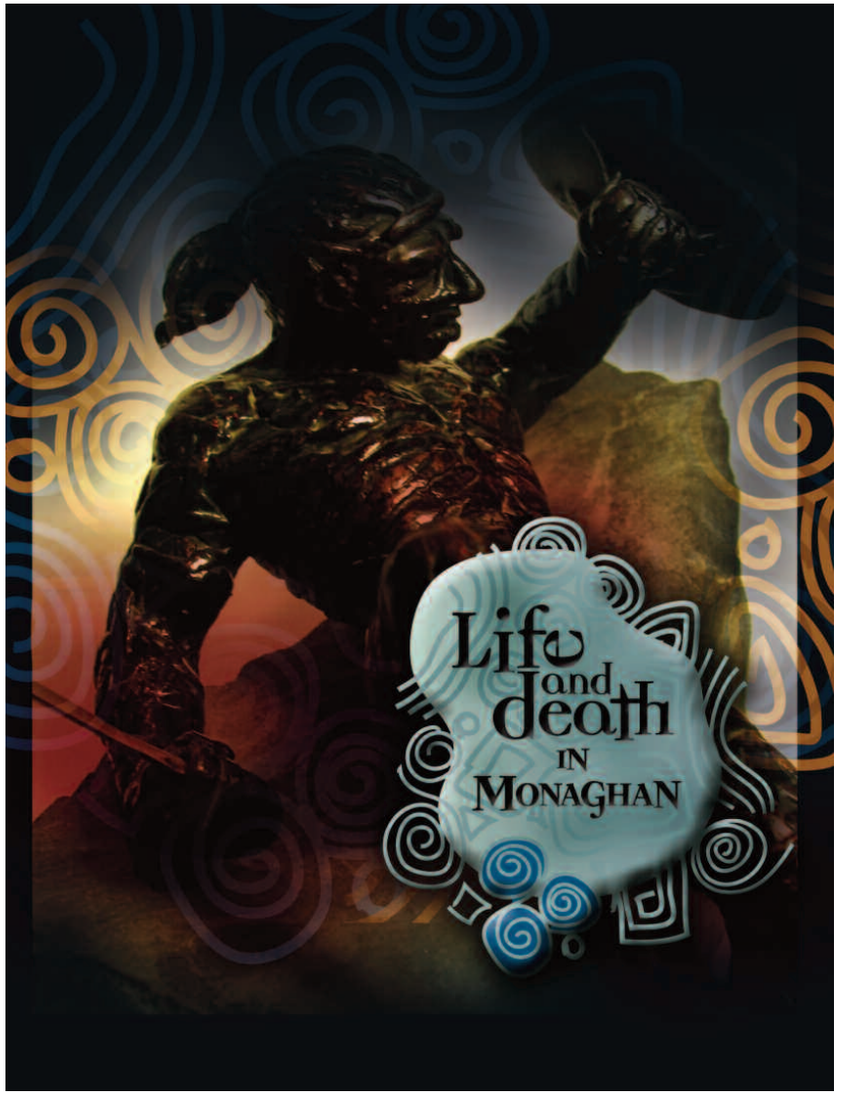
Comhairle Contae Mhuineacháin
Monaghan County Council

NRA
National Roads Authority
An tÚdarás um Bóithre Náisiúnta

"LIFE AND DEATH IN MONAGHAN"

RESULTS FROM THE N2 CARRICKMACROSS BYPASS EXCAVATIONS 2003

Monaghan County Museum, in conjunction with the National Roads Authority presents "Life and Death in Monaghan", an exhibition chronically the stories of how people lived and died from the Stone Age, when the County of Monaghan didn't even exist up until the rebellious times of the 1600's. Over the last number of years the NRA has created 26km's of new roads in Monaghan and from the archaeological investigations connected with these road projects, the soil has brought forth a wealth of information about our rich and diverse heritage. A heritage, which will be displayed in this ground breaking show by the use of colourful and interactive displays, scale models of archaeological sites and actual skeletal remains.



SPECIAL THANKS

WE WOULD LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE HARD WORK, CONTRIBUTIONS AND EXPERTISE OF THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS WITHOUT WHOM THIS EXHIBITION WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE.

The National Roads Authority
Monaghan County Council
Staff of Monaghan County Museum
National Museum
Niall Roycroft, Project Archaeologist NRA
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Tim Coughlan, Site Director, Irish Archaeological Consultancy Ltd
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Paddy Johnson, Senior Engineer, Monaghan County Council
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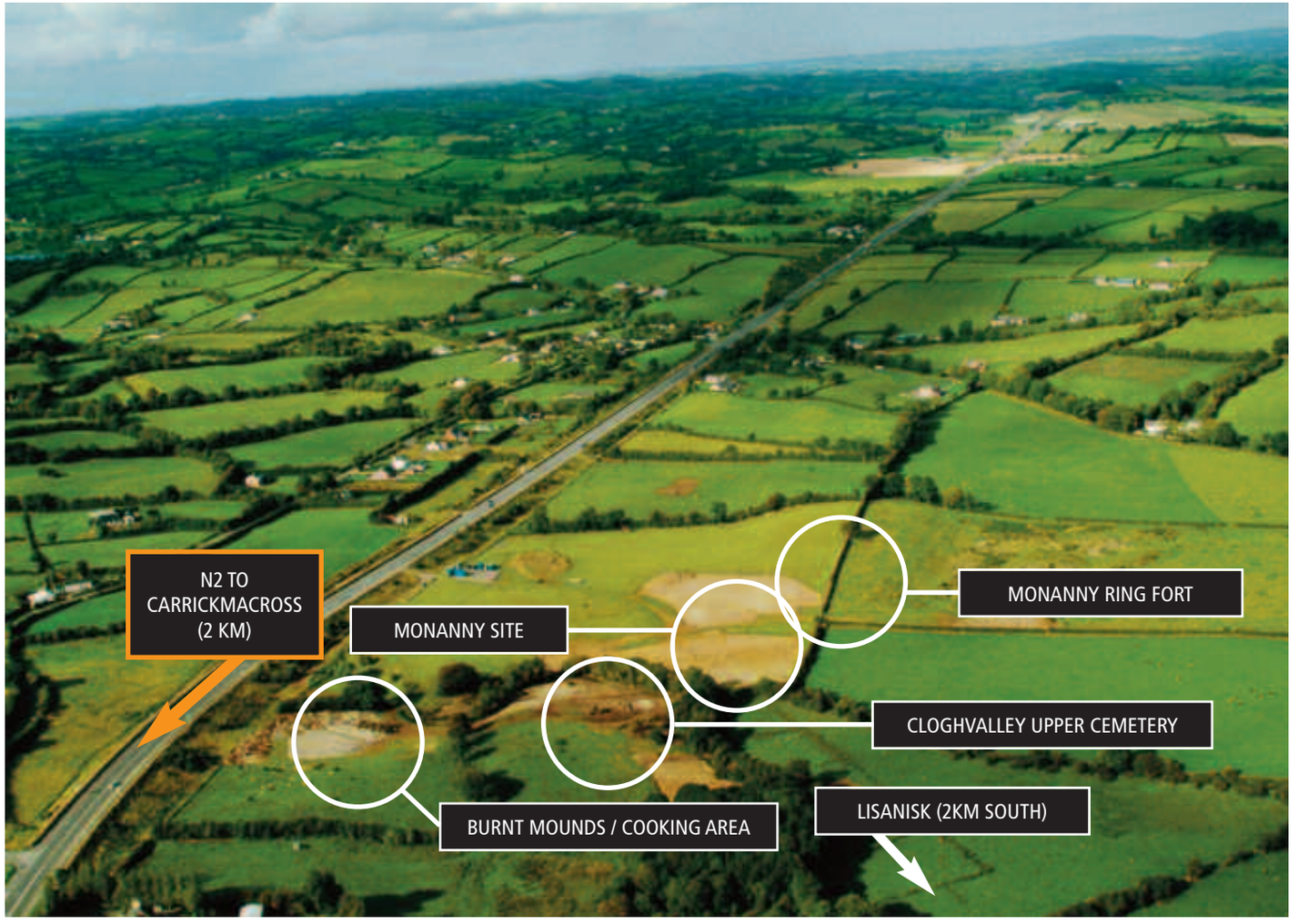
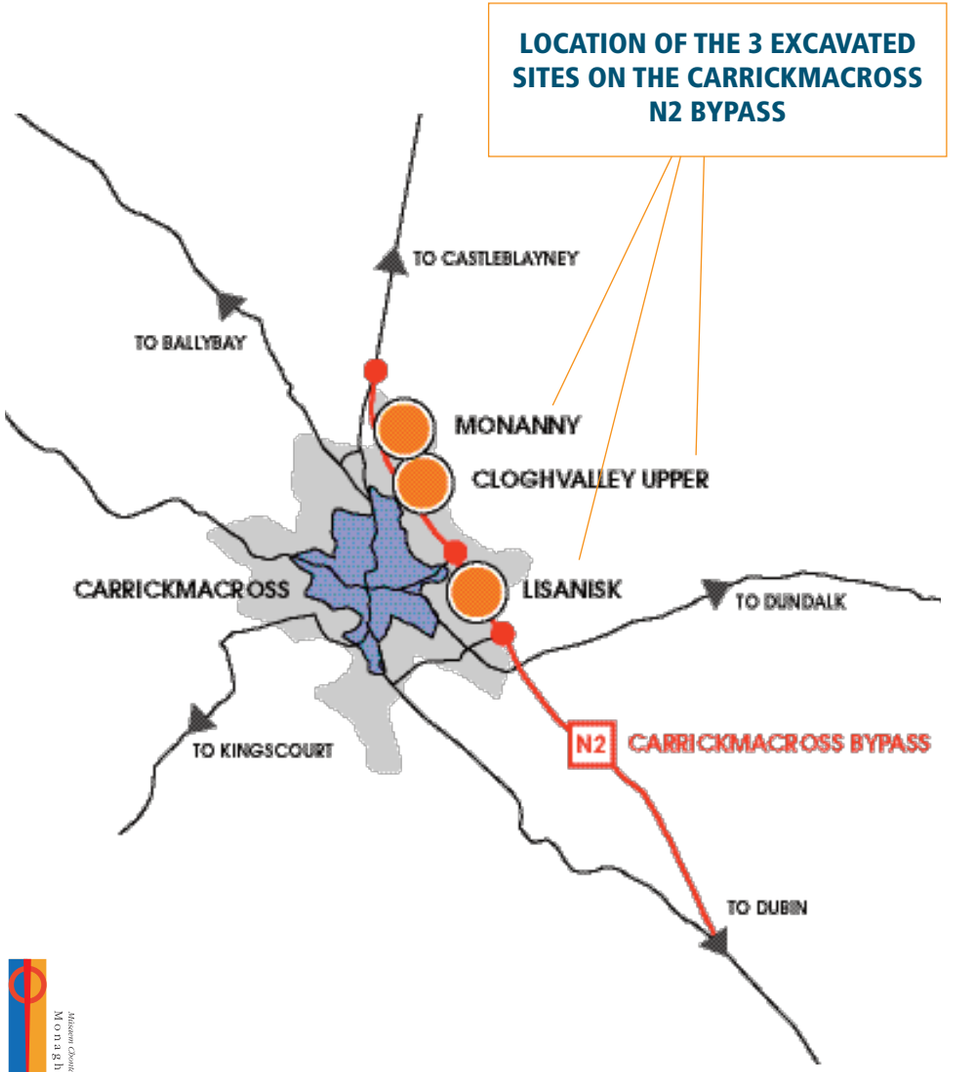
Effie Photos-Jones, Lisanisk metalworking analysis, Analytic Services for Art and Archaeology (Scotland) Ltd
Jennie Coughlan, Skeleton cranial reconstruction

EXCAVATION SITE –
SUMMER 2003





INTRODUCTION

The largest archaeological campaign ever seen in County Monaghan began in 2003. Monaghan County Council and the National Roads Authority have now completed archaeological digs along 26km of new roads with decisive results showing the unique nature of 'Life and Death in Monaghan'. The roads where the archaeology was found are the N2 Carrickmacross Bypass, the N2 Castleblayney Bypass and the N2 Monaghan Town Bypass. All excavations were managed by Niall Roycroft, NRA Archaeologist and undertaken by Irish Archaeological Consultancy Limited with Site Directors Fintan Walsh and Tim Coughlan.

The results represent an archaeological excavation trench right up the middle of the county. As new roads are deliberately built to avoid known archaeological sites, the results are an insight into the buried or 'lost' archaeology of the county. The road-works have revealed a great hidden wealth of history, prehistory, tradition and technology.

The star project was Carrickmacross, where 3 main sites of incredible importance to the story of Monaghan were found. In fact, the Carrickmacross remains were so well preserved and well recorded, that they add greatly to the whole study of Irish Archaeology

FIRST…
3 Neolithic houses were found in the townland of Monanny and were dated to between 3900 to 3700 BC

NEXT….
A double ditched ringfort in the townland of Lisanisk dating to the early Medieval period c.7th century AD

WHERE IS ARCHAEOLOGY?

Almost all archaeological sites are lost. Those sites we know about are usually made with large stones, large walls or large islands in lakes. Six thousand years of small farms and villages have almost all been swept away, mostly through abandonment and collapse, followed by continued farming and development.

Traces of sites do survive below fields, lakes or modern towns but this is only a tiny bit of what was once there. Archaeologists need to be forensic detectives in order to piece together long lost cultures from small bits of scattered evidence.

If we remove the modern coating of fields, towns and roads we are left with the natural 'physical' landscape. In this landscape of drumlins, valleys and lakes, some areas are better to live in than others. However, it is the culture that determines which sites are best suited to its particular needs. It is usually only when we find a site that we understand why people wanted to live at any particular spot at any particular time.

THE NEOLITHIC IN MONAGHAN C.4000 - 2400BC

NEOLITHIC FISHERMEN

Neolithic farmers were also hunters and one of the best wild animals to hunt in Ireland has always been salmon. The Neolithic settlement site at Monanny, Carrickmacross lies adjacent to a small salmon spawning stream that eventually leads to the River Glyde.

Having tons of fresh fish swim to your doorstep every year is a great bonus. It is much easier to catch fish in shallow water than deep water, so the fish-filled streams attract people and the people build their monuments to help mark their territories.

Seen like this the Neolithic settlement of County Monaghan begins to take shape. Sites are located near to streams leading:

* INTO THE FINN RIVER BETWEEN SMITHBOROUGH AND NEWBLISS,
* INTO THE DROMORE RIVER TO THE EAST OF BALLYBAY
* INTO MUCKNO LOUGH TO ROSS LOUGH AND THE RIVER FANE
* INTO THE ANNALEE RIVER AROUND SHERCOCK.

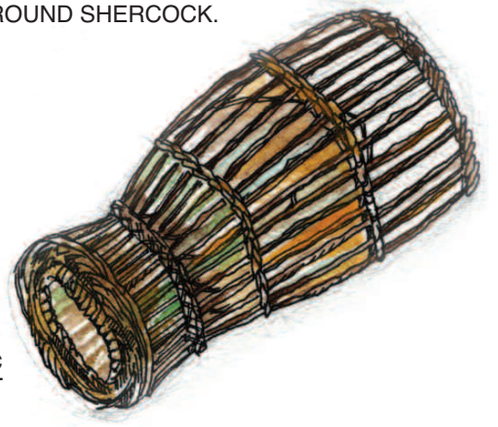
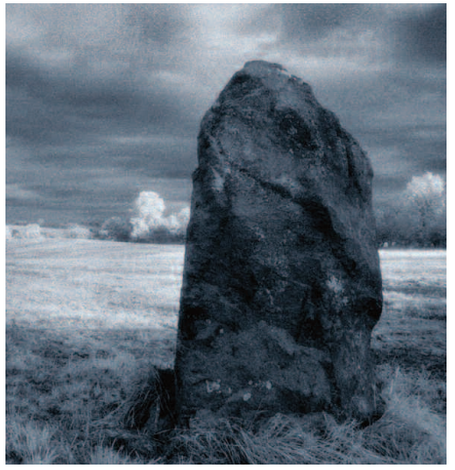


ILLUSTRATION OF A NEOLITHIC FISHING BASKET

NEOLITHIC SITE AT MONANNY



SCARVY STANDING STONE

Monanny was 3 rectangular buildings next to a salmon spawning stream. It dates between 3900 BC and 3700 BC and the people were part of a Neolithic group stretching across north Leinster and southeast Ulster. The Monanny site faces south to catch the sun, is sheltered from most winds and controls a fertile, if rather boggy, valley bottom. It was ideal for growing crops, raising animals, hunting and gathering fuel.

The buildings were made of vertical wooden oak planks set in a foundation trench and tied to upright posts. On the outside of the planks, turf sods were piled up to create wind and weather-proof walls. The buildings were probably thatched.

Ploughing had removed floors, hearths and any middens and only those finds that happened to end up in the foundation trenches or pits survived. Finds tell us how the site was built and what people did in the houses.

Some finds were deliberately put into the building foundation trench, such as a stone porcellanite axe, placed either for safekeeping or as part of a ritual. Mostly, though, finds ended up in the trench by accident. All buildings need repairing, and these buildings needed repairing frequently. In digging out split / rotten planks or posts and putting in new ones, some of what was lying on the floor of the building was swept up and dumped into the repair holes. In this way wild seeds, cereal grains, hazelnut shells, burnt animal bone and pottery have survived.

From these remains we can see that cereals (emmer wheat and naked barley) were grown and dried prior to being ground into flour, animals were eaten and the bones tossed onto the fire, hazel nuts were gathered and stored and pottery was made and used.

The site could quite easily have been occupied for several hundred years.

FROM THE MUSEUM COLLECTION
UNFINISHED STONE AXE

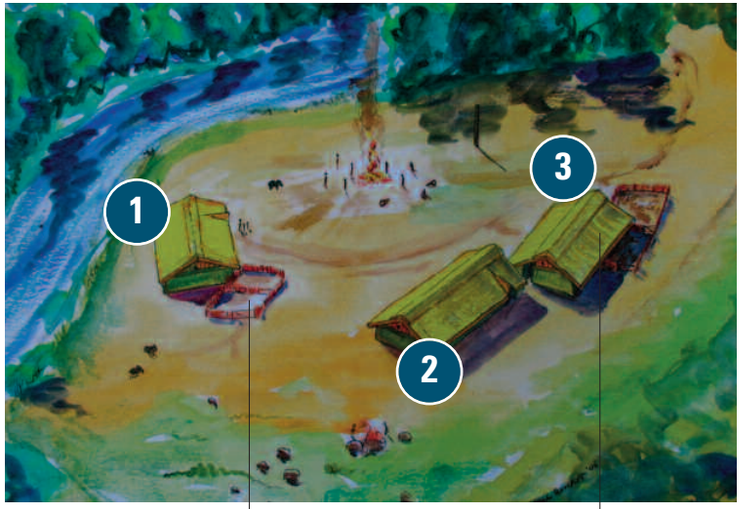
FROM THE MUSEUM COLLECTION
FLINT ARROW HEADS USED BY NEOLITHIC HUNTERS

FROM THE MUSEUM COLLECTION
FLINT STONE AXE HEAD

OBJECTS FROM THE MONAGHAN MUSEUM COLLECTION DATING TO THE NEOLITHIC PERIOD. THE LARGE SADDLE QUERN STONE WAS USED TO GRIND GRAIN FOR BREAD. THE FLINT AROWHEADS WERE USED FOR HUNTING AND THE STONE AXES WERE USED FOR CUTTING DOWN TREES.

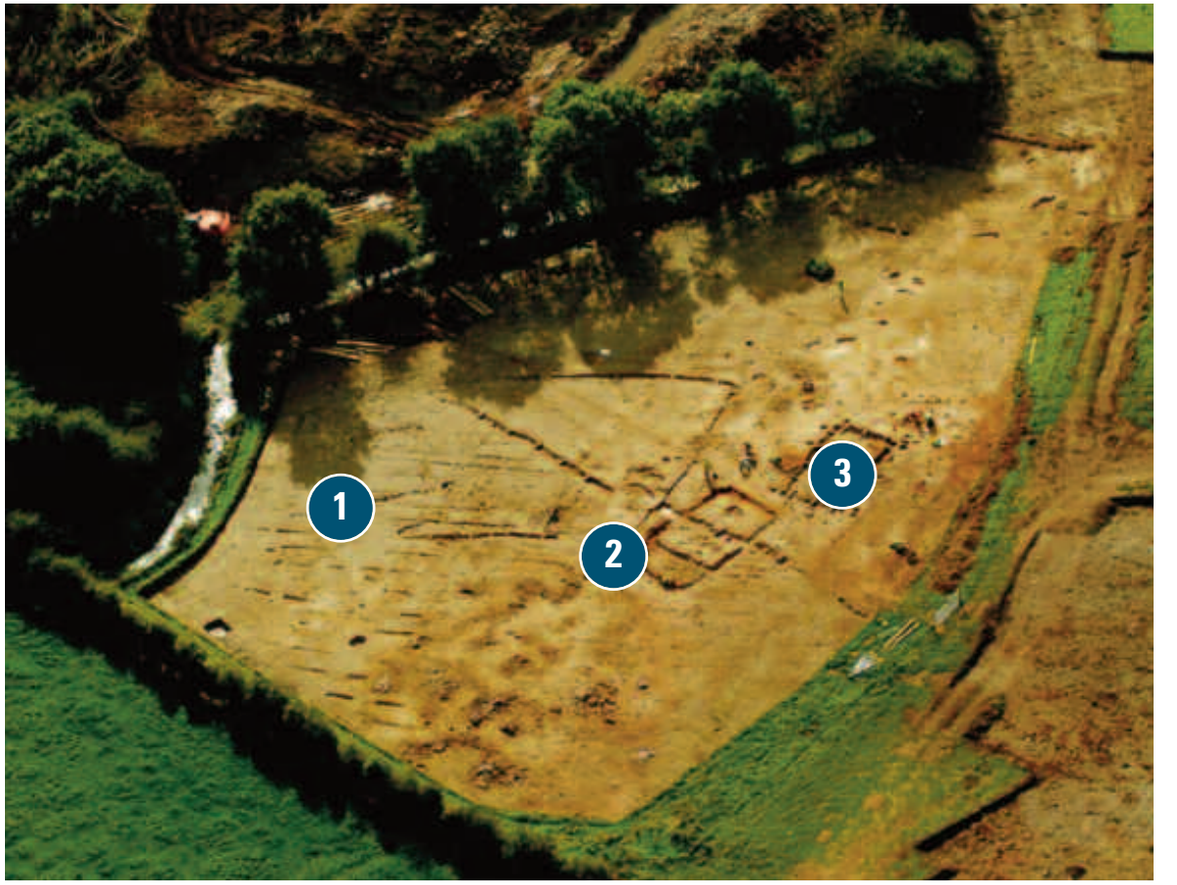
NEOLITHIC SITE AT MONANNY

ARTISTS IMPRESSION OF WHAT MONANNY SITE MAY HAVE LOOKED LIKE



ENCLOSED PEN FOR SHEEP/CATTLE

NEOLITHIC HOUSE WITH ROOF OVERHANG



AERIAL VIEW OF MONANNY SITE UNDER EXCAVATION

THE WALLS

Neolithic buildings use upright wooden posts approx 5ft to approx 8ft long to fix the building to the ground. Vertical plank walls would have been 1.5m high for the long sides and up to 2.5m high on the short sides. Long poles of around 16ft approx were used to form the roof and cross-ties.

THE WINDOWS

Any windows would have been confined to the top gable ends of the short sides. Windows would have been blocked up with a piece of turf if it got too cold or windy.

THE ROOF

The roof would have been thatched and therefore quite heavy. Smoke from hearth fires inside ensured the thatch stayed dry and did not rot, so it lasted for many years at a time. The roof would probably have sloped to near the ground to protect the walls from the weather. More poles would have been used over the years to stop the roof falling in!

DIFFERENT ROOMS

Dividing the inside into rooms is a clear feature of larger Neolithic houses. One room took the role of entrance lobby-work-meeting-cooking area with bedding around the side. The other room probably started off as a 'valuables' room where vital food stores were kept fresh, close enough to be guarded but away from the heat of the main room. Later the idea of dividing the internal building space into two more equal rooms seems to develop.

DOORS

Doors were found in all three buildings. Two were placed on the sheltered northern, long sides. The position of the doorway is a reflection of the way the building is put together. Building 3 was the most sophisticated and used lateral buttress posts to help support the roof. This meant that the best place to put the door was on the short side.

There is no evidence for a doorway into the small room in Building 2, either from the outside or from the other room. It is likely there was no doorway to the outside and access was from the other inside room only. Perhaps this access was via an up-and-over ladder. Perhaps when the room was to be loaded with goods a section of wall was simply dismantled to allow access.

A doorway between the two rooms inside Building 3 is clearly seen by a break in the internal wall.

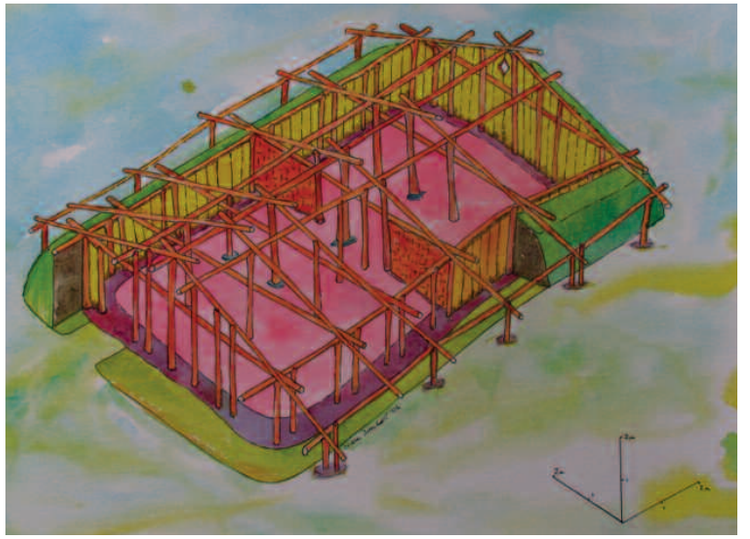
DETAIL TAKEN FROM A NEOLITHIC DWELLING RECONSTRUCTION

NEOLITHIC COOKING POTS

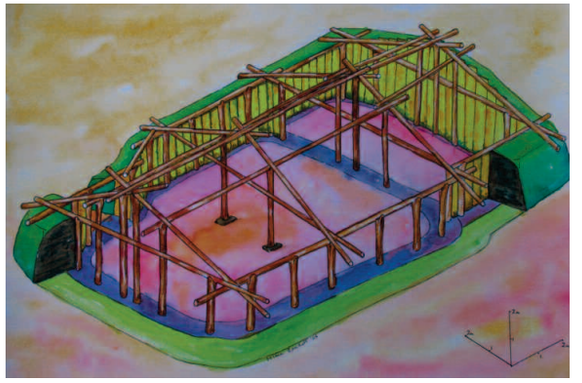
The Monanny pottery is plain carinated bowls. Carinated bowls have a rounded base and then a shoulder (carination), followed by a curved neck and a rounded rim. Rounded bases are stronger than flat bases and allow for both cooking and pot stacking. Between 76 and 200 pots are represented at Monanny, but this is only a tiny percentage of what must have been used on site.

The pottery was made here with the clay collected from a pool in the nearby stream. Once dug out, the clay was kneaded together with fine (dried) grass as well as stone grits and sands from the stream bed. These 'inclusions' gave the clay added strength. All of the vessels were coil built, which involved taking rolled strips of clay and wrapping them around to form the pot.

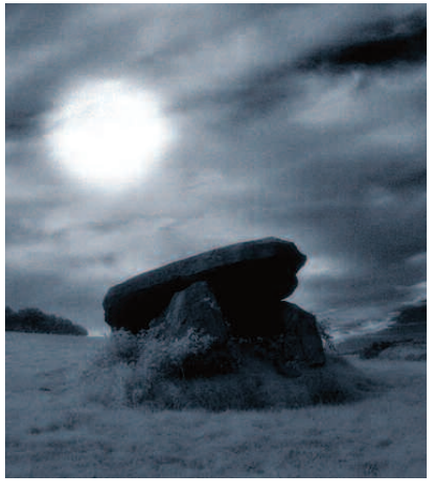
Once the pot had been built, it was smoothed. A few pots were finished with a thin wash of fine clay. When this clay was dry, but before firing, these pots were burnished by rubbing with a leather cloth to provide an even finer finish.



ARTISTS IMPRESSION OF BUILDING '3' WITH THE ROOF REMOVED



ARTISTS IMPRESSION OF BUILDING '2' WITH THE ROOF REMOVED



LENNAN PORTAL TOMB, CO. MONAGHAN

A B FROM THE MUSEUM COLLECTION
EARLY BRONZE AGE COOKING POTS, SIMILAR TO THOSE FOUND AT MONANNY

WHAT IS ARCHAEOLOGY?

It is the study of human life in the past by the examination of the material left behind. Examples of this would be the foundations of a building or human, animal and plant remains.

WHAT DOES AN ARCHAEOLOGIST DO?

An archaeologist digs up and records the material left behind by people who lived hundreds and thousands of years ago and tries to find out about how they lived their lives using the evidence that they find.

WHAT IS A DOUBLE DITCHED RINGFORT?

This is a roughly circular enclosure surrounded by two banks made of earth with a large ditch in front of each. They are built as high-status settlements for a family of prestige and are often used for storage, industry and to guard cattle or sheep. They typically date to early Medieval Period.

WHAT IS THE NEOLITHIC?

This relates to period c. 4000-2400BC. This was the beginning of farming in Ireland when people stopped moving from place to place in search of food and starting working the land with their stone and wooden tools. They also built large Megalithic Tombs such Lennan Portal Tomb and Lisnadarragh Wedge Tomb and the country's most famous Passage Tomb, Newgrange

WHAT IS THE EARLY MEDIEVAL PERIOD?

This refers to a period in history from c. 400 -1200AD

WHAT IS A "MIDDEN"?

A midden is a dumping site for domestic waste such as animal bones, rotten food, vermin and broken pottery

FROM THE MUSEUM COLLECTION

SOCKETED BRONZE AXE FROM LATE BRONZE AGE

MONAGHAN IN THE BRONZE AGE C.2400 – 500BC

FROM THE MUSEUM COLLECTION

FLAT BRONZE AXE FROM EARLY BRONZE AGE

There are four times as many known Bronze Age sites in nearby County Louth than in County Monaghan. The soils in county Louth are generally richer and easier to work. The increased available farmland, probably led to a greater population and so more sites and monuments. It is likely that much of County Monaghan was quite sparsely populated at this time. This theory is backed up by the lack of burnt mounds (also known as a fulachta fiadh) found during the recent NRA projects.

BURNT MOUNDS (FULACHTA FIADH)

Burnt mounds are places where meat is boiled in a trough filled with water and heated with hot stones. They are the most common site in Ireland and where water is abundant, can occur in clusters every few hundred metres along a new road development. Over the 26km of the recent NRA roads there was a group of three near Monaghan town and another group of three at Monanny, Carrickmacross. In burnt mound terms, this is 'virtually none.'

Burnt mounds are probably intimately connected with cattle. The problem with cattle is feeding them over winter. It is better to slaughter some of them in the autumn and preserve the meat rather than shelter them and bring in their food. If you need to boil up a whole cow, and this could take ten trough loads, you need a large amount of stone, sacks of charcoal and a great volume of water. If you need to boil up ten cows, perhaps over several years, the trough needs to be filled, used and emptied up to 100 times. Every time the trough is used, it fills up with stones and needs to be emptied. This accounts for the large 'discard' heap of burnt stones and charcoal normally seen in the mound.

LIFE AND DEATH IN MONAGHAN

ILLUSTRATION OF A TYPICAL BRONZE AGE DWELLING

BURNT MOUND UNDER EXCAVATION AT MONANNY

ARTISTS IMPRESSION OF A BURNT MOUNT BEING USED

1. BRINGING MEAT TO SITE
2. HEATING OF STONES
3. WOODEN POLES ALLOWING MEAT TO DRY
4. BURNT MOUND OF ROCK, CHARCOAL, ASH, FATS

WHAT IS THE BRONZE AGE?

This was a time when people stopped using stone for their tools and weapons and began to use Bronze, which is a metal alloy of copper and tin.

WHAT IS THE IRON AGE?

This was a time in Ireland when people began use this stronger metal known as iron to make their tools and weapons.

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As it is a very efficient way to cook large quantities of meat, burnt mounds are also traditionally associated with hunting and great feasts.

The burnt mounds on the Monaghan Town Bypass were all dated to the early Bronze Age, between 2300 – 1700 BC. Those at Monanny are dated throughout the Bronze Age from 1900 BC and 890 BC.

Late Bronze Age pottery found in a pit at Monanny shows the site was also occupied. Unfortunately, Bronze Age buildings are very different to Neolithic buildings as they are much lighter, circular and made of bendy wattles with only an occasional solid post. The result is Bronze Age buildings often leave very little archaeological evidence and a few scattered post-holes at Monanny may be all there is to represent a thousand years of Bronze Age settlement.

LATTONFASKY CIST BURIAL MOUND TYPICAL STONE LINED BURIAL FROM THE BRONZE AGE

The large Lisdrumturk Cauldron is a typical example of a Bronze Age cooking pot. It was made by riveting together sheets of bronze. The Bronze Age spear heads would have been used in warfare and hunting. The bronze was melted down and poured into stone moulds such as the spear head mould in this image. All objects date to the Bronze Age (c. 2400 to 500BC)

MONAGHAN IN THE IRON AGE C.500 – 400AD

The Iron Age of roughly 600BC to 400AD is a great archaeological mystery. Whilst there is evidence on some sites for great social organization and technological advances there is little general archaeological evidence. People did not often build great or small monuments, they did not make pottery and they did not appear to formally bury most of their dead. No evidence for the Iron Age has so far been identified on the NRA County Monaghan schemes.

AERIAL PHOTO SHOWING LISANISK RINGFORT AND THE LAKE SITE OF 2 POSSIBLE CRANNÓGS

MONAGHAN'S EARLY MEDIEVAL c.400AD - LATE 12TH CENTURY AD.

An Early Medieval ringfort (also known as "Fairy Forts") is not so much designed to keep people out as it is to keep cattle in. It was a place where the local overlord family managed their estate, usually from high ground and with enough space to shelter cattle in danger or bad weather. Most ringforts also appear to form a network of associated sites, often around a key site. This is most clearly seen with crannógs (lake settlements), which are often overlooked by several ringforts.

There are 669 known ringforts and 74 crannógs in County Monaghan. There are 286 further 'enclosures or earthworks' of which many are probably ringforts. Early Medieval sites make up 87% of all known archaeological sites in County Monaghan. The people who lived in Monaghan at this time are known as the Airghialla (anglicised to Oriel).

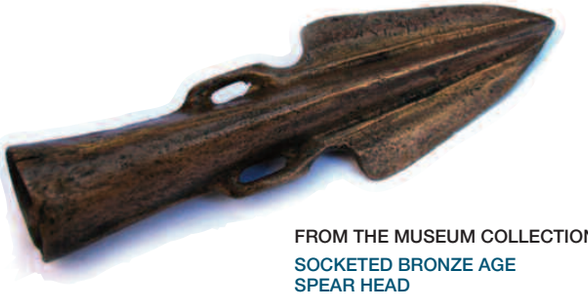
There were two ringforts on the Carrickmacross Bypass: both of them double ditched and huge!

The first ringfort was discovered at Lisanisk, Carrickmacross.

It was a tear-drop shape over 60m (196ft) across with the inner ditch slanted to the west to overlook nearby Lisanisk Lough and its crannógs.

At some stage in the 8th century AD the inner bank was knocked down and the inner ditch deliberately filled in. The reason for this is unclear, but, defensively the layout of the Lisanisk ringfort is poor due to the large distance between the ditches. Alternatively, the owners may have wanted more space in which to keep their cattle.

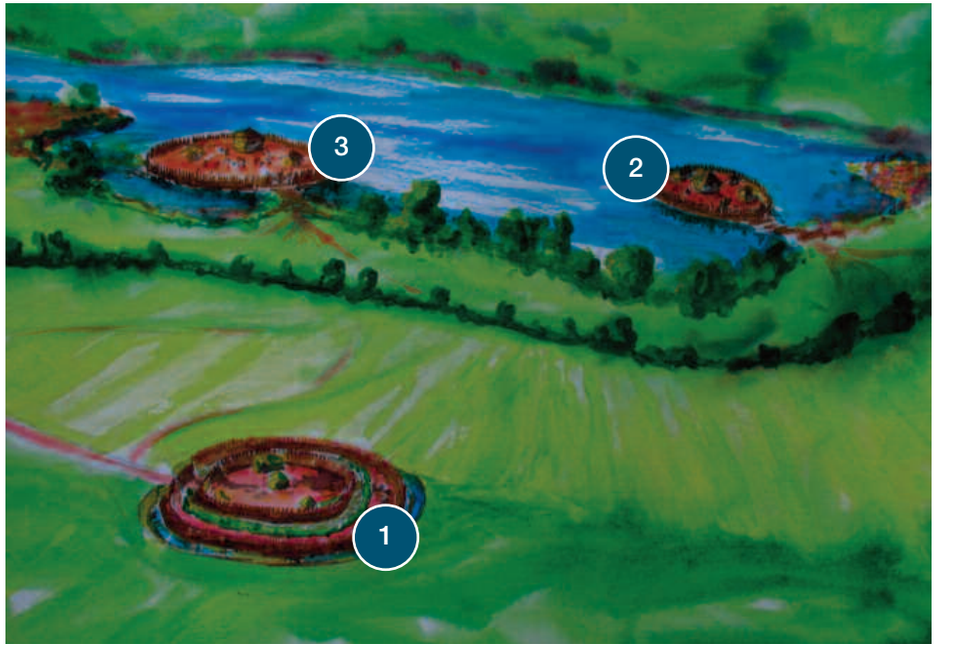
The second ringfort was a known site at Monanny. After a geophysical survey, the road was realigned to avoid it. The geophysical survey shows an oval shaped ringfort with double concentric ditches. In all, this site is over 100m (328ft) across.



FROM THE MUSEUM COLLECTION
SOCKETED BRONZE AGE SPEAR HEAD

DOUBLE DITCHED LISANISK RINGFORT

THE RINGFORT IS ESTIMATED TO HAVE HAD A DIAMETER OF 60 METRES



ARTISTS IMPRESSION OF LISANISK RINGFORT AND CRANNÓGS

1. LISANISK RING FORT ON THE HILL
2. LISANISK CRANNOG
3. POSSIBLE THIRD CRANNOG

EXCAVATIONS AT LISANISK RINGFORT

MULLAGHMONAGHAN CRANNÓG (CONVENT LAKE CRANNÓG)

WHAT IS A CRANNOG?

A crannog is a man made island found in lakes that is accessible by boat, a hidden underwater path or causeway.

EARLY MEDIEVAL METALWORK AT LISANISK

The key to metalworking is wood. It has been estimated that for every 1 ton of metal objects made, 25 tons of trees need to be felled, trimmed and turned into charcoal. County Monaghan at this time still had plenty of trees and during the 8th century AD Lisanisk ringfort became an intensive metalworking centre.

Metal is created through several stages. The first stage is to collect the ore (often from bogs), roast it to dry it out and then grind it up into little pieces. The next step is to place ore mixed with charcoal fuel into a pit-like bowl-furnace.

By blasting air into the furnace with a bellows, the furnace temperature is raised to around 1300oc. The wooden box bellows are protected from the heat by a clay tuyere (blow-hole). At the end of the firing a large metal 'cake' surrounded by slag has formed in the furnace.

Whilst this cake is still hot, it is removed to an anvil and the slag is smashed off with a hammer. This leaves a relatively pure lump of metal. We think this what the Lisanisk Metal-workers were doing.

WHEN THINGS GO WRONG!

Sometimes the ore and fuel in a bowl furnace combine into a huge lump of slag which settles on the bottom of the furnace. When this happens there is no option but to throw the whole lot away. This failure happened a number of times at Lisanisk.

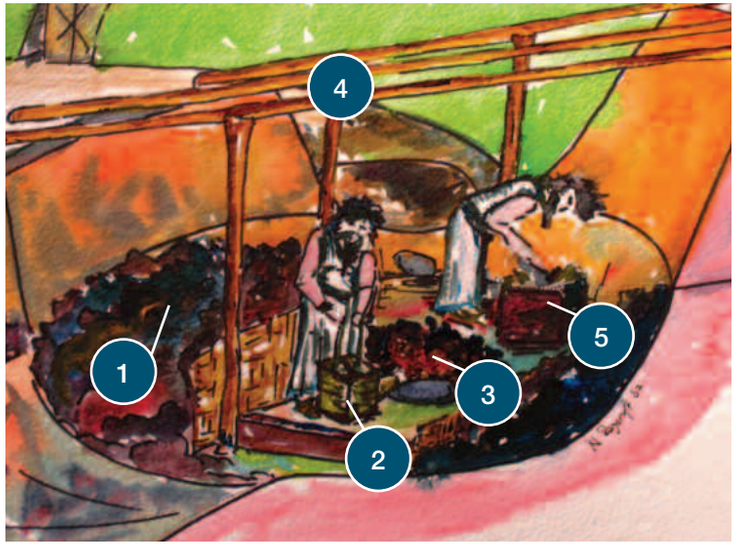
SMITHING

Another stage in metal-working, known as smithing, involves re-melting the iron in crucibles and making tools with moulds. Once roughly shaped the metal goes through a process of heating and hammering to form the final shape. The hammering knocks out many impurities and air pockets producing a strong yet flexible product. There is no real trace of smithing at Lisanisk but it was quite likely carried out somewhere on the site.

A MAJOR TRADE ROUTE

Lisanisk ringfort overlooks the ancient Carrickmacross road that branches to both Dundalk and Ardee. This road passed along the eastern side of the Lisanisk Lough. Such a major trade-route may be the reason why the metal-working happened at Lisanisk: the road could bring in raw materials and take away iron ingots or finished tools.

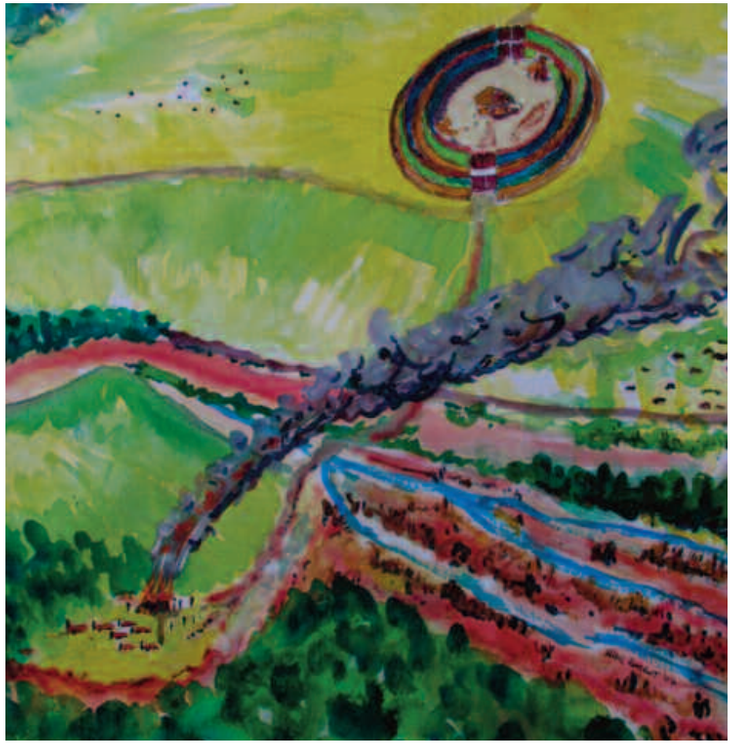
METAL WORKING AT LISANISK (THE WORK HOLOW)



DISCOVERY OF A TUYERE AT LISANISK

1. MOUND OF CHARCOAL
2. OPERATING A BOX BELLOWS
3. BOWL FURNACE – REDUCES ORE (PURIFY) INTO A METALLIC STATE
4. TIMBER FRAMEWORK TO PROVIDE SHELTER
5. WORKING THE IRON ORE

CLOUGHVALLEY UPPER



ARTISTS IMPRESSION OF A LARGE FIRE AFTER A BURIAL AT CLOGHVALLEY UPPER WITH MONANNY RINGFORT IN CLOSE PROXIMITY

WHAT IS ORE?

This is the red water in bog streams. This redness comes from iron and often the iron naturally accumulates into lumps (known as bog-ore) in the peat itself. All it needs is finding and collecting.

WHAT IS CHARCOAL?

Charcoal is generally made from wood that has been burnt or charred in the absence of oxygen by covering the fire with turf.

WHAT IS A TUYERE?

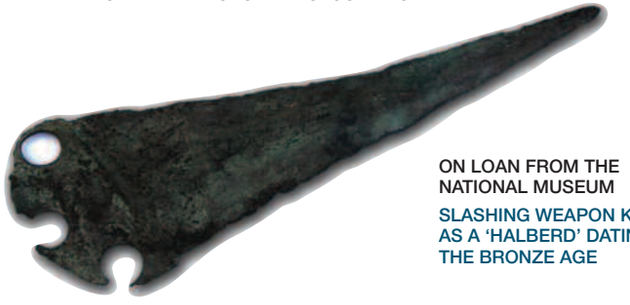
A clay nozzle through which air is blown into the smithing hearth.

WHAT ARE BELLOWS?

This was used to blow air at great speed into a furnace to make the fire burn harder.

WHAT IS SLAG?

This is the waste product that was left over in the firing process.



ON LOAN FROM THE NATIONAL MUSEUM

SLASHING WEAPON KNOWN AS A 'HALBERD' DATING TO THE BRONZE AGE

EARLY MEDIEVAL BURIALS AT CLOUGHVALLEY UPPER

SKELETAL REMAINS BEING UNEARTHED DURING EXCAVATIONS AT CLOGHVALLEY UPPER

There was a possible family burial plot at Cloghvalley Upper. It probably related to the nearby Monanny Ringfort and dates to the 7th – 8th century AD.

7 men, 5 women and 3 children have been identified. Loose bones indicate at least another two more bodies and more burials may exist outside the excavation area. There was no evidence for any violence on the individuals but the men showed evidence for 'heavy work' injuries. The general lack of children found indicates that they enjoyed a generally high level of health.

An interesting find was a calcified tapeworm cyst in an older woman. Such a cyst could take 10 years to grow in the body. Tapeworm (a relatively common intestinal parasite) is spread through contaminated faeces from pigs, sheep, cattle, deer or humans. It presence shows a certain lack of hand washing hygiene.

While the cemetery was in use, some of the graves were re-opened and more people put in. As these graves had the bones pushed to the side it is clear that the coffin-graves had plank lids that stopped the bones mixing with grave soil. It must also have had a marker so that people knew which grave to re-open some ten (or more) years later, once the first body had decayed.

A complicated grave was that of an 8-9 year old child who was buried in a stone lined grave and covered by a wooden plank. Later, the grave was re-dug and an adult female of between 45 and 60 years old was placed on top of lower lid. This female grave was also stone lined and covered with a plank. Perhaps the older female was the child's mother.

PHOTOGRAPH SHOWING ONE SKULL ON TOP OF ANOTHER.THIS MAY HAVE BEEN A MOTHER AND CHILD PLACED IN THE SAME GRAVE.

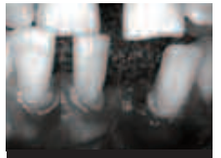
Over time the wooden parts of both graves had decayed and the upper body came to rest directly on top of the lower.

One burial (the skeleton on display) lay on the base of a grave that contained the remains of two other people. The bones of the previous occupants had been pushed to the side of the grave and the remains of two skulls were found. As there is no shortage of space on this site the re-opening of the grave may prove that they were very important people from the same family.

One feature of an Early Medieval graveyard appears to be a large cooking pit around which celebrations could occur, either at the time of death or at special times of year (for example Hallowe'en). Such a large pit was found at Cloghvalley and contained lots of animal bones and pottery.

REMAINS FROM CLOUGHVALLEY UPPER

PICTURE OF SKELETON 13 – (ON DISPLAY IN EXHIBITION)



PERIODONTAL DISEASE

TAPEWORK

WHEN IS A GRAVE NOT A GRAVE? WHEN IT'S A TOMB!

This is the skeleton of an adult male aged between 17 to 38 years old. The skeletal remains are 75% complete, it is estimated that he would have been about 180cm (5ft9ins) tall. This man died around c. 600AD, cause of death is unknown. Burial, as is typical for this period was in the traditional Christian manner of head to the west, feet to the east, lying on the back. As can be seen from the reconstruction, the body was fully clothed and tightly wrapped in a burial shroud of the clan's colours. The shroud would have been pinned down. We know this from the iron pins, which were found at the site. Some were buried with objects such as the knife also found at Cloughvalley Upper.

He was suffering from periodontal disease, which causes a reduction in the bone around the teeth and eventually tooth loss. This would have been the result of poor dental hygiene. As with most of the men found at this site, he was also afflicted with degenerative joint disease caused by confirmed heavy lifting and hard labour.

There was also a large amount of disarticulated bone found with the remains, 250 fragments in all. Analysis of the bones indicated that they belonged to 2 other people an older male and an older female. From this evidence we can see that this grave site was used at least twice before and the remains were simply pushed aside to make way for the new body. It is very likely that these people were all related and that the grave site was marked with some sort of upright headstone or wooden cross but no evidence of any such marker remains.

There were no coffins in this period. Instead the grave itself became the coffin. Stones were placed around the body and these would have supported planks or branches of wood. Sometimes these planks were held down by more stones. Sometimes there would have been a stone to place the feet upon. In this way the body was respectfully covered prior to the grave being covered with soil.

This knife would have been in its own scabbard attached to a leather belt. Iron knives are commonly found in Early Medieval graves and represent part of the tradition of life to death continuity. This knife would have been a treasured personal possession and would have been used for every purpose including eating food, shaping wood, butchering animals and scraping skins. It could even be used for fighting.

IRON KNIFE AND PINS FOUND AT CLOGHVALLEY UPPER

THE FORMATION OF MONAGHAN

County Monaghan was formed in 1585 from the five ancient baronies of Truagh, Dartrey, Monaghan, Cremorne and Farney. Farney (centred on Carrickmacross) was leased back to the MacMahon family and in 1590 the MacMahons moved their headquarters to the main crannóg on Lisanisk Lough.

Between 1628 and 1633 Carrickmacross was fortified with a castle, built by Robert Devereux, the third Earl of Essex.

THE DEMOLITION OF LISANISK RINGFORT

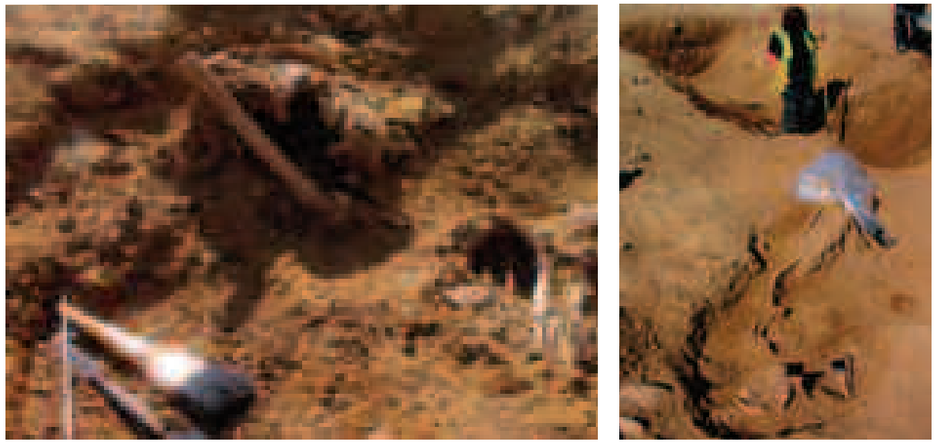
After the 1691-92 Jacobite war the Lisanisk ringfort was deliberately flattened, causing the earlier body to be buried. The razing of the ringfort was dated by a coin and was probably connected with land re-distribution, following the dispersal of the MacMahon and the creation of Lisanisk estate.

A FALLEN REBEL AT LISANISK?

Colonel Monke ended the 1641-7 Uprising by attacking the Lisanisk crannógs at Carrickmacross on Friday 15th October, 1647. Under fire from shot and artillery the last rebels were forced to yield to superior force.

To take the islands on Lisanisk Lough it would have been vital to obtain high ground. The Lisanisk ringfort is the only place where this advantage occurs.

Once this ringfort was taken, the crannógs in the lake were under attack from a height. In this situation they would have no hope and must surrender. Evidence for the 1647 battle of Lisanisk ringfort was perhaps found in the shattered body of a man tossed into the ringfort ditch. The ditch was probably full of weeds as the corpse was rolled in. It was then forgotten or deliberately left.



THE FALLEN REBEL AT LISANISK, DISCOVERED DURING THE EXCAVATIONS OF ONE OF THE DITCHES AT LISANISK RING FORT

THE UPRISING

On the night of the 23rd October 1641 rebels over ran the towns of Monaghan, Castleblayney and Carrickmacross, making the English garrisons prisoners. Colla MacBrian MacMahon of Lisanisk, Carrickmacross was the leader of the Uprising in County Monaghan.

Robert Boyle Clerk, Vicar of Carrickmacross stated that 30 or 40 rebels 'came in rebellious and tumultuous manner to his house at the Church of Ireland rectory on Shercock Road and threatened to break down the door if it were not opened. The rebels carried off one fouling piece, one brass pistol, two rapier staves, one pipe staff, cattle, corn, books, clothes, etc. to great value'.

Carrickmacross castle, sited where the convent now stands, was held by the rebels for eleven months. In September, 1642, Lord Lisle attacked it with two pieces of artillery. After a whole day's bombardment much of the castle was destroyed and the garrison fled during the night.

LIFE AND DEATH IN MONAGHAN

MESOLITHIC
c.7000 – 4000 BC

PREHISTORIC

NATIONAL
Around 3000 years after the end of the last Ice Age, the first people settled in Ireland. Mesolithic peoples formed semi-nomadic hunter and gatherer tribes in the thick forests and along rivers and sea-shores. A semi-permanent settlement is known around Mount Sandal, on the River Bann in County Derry.

INTERNATIONAL
Creation of the first towns and farming in the 'golden crescent' of the Middle East (Palestine and Syria).

PREHISTORIC

c.4000 – 2400 BC
NEOLITHIC

NATIONAL
First introduction of farming and pottery to Ireland. Neolithic people often joined together to build huge communal monuments such as Megalithic Tombs as at Newgrange, Knowth and Dowth, Co Meath. These people lived on scattered settlements cut out of the wild forest using stone axes. Communal burial, usually by cremation.

INTERNATIONAL
Construction of Stonehenge, construction of the Pyramids

BRONZE AGE
c.2400 – 500 BC

PREHISTORIC

NATIONAL
First use of bronze tools and weapons, gold jewellry. Time of Burnt Mounds (Fulachta Fia). Extensive, dispersed settlement of small buildings and occasional large, defended sites and crannógs. Mostly individual burials, sometimes cremated.

INTERNATIONAL
Invention of the wheel. First Olympic Games are held. Birth of Buddha.

PREHISTORIC

c.500 BC – AD 400
IRON AGE

NATIONAL
Use of iron for tools and weapons. Disappearance of settlement sites, pottery and the dead. Socially organized with powerful warriors living in large 'round-houses' and controlling important ritual sites such as Navan Fort (Emain Macha), County Armagh and the Hill of Tara, County Meath.

INTERNATIONAL
Birth of Jesus Christ and rise of Christianity. The rise of the Roman Empire.

EARLY MEDIEVAL PERIOD
c.AD 400 – LATE 12TH CENTURY AD

HISTORIC

NATIONAL
Introduction of Christianity to Ireland. Construction of ringforts and most of the crannógs. Development of ecclesiastic sites eg. Clones, Co. Monaghan. Burial in the Christian manner of east to west (head to the west), usually in family plots but sometimes in formal ecclesiastic cemeteries. Burials often accompanied by iron knives and combs.

INTERNATIONAL
The fall of the Roman Empire. The birth of Islam. The dark Ages in Europe.

HISTORIC

c.AD 400 – 900
EARLY CHRISTIAN PERIOD

VIKING AGE
c.AD 900 – LATE 12TH CENTURY

HISTORIC

NATIONAL
Viking Raids, Development of High Crosses and Round Towers, the first Irish towns and use of coinage. Viking burials started off as non-Christian, accompanied by armour and jewellry. Gradually they became more Christian with fewer 'grave-goods'.

INTERNATIONAL
Reign of Charlemagne. Bayeux tapestry depicting the Battle of Hastings

NATIONAL
The Anglo – Norman invasion. Development of Stone castles. Church Reform, medieval village landscape. Monaghan lies beyond the main Anglo-Norman Lordship throughout most of this period. Burial is mostly confined to consecrated ground associated with churches and chapels.

INTERNATIONAL
Spread of the Black Death. Invention of the Printing Press. Christopher Columbus travels to America. The Reformation.

HISTORIC

LATE 12TH CENTURY – EARLY 16TH CENTURY
MEDIEVAL PERIOD

POST-MEDIEVAL PERIOD
EARLY 16TH CENTURY – LATE 17TH CENTURY AD

HISTORIC

NATIONAL
Gaelic wars. The Plantation of Ulster. Flight of the earls. 1641 – 7 Uprising. Battle of the Boyne 1691. Creation of Plantation towns and a rich land-owning class supported by an extensive peasantry. Burial formally confined to church graveyards.

INTERNATIONAL
Spanish Armada. Construction of the Taj Mahal

NATIONAL
Penal Laws. 1798 United Irishmen Rebellion. 1801 Act of Union. Industrialisation begins. Massive increase in Irish rural population, based on the potato: the Great Famine and 19th century social upheaval.

INTERNATIONAL
Captain Cook travels to Australia. The Industrial Revolution. The French Revolution.

HISTORIC

18TH CENTURY – 19TH CENTURY AD
INDUSTRIAL PERIOD

Exhibition & Brochure: **www.ph7.ie**
Bronze Sculpture by Tony Murphy, entitled: Fallen Warrior No. II

Músaem Chontae Mhuineacháin
Monaghan County Museum

Comhairle Contae Mhuineacháin
Monaghan County Council

NRA National Roads Authority
An tÚdarás um Bóithre Náisiúnta

RESULTS FROM THE N2 CARRICKMACROSS BYPASS EXCAVATIONS 2003