

# what we found

## in brief:

Some of the findings in and between **Ballina** and **Tonybaun**.



1. Corn-drying kiln  
'Bowl' of the corn-drying kiln excavated at **Drumreevagh**.



2. Medieval burial  
Possible late medieval burial in the cillín at **Tonybaun**.



3. Votive stones  
Votive stones recovered from the cillín at **Tonybaun**.



4. Pit furnace  
Stone-lined bowl-shaped pit furnace uncovered adjacent to the cillín at **Tonybaun**.



5. Quern stone fragment  
Quern stone fragment recovered from the cillín at **Tonybaun**.

# background



Troughs and a possible well at the burnt mound uncovered at **Carrowntreila**.



Cillín at **Tonybaun** during excavation.

Between April and July 2003, the topsoil removal of the 4.7km route of the N26 Ballina to **Bohola** (Stage I - Ballina to Tonybaun) road scheme was carried out and monitored by **Mayo**

**County Council archaeologists** to reveal and resolve any unknown archaeology.

The work was carried out on behalf of the **National Roads Authority** and **Mayo County Council**.

Archaeological testing adjacent to two enclosures and a standing stone site also took place in advance of the main construction contract. The excavation of a cillín commenced in March 2003 and was completed in early September 2003.



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# archaeological DISCOVERIES

## front cover images

**LEFT:** Possible late medieval burial in the cillín at **Tonybaun**.  
**RIGHT:** General view of the corn-drying kiln excavated at **Drumreevagh**.  
**MIDDLE LEFT TOP:** Troughs and a possible well at the burnt mound uncovered at **Carrowntreila**.  
**MIDDLE RIGHT TOP:** Quern stone fragment recovered from the cillín at **Tonybaun**.  
**MIDDLE LEFT BOTTOM:** Stone-lined bowl-shaped pit furnace uncovered adjacent to the cillín at **Tonybaun**.  
**MIDDLE RIGHT BOTTOM:** 'Stone altar' in the cillín excavated at **Tonybaun**.



# prehistoric

A burnt mound dating to the Bronze Age was discovered during monitoring of topsoil removal at **Carrowntreila**.



Post-excitation view of the burnt mound excavated at **Carrowntreila** with post-holes marked.

The site was located at the base of a peaty hollow which was surrounded on three sides by low drumlins. It consisted of a mound of heat fractured stone and charcoal. This overlay two pre-mound deposits, a construction layer and a portion of the original sod. Beneath this several features were cut into the natural boulder clay. These consisted of a fire pit, a possible well, and two troughs. Clustered between these two troughs were a group of 98 stake-holes.

Analysis of the stake-hole patterns, in conjunction with wood identification, revealed a number of likely temporary structures and windbreaks associated with the troughs.



General view of the burnt mound excavated at **Carrowntreila**.

# medieval

## Cillín



'Stone altar' in the cillín excavated at **Tonybaun**.



Stone-lined bowl-shaped pit furnace uncovered adjacent to the cillín at **Tonybaun**.

The site of a cillín (i.e. a burial ground mainly used for the interment of unbaptised children) was known at **Tonybaun** (RMP MA039-107), however, prior to the excavation its date was unknown. A geophysical survey of the area surrounding the burial ground was undertaken to detect any archaeological features which may have been associated with the burial ground.



Quern stone fragment recovered from the cillín at **Tonybaun**.

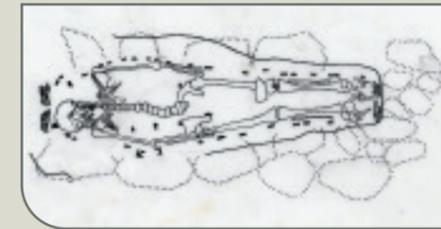


Possible late medieval burial in the cillín at **Tonybaun**.

# medieval

Two hundred and forty-eight burials were recovered from the site - 181 children and 67 adults.

Radiocarbon dates from the earliest burials ranged from 1562-1806 AD.



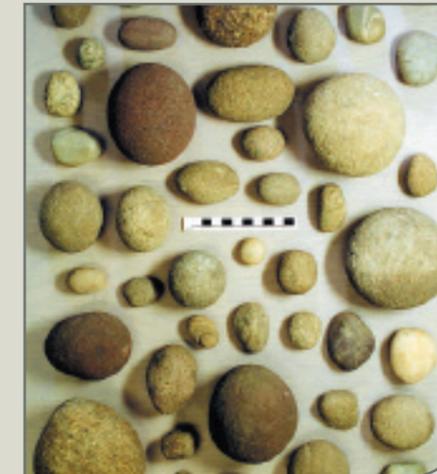
Grave showing position of burial under marker stones in the cillín at **Tonybaun**.

A leacht/altar/penitential station probably dating to the Early Christian Period was also uncovered from within the burial ground. Several rounded votive stones and quartz pebbles were found from within and around the vicinity of this structure.

Fragments of 23 rotary quern stones, a stone crucible fragment and a large amount of furnace bloom were also recovered from the burial ground. Over 200 flint

and chert flakes and two stone axes were found in soil levels on and around the site.

In June 2005, the remains uncovered in the cillín at **Tonybaun** were reburied in the local Ballinahaglish Cemetery, Knockmore, **Ballina** after a local service. The remains were interred in three large caskets and an engraved memorial stone has been erected at the side of the new road adjacent to the site of the cillín while an engraved headstone has been located at the new grave plot.



Votive stones recovered from the cillín at **Tonybaun**.

# medieval

## Corn-drying kiln

A medieval kiln corn-drying kiln was uncovered at **Drumreevagh** on a south-eastern facing slope of a large drumlin less than 100m to the south-east of the enclosure (RMP MA039-079).

The stone-lined kiln was keyhole-shaped and cut into the subsoil. The bowl was sub-circular in plan. The flue extended from the bowl in an east-south-easterly direction. The flue lining survived to a length of 1.4m culminating at the fire spot. It is clear from the archaeological evidence that a fire was lit at the mouth of the flue, the smoke from which would have been sent along the flue and into the bowl/drying chamber. This would have allowed a constant low heat to dry the grains to be suitable for grinding.



'Bowl' of the corn-drying kiln excavated at **Drumreevagh**.



General view of the corn-drying kiln excavated at **Drumreevagh**.