

## 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Construction of the Cross on Knockfierna Hill.

By Pat O'Donovan, Jan 2021.

The Cross on Knockfierna Hill was built in 1950 to commemorate the Holy Year. It was constructed by local volunteers from the parish of Granagh and Ballingarry. A committee was formed and one person from each household was invited to volunteer. It took the month of November to complete and was all done by manual labour.

First the foundation had to be dug 8ft deep, with a pick and shovel.

All the material had to be brought to the base of the hill by tractor and trailer. It was then loaded onto a type of sleigh with two shafts, which was made by local blacksmiths, so that it could be pulled by a horse.

All the material needed had to be pulled up the hill in small loads so that the horse could pull it. Once the foundation was dug a concrete base was poured, mixed with shovels of equal size, so the ratio of cement to gravel could be measured. Steel reinforcing bars had to come up out of the foundation in the shape of a cross. The scaffolding was erected around the steel, then the timber shuttering had to be clamped, propped and plumbd. Then it was ready for the concrete.

Credit has to be given to all involved for the many hours of hard work in wintry conditions.

In 1952, the Marian year, the Cross was electrified. The holes for the poles were dug manually by local voluntary labour & the poles were pulled up with the loan of horse from a local farmer. The ESB then were able to connect the power.

Knockfierna Heritage would like to thank the ESB for helping to get the lights working again after all these years, also the local landowner and electrician.

Knockfierna Heritage Society is made up of a very small number of members who are mostly pensioners. We welcome new members to the group so that they can help with improvements and make this Hill a place everyone can enjoy.

A lot of people died of starvation on this hill during the famine years, we owe it to these people as a mark of respect, to protect this land in their memory.

It's a place of peace and tranquility where people can get away from the stress of modern day living. When you get to the top of Knockfierna, you can sit at the base of the cross in "awe" and say to yourself "this is God's County". Any day you can get out of bed is a good day.

If interested in getting involved, contact – Ned on 087-2214938. Pat on 086-8717100. Tim on 087-6483502.