

A Man and his Boat
MAURICE DAVIN

Marie McMahon, South Tipperary County Museum.



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02.



03.

‘South Tipperary County Museum is very proud to have embarked on the Davin Boat Project, as the ‘Crúiscín’ represents excellence through its sporting achievements and quality, through its boating craftsmanship. This catalogue will transport you through the variety of stages the boat faced from when it left the safety of Deerpark, Carrick on Suir, travelling across Ireland and back to South Tipperary County Museum.

The museum is undergoing significant changes in its permanent gallery and what better piece to spearhead these changes than the Davin Boat. In conjunction with the refurbishment, the museum has widened its audience base by including Irish translation.

The museum’s highly qualified staff strives on a daily basis to attain national standards in its collections care and quality services it provides to our local community. They should be supported and appwuded for their creativity and dedication.

A special word of thanks to all those who work tirelessly to achieve our ultimate goal, safe guarding this significant historical piece for future generations to come...’

Marie McMahon, Curator.



A Man and his Boat

Maurice Davin
Muiris Dáimhín
(1842 – 1927)

In May 2006, Pat Walsh, Grand-nephew of Maurice Davin, donated the Crúiscín to South Tipperary County Museum. Grant-aid and sponsorship resulted in the boat being sent to the Conservation Centre in Letterfrack for conservation. The journey of the boat's removal from the cow-shed back to the Museum was the subject of a Nationwide documentary shown on RTÉ in 2006. Maurice Davin would have been proud of the men and women who afforded so much of their time to the research, display and conservation of his prized rowing boat – the Crúiscín.

I mBealtaine 2006, bhronn Pat Walsh, garnia Maurice Davin, an “Crúiscín” ar Mhúsaem Thiobraid Árann Theas. Le cabhair deontais agus urraíochta cuireadh an bád chuig Ionad Caomhnaithe i Leitir Fraic lean hathchóiriú. Bhí turas an bhaid agus í á haistriú ón mbóitheach go dtí an Músaem mar ábhar cláir ag “Nationwide” a taispeánadh ar RTÉ i 2006. Bheadh Maurice Davin an-tógtha leis na fir agus mná a chaith an oiread sin dá gcuid ama le taighde, taispeánadh agus caomhnú an bháid rámhaíochta a ba mhór leis – an “Crúiscín”.



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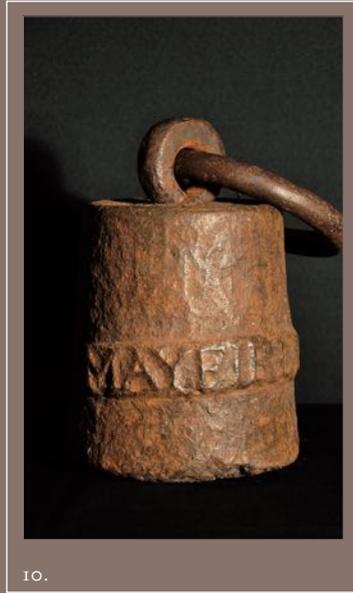
Family Background

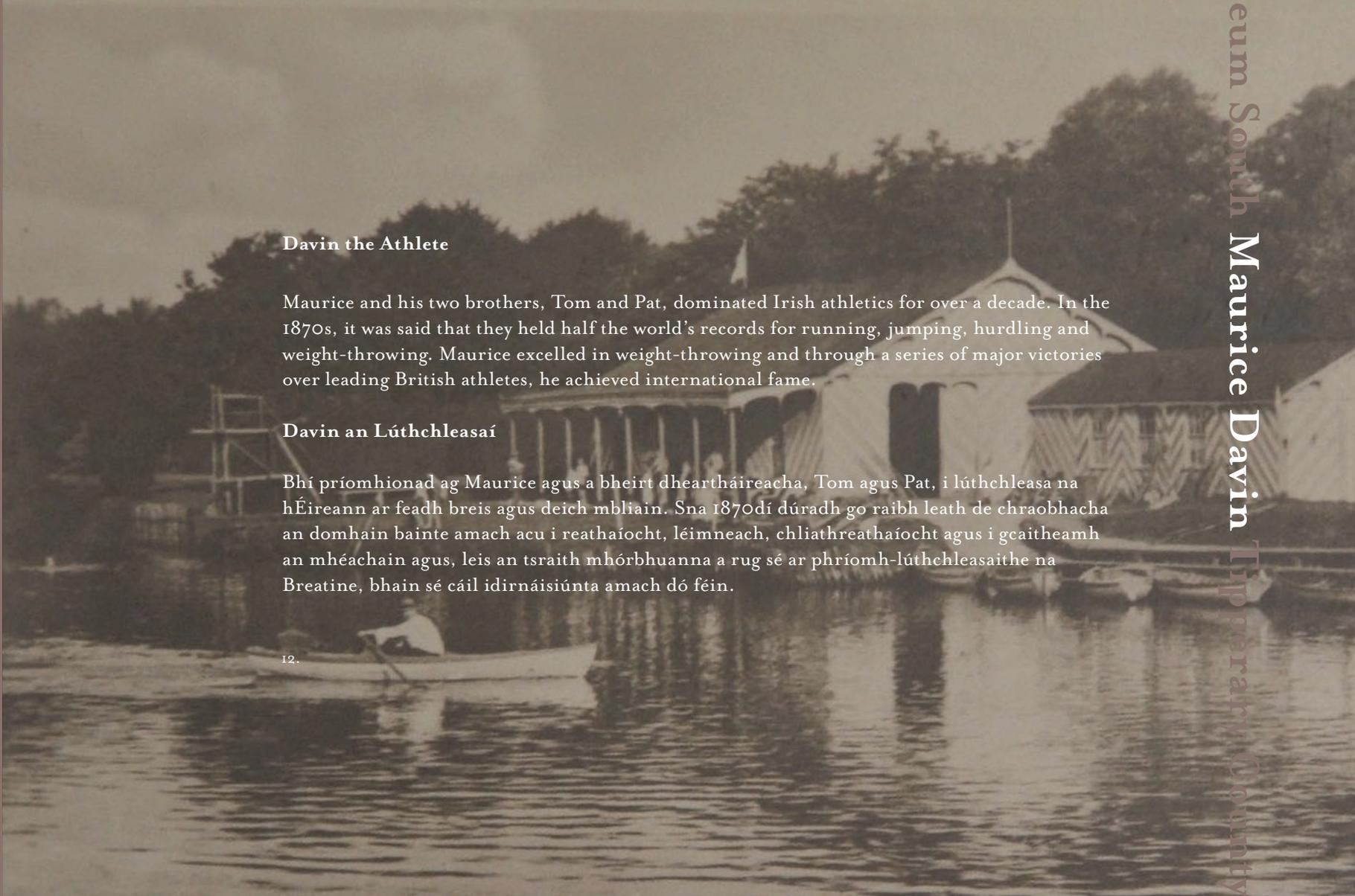
Maurice Davin was born in Carrick-On-Suir in 1842 and died in 1927. He was the eldest of five children born to John Davin and his wife, Bridget Walsh. The Davin family were originally boatmen in Carrick-On-Suir, but early in the 19th Century they began farming at Deerpark, west of the town, from which they later conducted a prosperous river-transport business.

Cúlra Teaghlaigh

Rugadh Maurice Davin i gCarraig na Siúire i 1842 agus fuair sé bás i 1927. Ba é an duine ba shine de chúigear páistí a rugadh do John Davin agus a bhean, Bridget Walsh. Báidóirí i gCarraig na Siúire ab ea clan Davin i dtús ama, ach go luath san naoú aois déag thosaigh said ag feirmeoireacht ag Páirc na bhFia, thiar ón mbaile agus tamaill ina dhiadh sin reáchtáil said gnó rathúil iompair ar an abhainn.

08.





Davin the Athlete

Maurice and his two brothers, Tom and Pat, dominated Irish athletics for over a decade. In the 1870s, it was said that they held half the world's records for running, jumping, hurdling and weight-throwing. Maurice excelled in weight-throwing and through a series of major victories over leading British athletes, he achieved international fame.

Davin an Lúthchleasaí

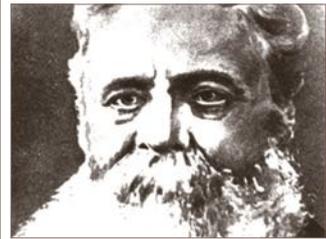
Bhí príomhionad ag Maurice agus a bheirt dheartháireacha, Tom agus Pat, i lúthchleasa na hÉireann ar feadh breis agus deich mbliain. Sna 1870dí dúradh go raibh leath de chraobhacha an domhain bainte amach acu i reathaíocht, léimneach, chliathreathaíocht agus i gcaitheamh an mhéachain agus, leis an tsraith mhórbhuanna a rug sé ar phríomh-lúthchleasaithe na Breataine, bhain sé cáil idirnáisiúnta amach dó féin.

Davin and the G.A.A.

Maurice Davin became the first President of the Gaelic Athletic Association, which was founded in Thurles on 1st November 1884. It was his wise counsel, his gentle personality and his deep commitment that guided the organization through its uncertain years. Davin was opposed to the ban on foreign games and when it was decided that members of the Royal Irish Constabulary should also be banned, he resigned.

Davin agus C.L.G.

Ba é an chéad uachtarán ar Chumann Lúthchleas Gael, a bunaíodh i nDurlasar i Samhain 1884. Trína chomhairle chríonna, a phearsantacht chaoín agus a thiomantas domhain, threoraigh sé an eagraíocht le linn a blianta éiginnteachta. Bhí iomrá air mar náisiúnaí réasúnta, bhí sé in aghaidh an choisc ar chluichí eactracha, agus nuair a cinneadh go gcuirfí bac, freisin, ar bhaill de Chostáblacht Ríoga na hÉireann, d'éirigh Maurice as.



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CARRICK-ON-SUIR REGATTA FUND, 1869

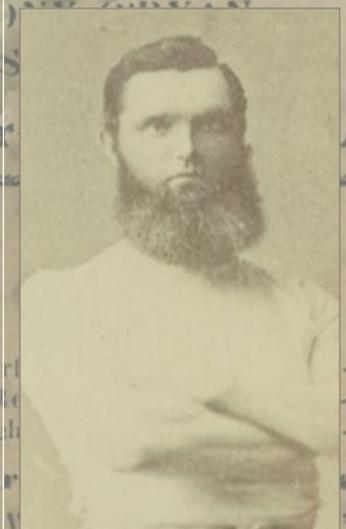
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SUBSCRIPTION

CARRICK-ON-SUIR
Regatta and River

WEDNESDAY, 29th AUGUST

The Committee of the above Regatta and River Race are interested in the revival of this old pastime and desire to see them to establish it annually. The Programme require favorable support, and trust that you will be pleased to contribute to the same.

SOURCE T. C. CHAIRMAN.

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Samuel H. Hunt, Dr. Fitzgerald, John Walsh,
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SOURCE T. C. CHAIRMAN.

Subscriber's Name _____

MENTS.
PENDED.

PRIZES.

Canoe Race, Field Glass (C. Clibborn 1st) value 33s. 6d., Flask, (M. Davin 2nd) value 7s. 6d.	£ 1 10 0 1 0 0
4 Oared Gig Race. (Watermen, E. Burke 1st)	12 0 0
Do. do. T. Power 2nd)	2 0 0
Wherry Race, (Amateurs, M. Davin, Prize returned)	3 0 0
4 Oared Gig Race (Amateurs, J. Foley)	5 0 0

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Boating and other Pursuits

This kindly giant was also an accomplished violinist, singer and dancer. A superb all-round athlete he excelled at cricket, football and boxing. He was a champion oarsman, capable of building his own boats. In the 1860s, he built and designed a boat, which his mother called the Crúiscín. Originally the boat did not perform as well as expected and was returned to the cow-shed on the family farm for modifications. The bow was extended to 38ft. and was returned to the river.

Bádóireacht agus Tóireacha Eile

Bhí an fathach lách seo ina veidhleadóir, amhránaí agus rinceoir críochnaithe, freisin. Ba shár-lúthchleasaí cuimsitheach é a bhain barr feabhais amach ag cruicéad, peil agus dornálaíocht. Ba churadh rámhaíochta é a bhí ábalta a chuid bád féin a dhéanamh. Sna 1860dí, dhear agus rinne sé bád ar thug a mháthair an “Crúiscín” uirthi. Bhí an bád 38tr. ar fhad i dtús ama, ach nuair nár chruthaigh sí chomh maith agus a raibh súil leis, cuireadh ar ais chuig bóitheach ar fheirm an teaghlaigh í le mionathrú a dhéanamh uirthi. Tar éis dó ceann an bháid a mhéadú, cuireadh ar ais ar an abhainn í.



The Crúiscín:

In an interview with The New York Daily News, given in 1906, Davin said: “I built the boat over forty years ago. Somehow or other she was not a success...it was not my fault that she did not win at a Regatta in Waterford in the sixties. I held onto her, I had faith in her, for she was a sweet boat. Last year I lengthened her bow a bit, and the boys took her to this year’s Regatta in Waterford and won. Now, what do you think of that for a boat?” Following Davin’s retirement from competitive rowing, the Crúiscín competed under a new crew of rowers. Subsequently, the boat was stored in the rafters of the cow-shed at Deerpark.

An “Crúiscín”:

In agallamh le “Daily News”, Nua Eabhrach i 1906, dúirt sé: “Rinne mé an bád breis agus daichead bliain ó shin; ar bhealach éigin, ní raibh rath uirthi...ní orm a bhí an locht nár bhuaigh sí ag geallta Phort Láirge sna seascaidí. Choinnigh mé í, chreid mé í, chreid me inti, mar ba bhád binn í. Chuir mé píosa beag lena ceann anuraidh agus thug na buachaillí chuig na geallta bád i bPort Láirge i mbliana, agus bhuaigh said. Anois, cad é do mheas uirthi sin mar bhád? Tar éis do Davin éirí as an rámhaocht iomaíoch, chuaigh an “Crúiscín” san iomaíocht faoi chriú rámhaithe nua. Ina dhiaidh sin, cuireadh an bád i dtaisce i rachtaí an bhóithigh ag Páirc na bhFia.



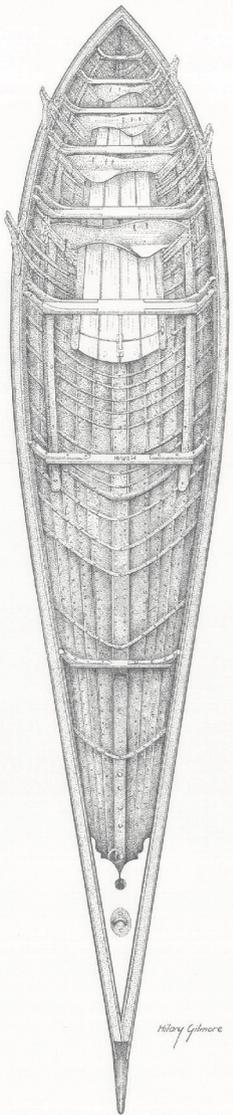
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“The Crúiscín project is the single most ambitious undertaking by the Workmans Boat Club since the publishing of the notebooks of T. Cuddihy in 2004 by the Club. Pat Walsh brought me out to the cowshed in the yard, opened one of the gates and said, “Here she is. Maurice Davin’s Crúiscín!” I saw before me in the rafters of the shed an amazing sight – a longboat of exquisite beauty and line, if smothered in dust and showing some wear and tear. I turned to Pat and said, “she’s a beauty. I’ll be back to you after I speak with the committee members of the Workman’s Boat Club. The rest is history.”

Shay Hurley



LUNCHEON & TEA TENTS.



“The boat became fully enclosed over time and impossible to move without removing the gable wall. This is possibly one of the reasons why the boat stayed unnoticed and why it was so well preserved...”

Sven Habermann



DUBLIN UNIVER
 REG
 (UNTER I. A.)

FIRST DAY

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21, 1905.

ADMIT TO GRAND

First impressions

ENTRANCE STAGE — Oppos

1906:77



37.



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"Maurice Davin had great veneration for his boat. It had given him great pleasure over the years and he could not see his way to having it broken up - hence his determination to keep it, in the hope that It would some day be appreciated.

"In 2005, I made up my mind to donate the Crúiscín to the County Museum, if they agreed to take it. I was sorry to see the boat leave, as I considered it part of the farm. It was my decision, and I hoped I was doing the right thing.

"Very few people knew of the Crúiscín's existence up until now. I am sure the County Museum and the general public will appreciate this boat, as I think it's a National Treasure and hope it will be on view for many generations to come."

Pat Walsh, Grand-nephew of Maurice Davin

Structure

The Boat is a clinker built single four oar rowing skiff made of $\frac{3}{8}$ inch (9 mm) thick planking. All planking is riveted with copper nails and copper washers. In total seven rows of planking on each side make up the hull. The bilge plank is 4 inches (100 mm) wide and all others are 2 inches (50mm) wide. The boat has beaded frames every foot throughout with an additional pair of short frames at the four oar pivots. A scarf joint in the keel, brass cover plate and the fact that all the planking is jointed in and around 5 feet away from the bow indicates that an alteration took place – The method, material and quality of this alteration is of such a high quality, it would suggest that the same person who built the boat in the first place executed this change.

Dimensions

Length: 38 feet (1150 mm). Width in centre: 37 inches (940 mm).
Height in centre: 12 inches (300 mm). Length of the oars: 11.5 feet (3500 mm).
Weight total approx: 160kg.



Timbers

Eight very small transverse cross section samples were taken from the boat to establish the timber species.

Planking:	<i>Pinus strobus</i> , Eastern White Pine
Keel:	<i>Pinus strobus</i> , Eastern White Pine
Stern-post:	<i>Quercus robur</i> , Oak
Sole planks:	<i>Pinus strobus</i> , Eastern White Pine
Thwarts:	<i>Pinus strobus</i> , Eastern White Pine
Thwart knees:	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> , Ash
Frames:	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> , Ash
Oar:	<i>Thuja plicata</i> , Western Red Cedar



The Cow Shed

The story began during May 2006 when Pat Walsh of Deerpark, the Grand-nephew of Maurice Davin, met with Shay Hurley. Some time later, Pat decided to donate the Davin Boat to South Tipperary County Museum.

Removal

Its removal from the cow-shed was a delicate and complicated task. Before the complex evacuation could take place, it was decided to strengthen the hull with an internal frame to reduce the risk of breakage to an absolute minimum. The main purpose of this support frame was to distribute the weight of the boat to a centre beam, which would help to stiffen the long thin hull and to avoid stressing the gunwale and hull. After three days of preparation the gable wall was removed and with seven extended lifting handles the boat was lifted by ten people and guided through a hole with three inch clearance on all sides.

The Journey to Connemara

After removal from the shed, the boat was placed on a 45 foot articulated truck where a custom made suspended platform was waiting to hold the boat by the internal support keel. The additional triangular frames helped to reduce tension and pressure on the weakened gunwale on the long journey to the Conservation Centre in Letterfrack.

Conservation

On the 17th May 2006, the boat arrived at the Conservation Centre in Letterfrack, where it underwent lengthy conservation treatments. On arrival, the boat was not brought into the fully climate-controlled workshop in order to avoid a climatic shock which would cause fast drying and subsequent shrinkage cracks in the hull.





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Pest eradication

Because of the presence of many wood-boring insect holes in the hull, it was assumed that it was infested with “*annobium punctatum*”, better known as woodworm. To make matters worse, it was Spring when the boat arrived which is the hatching period for wood-boring insects. To reduce additional damage and to break the cycle of a new generation of woodworm, a water-based insecticide called *Constrain* was applied to deal with the acute pest presence.

In the long term this would not be effective because of its shallow penetration into the timber. For long-term pest eradication, a much more advanced and thorough approach was chosen. It was decided to apply a proven, tested and thoroughly researched method called *Thermo Lignum*. This is based on the fact that all protein de-nature at 55°C. Simplified, you cook the bugs until they pop, without shrinkage of the timber. The cycle takes only 24 hours and is 100% effective, chemical free, cost effective and suitable for all organic materials up to any size.



Cleaning and consolidation

After the preparations of conditioning and pest eradication were finished, a crate was built to turn the boat upwards for further treatment. The first cleaning took place in the shed. Once back on its keel inside the support crate, the internal support beam was removed and the interior of the boat was vacuumed while soft brushes were used to remove any loose surface dirt. Solvent tests showed that the original varnish, which was still perfectly intact on the inside, was most likely a linseed oil based copal varnish, a technique which would have been used in the mid to late 19th Century. A suitable aqueous cleaning method was devised, based on *Vulpex soap*. This PH neutral soap is extensively used on museum objects and is highly effective on removing embedded dirt without interfering with the original varnish layers.



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The Crúiscín's return to Tipperary

The Davin Boat returned from Letterfrack, to South Tipperary County Museum on the 24th November 2006. A Garda convoy escorted the Crúiscín as it entered the civic centre of Mick Delahunty Square, where the museum is sited. A large contingent of people was eagerly awaiting its arrival – Pat, Edward and Richard Walsh direct descendants of Maurice Davin, Museum Staff, The Workman's Boat Club, Letterfrack Conservation Team, Michael Kennedy – Shipwright, Donal Wylde & Damian Tiernan – R.T.É and many others. It took approximately 25 men and women to direct the 38ft long boat into its permanent position. It was put on temporary display in a wooden cradle that supported and protected her.



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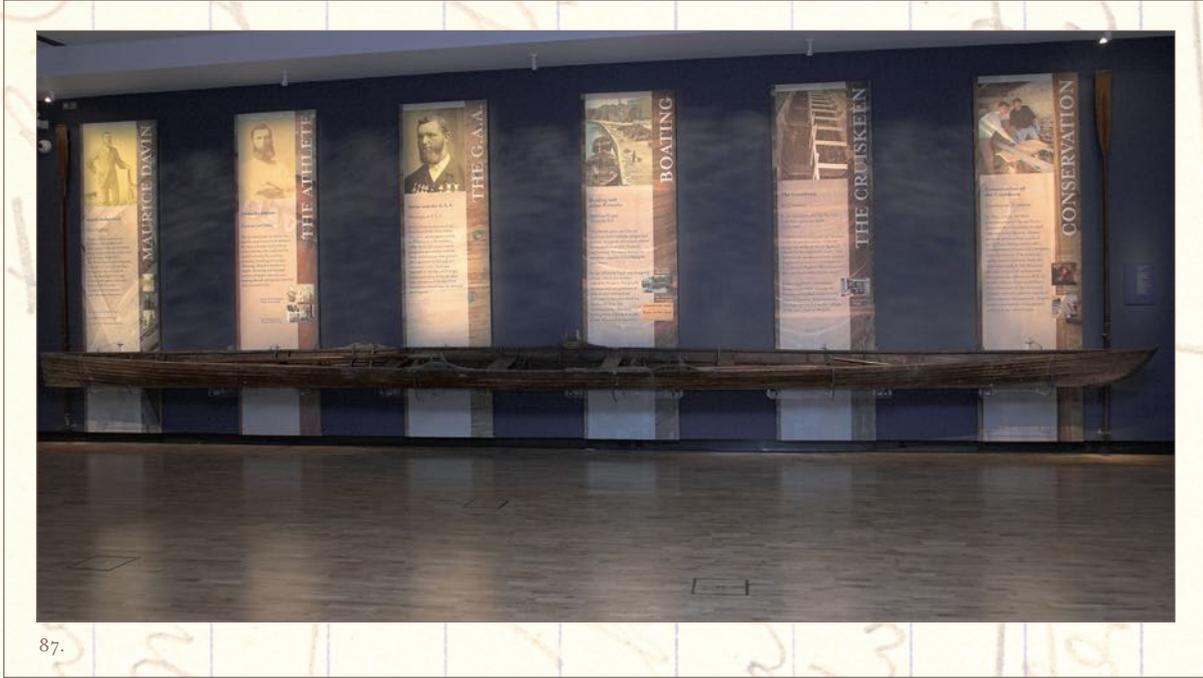
85.

(1921)

The museum's Conservator, Damian Lizun monitored and analysed the conditions within the gallery to safe-guard the boat. A frame for mounting the boat for permanent display was developed by Michael Kennedy and design panels based on the history of the boat and it's journey were created by Joy Rooney. A DVD of the entire process has been commissioned, along with a large collection of still photographs. Artists Hillary Gilmore and Steve Cannon were also commissioned to do a number of sketches of the Crúiscín. R.T.É. filmed the journey of the Davin Boat and a comprehensive website of this project is available.



86.



South Tipperary County Museum would like to extend their thanks and appreciation to Mr. Pat Walsh and his family for their generous donation of the Crúiscín. It will be housed in the museum for posterity and will be enjoyed by all who will come to see it.

A special word of thanks to everyone who worked tirelessly to preserve, conserve and display an important piece of Tipperary's History – the Crúiscín.

Members of the Workman's Boat Club, Shay Hurley, Michael Kennedy, Pat Grimes, John Robson, John Colpher, Sven Habermann, Members of Conservation Letterfrack Centre, Jeremy Madden, Michael Tyrell, Reginald Van Acker, Joy Rooney, Andrew Leonard, Dr. Michael Ahern, Dr. Rachael Finnegan, Micheál & Síle Grae, Michael Lawlor, John Crowley, Hilary Gilmore, Steve Cannon, Pat Holland, The Heritage Council, Museum's Advisory Committee, South Tipperary County Council, Museum Staff – Julia Walsh, Damian Lizun, Bernadette Corr, Michael Fanning, Michael Grace, Alice Tobin and Seán Toomey

Marie McMahon - Curator

County Council Management: Mr. Ned O' Connor County Manager, Mr. Pat Slattery Corporate Affairs Director, Mr. John O' Mahoney S.E.O., Cathaoirleach Cllr. Liam Ahearn, Mr. Tom Ambrose, South Tipperary County Council and members of the Museums Advisory Committee for there constant support through this mammoth project.

The conservation and display process was financed by grant aid from the following Organisations and Individuals: South Tipperary County Council (Community and Enterprise). BNS Rural Development. Clonmel Work Man's Boat Club. D. Dougan Audiology. J. Ronan Treasury Holdings. B. Norris. G.A.A Dublin. S.E.F.B (Southern Fisheries Board). Allan Cullough. Merck Sharpe & Dohme. Clancy Veterinary . (Carrick-on Suir). Gilligan Auctioneers (Carrick-on-Suir). P. Cloughlan Chemist (Carrick on Suir). Bank of Ireland (Carrick on Suir). Brophy Builders. P. Costello (Carrick-on-Suir). Seamus Gubbins Electrical. The Heritage Council. Pinewood Laboratories.

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