

## HIDDEN GEMS AND FORGOTTEN PEOPLE

### CLANE LOCAL HISTORY GROUP.



### THE BULLAUN STONE

Located in the retaining wall bordering the Butterstream, a managed stream, on the Sallins Road, Clane, opposite the old Franciscan Friary, is a little known relic of ancient times, called the Bullaun Stone. The bullaun stone consists of a large rectangular block of weathered limestone with a deep bowl-shaped depression, hollowed out of its upper side. It is believed locally to be of pre-Christian origin and is probably the oldest man-made artifact extant in Clane. It may have been used in pagan worship with perhaps offerings of milk, grain or even blood deposited in the bowl. It is intimately connected with the legend of the 1<sup>st</sup>. Century local King Mesgegra and his untimely death at the ford of Clane.

Tradition has it that Mesgegra was confronted by his enemy Conall Cearnach, an Ulster hero, at the ford in the river (now the Liffey) at Clane. After a fierce duel Conall defeated Mesgegra, severed his head at the bullaun stone and then placed it in the bowl-shaped hollow. It is believed that Mesgegra was buried under the large Moat near the present Alexandra Bridge at the river crossing and that his head was buried along with his wife Queen Buan (who died of shock at the sad news), under the mound at nearby Mainham. Locals refer to the bullaun stone as a “wart stone” and attribute healing powers to the rain that collects in the bowl-shaped hollow.