

History of the Old Fort

Built in 1547/8 during the tenure of Bellingham, Lord Justice of Ireland, in the reign of *"the boy King"* Edward VI, it became known as FORT PROTECTOR. The earliest written record of the Fort comes from August 1548 when Thomas Walshe *"set forth the musters for the new Fort of Leix"*. Protector was to become the administrative and military centre in medieval Laois (Leix) and acted as the chief garrison in the territory which oversaw the English settler plantation of the Midlands.

A town grew up around the Fort walls from the 1560's, renamed MARYBOROUGH in honour of Queen Mary. A church (located on present day Railway Street) was added in the 1580's as the town expanded and was granted a market by Royal charter. The *"unruly"* O'More's and other native clansmen of the county constantly harassed the New Settlers. The town and Fort were attacked and placed under siege a number of times by Rory and his son Owey Mac Rory O'More.

Although burnt down in 1597/8, the garrison recovered enough power by the following year to capture and slay 37 rebels who had their heads placed on spikes along the Fort walls as punishment for their uprising! By the early 1600's the natives had been broken and many were transplanted against their will from Laois to marginal lands in Kerry. However, conflict arose again during the Cromwellian campaign in Ireland in the mid-1600s. The Fort surrendered to the Catholic leader Owen Roe O'Neill in 1646, gave refuge to the Papal Nuncio Cardinal Rinnuccini in 1648 but was recaptured and dismantled by Cromwell's Generals Hewson and Reynolds in 1650.

The modern town continued to grow up around the Fort and it was used briefly as a barracks for a LEINSTER DRAGOON REGIMENT up until the early 1800's. A castle (located near present day Fortune's Corner/O'Loughlins) was pulled down in 1837 leaving us today with just one rounded bastion tower and sections of defensive walls, from the once mighty original fortification.



OLD FORT QUARTER FESTIVAL

Medieval heritage
Music acts
Street theatre
Artisan food market
Comedy stage
and more!

FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY

www.oldfortquarter.ie



MUSIC MAIN STAGE

FRIDAY 22 JUNE

- 7pm The Jury
- 8.30pm The Frank & Walters
- 10.30pm Roll With It - Ultimate Oasis Tribute
- 12.30am DJ

SATURDAY 23 JUNE

- 12pm Joe S
- 1pm Vendetta Love
- 2pm Curtis Walsh
- 3pm Robin and the Hoods
- 4pm Portlaoise Comhaltas
- 5pm Dublin Ukulele Collective
- 7pm Rusangano
- 8pm The Valves
- 10pm Transmitter
- 12.30am DJ Bob Conway

SUNDAY 24 JUNE

- 12pm Fionn Marum
- 1pm Curtis Walsh
- 2pm Music Generation Laois
- 4pm Vocalese
- 5pm Kavanagh's Ukulele Troup
- 6pm Soul Beats
- 7.30pm James O'Connor & Alan Smyth
- 10pm Smash Hits
- 12.30am DJ Bob Conway

STAGE 2

- | FRIDAY | SATURDAY | SUNDAY |
|----------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 7.30pm Radio Nowhere | DJs all night | 7.30pm Abbey Folk |
| 9.15pm Super Bass | | Followed by DJ |

MEDIEVAL HERITAGE

SATURDAY & SUNDAY 12-6pm

ON FITZMAURICE PLACE

Step back in time to Medieval Maryborough and learn some of the fascinating history of the mighty Fort Protector!

Great fun for history buffs and curious kids alike! Explore a soldier's camp display, stalls of medieval armoury, medieval craft and cooking displays or make your own shield.

Featuring Lord Edwards Own Re-enactment Group, Raven Haven Aviaries, Ancient Music Ireland and Irish History Live Re-enactments Group.

Explore the Old Fort of Maryborough on a short, guided-walk led by Laois Heritage Society. Starting from the Main Stage at 2pm, 3.30pm and 5pm on Saturday and Sunday.

You'll be amazed at the hundreds of years of Heritage, tucked away behind our Main Street, previously unknown to most locals and visitors alike!

ARTISAN FOOD MARKET

All weekend, some of the best local artisan producers from Laois and beyond will bring their culinary delights to Portlaoise for our delicious market.

- * Coca Couture - Artisan Chocolate
- * Original Street Food Junkie
- * Rockfield Ice Cream
- * Quarrymount Free Range Organic Meats
- * Athaboe Farm Foods
- * Gee's Jams Chutneys
- * Haze Foods Crepes
- * Bloom Restaurant's Outdoor BBQ
- * Sharon Shannon's Garden of Vegan
- * Flavour Safari
- * La Merienda - Mexican Street Food
- * Fuel Your Roots - Vegan Stall

FAMILY FUN

From 12-6pm SATURDAY and SUNDAY

ON MAIN STREET & FITZMAURICE PLACE

- * Face Painting, Giant Games and Street Theatre Shows

ALSO on SATURDAY - Cruinniú na nÓg

Cruinniú na nÓg is a new national day of creativity for children and young people, taking place on 23rd June 2018. The Old Fort Quarter Festival will be celebrating this day with a whole host of additional creative activities for children and young people, funded by Creative Ireland and organised by the Arts Office of Laois County Council.

On Fitzmaurice Place from 12 to 5pm, there's:

- * Art and circus skill workshops,
- * Cupcake decorating
- * Shield making
- * Intercultural dance, drama and music performances for and by young people and children

At the Dunamais Arts Centre there will be

- * Storytelling for children
- * Introductory instrument playing Try-an-Instrument
- * Dance performances
- * Silent Disco
- * Drumming circle
- * Rap workshop

COMEDY Kavannagh's pub, Main St (upstairs)

SATURDAY

- 4pm Eve Darcy and Pauline Shanahan
- 5.45pm Cornelius O'Sullivan & Anthony Riordan
- 7.30pm Mark Doheny

SUNDAY

- 5.45pm Gary Lynch & Greg Marx
- 7.30pm Jonathan Sheehan & Ashlee Bentley