

Wexford Festival Opera Tours



Johnstown Castle and gardens.

The Wexford Historical Society tours have been an integral part of the Opera Festival since 1951. The tours are organised by Bernard Browne, following in the tradition of George Hadden and Nicholas Furlong who organised the tours for over 60 years. All the tours are free and depart from the car park of the Talbot Hotel promptly at 10.30 a.m. and return by 1.00 p.m. The tours are a wonderful opportunity to explore the hidden gems throughout the town and county and are led by experienced guides.

SATURDAY, 20 OCTOBER

Explore maritime Wexford on a walking tour along Wexford's Quay outlining its maritime history with particular references to Commodore John Barry and the USN Air Station located at Ferrybank during WWI with author and musicologist **Liam Gaul**. Walking Tour.

MONDAY, 22 OCTOBER

Marking the centenary of the birth of Brendan Corish T.D. (1918–1990), former Tánaiste of the Irish Republic and Leader of the Irish Labour Party, learn more about the life and times of one of Wexford's most illustrious and beloved political sons with his niece and tour guide, **Helen Corish-Wylde**. Walking Tour.

TUESDAY, 23 OCTOBER

Join naturalist Jim Hurley along the beach and rocky shoreline in the fishing village of Kilmore Quay. The tour examines a 600 million-year-old rock outcrop, St Patrick's Bridge, an unusual landform allegedly constructed by Ireland's patron saint, and much more. Round trip 48 km.

WEDNESDAY, 24 OCTOBER

An exploration of the medieval town of New Ross, developed by William Marshall and his wife Isabel, granddaughter of Diarmait Mac Murchada in the thirteenth century. New Ross was later known as the ancestral home of the Kennedy family. **Brian Matthews**, former chairman of Wexford Historical Society, leads the tour. Round trip 60 km.

THURSDAY, 25 OCTOBER

A visit to the south county village of Our Lady's Island. Discover the history of this pre-Christian settlement, a place of ancient pilgrimage, which continues today with historian **Bernard Browne**. Round trip 40 km.

FRIDAY, 26 OCTOBER

This duo of experienced tour guides, **Monica Crofton** and local businessman, **Ray Corish**, provide an insight into the neglected aspects of thirteenth century Norman Wexford Church and State. Walking Tour.

SATURDAY, 27 OCTOBER

John Edward Redmond (1856–1918), Wexford man and leader of The Irish Parliamentary Party from 1900–1918, was one of the most influential Irish politicians in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The tour visits Ballytrent House in South Wexford where he spent his formative years. With **Jarlath Glynn**, librarian and expert on the Redmond family. Round trip 45 km.

MONDAY, 29 OCTOBER

Tour the glorious Tintern Abbey and its wandering history from William Marshall, the greatest knight in chivalry, to the Colclough family with **Imelda Carroll**, librarian and writer. Round trip 60 km.

TUESDAY, 30 OCTOBER

The village of Taghmon, just outside of Wexford town, was an important early Christian monastic settlement. Native author, dramatist and historian Greg Walsh gives an objective analytical view of the phases of the Christian story, visiting relevant sites in the village. Round trip 25 km.

WEDNESDAY, 31 OCTOBER

A Halloween treat! Visit the lost town of Carrick, located on the grounds of the Irish National Heritage Park, Wexford and explore the excavations of the buried remains of the first Anglo-Norman fortification, built in 1169, with its General Manager, **Maura Bell**. Round trip 6 km.

THURSDAY, 1 NOVEMBER

Begin the Celtic New Year with a visit to Enniscorthy town and explore its multiple layers of history including the wonderful Pugin Cathedral, castle and the heroic story of the 1798 rebellion with Enniscorthy Historian **David Hasslacher**. Round trip 60 km.

FRIDAY, 2 NOVEMBER

Johnstown Castle and gardens is now in a new and exciting phase in its long history. **Peter Millar**, Chairman of the Agricultural Museum, Johnstown Castle, takes you on a journey through its historical past and rejuvenated future. Round trip 10 km.

SATURDAY, 3 NOVEMBER

A visit to Bridgetown, a bustling south Wexford village with its canal and railway, a church dedicated to the Welsh St David and a magnificent stained glass window by Edward Burne-Jones at Mulrankin Church is led by **Brendan Culliton**, Chairman of Wexford Historical Society. Round trip 25 km.