

Walking the Reenascreena trail: episode 2

Contributed by Calvin Jones
Monday, 18 July 2005

On Tuesday 22 June a fine crowd of walkers, led by local historian Fachtna O'Callaghan, headed out from Reenascreena on a walk that marked the start of the Reenascreena Crossroads Arts Festival 2005. The group walked to the crossroads known locally as the "Four Crosses" before turning left and heading up to the famous stone circle that gives Reenascreena its name -- "The Ring of the Shrine".

Excavated between 1959 and 1962 the circle is widely acknowledged in archaeological circles as a fine example of a megalithic monument of this type. It consists of 13 standing stones oriented to the "Minor Lunar Standstill" position. The circle is just over 9 metres in diameter and is surrounded by a narrow boggy area that was in all likelihood a moat.

After a brief stop to admire the circle, and to listen to a fascinating commentary by Fachtna regarding its history and significance, the walk continued eastwards for several miles to the site of a local hill fort before returning to complete the circuit into the village. It was a wonderful evening, and a fitting start to the 2005 festival.