



The History of Cromane Coastguard Station

By Erin Moroney

Why the Coastguard Station was built

Coastguard Service started in 1822 and by 1837 there were fifteen stations in Kerry. They were in three areas: Tralee which had five, Valentia had four and Dingle had six.

The station was built to replace the Dunquin Station which was closed because it had poor landing facilities.

Cromane began building the station in 1866 and was finished two years later in 1868.

The Coastguard Before



The Coastguard was made by the British from stone, it had six houses: One for the chief boatman and the another five for his men and their families. All terraced houses contained three bedrooms upstairs, a kitchen and a scullery room downstairs.

The watchtower and watchhouse contained two rooms.

The boathouse was close to the beach and was separate from the main building.

At the southern end of the building there was the day-room and the lookout room which was twenty-six feet in height.

Beside the tower was a forty foot flag staff where the Union Jack was hoisted every day.

The Coastguard Now



Jacks' Coastguard Restaurant is an Award Winning Restaurant in fishing village of Cromane just minutes off the Ring of Kerry and Wild Atlantic Way.



Blue Men

The coastguard themselves wore blue denim overalls and pillbox caps and were known as the "Blue Men" or "Na Fir Ghorm".

Reference

Killorglin – Fatal Accident

"On the evening of Friday last, as a boat from the Lanne was returning laden with sea-weed, from Inch Bar, and just as she turned to Point of Cromane a sudden squall came upon her and she sank, when, melancholy to relate the crew consisting of 4 men met a watery grave. Female who accompanied them was fortunate to grasp 2 of the oars of the boat, and thus succeeded in remaining afloat until the Coastguards of the Cromane Station were able to approach and rescue." - Reference; Daily Express Tuesday 29th. June 1852.

(It is believed that the above "Lanne"; is actually a reference to the Laune River, which flows into Castlemaine Harbour at Ballykissane.)

Local Folklore

One night four local men somehow managed to get hold of the key – they took the Protection boat across to Inch and scuttled it. If these men were recognised, they'd deal with severe punishment – luckily, they were not found – a livelihood for their families is what they were engaged in.

The Marble Rock

One hundred and 160 years ago, a ten tonne Spanish marble rock was found on Cromane Beach. The slab of rock was supposed to go to Killorglin and be part of a step in Saint James' Church but it fell off the ship. It was found in 2004. It's said to be a local landmark since 1840.

1 APPROX: Monty O'Neil and Pat Casey see the digger approach.

2 ATTEMPT: The digger moves in closer to the disputed rock.

3 CLOSE: The digger bucket attempts a removal.

4 NO WAY: Monty O'Neil sits back on the rock and refuses to move.

Cromane locals determined to protect beach landmark

Hollywood star to lead Killarney parade

Hollywood is coming to Killarney for Saint Patrick's Day as Sir star and comedian Denis Leary heads up the street parade in the role of grand marshal.

The actor, who regularly visits the home of his daughter, is making a five-day tour in the town.

The late Father John, who was from Kesh, County Wick, died suddenly on a visit home in 1960. The incident, which took place in the town, was a tragedy for the community.

Mr. Leary, who is a well-known figure in the town, is a great friend of the town and will be leading the parade on Saturday.

He will be joined by a number of other celebrities and will be a great asset to the town.

The parade will be a great success and will be a great day for the town.

PARADE LEADER: Denis Leary

LOCALS DETERMINED TO defend a disputed rock on Cromane beach say they will never allow it to be removed from the site onto which it fell 184 years ago.

on Friday as attempts were made to remove the stone, which has been a landmark in the area for generations," local man Pat Casey told Kerry's Echo.

But Mr Moriarty says the rock is legally his. "Nobody had any interest in the rock before now and following some investigation, I contacted descendants of the ship's owners, who also owned the marble quarry in Spain," he said.

"It's 4th generation descendants of the original owner gave me permission to remove the rock."

The Killorglin man confirmed he will be attempting to remove the rock, again on St Patrick's Day, when tides will be favourable.

When asked about the incident on Saturday, he said: "They were obstructing me. They knew what they were doing. No one from Cromane has approached me regarding this rock."

"It must also be stated that deep marks on the rock were not done by me."

In the meantime, local people are being urged to watch on site and are united in their efforts to ensure the local landmark remains on the beach.

A Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources spokesperson confirmed a special licence is required to remove large items from a beach.

According to Mr Moriarty, he is awaiting a decision.

"I contacted the Department of the Marine and am awaiting a licence to remove the rock. The licence will be granted if it can be proved that the rock is a landmark."

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The Boathouse

The boathouse was also built at the same time.

The road then went only as far as the boathouse and those living below the boathouse walked the beach to their homes and in bad weather walked through the fields to the left of the boathouse. The road to lower Cromane was built as late as the 1920's (before the road was built in the area where it is now built was often flooded).

In 2019 Toni and Fionan Walsh made a café shack outside the boathouse, it is a great tourist attraction, especially in the summer. It opened in 2019 just before Covid-19 but was still open during Covid-19 because it was an outside café. In 2020 they renovated the boathouse to make seating areas inside on cold days, it opened in 2021 and have had more customers

The Boathouse

Before



After



Resources

Primary Sources

Locals in Cromane

Conversation with the Jacks
Marketing Manager.

Secondary Sources

[The Irish Times](#)

[The Boathouse Cromane](#)

[Jacks Coastguard Resturant](#)