



An aerial view of the 'Dedication Ceremony, Wreathlaying and Unveiling of Memorial Monument at Abbey Street to honour the memory of Robert Brennan. Pic: Jim Campbell



Laying of a wreath by Minister Paul Kehoe on behalf of the Irish Government during the 'Dedication Ceremony, Wreathlaying and Unveiling of Memorial Monument at Abbey Street to honour the memory of Robert Brennan. Pic: Jim Campbell



Ms Yvonne Jerrold, grand daughter of Robert Brennan address the attendance during the 'Dedication Ceremony, Wreathlaying and Unveiling of Memorial Monument at Abbey Street to honour the memory of Robert Brennan. Pic: Jim Campbell



The memorial was unveiled by Mayor Cllr Ger Carthy and Ms Yvonne Jerrold during the 'Dedication Ceremony, Wreathlaying and Unveiling of Memorial Monument at Abbey Street to honour the memory of Robert Brennan. Pic: Jim Campbell

# Wexford's 1916 leader honoured

by Geni Murphy

LOCAL REPUBLICAN hero Robert Brennan was honoured in his hometown of Wexford on Saturday last, when a large crowd gathered for the unveiling of a plaque dedicated to his memory.

Descendants joined dignitaries and members of the community alike for the Abbey Street event to commemorate Wexford's 1916 Rising leader and historic public figure.

Outgoing Mayor of Wexford, Ger

Carthy, joined Minister of State at the Department of Defence, Paul Kehoe TD, for the special ceremony.

A Colour Party from the 3rd Infantry Battalion, Irish Defence Forces and members of the Commodore John Barry branch of the National Organisation for Ex-Service Personnel were also in attendance.

Renowned local historian and writer Nicky Furlong gave a short address to the assembled audience on Robert Brennan's life before the memorial was officially unveiled.

"Robert Brennan, one of our greatest, most courageous heroes is at last given the gratitude and the eminence he deserves," Mr. Furlong said.

"After seventy years Wexford honours a man who was born here, walked these very streets, played, developed and grew to manhood, a man who became a colossus in Ireland's history," he said.

Those in attendance heard how Brennan was Director of Publicity for the Republican forces during the Irish Civil War and spent much time in British jails as a result.

Having led the Wexford Volunteers during the Rising, Brennan was arrested, jailed, court-martialled and due to be executed at Kilmainham Jail.

On the morning of his execution, however, British Prime Minister Asquith ordered a halt to the serial executions on foot of US demands.

Brennan went on to have a varied public career through politics, journalism with The Echo and diplomacy.

The 1916 leader became the first Director General of the Irish Press and later Ireland's First Minister to the USA, a Washington-based post he would hold throughout the second World War.

On his return to Ireland, the distinguished Wexfordman was appointed Director of Broadcasting for Radio Éireann.

It was in this post that Brennan remained until retirement.

Wexford Parish Administrator Father Aodhán Markam and Canon Arthur Minion blessed the Abbey Street memorial to Brennan, which was officially unveiled by his granddaughter Suzanne Maher.

Lieutenant Keelan O'Toole of the Irish Defence Forces read out the Irish Proclamation at the event, while wreaths were laid on behalf of the Irish Government, the people of Wexford and Robert Brennan's relatives.

Talented local musician Anthony Nolan played The Last Post and Reveille as Lieutenant O'Toole raised the Irish National flag during the ceremony.

In conclusion, St. Patrick's Fife and Drum band played Amhrán na bhFiann to round off one of the most significant events in Wexford's 1916 commemorations' calendar.



Minister Paul Kehoe TD and Mayor Cllr Ger Carthy pictured with family and guests at the 'Dedication Ceremony, Wreathlaying and Unveiling of Memorial Monument at Abbey Street to honour the memory of Robert Brennan. Pic: Jim Campbell