

**“Let us never again ignore a grave because it holds the remains of the poor. Let us remember that material wealth means nothing in the long run. Let us not forget our dead. May they all rest in peace”**

Across the road from Borrisokane Community College, formerly the Borrisokane Union Workhouse, lies a small graveyard containing the remains of those who died in the Workhouse from its establishment in 1853 until its closure in 1923. In 2010 the Local Tidy Towns Committee and the local Historical Society erected two plaques in the graveyard in memory of the many people buried there. Most were buried in a grave containing more than one corpse marked only with a mound and a simple rock. There are no headstones to indicate the identity of those interred and so their names have been lost to us for over a hundred years.

In 2019 Transition Year History students, as part of the school’s Heritage Project, began researching the civil death records to find the names of those who died in the Workhouse. Students studied over 5,800 death records for the Borrisokane area between 1878 and 1923 and found evidence of 774 deaths in the Workhouse during that time. It is assumed that the vast majority of those are buried in the graveyard adjacent to the school.

A list of these names was compiled and published on the school website. The list includes names, dates of death, ages and former residence. Each name also includes a link that when clicked will direct to the original death certificate document.

In the course of this research the students involved gained a real appreciation for the history of their school and a sense of empathy with the people who lived and died in the Workhouse. They also learned valuable research and digital skills. They have provided an invaluable service to the local community in terms of contributing to the body of historical knowledge about the Workhouse. We hope that this project will be seen as an act of compassion and remembrance towards the poorer people of the area who had mostly difficult lives and were buried in unmarked graves with no one to mourn or remember them.