

*Tom Kenny's*

# OLD GALWAY

**A BIRD'S EYE VIEW**

**A photographic exhibition**

**31 March - 30 April, 2026**

Kennys Bookshop & Art Gallery,  
Liosbán Retail Park, Tuam Road,  
Galway, H91 N5P8



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22. Lower Abbeygate Street showing the Browne Doorway in its original setting.



15. A view of Salthill extending from the Hangar and Dalysfort Road to Seapoint, 1953.

## Tom Kenny's Old Galway – A Bird's Eye View

*A photographic exhibition*

A new exhibition in the **Tom Kenny's Old Galway** series opens at the Kenny Gallery with a collection of more than 40 enlarged photographs from the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this time presenting Galway from above.

*Tom Kenny's Old Galway – A Bird's Eye View* brings together aerial photographs and elevated viewpoints that reveal the city's streets, rivers, docks, and neighbourhoods from perspectives rarely seen in everyday life. While most of the images are aerial in nature, a small number capture the city from high vantage points, offering a similar bird's-eye perspective on Galway's changing landscape.

Among the earliest pieces in the exhibition is a remarkable **1651 map of Galway**, drawn during the Cromwellian period. Although created centuries before aerial photography was possible, the map presents an almost bird's-eye understanding of the walled city and its surroundings, anticipating the perspectives that later photographers would capture from the air.

The exhibition also highlights the work of pioneering aerial photographers whose images documented Galway's development across the twentieth century, including figures such as **Norman Ashe**, whose remarkable aerial surveys remain an invaluable visual record of the region.

Grateful acknowledgement is also due to the photographer **Gerry O’Gorman**, whose generosity in gifting his entire collection of aerial photographs to Tom’s photographic archive has greatly enriched the visual record of Galway from above.

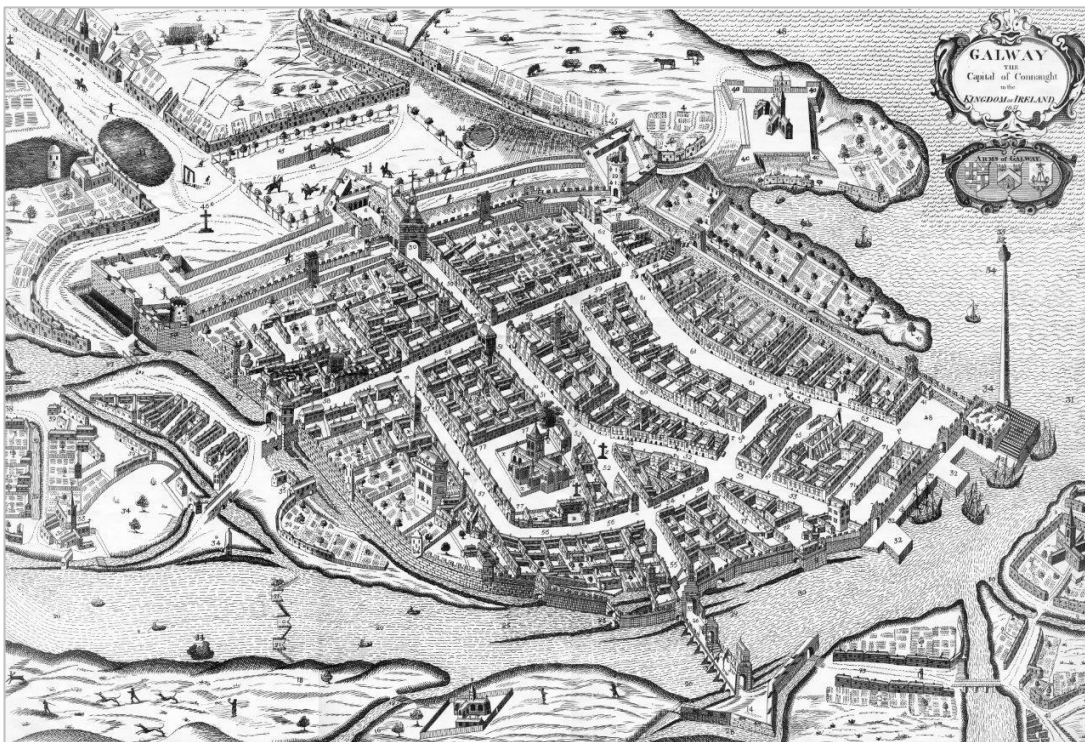
Today, with drones capable of capturing effortless aerial views, such perspectives are readily available. The historic photographs gathered here remind us how rare and remarkable these vantage points once were, and how valuable they remain as records of Galway’s changing landscape.

After fifty years of Tom Kenny’s *Old Galway* column in the *Galway Advertiser*, the exhibition revisits photographs that have been central to his exploration of Galway’s rich social history.

In addition to the exhibition, two volumes drawn from Tom’s work on the column have been published, documenting the fascinating stories behind many of the photographs.

**Tom Kenny’s Old Galway – A Bird’s Eye View** runs at the Kenny Gallery, Galway, from **31 March to 30 April 2026**. Open Monday to Saturday, **9:00–17:00**, admission is free and all are welcome.

The exhibition will be opened at **6:00pm on Tuesday 31 March** at the **Kenny Gallery, Liosbán Retail Park, Tuam Road, Galway (H91 N5P8)**, in the form of a live recording of the **Old Galway podcast** with **Dick Byrne**, historian and architect, in conversation with Tom Kenny.



1. *The 1651 map of Galway*

## A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

**1.** The 1651 map of Galway, the first aerial view of the city. Some features are slightly exaggerated but otherwise a brilliant overall view of The City of The Tribes.

*Léarscáil don chathair, 1651. Chuir an cairteoir rud beag leis an fhírinne, ach is íomhá tábhachtach í seo le sonraí agus mioneolas faoi Chathair na dTreabh.*

**2.** A panoramic view of College Road at the top of picture, the Fairgreen car park seen to the right, Lough Athalia in the distance. c.1988.

*Radharc iomrothlach de Bhóthar an Choláiste agus Loch an tSáile le feiceáil i bhfad uainn. c.1988.*

**3.** When Salthill was a Village. 1950. A view showing Kenny's Field, The Nun's Field and Monk's Field with the village in the background.

*Bóthar na Trá nuair a bhí sé ina shráidbhaile gan aon forbairt déanta fós ar na seanpháirceanna, áit ina bhfuil dúichí tithíochta anois, 1950.*

**4.** A panorama of the city c.1988. The main feature is the large empty space left after the fire of 1971.

*Lánléargas don chathair i 1988, is é an príomhghné an spás fágtha tar éis an dóiteáin mhóir i 1971.*

**5.** The Fishmarket and Long Walk. The docks are being dredged and you can see the beginning of the development of housing in Renmore. 1953.

*Margadh na nÉisc agus na duganna á ndreideáil i 1953.*

**6.** The river from the Salmon Weir to the sea, Fisheries Field on the right. 1953.

*Abhainn na Gaillimhe ón gCora go Cuan na Gaillimhe. 1953.*

**7.** Upper Salthill showing the Church of Christ the King, Lenaboy Gardens on the right and the beginnings of Ardnamara in the distance. 1953.

*Bóthar na Trá Uachtar, 1953.*

**8.** The Central Hospital. The new Nurse's Home is being built. Newcastle Park has yet to be constructed, c.1933.

*An tOspidéal Lárnach, Teach na mBanaltraí á thógáil, c.1933.*

**9.** The Connacht Laundry, Canal Road in the foreground, Henry Street and Helen Street running from left to right. 1989.

*Teach Níocháin Chonnacht, Sráid Héilín ag dul ó chlé go deas. 1989.*

**10.** Crowded beaches in Salthill and the Pools are busy. Dr. Mannix Road and Glenard under construction. c.1960.

*Tá an Trá plúchta le daoine agus na linnte snámha gnóthach, na tithe ar Bhóthar an Dochtúir Mannix á dtógáil. c.1960.*

**11.** The Cathedral is framed by the river and the canal. Very little development on the Headford Road. c.1968.

*An Ardeaglais le feiceáil idir an abhainn agus an sruth mhuilinn. c.1968.*

- 12.** The tanks on the docks are the main feature. Reconstruction of Merchant's Road has begun. 1990.  
*Na taiscumair ar na duganna, Sráid na gCeannaithe á haththógáil. 1990.*
- 13.** Looking down on the river, Claddagh Basin to the left. Jury's Hotel now built. 1990.  
*Abhainn na Gaillimhe, Báisín an Chladaigh ar chlé. 1990.*
- 14.** The roundabout at Moneenageesha with the school in the foreground. Corbett's warehouses bottom left. 1990.  
*An timpeallán ag Móinín na gCiseach, an scoil le feiceáil sa réamhionad. 1990.*
- 15.** A view of Salthill extending from the Hangar and Dalysfort Road to Seapoint which is under construction. 1953.  
*Bóthar na Trá ó Halla Damhsa an Hangar agus Bóthar Dún Dálaigh go Halla Damhsa Seapoint a bhí á thógáil ag an am, 1953.*
- 16.** St. Mary's School and grounds, St. Mary's Road in the foreground, parts of Ragoon Road on the right. 1950.  
*Coláiste Mhuire agus an timpeallacht. 1950.*
- 17.** A view of the city, Lough Athalia in the foreground, part of the docks to the left, the railway station complex to the right. 1950.  
*Cathair na Gaillimhe, Loch an tSáile sa réamhionad. 1950.*
- 18.** The river from the weir to the Hygeia buildings, the Gaol site to the left, Market Street in the foreground. 1952.  
*Abhainn na Gaillimhe ón gCora go foirgnimh Hygeia, an príosún ar chlé. 1952.*
- 19.** A view of the corner of Eyre Square and Prospect Hill taken from a crane, 1960.  
*An Fhaiche Mhór agus Cnoc na Radhairc. 1960.*
- 20.** A view of the corner of Church Lane and Shop Street taken from the tower of St. Nicholas' Collegiate Church. 1983.  
*Coirnéal Lána an Teampaill agus Sráid na Siopaí. 1983.*
- 21.** A wet Woodquay with part of Francis Street in the foreground. Taken from a crane. 1960.  
*Barr an Chaladh tar éis báistí, Sráid Phroinsias sa réamhionad. 1960.*
- 22.** Lower Abbeygate Street showing the Browne Doorway in its original setting. The Pro-Cathedral in the background. taken from the top of a building. c.1895.  
*Doras de Brún ina bhunsuíomh i Sráid Gheata na Mainistreach Íochtair, c.1895.*
- 23.** Newly build houses along Fr. Griffin Road from the top of the Technical School which was under construction. 1938.  
*Na tithe nua ar an mbóthar nua, Bóthar an Athar Uí Ghríofa. 1938.*

- 24.** The Regional Hospital under construction, the Model School and the newly built Shantalla Clinic in the foreground. 1953.  
*An tOspidéal Réigiúnach i mbun tógála, an scoil Protastúnach sa réamhionad. 1953.*
- 25.** Pearse Stadium under construction and Ardnamara is almost completed. 1956.  
*Páirc an Phiarsaigh i mbun tógála, eastát Ardnamara beagnach críochnaithe. 1956.*
- 26.** A wet day crossing Wolfe Tone Bridge showing some of the walls of the old Custom House. c.1990.  
*Lá fliuch ar Dhroichead Wolfe Tone, seanbhallaí Theach an Chustaim le feiceáil. c.1990.*
- 27.** The Quadrangle, U.C.G. with the pitch in front. The campus has yet to be built. 1950.  
*Ceathairuilleog Choláiste na hOllscoile leis an bpáirc imeartha. 1950.*
- 28.** The newly built St. Patrick's National School showing part of Lombard Street and Market Street. The rear of Bridge Street buildings in the foreground. 1953.  
*Scoil Náisiúnta nua Naomh Phádraig. 1953.*
- 29.** Calvary Hospital, with Renmore Road in the background. Part of the main Galway to Dublin Road on the right. 1953.  
*Ospidéal Calvary, an bóthar go Baile Átha Cliath ar dheis. 1953.*
- 30.** The Savoy Cinema as seen from a crane. 1960.  
*Pictiúrlann an Savoy tógtha ó chrann tógála, 1960.*
- 31.** The Warwick Hotel and Lower Salthill showing parts of Devon Park being built. 1953.  
*Óstán an Warwick agus cuid de Bhóthar na Trá Íochtar. 1953.*
- 32.** St. Enda's College showing Threadneedle Road on the left. Cloran's Cross is at the base of the photograph. 1950.  
*Coláiste Éinde le Bóthar na Mine ar chlé. 1950.*
- 33.** The newly-built Claddagh showing 'The Boggers' to the left. The city in the distance. 1950.  
*Tithe nua an Chladaigh, an chathair i bhfad uainn. 1950.*
- 34.** The corner of Church Lane and Market Street, showing the church graveyard in the foreground. 1990.  
*Coirnéal Lána an Teampaill agus Sráid an Mhargadh, 1990.*
- 35.** A view of the Gaol buildings and the river, U.C.G. boat club and the canal are in the foreground. c.1930.  
*An Príosún agus an Abhainn, Club Bádóireachta an Choláiste agus an chanáil sa réamhionad. c.1930.*
- 36.** The old Claddagh, all thatched buildings with the Claddagh Basin in the background. 1933.  
*Tithe ceann tuí i Sráidbhaile an Chladaigh. 1933.*
- 37.** Shantalla, a few farm buildings and a lot of fields and stone walls. 1940.  
*Roinnt tithe feirme i Sean-Talamh, páirceanna agus fallaí cloiche. 1940.*

**38.** One of the towers of the Cathedral. c.1992.

*Ceann de na túir ar bharr na hArdeaglaise, Institiúid Uí Riain taobh thiar. c.1992.*

**39.** Mervue, showing the newly built Northern Telecom Tower and buildings with Heneghan's glass houses on the right. 1990.

*Túr Northern Telecom i Muirbheach, 1990.*

**40.** St. Brigid's Terrace showing part of Prospect Hill / Bohermore in the foreground. c.1950.

*Árdán Naomh Bríd; roinnt de Chnoc na Radhairc agus an Bóthar Mór le feiceáil. c.1950.*

**41.** The Lion's Tower, Eglinton Street taken from a crane. The Garda Barracks seen on the left. 1960.

*Túr na Leoin, Sráid Eglinton chomh maith le Bearaic na nGardaí. 1960.*

**42.** Cluain Mhuire, the Redemptorist Seminary, Wellpark Road in the foreground. No development to be seen in the background. 1953.

*Cluain Mhuire, Páirc an Tobair. Páirceanna agus fallaí cloiche sa chúlra. 1953.*

**43.** Buildings on Market Street as seen from the tower of St. Nicholas' Collegiate Church. 1936.

*Tithe ar Shráid an Mhargaidh, 1936.*

**44.** The Christmas Market as seen from the top of a building. c.1955.

*Margadh na Nollaig, c.1955.*

**45.** A group of Post Office staff. c.1977.

*Oibrithe i nOifig an Phoist c.1977.*



30. The Savoy Cinema as seen from a crane. 1960.

#### PHOTO CREDITS

*All images from the collection of Tom Kenny except the following, courtesy of the Norman Ashe Collection: Numbers 3, 16, 17, 18, 32; from the National Library of Ireland: 5, 6, 7, 10, 15, 24, 28, 29, 31, 42; by Gerry O'Gorman: 2, 4, 12, 13, 14, 34.*



45. A group of Post Office staff. c.1977.

4. A panorama of the city c.1988







41. The Lion's Tower, 1960.



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**Gallery hours:**  
**Monday to Saturday, 9:00-17:00**  
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