

# THE HOLLYWOOD SIGN



How Hollywood, Co. Wicklow got its sign!



## MESSAGE FROM CHAIR TOMMY TUTTY

Started in 2017, Hollywood Community Forum has been a strong voice for Hollywood and its inhabitants. Since its formation, Hollywood Community Forum has been instrumental in getting a path from the village to the GAA, in lobbying for an official bus stop, in winning a 'Pride of Place' award and now in organising a permanent 'Hollywood' sign to grace the hills above the village.



I would like to thank Hollywood Community Forum committee members, both past and present and previous Chair Kay Hogan for all their hard work towards our permanent 'Hollywood' sign.

I would also like to acknowledge Pat Reilly, landowner, without whose co-operation this project could not have taken place.

I wish to also acknowledge County Wicklow Partnership Leader Funding and the wider Hollywood community for their support for this project.

Hollywood Community Forum continues its work to this very day. Our goal is to enhance our village and surrounding areas for all those living in and visiting the area, now and into the future.

*Tommy Tutty, Chair, Hollywood Community Forum, May 2026*

## MESSAGE FROM PAST CHAIR KAY HOGAN

Since its foundation in 2017, Hollywood Community Forum has aimed to enhance the community's interests, historically, environmentally, culturally and to support tourism.

I was elected Chairperson in 2018 and it quickly became apparent that our next project was to make the Hollywood sign permanent. After much work, in January 2023 we obtained planning permission for a permanent sign. I acted as coordinator between Wicklow County Council, landowner and committee. Each Forum member had different assignments and I am pleased to say the Forum worked very well together. Tommy Tutty took over as Chair when I stepped down and I would like to express my utmost thanks and admiration to all the present members.



*Kay Hogan, Past Chair, Hollywood Community Forum*

# HISTORY OF THE HOLLYWOOD SIGN

In 1998, Hollywood found itself at the centre of two remarkable occasions. The first was the filming of *Dancing at Lughnasa*, which brought an extraordinary cast to our village including Meryl Streep and Michael Gambon.



*Hollywood star Meryl Streep with Jim Tutty on the set of Dancing at Lughnasa*

The second occasion was the Tour de France. On 12 July 1998, Stage One of the race took cyclists from Dublin, through Wicklow, the Wicklow Gap, Hollywood and back to Dublin, 180 kilometres in all. 'It was one of the greatest sporting occasions ever to pass through this part of the world and we knew it,' said Tommy Tutty.



*1998 brochure for Tour de France Festival, Hollywood & map showing route*

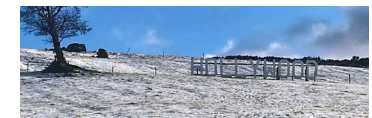
With cycling enthusiasts and film crews expected from all over the world, Hollywood community was determined to make the most of every moment.

'We needed a sign, something on the hill that the cameras couldn't miss,' said Tommy. The thinking was simple: put Hollywood, Co. Wicklow on the map. 'Let the world know we were here and remind them that our little village had its own claim to the Hollywood name long before California did.'

(It is believed Mathew Guirke, born in the village, gave his hometown's name to what is now the iconic film capital of the world: Hollywood, California.)

Tommy and his daughter Suzann quickly set to work, marking out the letters on plywood left behind from the *Dancing at Lughnasa* film set. With support from Kevin Traynor and the kind permission of the late Tom Reilly, the sign was put up on Reilly's Hill, overlooking the village.

That original sign remained in place for a good number of years, before weather and livestock damaged it and it fell into disrepair.



*The old Hollywood sign in the snow*

For the first Hollywood Fair in 2011, a new sign, using plywood supplied by Billy Fennan was constructed. This sign was the same shape and size that people know today. It measured 15 metres long by 1.8 metres high. But the story didn't end there.



*Michell Lenehan's painting of Hollywood Fair*

Now we have a permanent steel sign erected on the hill – this version made of powder-coated aluminium letters, supported by galvanised steel box sections set on steel joists in concrete but fittingly, the same size and shape as the one made for that first fair back in 2011.

'From a piece of plywood cut by hand in 1998 to a steel structure standing for generations, it has come a long way,' says Tommy.

# SEVEN YEARS IN THE MAKING: PLANNING, PERMISSIONS & PROJECT DELIVERY

Over the years, the Hollywood sign became woven into the landscape of our village. When the light shifted across the hillside, the letters seemed to disappear entirely; at other times, they caught the sun and sparkled brightly, a familiar sight that locals grew to love. *'It became part of the rhythm of the place, a quiet landmark that felt as natural as the hill itself,'* said Ann Halpin.



*The old Hollywood sign in beautiful evening light.*

But the sign was never designed to be permanent. Time, weather and the simple realities of its construction meant that a more enduring solution would eventually be needed.



*Hollywood Community Forum members inspecting the old Hollywood sign which was in disrepair.*

## HOLLYWOOD SIGN PROJECT

Between 2018 and 2026, Hollywood Community Forum moved from early discussions to full project delivery. Detailed planning was undertaken, with responsibilities allocated across committee members to ensure the project progressed efficiently and transparently.

## PLANNING & PERMISSIONS

Consultation between landowner Pat Reilly and Hollywood Community Forum Chair Kay Hogan marked the beginning of the formal process. After permission was granted by the landowner, planning drawings were prepared. Kay organised the planning permission application and approval was granted, two essential milestones that allowed the project to progress.

## FINDING FUNDING

Funding applications were prepared by Ann Halpin with approval secured through the support of Alison Keogh of County Wicklow Partnership Leader Funding. Additional financial arrangements were put in place through Blessington Credit Union.

Following an appeal, local community sponsors generously donated to make up the funds for the completion of the project.

With funding and permissions secured, local contractors were appointed. Project

designs were refined and logistical planning was coordinated by Aideen Klauer and Tommy Tutty.

Financial and tax accounts were managed by Cici Zheng in collaboration with Accountant Ronan Byrne, while the license agreement and legal matters were overseen by Peter Doyle, Solicitor, working closely with Ann Halpin.



*The first letter of the new Hollywood sign is erected.*

## AND FINALLY...

As the project entered its final months, weather challenges, design adjustments and site delivery issues all emerged in quick succession. However, through persistence, coordination and a strong sense of purpose, the project management team successfully brought the project to completion ahead of deadline, with the permanent Hollywood sign now standing proudly above the village.



*Aerial shot of the newly erected Hollywood sign*



The new Hollywood sign standing proudly above the village

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Hollywood Community Forum would like to gratefully acknowledge the key sponsors whose support made the Hollywood Sign Project possible. We extend our sincere thanks to:

- County Wicklow Partnership Leader Funding (part funding for the sign)
- Wicklow County Council: Community Funding
- Wicklow Tourism



Hollywood Community Forum would like to gratefully acknowledge the following whose support made the Hollywood Sign Project possible. We extend our sincere thanks to:

- Peter Doyle, Solicitor at Doyle Fox & Associates, Blessington.
- Ronan Byrne & Company, Accountant, Carlow
- Liam Cullen, Baltinglass Municipal District Administrator, Wicklow County Council
- Alison Keogh, County Wicklow Partnership
- Blessington Credit Union

## COMMUNITY SPONSORS OF THE HOLLYWOOD SIGN

A special word of thanks to our local sponsors, whose generous contributions played an essential role in bringing the Hollywood Sign Project to conclusion. (in alphabetical order)

- Abhainn Ri Holiday Homes
- Anonymous
- Blessington Union of Parishes
- Catriona Byrne Solicitors
- Crookstown Inn
- Daly's Shop
- Dempsey Sand & Gravel Ltd
- Dr. Jim Gray
- Emma Lyons & Ian Nash
- Future Proof Construction
- GBS Engineering Ltd
- Gerry Terry
- Hollywood Café
- Hollywood Flowers
- Hollywood GAA
- Hollywood ICA
- Hollywood Indoor Bowls Club
- Hollywood Whist
- John Breslin, Wicklow Granite
- Kevin Phelan & Family
- Mike Chen
- Naas Oil Co Ltd
- Nugent Auctioneers
- Richard Burke
- St. Kevin's Way Group Hollywood
- Denis Halpin
- The Hollywood Inn
- Tim Kelly Consulting Engineers Ltd
- Tommy & Marie Tutty
- Tutty's Pub
- Ultra Safe Security Systems

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



First ground is broken in the construction of the new Hollywood sign.

Hollywood Community Forum would like to acknowledge the work of our contractors in the erection of the sign and associated works.

- Garrett Corrigan, Hollywood Groundworks, base, positioning supports and letters.
- Seamus Kelly, GBS Engineering, Naas Lettering.
- Seamus O'Neill, Hillside Ironworks, Donard Supports and brackets for letters.
- John Coogan. Coogan Fencing, Tinahely Fencing and gates.
- Seamus Tutty & Associates, Architects, Hollywood Drawings/Plans.

Hollywood Community Forum would also like to acknowledge local County Councillors for their support for the project.



The construction of the new Hollywood sign nearing completion

# HOLLYWOOD COMMUNITY FORUM

The erection of the new sign was a whole community effort. We acknowledge the contribution of Hollywood Community Forum committee members past and present.

*Kay Hogan, Chairperson 2018-2024*

*Tommy Tutty, Chairperson 2024 - present*

*Committee members: Richard Burke, Ann Halpin, Denis Halpin, Kay Hogan, Claire Berry, Aideen Klauer, Emma Lyons, Marie Tutty, Emma Smith, Cici Zheng.*



*Hollywood Community Forum from l to r: Aideen Klauer, Emma Smith, Marie Tutty, Richard Burke, Kay Hogan, Cici Zheng, Tommy Tutty, Emma Lyons, Denis Halpin, Ann Halpin.*

## A SPECIAL WORD FROM PAT REILLY, LANDOWNER

I hope that The Hollywood Sign brings happiness and prosperity to the village of Hollywood Co. Wicklow. I am very pleased to be part of this permanent Hollywood Sign. I look forward to liaising with the Forum for years to come and that future generations can enjoy this iconic sign in a scenic setting.

*Pat Reilly & Family (Cork)*



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