

Wexford Bullring & Pikeman Statue

The famous Wexford Bullring was recently given a total facelift to commemorate the Bi-centenary of the 1798 Rebellion.

The area was originally a beach where boats were drawn up laden with produce bound for the town's markets.

It got its present name from the medieval sport of Bull-baiting, introduced to the town by the Butchers' Guild.

From 1621 until 1770, bulls were baited twice a year and their hides presented to the Mayor. According to tradition, Cromwell's soldiers massacred part of the civilian population here in October 1649.

Then, during the 1798 rebellion, the Bullring became an open-air armaments factory, making and repairing pikes and other weapons for the insurgents.



Wexford Bullring 2006
Photo by James Busher

Over the years the Bullring has been the venue of many political rallies and protests : Daniel O'Connell, Charles Stewart Parnell, John Redmond, James Larkin and Eamonn de Valera are among the many political figures who have addressed audiences in this historic square at the heart of Wexford.

A 'Tree of Liberty', an oak, was planted in the centre of the Bullring, and embedded in the ground behind the Pikeman statue is a 'time capsule' taking the form of a metal cylinder containing items reflective of Wexford life today.

The limestone setts which sit on either side of the monument feature inscriptions relating to 1798 while bollards in the shape of cannonballs line the area.

Lime trees have been planted at a number of points.

The re-construction of the Bullring was carried out as a 1798 bicentenary project and was officially opened on 31st May, 1998 by President Mary McAleese.



Pikeman Statue
at the Wexford Bullring