

FAMINE WALK 2017

From Hunger and War... to a Home and a Welcome?

Saturday, May 20th 2017
Doolough Valley, Co. Mayo.



Afri 

Beginning at 1.30pm

Registration from 12.45pm

€24 per adult participant (this includes ticket for shuttle bus)

Walk Leaders:

Donnah Vuma

Abjata Khalif

Danny Cusack

Music: Joe Black

We are asking each participant to raise as much sponsorship for Afri as possible to enable us to continue to organise this Famine Walk and a wide range of other work.

Introduction

For 30 years Afri has walked the famine road through the Doolough Valley in County Mayo. It is a walk like no other, abounding in memory, music, history, solidarity and spectacular beauty; retracing the steps of the dispossessed of the past and forging solidarity with the banished and oppressed of today.

Extraordinary people have walked this road over three decades and extraordinary stories have been told: stories of food and famine; of oppression and denial of human rights; of wars, violence and the impact of climate change; but also stories of courage and determination; of inspiration, illumination and motivation. And music, song and theatre from some of our greatest artists have been integral parts of every walk.

This year's walk will link the experience of Irish people fleeing on coffin ships or being condemned to workhouses during An Gorta Mór in the nineteenth century with those crossing the Mediterranean in flimsy, rickety boats today, some of whom, if they survive, may end up in Direct Provision Centres for asylum seekers in Ireland.

Sadly, Ireland's welcome for the stranger has been appalling, despite the fact that we know the experience of being refugees: it's in our genes, it's part of our DNA. Irish people have travelled to the four corners of the earth in search of a safe place of refuge; a secure home; to escape poverty, fear and exploitation.

Now Ireland is in a position to take a lead role in addressing the situation of refugees - one of the most urgent and critical issues facing our world today. According to the UN's refugee agency, the number of people currently in situations of displacement is over 65 million; as many as 55% of these come from war-torn countries such as Afghanistan, Somalia, Iraq, Syria and Sudan.

Drawing on our own experience of famine and exile, we must tackle this critical issue as well as the forces that are bringing it about, especially incessant wars, fed by an obscene arms trade, and climate change.

We must offer a welcome to often vulnerable, traumatised and shell shocked refugees, many of whom have fled war and terror and made hellish journeys across land and sea. Above all, we must end the cruelty of Direct Provision and repeal the new 'International Protection Act', which generates such fear and is a source of such stress for those seeking asylum in our country.

The historical memories evoked by the famine road through the Doolough Valley demand no less.

- Joe Murray

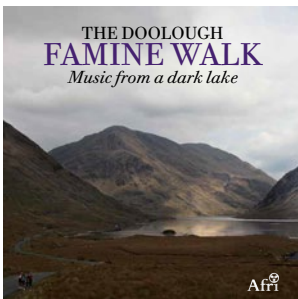
BIOGRAPHIES

Donnah Vuma originally from Zimbabwe, has been in Ireland since 2014 and living in Direct Provision while awaiting a decision on her asylum application. Donnah is a tireless advocate for asylum seekers rights and strongly believes that seeking asylum is not a crime, it is a fundamental human right which should be safeguarded by all nations. Donnah is an active community and youth worker. She is Co founder of MASI - "movement of asylum seekers Ireland" and of Limerick based community group "every child is your child".

Abjata Khalif: is a journalist who works to promote sustainable development and resilience in Kenya. He has a particular interest in climate change, renewable sources of energy and human trafficking. He is Chair of the Kenya Pastoralist Journalist Network, (KPJN) a community organization based in northern Kenya. KPJN, in partnership with Afri is providing solar powered lights for school children, community groups and mid-wives in the region.

Danny Cusack: is a native of Western Australia who has lived in Ireland for 25 years. He currently resides in Kells, Co. Meath. A historian, he has a special interest in the Great Famine and modern Irish history in general. He has also been involved with various human rights and peace & justice organisations over the years. He worked for Afri in 1996 during which time Afri co-produced with Meath County Council a booklet on the Famine in Meath. Danny was also instrumental in the organisation of the Afri famine walk from Mullagh Co. Cavan to Kells Co. Meath which took place annually from 1991 until 1995.

Joe Black Ryder: Joe is a Dublin born musician, singer, songwriter, composer and activist, who was born in the Dublin suburb of Crumlin in 1952. Joe emigrated to England in 1970 and has played in many different bands down through the years. He returned to Dublin in 2004 and is currently completing his musical studies. He does regular gigs in Ireland and abroad. He has been a supporter of Afri for many years and has been involved with the Giuseppe Conlon House in London. He contributed a song called The Ballad of Giuseppe Conlon as a gift to the house. One of the many causes close to his heart is supporting the relatives of Chelsea Manning, the Fox family in South Wales.



'Music from a Dark Lake', a CD featuring some of the amazing singers/musicians who have played on the walk since 1988, will be available at this year's special 30th Famine Walk

Front cover painting by Choctaw artist Waylon (Gary) White Deer entitled Bog Cotton. The painting, among other things features the Workhouse and the Direct Provision Centre.

Practical Information

Please assemble in Louisburgh for registration from 12.45pm. There will be an (approximately) 15/20 min opening ceremony, including speakers and music – this is a very important part of the Famine Walk and we would encourage all participants to be present for this part of the event. Shuttle buses will bring walkers to start point from 1.45pm. A tree planting will take place at the Famine Memorial in Delphi Lodge before walkers return to Louisburgh.

Afri is a justice, peace and human rights

Please note there is no parking available at Delphi Lodge.

The walk is approximately 11 miles and a shuttle car will be available along the route if needed.

Tea/coffee (no food) will be provided at a halfway point along the way.

There will also be toilet facilities at the halfway point as well as along the lake.

organisation, which was founded in 1975. Afri's first 'Famine Walk' took place in 1988, with the aim of linking the experience of Ireland in the 1840s with contemporary issues of famine, hunger, food insecurity and human rights abuses. Since then we have explored many related issues such as food sovereignty and the forced migration of people among other themes

Please help Afri to continue its work by getting sponsorship and taking part in this walk. To register online: <http://tinyurl.com/lkz48au>

Afri gratefully acknowledges the support of Irish Aid, Trócaire and Concern.



IN THE INTEREST OF HEALTH AND SAFETY, PLEASE WALK ON THE LEFT HAND SIDE OF THE ROAD FOR THE DURATION OF THE WALK.

Afri,
134, Phibsborough Road,
Phibsborough, Dublin 7.
Telephone 01-8827563
email: admin@afri.ie



www.afri.ie <http://www.facebook.com/afriireland> Twitter: @afripeace