

Mass grave at Irish orphanage may hold 800 children's remains

SHAWN POGATCHNIK Associated Press Seattle Times 4 June 2014



Anyone looking for more information or to donate to the fund can contact Corless via email: catherinecorless@hotmail.com

DUBLIN. The Catholic Church in Ireland is facing fresh accusations of child neglect after a researcher found records for 796 young children believed to be buried in a mass grave beside a former orphanage for the children of unwed mothers. The Catholic Church in Ireland is facing fresh accusations of child neglect after a researcher found records for 796 young children believed to be buried in a mass grave beside a former orphanage for the children of unwed mothers. The researcher, Catherine Corless, says her discovery of child death records at the Catholic nun-run home in Tuam, County Galway, suggests that a former septic tank filled with bones is the final resting place for most, if not all, of the children.

Church leaders in Galway, western Ireland, said they had no idea so many children who died at the orphanage had been buried there, and said they would support local efforts to mark the spot with a plaque listing all 796 children. County Galway death records showed that the children, mostly babies and toddlers, died often of sickness or disease in the orphanage during the 35 years it operated from 1926 to 1961. The building, which had previously been a workhouse for homeless adults, was torn down decades ago to make way for new houses.

A 1944 government inspection recorded evidence of malnutrition among some of the 271 children then living in the Tuam orphanage alongside 61 unwed mothers. The death records cite sicknesses, diseases, deformities and premature births as causes. This would reflect an Ireland that, in the first half of the 20th century, had one of the worst infant mortality rates in Europe, with tuberculosis rife.

Elderly locals recalled that the children attended a local school -- but were segregated from other pupils -- until they were adopted or placed, around age 7 or 8, into church-run industrial schools that featured unpaid labor and abuse. In keeping with Catholic teaching, such out-of-wedlock children were denied baptism and, if they died at such facilities, Christian burial.

It is well documented that throughout Ireland in the first half of the 20th century, church-run orphanages and workhouses often buried their dead in unmarked graves and unconsecrated ground, reflecting how unmarried mothers -- derided as "fallen women" in the culture of the day -- typically were ostracized by society, even their own families. Records indicate that the former Tuam workhouse's septic tank was converted specifically to serve as the body disposal site for the orphanage.

Tuam locals discovered the bone repository in 1975 as cement covering the buried tank was broken away. Before Corless' research this year, they believed the remains were mostly victims of the mid-19th century famine that decimated the population of western Ireland. Respectful of the unmarked grave in their midst, residents long have kept the grass trimmed and built a small grotto with a statue of the Virgin Mary.

Archbishop of Tuam Michael Neary said he would meet leaders of the religious order that ran the orphanage, the Bon Secours Sisters, to organize fund-raising for a plaque listing the 796 names and to hold a memorial service there. Corless and other Tuam activists have organized a Children's Home Graveyard Committee that wants not just a lasting monument to the dead, but a state-funded investigation and excavation of the site.

The government has declined to comment. Ireland already has published four major investigations into child abuse and its cover-up in Catholic parishes and a network of children's industrial schools, the last of which closed in the 1990s.

http://seattletimes.com/html/nationworld/2023757060_apxirelandchildrensmassgrave.html

Allegations about mass grave of 800 babies 'being taken very, very seriously'

Additional reporting by Hugh O'Connell. 4 June 2014 Limerick1914/Twitter

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"This is turning into a horrific account of maltreatment, neglect and a complete abdication of responsibility". THE CABINET DID not discuss allegations that a mass grave containing the bodies of almost 800 infants has been found on the grounds of a former children's home in Galway, despite an assertion by the Minister for Children that it would. Minister for Children Charlie Flanagan said he was shocked by the "appalling revelations" about the home. "The full facts surrounding the matter must be established," he said.

He had confirmed to *TheJournal.ie* that he expected the matter to come up at today's ministerial meeting. However this evening, a spokesperson for the minister said that it was not specifically discussed.. They said the minister has been in touch with the Department of

Justice and the Taoiseach on the matter and it is being considered at senior levels in the coalition. "The matter is being taken very, very seriously. The full facts need to be established," the spokesperson said.

The death records for 796 children, ranging in age from newborn babies to children up to the age of nine, were discovered by local historian Catherine Corless who was researching the history of the home, which was run by the Bon Secours order of nuns from 1925 until 1961. While the area was known locally as being a graveyard, the extent of how many children were placed in the former septic tank was only discovered by Corless during her research.

She found that the children died of malnutrition and neglect, as well as illnesses such as measles, tuberculosis and pneumonia. Fine Gael TD for Galway East Ciaran Cannon said the deaths were a "horrific account of maltreatment, neglect and a complete abdication of responsibility for the care of these very vulnerable young children". "Doing nothing is simply not an option for us in Government when presented with details of this nature," he said.

"These children were denied love and respect, they were treated almost as a sub-species and no-one reached out to put a protective arm around them". "And I don't accept the argument that their deaths can somehow be anonymised on the basis that there were deaths of a similar nature across the country, that this was the nature of the times they lived in. Every child was someone's son or daughter, every child was an individual deserving of our respect and they were denied that". Cannon also said that a "large number" of unidentified remains were discovered in a water tank close to the home in the 1970s.

The skeletons of the children were discovered by two boys who were playing in a field in 1995. The dead children were not buried in coffins and no gravestones mark the place where they were buried. The home was closed in the 1960s and then demolished and a housing estate now stands in its place. Archbishop Diarmuid Martin of the Dublin Archdiocese said there should either be a public inquiry into "outstanding issues of concern" at the mother and baby homes or else, where appropriate, a social history project to get an accurate picture of what happened at the homes.

Corless and a local committee are trying to raise money to build a memorial to the children but said last week that fundraising efforts have been slow so far. The mortality rate at the home was significantly higher than it was for children generally at the time in Ireland: a Dáil debate in February 1934 noted that one in three children born outside of marriage died within one year of their birth – a rate which was about five times higher than for other children. "From the abnormally high death rate amongst this class of children one must come to the conclusion that they are not looked after with the same care and attention as that given to ordinary children," Fianna Fáil TD Dr Conn Ward told the Dáil.

<http://www.thejournal.ie/800-babies-tuam-home-1497779-Jun2014/>

Hundreds of bodies of babies, toddlers and children found in mass grave in Ireland

3 June 2014 Nick Grimm ABC

Anyone looking for more information or to donate to the fund can contact Corless via email: catherinecorless@hotmail.com

A new chapter is being written in Ireland's horrific history abuse and mistreatment of those forced to live in church-run institutions. In county Galway, the remains of 800 babies and young children have been discovered dumped inside a disused septic tank. They were occupants of a home for unmarried mothers and their children who, over a 36 year period from 1925 until 1961, died from malnutrition and disease.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-06-04/hundreds-of-bodies-of-babies-toddlers-and-children/5501070>

Mass grave for 800 babies found in Galway needs to be urgently investigated, minister demands

Jun 04, 2014 Jessica Best, Paul O'Donoghue

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Children's home at Tuam, Co. Galway - Catherine Corless/Tuam Historical Society

796 children were found in a septic tank next to a home for the children of unmarried mothers. A junior minister has called for an urgent inquiry into the discovery of a mass grave containing the bodies of almost 800 children. Ciaran Cannon said there needs to be a probe, including a Garda investigation, into the find at the mother and baby home in Tuam, Co Galway. He added: "This is turning into a horrific account of maltreatment, neglect and a complete abdication of responsibility for the care of these very vulnerable young children.

"Doing nothing is simply not an option for us in Government when presented with details of this nature. "We need to proceed with sensitivity but also with efficiency to determine as best we can what happened to these children." 796 children were found in a septic tank next to a home for the children of unmarried mothers. New research looking at child death records has led to the grim conclusion that the bodies of hundreds of infants may have been placed by the Catholic nuns in the county. The youngsters are all believed to have died from sickness or disease between 1926 and 1961.

The building was pulled down years ago and has now been replaced with a housing estate, according to the Belfast Telegraph. The mass grave came to light following research by local woman Catherine Corless, who made separate Freedom of Information enquiries about the deaths. Records suggest the home's septic tank was converted especially for the purpose of disposing of bodies, and bones were first found in 1975 when cement covering the tank was pulled away.

But once Catherine began looking at all the children whose place of death was recorded as "Children's Home, Tuam", she uncovered the shocking numbers that could have been buried in the mass grave. She told the Mail: "There was just one child who was buried in a family plot in the graveyard in Tuam. That's how I am certain there are 796 children in the mass grave. "These girls were run out of their family home and never taken back, so why would they take the babies back to bury them, either?" She is now calling for a permanent memorial on the spot listing the names of all those who died. The story has received coverage worldwide from publications such as the BBC and Al Jazeera.

<http://www.irishmirror.ie/news/irish-news/mass-grave-800-babies-found-3644396>

Bodies Of 800 Children Were "Just Resting" In Mass Grave, Claims Catholic Church

June 3, 2014 Waterford Whispers News

Anyone looking for more information or to donate to the fund can contact Corless via email: catherinecorless@hotmail.com

The Catholic Church has responded to the grim discovery of the remains of up to 800 unidentified children buried in an unmarked plot beside a notorious "Mother and Baby Home" in Galway, claiming that the mass grave was a temporary solution and the infants remains are "just resting" there. The Tuam workhouse for unmarried mothers and their babies was run by the Sisters of Bon Secours (French for "safe harbour") between the years 1925 and 1961, during which time the bodies of at least 796 children aged from 2 days to 9 years were placed one by one in an unused septic tank, following deaths from TB, malnourishment, pneumonia, and good old-fashioned neglect.

Meanwhile the entire nation has reacted with shock and an unquantifiable disgust at the discovery made by Catherine Corless, a local historian and private citizen, as she carried out research about a church run institution known locally as 'The Home'. The events that transpired there are a lesson in abject misery and unending sorrow that would even make a

Nazi war criminal blush and this was reflected in the word on the street from many Irish people.



"Well, I'm 55 so a bit before my time but when we used to visit my aunt up in Donegal, she would tell us to stay away from the fields down the road because there were babies buried there but if only someone knew about it," John Drummond, a Dublin native explained, "It's all changed now though in fairness," John said of a country that saw 196 children in state care die between the years 2000 and 2010. "I can't believe it. What vile creatures must have worked there?" shared a visibly upset Ciaran Giles, from Tipperary, "like there was a Magdalene laundry down the road from my house or so my father tells me but like no one knew, well they knew but they didn't, you know?"

Others on the streets tried to find some solace at the discovery of the mass grave. "Well, obviously those in the laundries have been compensated, Ireland's moved on," shared student Lauren Greene of a country that has yet to pay compensation in full to Magdalene laundry survivors. "It was a different time, so arguments and the like create a false dichotomy," shared 24-year-old Sean Cullen, who was told as a child to avoid walking home by the priest's house for some reason, "ha yeah, that's weird isn't it? Because obviously my parents didn't know the priest raped children or else they would have done something about it," he added.

The Catholic church, who were limited to just €128 million in compensation to sexual abuse victims in a 2002 deal, meanwhile sought to explain their stance on the mass grave in Tuam. "There's a lot of speculation as to what went on in The Home following these recent revelations" said Monsignor Sean Green, spokesperson for the Irish branch of the Catholic Church Scandal Containment Unit, "people seem to believe that because these children were born to unmarried mothers the church at the time considered them sinful and unworthy of a decent Catholic burial, so basically threw their little remains into the nearest hole they could find".

"But trust me, that wasn't the case; I assure you, those bodies are just resting in that mass grave. Cover up the mistreatment of children? Not at all. We've always planned to exhume them and bury them properly, and we're going to get right on it really soon". When WWN asked the Government for comment absolutely no one was available for comment. To donate to the memorial fund which will see a plaque erected with all 796 names written on it contact catherinecorless@hotmail.com To see a list of the people who can demand justice and bring about accountability in this case please consult the nearest phone book or the latest census.

<http://waterfordwhispersnews.com/2014/06/03/bodies-of-800-children-were-just-resting-in-mass-grave-claims-catholic-church/>

Tell us the truth about the children dumped in Galway's mass graves

Emer O'Toole theguardian.com, Wednesday 4 June 2014

Anyone looking for more information or to donate to the fund can contact Corless via email: catherinecorless@hotmail.com



One of the former church-run Magdalene laundries, where unmarried women and children were incarcerated in Ireland. Photograph: Julien Behal/PA

Forget prayers. Only full disclosure by Ireland's Catholic church can begin to atone for the children who died in its care. The bodies of 796 children, between the ages of two days and nine years old, have been found in a disused sewage tank in Tuam, County Galway. They died between 1925 and 1961 in a mother and baby home under the care of the Bon Secours nuns. Locals have known about the grave since 1975, when two little boys, playing, broke apart the concrete slab covering it and discovered a tomb filled with small skeletons. A parish priest said prayers at the site, and it was sealed once more, the number of bodies below unknown, their names forgotten.

The Tuam historian Catherine Corless discovered the extent of the mass grave when she requested records of children's deaths in the home. The registrar in Galway gave her almost 800. Shocked, she checked 100 of these against graveyard burials, and found only one little boy who had been returned to a family plot. The vast majority of the children's remains, it seemed, were in the septic tank. Corless and a committee have been working tirelessly to raise money for a memorial that includes a plaque bearing each child's name. Sean Ross Abbey, a home run by nuns in County Tipperary, from where 438 babies were secretly exported to the US for adoption.

For those of you unfamiliar with how, until the 1990s, Ireland dealt with unmarried mothers and their children, here it is: the women were incarcerated in state-funded, church-run institutions called mother and baby homes or Magdalene asylums, where they worked to atone for their sins. Their children were taken from them. According to Corless, death rates for children in the Tuam mother and baby home, and in similar institutions, were four to five times that of the general population. A health board report from 1944 on the Tuam home describes emaciated, potbellied children, mentally unwell mothers and appalling overcrowding. But, as Corless points out, this was no different to other homes in Ireland. They all had the same mentality: that these women and children should be punished.



Ireland knows all this. We know about the abuse women and children suffered at the hands of the clergy, abuse funded by a theocratic Irish state. What we didn't know is that they threw dead children into unmarked mass graves. But we're inured to these revelations by now. Corless expresses surprise that the media were so slow to report her story, that people didn't seem to care. If two children were found in an unmarked grave, she observes, it would be news; what about 800? But what is the difference between the wall of lies, denial and secrecy the church constructed to protect its paedophile priests and a concrete slab over the bodies of 796 children neglected to death by nuns? Good people unearth these evil truths, but the church always survives.

The archbishop of Tuam and the head of the Irish Bon Secours sisters will soon meet to discuss the memorial and service planned at the site. The Bon Secours sisters have donated what the Irish TV station RTÉ describes as "a small sum" to the children's graveyard committee. Father Fintan Monaghan, secretary of the Tuam archdiocese, says:

"I suppose we can't really judge the past from our point of view, from our lens. All we can do is mark it appropriately and make sure there is a suitable place here where people can come and remember the babies that died." Let's not judge the past on our morals, then, but on the morals of the time. Was it OK, in mid-20th century Ireland, to throw the bodies of dead children into sewage tanks? Monaghan is really saying: "don't judge the past at all". But we must judge the past, because that is how we learn from it.

Monaghan is correct that we need to mark history appropriately. That's why I am offering the following suggestions as to what the church should do to in response: Do not say Catholic prayers over these dead children. Don't insult those who were in life despised and abused by you. Instead, tell us where the rest of the bodies are. There were homes throughout Ireland, outrageous child mortality rates in each. Were the Tuam Bon Secours sisters an anomalous, rebellious sect? Or were church practices much the same the country over? If so, how many died in each of these homes? What are their names? Where are their graves? We don't need more platitudinous damage control, but the truth about our history.

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/jun/04/children-galway-mass-graves-ireland-catholic-church>

800 babies 'buried in septic tank mass grave' at former Irish children's home

Jun 04, 2014 Jessica Best

Anyone looking for more information or to donate to the fund can contact Corless via email: catherinecorless@hotmail.com



Mass grave: The children's home at Tuam, Co. Galway

New research suggests the bodies of 796 infants were placed in an unmarked grave over 35 years. Catherine Corless/Tuam Historical Society. Almost 800 babies are believed to have been buried in a mass grave in Ireland, in a septic tank next to a home for the children of unmarried mothers. New research looking at child death records has led to the grim

conclusion that the bodies of hundreds of infants may have been placed in the tank at a former home run by the Catholic nuns in Tuam, County Galway. The youngsters are all believed to have died from sickness or disease between 1926 and 1961.

The building was pulled down years ago and has now been replaced with a housing estate, according to the Belfast Telegraph. The mass grave came to light following research by local woman Catherine Corless. Records suggest the home's septic tank was converted especially for the purpose of disposing of bodies, and bones were first found in 1975 when cement covering the tank was pulled away. But once Catherine began looking at all the children whose place of death was recorded as "Children's Home, Tuam", she uncovered the shocking numbers that could have been buried in the mass grave.

She told the Daily Mail: "There was just one child who was buried in a family plot in the graveyard in Tuam. That's how I am certain there are 796 children in the mass grave. These girls were run out of their family home and never taken back, so why would they take the babies back to bury them, either?" She is now calling for a permanent memorial on the spot listing the names of all those who died. Ireland's minister for education and skills Ciaran Cannon said the new details emerging were "horrific" and that an inquiry was needed to establish what had happened.

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/800-babies-buried-septic-tank-3642919>

Mass grave of 800 babies found at Galway children's home is a stain on the nation

Jun 04, 2014 AINEHEGARTY

Anyone looking for more information or to donate to the fund can contact Corless via email: catherinecorless@hotmail.com

But much have things really changed when you see how many vulnerable kids in state care are dying every year. Good Catholic Ireland really was a sick and brutal place. Revelations that the bodies of 800 vulnerable children were dumped into a septic tank at a home run by nuns in Tuam, Co Galway, are stomach-churning. The remains of innocent youngsters ranging in age from newborns to nine-year-olds were found stacked in the mass unmarked grave. The full extent of the horror was uncovered by local historian Catherine Corless who was researching the history of the home run by the Bon Secours order of nuns from 1925 until 1961.

The mass grave was found by two boys who were playing in a field in 1995. They found a broken concrete slab and when they lifted it up discovered it was filled to the top with human bones and skulls. The boys who made this shocking discovery still have nightmares about it. Ms Corless has tirelessly tracked down records of these forgotten children and found many died from malnutrition and neglect. Others had succumbed to measles, convulsions, TB, gastroenteritis and pneumonia.

The infant mortality rate at the home was disturbingly high with two babies dying a week there at one stage. It has been closed for five decades but the earth has now given up the

sins of the nuns. It's difficult to imagine the terror these poor kids must have felt being prisoners in "The Home", as it was known by locals. They were condemned to a life of brutality and neglect, their only "crime" being they were born out of wedlock – the ultimate sin in the eyes of the Church.

And so to make up for that, they were treated as outcasts and then neglected to such an extent they died in shocking numbers. Make no mistake about it, this was a deliberate mass killing and nobody in Ireland at the time seemed to care what was happening to these youngsters. How can 800 children simply die at a home and there be no inquiry? Why were they not entitled to a proper funeral and burial? How could the nuns simply throw them into a septic tank?

It would be nice to reassure ourselves that modern-day Ireland has changed and this could never happen again. Unfortunately we can't afford such delusions. What about the catalogue of children who die every year in the care of the State? What about Tracey Fay who was found dead in a coal bunker, aged just 18, after spending four years in State care? The teen's body lay there for six days before gardai found her.

And what chance did Tracey ever have given the "care" she received from the State? She had been placed in at least 36 different locations including B&Bs, apartments and supported lodgings. A report into her death found: "She ended up spending large periods of time on the streets, where she was abused and learned not to trust the system to care for her." And horror stories such as Tracey's are just the tip of the iceberg. In the 10 years between 2000 and 2010, 196 kids who were known to the State's child protection services died – with 112 from "non-natural causes".

And were there outraged members of the public out protesting in the streets asking what was happening to these children? No. So we have to ask ourselves how much have things really changed for vulnerable kids in Ireland? Because the truth is we don't cherish all children equally. And children who have nobody to speak up for them are all too often ignored.

<http://www.irishmirror.ie/news/news-opinion/mass-grave-800-babies-found-3642179>

Ireland's Bizarre Silence Around 800 Dead Babies

M.L. Nestel 4 June 2014

Anyone looking for more information or to donate to the fund can contact Corless via email: catherinecorless@hotmail.com

Ireland is ablaze over news of a mass grave filled with skeletons of 800 babies. But why now, when it has been a local secret for more than 40 years? Mass graves are something you associate with war zones or genocides. But a discovery in a sleepy town in Ireland has rocked the rural community and caused a national scandal. The skeletons of almost 800 baby bodies, left to rot for decades, were discovered dumped in a septic tank. The tank was in a field next to what was a home for unwed mothers in Tuam, a town in Ireland's western county of Galway.

The unmarked concrete container, meant to hold human waste, was instead brimming with the bones of babies as young as 3 years old. The babies died from a variety of maladies—measles, TB and pneumonia amongst them—according to recently released reports. They died over the course of several decades from the 1920s to 1960s and were believed to have been shamefully buried in secret. The babies were all born to single mothers in a home run by the Bon Secours Sisters between 1925 and 1961.



Sean Ross Abbey in the 1950s *FLICKR/BRIAN LOCKIER*

Most of the children didn't live beyond 13 months, and one of the youngest for whom records exist died aged only three weeks. The most unusual aspect of the story is the timeline of events. The septic tank and its gruesome contents were originally discovered in the 1970s by two unsuspecting 12-year-old boys, Barry Sweeney and Francis Hopkins. "It was a concrete slab and we used to play there, but there was something hollow underneath it, so we decided to bust it open, and it was full to the brim with skeletons," Sweeney told [MailOnline](#).

The story has been known locally, but never generated major headlines. The grounds of the home have since been turned into private housing estate, and ever since the discovery more than 40 years ago, a local man tended to the site of the septic tank as a memorial, until his recent death. The scale of the scandal has been brought to light because of the work of local historian and genealogist Catherine Corless, who has attempted to identify the victims.

Corless said she subsequently cross-referenced 796 children's death certificates to come up with a tentative list of the dead. But there is no official burial record, and some of the death certificates remain missing. One example is the Dolan brothers, who are believed to have passed away at the home. John Desmond Dolan was born on Feb. 22, 1946. Despite a healthy birth, he died of the measles on June 11, 1947. But his brother, William, succumbed to unknown causes the following year.

"He could still be alive or he's with his brother in a grave. I want to find out," a family member told MailOnline. "I just want to know what happened to him." The Irish media has pounced on the story in recent days, prompting authorities to open an official investigation to track down the missing death certificates. Minister of State for Education and Skills Ciaran Cannon told the [Irish Independent](#) that he's called for an inquiry.

"The evidence to date seems to suggest that something very horrific went on there," he said. Shockingly, Corless said the mass grave isn't causing enough outrage. "People aren't talking about the discovery," she told Irish news site [The Journal](#). "People don't seemed shocked. I don't understand."



Children and mothers photographed at Sean Ross Abbey. *FLICKR/BRIAN LOCKIER*

A grave-site memorial service on Monday was attended by Philomena Lee, whose toddler son was taken from her by nuns 60 years ago. Her story was turned into a major motion picture, earning an Oscar nomination last year. "I'm shocked at the latest news of the mass grave," she said. "It's appalling and shouldn't be hidden." Corless said that many of the

survivors of the home told her that if they lived to see 7 years old, they were shipped off to attend industrial school.

Survivors of the home have described scenes reminiscent of *Oliver Twist*. Money is being raised to erect a memorial that would indelibly remember the once forsaken babies of Tuam. Corless says she founded a group called the Children's Home Graveyard Committee out of urgency. "It was time to do something." Thousands of dollars have been raised from local authorities to establish a plaque bearing every dead child's name.

<http://www.vocativ.com/world/ireland-world/irelands-bizarre-silence-around-800-dead-babies/>

Memorial bid to mark mass grave of 800 babies in Galway

Casey Egan @irishcentral May 28, 2014



Group led by a local historian hopes to raise \$7,000 for a small statue and plaque marking the grave of 800 babies in Tuam, Co. Galway. Photo by: Thinkstock

A campaign is underway to place a small statue and memorial plaque at the [mass grave of 800 babies](#) in Tuam, Co. Galway. [The grave](#) is located beside a former home for [unwed mothers and babies](#), known colloquially as "The Home," run by the Bon Secours nuns from 1925 – 1961. The shocking discovery [emerged over the weekend](#) after the "Irish Mail on Sunday" published a report. As many as 796 infants and children are believed to have been buried there, with causes of death ranging from measles, tuberculosis, gastroenteritis and pneumonia to malnutrition and convulsions.

Burials usually took place without a coffin, in a plot of land that had once housed "a water tank," the report also claimed. Local historian and genealogist Catherine Corless, who uncovered the 796 death records when she was researching the home, told "[The Journal](#)" that plans are underway to ensure that the grave will not remain unmarked for much longer. "A group of us came together late last year, formed a committee, and decided that when we discovered the enormous amount of children in that plot it was time to do something," she said.

To date the fund committee has secured close to \$3,000 from local authorities towards their goal of nearly \$7,000, which will cover the costs of a small commemorative statue and a plaque with the names of the deceased. Corless described the fundraising campaign as slow thus far and expressed surprise that the burial site was not being more widely discussed. "People don't seem shocked, I don't understand," she said. "If two children were discovered in an unmarked grave, the news would be everywhere.

"We have almost 800 here." Until recently, the grave site had been maintained by a local couple from the housing estate built where the Bon Secours home once stood. The husband, Padraic, died just over a week ago. For 35 years, he tended the grass and planted flowers. "Padraic's wish was that this little graveyard would be remembered with a plaque," Corless added.

<http://www.irishcentral.com/news/Memorial-campaign-underway-for-forgotten-grave-of-800-babies-in-Galway.html>