

A terrible beauty is born on screen as 1916 movie is planned

MIKE DWANE

LIMERICK'S Daly family are to feature prominently in the first feature film on the Easter Rising of 1916.

With the working title of the Rising, the movie has a \$6 million budget and has a target release date of St Patrick's Day 2016.

Producer/director is the award-winning documentary maker Kevin McCann and while the movie will have Sean Mac Diarmada as its main focus, the contribution of Limerick men and women will feature.

Ned Daly, at 25, was the youngest of the rebels to be executed and his sister Kathleen, a freewoman of Limerick, was married to Tom Clarke, one of the seven signatories of the 1916 Proclamation.

"Ned Daly will be featured and also (the old Limerick Fenian) John Daly. The Dalys are an extremely important family in 1916. Daly's influence on Tom Clarke was hugely significant. The Dalys are central to 1916 as is Limerick. There were 2,000 British troops in Limerick that week," said Mr McCann.

Others associated with Limerick to be executed in 1916 were Con Colbert from Athesa and Sean Heuston, who worked as a rail clerk in Limerick. And Mr McCann said there may also be smaller



Ned Daly was only 25 when executed in 1916

parts for these men.

He believes that if not for those who fought in 1916, "there might be no Irish passports today".

And while copies of the 1916 Proclamation might hang in schools around the country, Mr McCann believes the story of those who took part have "largely been written out of history, or at least it was in my school in Cavan".

"I believe that 99% of people in Ireland don't know anything about the Easter Rising apart from the surnames of Pearse and Connolly. I was one of those people and it is only through studying really that I came to appreciate it more fully. I did a documentary in Leitrim and discovered this character called Sean MacDiarmada - and to my shame I didn't know who he was. And he was from the next county over to me," said Mr



'The mind of the revolution': Sean Mac Diarmada

McCann.

While Connolly and Pearse's surviving writings have ensured they are the best remembered of the leaders, Mac Diarmada is a lesser known figure - "a secretive plotter and conspirator", according to Mr McCann.

"Pearse and Connolly, rightfully, are remembered as very important leaders of the Rising but if I was to take for example the words of Liam Gaynor, a volunteer from Limerick, he described Sean Mac Diarmada as 'the mind of the revolution'."

It helps for movie makers that of all the 1916 leaders, Mac Diarmada most fits the bill as a matinee idol.

"I met somebody in Dublin who was trying to do a film on James Connolly. He gave me a CD called The Seven Signatories and people had written songs about all seven.

I listened to the Mac Diarmada song first and first line of it went "with looks fit to grace the silver screen". So I said to myself I'm on the right track. He was a handsome man no doubt," said Mr McCann.

So handsome indeed that the producers are considering Armagh actor Colin Morgan and Hollywood star Shia LaBeouf for the starring role. Other actors in the mix for a part are John Hurt and Brendan Gleeson.

"We have a casting director in place and we are talking to a number of actors about these roles but no announcement will be made until probably September," said Mr McCann, who hopes to see emerging Irish acting talent cast.

The production team is looking for the support of the Irish Film Board, having already secured backing from its equivalent in the north, Northern Ireland Screen.

Mr McCann spent a number of months raising funds from private sources in the United States and those interested in bringing the story of 1916 to the big screen can also make donations online at www.therising.ie.

"The main idea is to produce a work that tells the story of 1916 in a motion picture for the first time, something we can all be informed by - all of us on the island north and south and people in Britain as well," said Mr McCann.

Am-ham operators set for Loop Head

NICK RABBITTS

A GROUP of amateur ham radio operators are to attempt

Lightship weekend.

During the broadcast - which runs from midnight Friday to midnight Sunday

and lightships as far away as Brazil, Australia, Tonga, French Guyana, Asiatic Russia, Ecuador, The Azores and The

involves waves travelling from one transmitter to another using the moon as a reflector.

Simon Kenny, Limerick Radio Club, said Loop Head is

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