

The Malone mausoleum.  
Courtesy of John Nankivell and IGS



Mausoleum interior sarcophagus detail



Mausoleum interior, repoussé angels

Front cover: The Malone mausoleum.  
Courtesy of Liam Mulligan



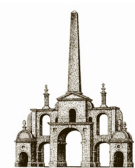
THE FOLLIES TRUST

The Follies Trust has been campaigning for – and conserving – Irish follies since 2006. During that time we have been involved in the conservation of 31 structures in 12 counties. The Trust undertakes projects in a variety of ways. For some we are the client, raise all the funds and supervise the entire project; for others we work with a local group and provide match funding, ensuring work is undertaken to best conservation standards. Follies Trust always employs surveyors, architects and contractors with proven conservation expertise.

The Follies Trust has published eight booklets on the conservation work it has undertaken around Ireland. If you would like further information please go to [www.follies-trust.org](http://www.follies-trust.org)



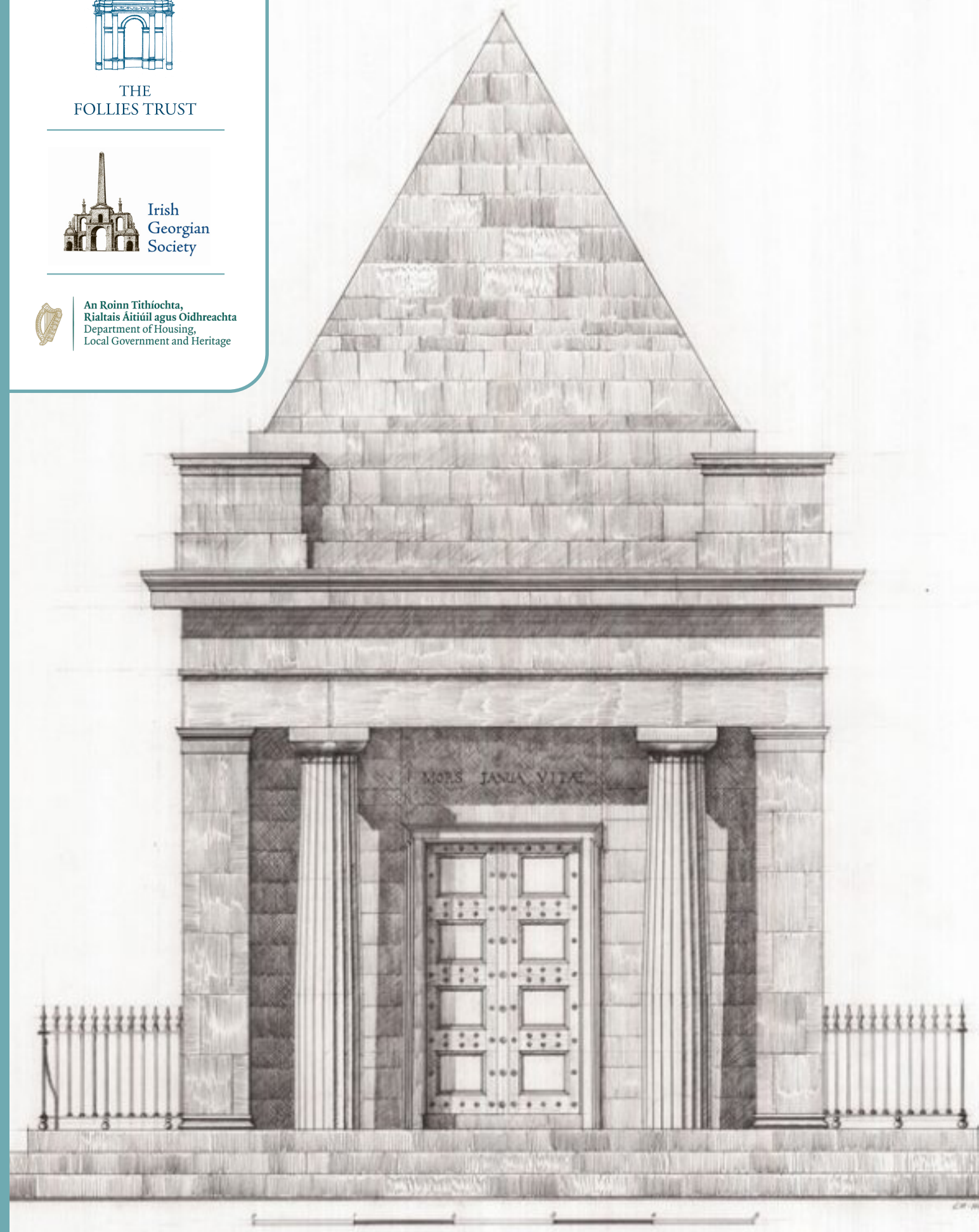
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Irish Georgian Society



An Roinn Tithíochta, Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta  
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage



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Kilbixy medieval landscape



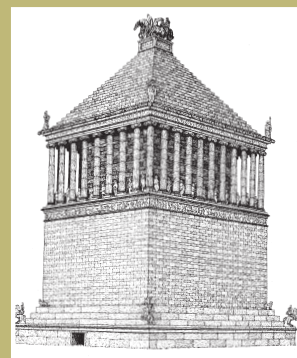
Kilbixy Church

MALONE MAUSOLEUM & KILBIXY, CO. WESTMEATH

## Study Day and Site Visit 21 & 22 October 2022

*On these two days in October The Follies Trust is bringing together a group of academics and historians to discuss and enlighten all concerned about this important mausoleum and its context.*

We are delighted to be working in partnership with the Irish Georgian Society. These events are made possible by generous funding from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The Minister of State for Heritage, Malcolm Noonan T.D., has taken a keen interest in the work of The Follies Trust.



The tomb of King Mausolus.  
Courtesy of Michael Craig

Maurice Craig defined a mausoleum as ‘A funerary structure having the character of a roofed building, and large enough to stand up in, or at least having that appearance.’ (*Mausolea Hibernica* p.4)

‘In 353BC Artemisia, Queen of Caria, inspired by grief, ordered the construction of a work designed to convey both herself and her Lord Mausolus (beloved husband, wise friend and full brother) in style and triumph into another, finer world. Was she influenced by the Great Pyramid or aware of its transcendental power? Whatever her ambitions the monument at Halicarnassus settled in beside Cheops to become the seventh wonder of ancient world and in passing gave its name to a whole area of architectural endeavour.’

‘The architectural vocabulary used by the mausoleum builders rarely has an Irish accent. There are few recognised architects who can be definitely be associated with particular monuments, but it must be admitted that these form a distinguished list:

Robert Adam’s triumphal edifice at Castle Upton, Co. Antrim, Edward Lovett Pearce’s obelisk at Stillorgan, Dublin, James Wyatt’s temple at Dartrey, Co. Monaghan, and his mini-Halicarnassus at Kilbixy, Co. Westmeath, James Gandon’s pedimented sepulchre at Portarlington, Co. Laois. These are mini-masterpieces of great artists.’ Michael Craig in *Clonbern Graveyard its Monuments & People*.

Kevin V. Mulligan describes the architecture and the juxtaposition of the Kilbixy church and mausoleum.

‘A solemn mausoleum of the Malone family set cheek by jowl with the parish church, two distinguished buildings vying with each other like two different specimen trees planted too closely together – each a mascot for their respective architectural style – the Gothick church light, serene and delicately-detailed, the Greek-Revival mausoleum, weighty, pure and prismatic.’

‘A stark cube in crisp ashlar, with a pyramidal roof, set on a stepped podium, its diminutive temple design has naturally drawn comparisons with the ancient mausolea of Halicarnassus and Knidos, but a much closer analogy may be drawn with the Choragic Monument of Thrasylus in Athens ...



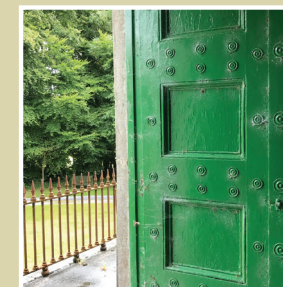
Malone mausoleum and Kilbixy church



Malone mausoleum and Kilbixy church



The Malone mausoleum



The Malone mausoleum doors



Intact coffin



Anthony Malone sarcophagus



Malone monument



Lord Sunderlin monument



Besides the corresponding proportions and pilasters, the similarities between the buildings are most telling in the use of unusual plinth-like blocks on the corners, above the cornice, with the stonework stepped between which at Kilbixy provides the base to the pyramid. Baseless Doric columns, set in antis like sentinels, flank the imposing studded iron door beneath the optimistic Latin inscription *Mors Janua Vitae*.

These great doors fold into the cross-vaulted space, designed with arched recesses to reflect in the plan a Greek cross, the three recesses bearing on a ledge, Greek-revival mural sarcophagi in black marble with bronze enrichments, the inscribed plaques above commemorating each of the principal occupants – Lord Sunderlin, his scholarly brother, Edmond and their benevolent uncle Anthony.’

*Vain Transitory Splendours – the Irish Country House and the Art of John Nankivell*. Kevin V. Mulligan p.114.

The Follies Trust is grateful to Dr Finbar McCormick who undertook a detailed survey of the vault of the Malone mausoleum in September 2022. He discovered there is a fourth coffin in the vault. His findings will inform the conservation survey being undertaken by Lotts Architecture with funding from the Irish Georgian Society Homan Potterton bequest.



Kilbixy church and Malone mausoleum

John Martin Robinson, on the attribution of the Malone Mausoleum to Wyatt in the absence of documentary evidence, writes:

‘...it is likely that it formed part of the same commission as the church...Wyatt would have been known to Lord Sunderlin, whose younger brother, Edmond Malone, a Shakespeare scholar, was a friend of Horace Walpole and a neighbour of Wyatt in Foley Place, [London].’ (John Martin Robinson, *James Wyatt, Architect to George III*, p. 172)