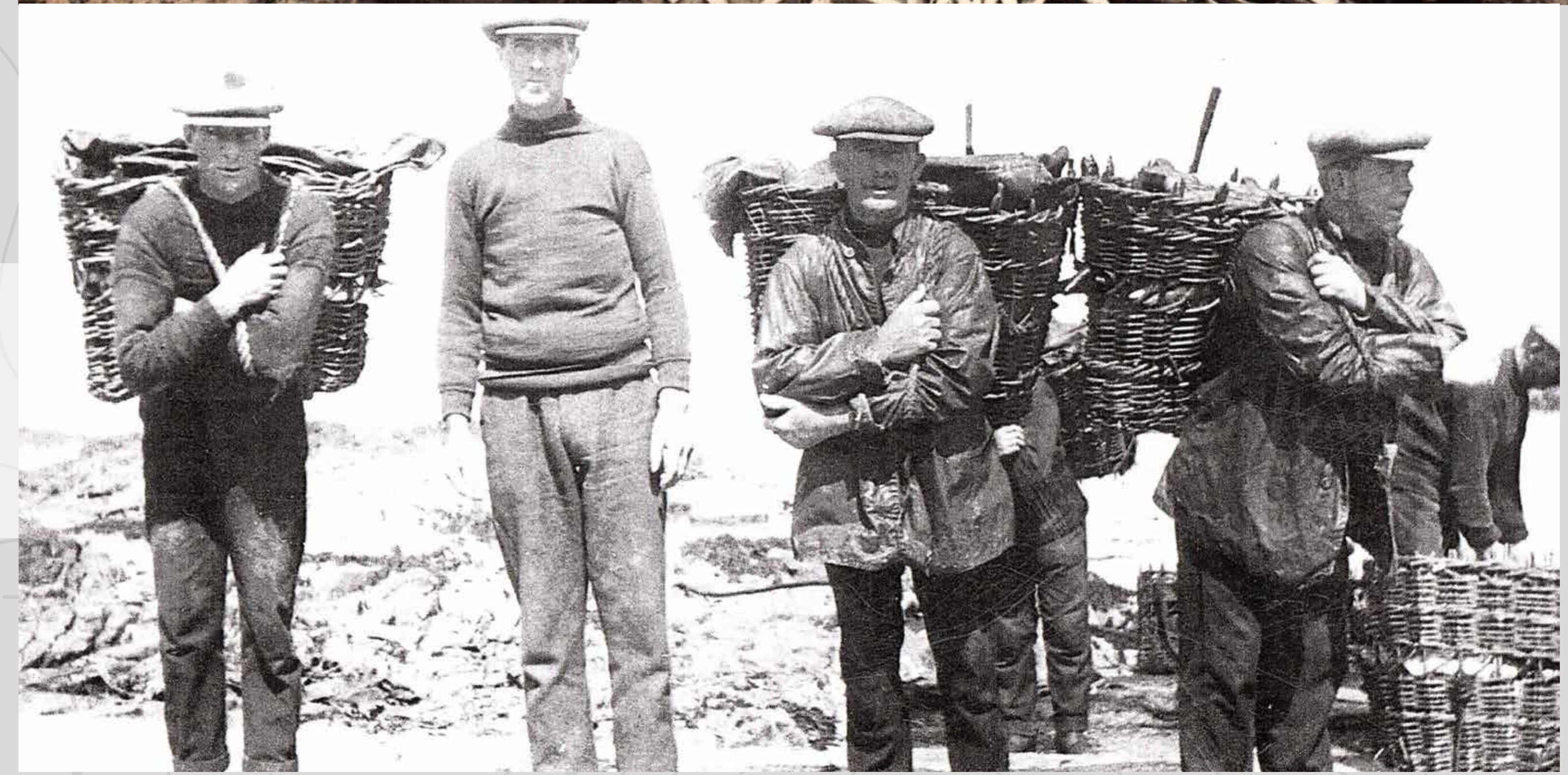


# Forever by the Sea

The sea and shoreline has been a vital resource for the people of the Causeway Coast for centuries and its rich maritime tradition is an essential element of the area's history. Boat building and fishing provided a livelihood for many, while the sea also offered a means of connection between this region and the rest of the world.

## FINE FISHERMEN

Fishermen would bring their catch in off the sea to local harbours, where they would use it to feed their families and to trade. Some would stretch their nets out between the rocks at Portmoon to catch the many Atlantic Salmon migrating to spawn in the nearby River Bush. Others would bring their catch into Dunseverick harbour and place it into handmade creels that they then carried on their backs up the steep coastal slopes to the main road, where fish sellers waited. These photos were kindly submitted by Jim Wilkinson, son of James Wilkinson one of the men pictured.



Top: Dunseverick fishermen with a fine catch of cod in the 1950s.

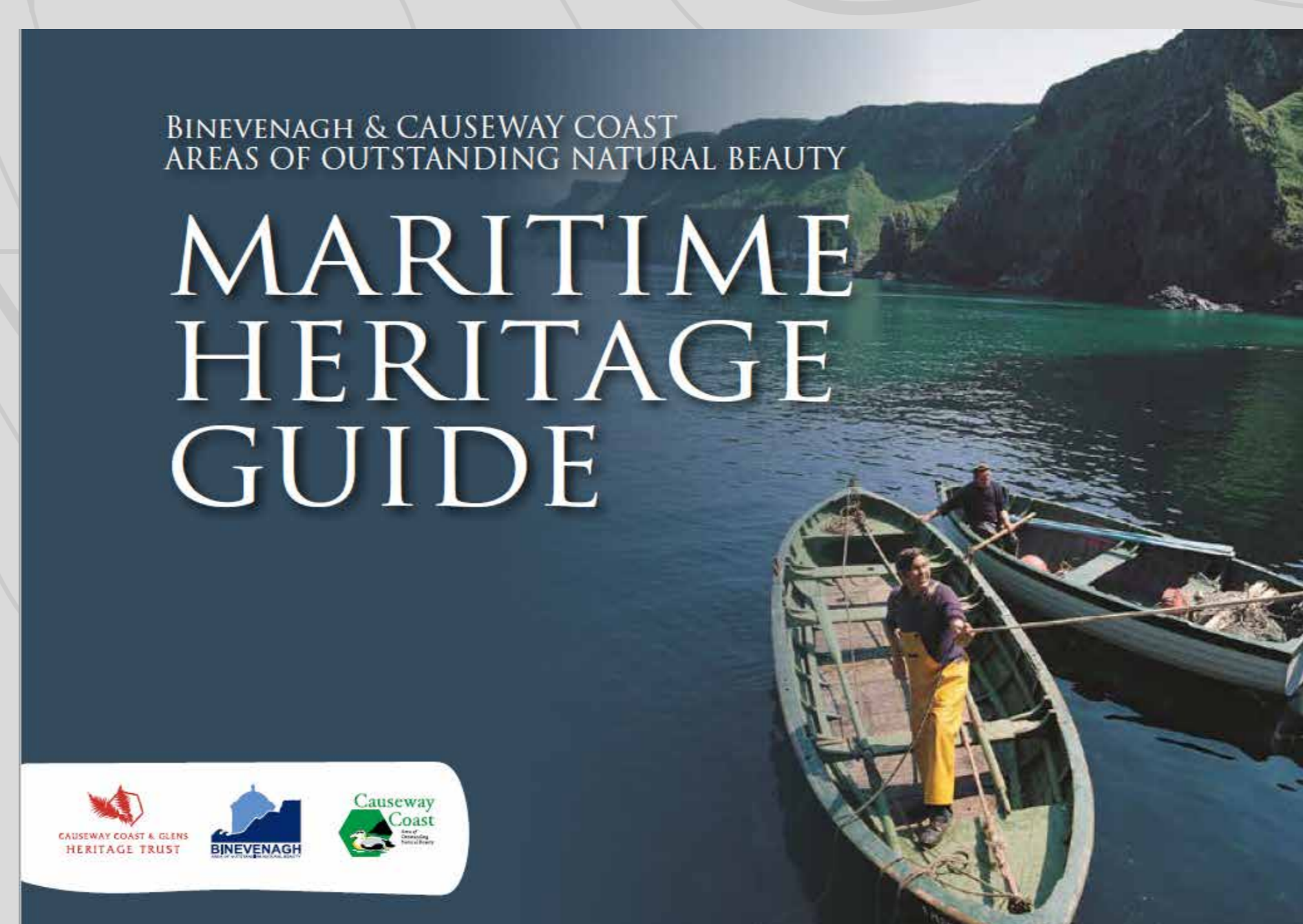
Bottom: Local fishermen, from the left - John McMullan, James Brewster, Dan McClelland, James Wilkinson and Bobby Gault.

## BOAT BUILDING

The first settlers arrived in Ireland by boat, and people have been operating and building boats around our coastline for millennia. Logboats were used in ancient times, and then currachs – wood framed boats covered with skins waterproofed with pitch or grease. A currach's lightweight construction meant it could be carried and launched from almost any cove or bay; this may be why so many parts of our coast are referred to as 'ports' on old maps or to this day. In more recent times, the traditional boat of the area was the dronheim, clinker built open vessels. These Norwegian style boats were imported from the 18th century and were later built locally.



A photo taken of The Devereux when it was scuppered in 1864, before its sinking. Courtesy of Gary Burrows, DAERA



For more information on the maritime heritage of the Causeway Coast download CCGHT's Maritime Heritage Guide.

## SHIPWRECKS

Famously, the Causeway Coast is home to NI's most famous shipwreck – La Girona. As part of the Spanish Armada, this ship was wrecked at Lacada Point in 1588 with the loss of almost 1300 souls. However, there are many other shipwrecks still to be found along our shores.

A more recent example would be The Devereux, a 425 tonne merchant barque, which ran aground off Whiterocks Beach on September 5, 1864. This cargo ship got into trouble in a storm off the Donegal coast before eventually sinking near the Skerries. One crew member was lost, but the remaining crew were rescued. The boat's 600 tonne cargo of wood was auctioned the next week. Recent storms uncovered this beautiful wreck from the seabed allowing divers to survey the site.



The wreck of the Devereux. Courtesy of Gary Burrows, DAERA.