



ULSTER  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SOCIETY



Centre for  
**COMMUNITY  
ARCHAEOLOGY**  
Queen's University Belfast

# DISCOVERY 2020!

**FOURTH ANNUAL REVIEW OF  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES IN ULSTER**

**Saturday 7th November 2020**

**Online Conference**

**Queen's University Belfast**

## Welcome from the Ulster Archaeological Society

On behalf of the Committee of the Ulster Archaeological Society (UAS) I would like to welcome everyone to the **Discovery 2020! Fourth Annual Review of Archaeological Discoveries in Ulster** conference organised by the Ulster Archaeological Society and the Centre for Community Archaeology at Queen's University Belfast.

The Ulster Archaeological Society held its first meeting at Queen's on October 15th 1947. More than 70 years on, we are proud to be a part of the Centre for Community Archaeology at Queen's University.

This has been an extraordinary year for all of us. The coronavirus pandemic, that is still raging, has badly affected face-to-face archaeological activities everywhere. In March 2020, the UAS Committee took the decision to suspend all such UAS activities. The continued safety of our members, and that of members of the public who engage with us, remains our first priority. This means that UAS field trips, workshops, excavations and the field survey of monuments have been put on hold and they will not resume until it is safe once again to do so.

However, just because we cannot engage directly with people, it does not mean that the Ulster Archaeological Society cannot continue to carry out its core aim of disseminating information about new archaeological projects, research and publications in Ulster to both the archaeological profession and the general public. To this end we have increased our utilization of digital technology. The UAS Committee continues to meet regularly via Zoom and Microsoft Teams. In March we established the UAS *eNewsletter* that is e-mailed to members, is available to download from the UAS website and hard copies of which are also posted out to people. And later this year we intend to start providing online lectures for our members and the general public. But the best example is that our well-established annual **Discovery** conference is also, this year, online.

As with previous conferences, the range of papers at **Discovery 2020!** gives a taster of the important work currently being carried out across Ulster and beyond by heritage institutions and bodies, commercial archaeological companies and community groups. We hope that you find this virtual conference both enjoyable and informative. We would like to thank all of the participants for sharing their research with us. We would also like to thank Dr Duncan Berryman for all of the work, expertise and commitment that he has put into making sure that we are able to host this year's conference online.

The Ulster Archaeological Society is the longest established specialist archaeological society in Ulster and, as many people know, it originally began life as a support group for the Third Series of the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*. It gives us great pleasure and pride to launch and celebrate the publication of the newest volume of the Journal, **Volume 75** (2019-2020), at this conference. The *Ulster Journal of Archaeology* remains the foremost repository of excavation reports and other papers on archaeological research in Ulster. On behalf of the UAS Committee, I would like to thank Cormac Bourke (Hon. Editor of the Journal) and Grace McAlister (Hon. Assistant Editor of the Journal) for the magnificent job that they have done in getting this latest volume of the Journal out.

We look forward to seeing you at the **Discovery 2021!** conference next year.

**Ruairí Ó Baoill**

**President, Ulster Archaeological Society**

## **Welcome from the Centre for Community Archaeology at Queen's University Belfast**

Welcome to the fourth annual review of archaeological discoveries in Ulster – the *Discovery 2020!* conference. What a year this has been! Our conference has had to move online because of Covid-19 but we are very pleased with how the event has been formulated. The conference boasts a very diverse programme with speakers from across the island and a keynote lecture by Dr Monique van den Dries from Leiden University, the Netherlands. The work of Archaeology and Palaeoecology at Queen's this year has not been without challenges but we strived to ensure our students continued to get a good quality education and we kept busy with as many of our research activities as possible. We were fortunate to have been able to run three events in the NI Science Festival in February, including a weekend festival of archaeology in the Navan Centre, while our Belfast Young Archaeologists' Club has continued with its monthly meetings, albeit in a virtual online manner.

We were absolutely delighted on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2020 when the sterling work of the Centre for Community Archaeology (CCA) was recognised at the QUB Staff Excellence Awards 2019 ceremony when we won the university's 'Community Impact' award which recognises the significant contribution that members of the university's staff have made to the local community and wider society. At the start of March the CCA was looking forward to getting back into the field again with the first of our programme of excavations for the year but little did we know that this would turn out to be our only community-based excavation in 2020. A team, led by Dr Heather Montgomery, undertook an excavation at the Magilligan Training Estate, a project commissioned by the Ministry of Defence/Defence Infrastructure Organisation, and supported by 2 Royal Irish Engagement Team and in collaboration with the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust. The key purpose of the project was to connect local people with the First World War heritage in their area and to increase understanding of the life of the soldiers during the First World War.

As the lockdown eased in the Summer, we were also able to undertake some survey work. In late August Dr Siobhán McDermott, with Dr Alastair Ruffell (Geography), led a geophysical survey at Killyloughran in south Armagh. In partnership with the Creggan Local History Group, and supported by the Newry Mourne and Down District Council, the CCA had made a successful application to the Royal Irish Academy for funding to support the work at this enigmatic site. Siobhán also led a programme of geophysical survey at the Steeple in Antrim during October. The investigation at the site of this 'lost' monastery was undertaken on behalf of the Lough Neagh Landscape Partnership and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council and was funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. A third geophysical survey is planned for Lisburn Castle, on behalf of Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, in November 2020.

Recognising the challenges posed by the pandemic, we endeavoured to increase our efforts to engage with the community through the digital environment. Many of our projects have online storybooks and films that can be viewed on the CCA website and ArcPal YouTube site, but a more focused response was initiated by Dr Siobhán McDermott in May when she received seed funding from the QUB Engaged Research Fund to establish a new digital resource. Working in collaboration with the Lough Neagh Landscape Partnership and the National Lottery Heritage Fund, this 'Community Archaeology Toolkit' provides insight and instruction into how archaeologists undertake their work. The toolkit was launched in September and the course was quickly oversubscribed. As such, we are planning to run it again in January 2021.

We at Queen's cherish our close relationship with the Ulster Archaeological Society and our shared annual conference serves only to strengthen these ties. We are very grateful to all the speakers participating in the conference and especially to Dr Duncan Berryman for coordinating the technical aspects which have made this online event possible. We very much hope you will all enjoy our virtual conference – 2020 is a year none of us will forget anytime soon!

**Professor Eileen Murphy**

**Head of Archaeology & Palaeoecology & Co-Director of the Centre for Community Archaeology**

**School of Natural and Built Environment, Queen's University Belfast**

**DISCOVERY 2020!**  
**FOURTH ANNUAL REVIEW OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES**  
**IN ULSTER**

Organised by the Ulster Archaeological Society and  
the Centre for Community Archaeology at Queen's University Belfast

**Saturday 7th November 2020**

**9.30**

**Conference Welcome:**

**Professor Eileen Murphy** (Co-Director of the Centre for Community Archaeology, School of Natural and Built Environment, Queen's University Belfast)

**Ruairí Ó Baoill** (President of the Ulster Archaeological Society)

**Dr Duncan Berryman** (Conference Co-ordinator, Ulster Archaeological Society)

**9.40**

**Keynote Address:**

**Dr Monique van den Dries** (University of Leiden)

*Discovering Archaeology's Treasures: The Public Benefits of Archaeology According to the Public.*

**10.10**

**SESSION 1: COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY**

**Dr Heather Montgomery** (Queen's University Belfast)

*Community Excavations at Magilligan Military Training Estate, Co. Londonderry, 2020.*

**Dr Alastair Ruffell, Jonathan McNee and Liam Bradley**

(Queen's University Belfast/ WW2 Aviation Consultant/ Monaghan County Museum, Co. Monaghan)

*W2 Aircraft Crash Sites in Monaghan (Spitfire and P-38): Search, Location, Community Excavation, Recovery and Curation.*

**Anthony Neville** (Resurrecting Monuments Community Archaeology Group)

*Resurrecting Monuments: Philosophy to Results.*

**Jonathan Barkley** (Northern Archaeological Consultancy Ltd)

*A Gaelic Moated Site: The Excavation at Arney Fort, Co. Fermanagh.*

**11.30**

## **SESSION 2: SURVEY AND EXCAVATION**

**Dr Patrick Gleeson** (Queen's University Belfast)

*Navan Fort and Environs: Recent Discoveries in the Emain Macha Landscape.*

**Dr Victoria Ginn** (Historic Environment Division, Department for Communities)

*Unearthed: Recent Discoveries from Development-led Archaeology in Northern Ireland 2018-2020.*

**12.10**

## **SESSION 3: ARCHITECTURE AND MONUMENT TYPES**

**Dr Michelle Comber** (National University of Ireland, Galway)

*Square Ringforts- A Square Peg in a Round Hole?*

**Dr Michael O'Mahony** (Queen's University Belfast)

*Towering Ambitions: A Spatio-Structural Comparison of the Late Medieval Tower-Houses of Britain and Ireland.*

**Dr Barry O'Reilly** (National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht)

*Our Built Vernacular Tradition: A 2020 Perspective.*

**1.10**

## **SESSION 4: ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

**Dr Colm Donnelly** (Queen's University Belfast)

*Going online: meeting our community partners' needs in a pandemic.*

**David Craig** (Ulster Archaeological Society)

*Armchair Archaeology: A Lockdown Discovery Experience.*

1.50

## SESSION 5: RESEARCH

**Dr Lara Cassidy** (Trinity College Dublin)

*The Genomics of Megaliths: Hierarchy and Heterogeneity in Irish Neolithic Society.*

**Dr Connie Kelleher** (National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht)

*"When an alliance of pirates ruled the seas around Ireland"*

**Thomas McErlean** (Archaeological Consultant)

*Statements of Significance on five sites in State Care: Copney, Ballygroll, Church Island, Devenish and Knockmany.*

**Dr David Tosh** (National Museums Northern Ireland)

*Visitor Views on the Display of Human Remains in the Ulster Museum.*

3.30

## JOURNAL LAUNCH AND CLOSE OF CONFERENCE

Launch of **Volume 75** (2019-2020) of the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*.

**Ruairí Ó Baoill** (President of the Ulster Archaeological Society).

## Conference Abstracts and Profiles

### KEYNOTE ADDRESS

**Dr Monique van den Dries** (Leiden University)

***“Discovering Archaeology’s Treasures: The Public Benefits of Archaeology According to the Public”***

#### **Keynote Speaker abstract**

In this lecture I will look into the discoveries we have made on the public benefits of archaeology according to members of the public. These discoveries were made through international projects and case studies (with students) in the Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe and other continents. I will show what community members and citizens (mostly in Europe) think about the value of archaeology, in general and for them personally. I will continue by discussing what other measurements of impacts add to this picture and how the predominant practice in archaeology today (development-led archaeology) may benefit from these insights. Listeners may discover for themselves why it could be a good idea to keep (or start!) engaging with archaeology.

**Keynote Speaker profile**      **E-mail: [m.h.van.den.dries@arch.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:m.h.van.den.dries@arch.leidenuniv.nl)**

**Dr Monique van den Dries** is an archaeologist. She is associate professor at the Faculty of Archaeology at Leiden University (the Netherlands). For the last ten years she has been teaching international BA and MA courses on heritage management on topics connecting archaeology and society (e.g. site management; heritage protection; public archaeology; science communication). Before her return to academia (2008) she worked for fifteen years at cultural heritage institutions (e.g. Dutch Heritage Agency and the Heritage Inspectorate) and has a wide experience in heritage management, policy evaluation and communication. Her research focuses on the value of archaeology for society and the impacts of (international) cultural heritage policies on the profession and on society, in terms of social inclusion, empowerment and sustainable development, wellbeing etc. She participated in several EU-funded projects that studied such themes, such as Archaeology in Contemporary Europe (Culture Programme 2007-2013); Discovering the Archaeologists of Europe 2012-2014 (Lifelong-learning Program); Heritage Values (JPI Cultural Heritage and Global Change); NEARCH: New scenarios for a community involved archaeology (Culture Programme 2007-2013). Currently she represents the Netherlands in an Erasmus+-project (EU-CUL) that focuses on fostering social responsibility in higher education on the basis of local heritage. She was vice-president of the European Association of Archaeologists (2009-2015) and currently serves several editorial (advisory) boards (e.g. Journal of Community Archaeology and Heritage). Her webpages at Leiden University, Academia.edu and ResearchGate.net offer publications for various audiences (lay people, academic and professional colleagues) on topics relating to (archaeological) heritage policies and politics, site management, heritage education, public participation, inclusiveness, gender equality, wellbeing etc.





## SESSION 1: COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY

**Dr Heather Montgomery** (Queen's University Belfast)

***"Community Excavations at Magilligan Military Training Estate, Co. Londonderry, 2020"***

### **Abstract**

The Defence Infrastructure Organisation commissioned Queens University Belfast's Centre for Community Archaeology, in collaboration with the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust, to undertake an archaeological excavation at the Magilligan Training Centre in County Londonderry. The key purpose of the project was to connect local people with the First World War heritage landscape in their area by generating increased levels of knowledge and awareness about the defence heritage resource within the Magilligan Training Estate, through a programme of Community-based archaeological fieldwork. The excavation uncovered a fascinating insight into First World War practice trenches previously dug by soldiers training at Magilligan before being sent to the Western Front. The three-week excavation ended on March 20, just before the country went into Covid-19 lockdown, meaning it was the only community excavation project that the CCA could undertake this year.

### **Profile**

**E-mail: [hmontgomery03@qub.ac.uk](mailto:hmontgomery03@qub.ac.uk)**

**Dr Heather Montgomery** is a Military Archaeologist and Excavation Director at the Centre for Community Archaeology at Queen's University Belfast. She graduated from QUB in 2009 with BA Hon's in Archaeology. She worked in commercial archaeology before commencing her doctoral studies in 2012. Her research comprised the historical archaeological landscape analysis of Ireland's First World War training camps; thesis, entitled: *Training Kitchener's New Army, 1914-18: An Archaeological Perspective on the Irish Experience*. This study considered the Nature of British military training in Ireland during the First World War (1914-1918) through the evaluation of methods employed in the training of Ireland's volunteer recruits. This critical examination led to the identification

of previously unrecognised archaeological remains throughout Ireland, illustrating how these remains represent a wealth of unstudied and largely unknown Irish First World War heritage, presenting significant new evidence that challenged the existing historical narrative on the training of the new Irish Divisions.

Heather was Director of the Phase 1 Magilligan First World War Community Excavations in 2020, Co-Director of Ballykinler Archaeological Excavations in March 2019, Director of excavations at Ballykinler Training Estate in 2016 and Co-director of excavations at Grey Point Fort in 2014. She was also Project Officer for Material Cultures and Landscapes for QUB WW1 Engagement Centre and Project researcher and archivist, 'Men Behind the Glass' HLF funded research project.

Heather is passionate about public outreach and the positive role heritage, material culture and archaeology can have on people and places. Community and public outreach accounted for a significant part of her work during her doctoral studies. The projects were undertaken at different times throughout the course of her study and were often in collaboration with groups such as the HLF, the HED Defence Heritage Project, the Ministry of Defence and the Irish Defence Forces, Department for Defence. The aims of the projects were to engage members of the public with their local heritage. Heather was responsible for coordinating volunteer groups and school visits (primary, secondary and special needs), an integral part of these community excavations and engagement events. To do this successfully she liaised with representatives from other stakeholders to coordinate interactive group visits to the sites and events. An important element of her work as a Project Officer with the Living Legacies 1914-18 Engagement Centre included functioning as a Facilitator alongside the Council for British Archaeology, designing and delivering interactive workshops to local community groups and if required primary and secondary schools. These workshops were modified, to suit the age, ability and knowledge of the participants.

Heather is a Member of Defence Heritage Advisory Board for Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust (CCGHT), Binevenagh and Coastal Lowlands Landscape Partnership Scheme, a Member of the Royal Engineers Historical Society and the Military History Society of Ireland. She is also a Leader with Belfast Young Archaeologists' Club.



**Dr Alastair Ruffell** (Queen's University Belfast), **Jonathan McNee** (WW2 Aviation Consultant) and **Liam Bradley** (Monaghan County Museum)

***“WW2 Aircraft Crash Sites in Monaghan (Spitfire and P-38): Search, Location, Community Excavation, Recovery and Curation”***

**Abstract**

In 2017 we located and recovered a WW2 Mk4 Spitfire from Figgular, Co. Monaghan. This was followed by the discovery and excavation (both under licence) in 2019 of a P-38 Lightning from near Castleblaney, Co. Monaghan.

In this presentation we will give a synopsis of both aircraft crashes and location/recovery (in parallel), from: intelligence (flight/crash records/local anecdotes) on the rough location; our Geoforensic search strategy; community/schools involvement in excavation; the excavation and recovery and the displays in the Monaghan County Museum. The presentation will be live, with us showing the sites with drone flight imagery and display of the recovered artefacts, plus a Q&A session to follow.

**Profiles**            **E-mail: [a.ruffell@qub.ac.uk](mailto:a.ruffell@qub.ac.uk)**

**Dr Alastair Ruffell** (AR), School of the Natural, Built Environment, Queen's University Belfast, **Jonathan McNee** (JMcN), WW2 Aviation Consultant, Pathfinder House, Claudy, Co. Derry and **Liam Bradley** (LB), Monaghan County Museum, Co. Monaghan.



**Anthony Neville** (Resurrecting Monuments Community Archaeology Group)

***“Resurrecting Monuments: Philosophy to Results”***

**Abstract**

Resurrecting Monuments is a community-based archaeology group drawing members from the Baldoyle / Howth area of North East Dublin. The group was established in 2014 following the successful Grassroots Archaeology excavations carried out in Baldoyle in 2013 & 2014.

In this presentation I hope to briefly explain the nature and development of the group. Resurrecting Monuments philosophy is based on development of the local community using archaeology and heritage as a vehicle to achieve this. Resurrecting Monuments aim to carry out all the stages of an archaeological investigation from exploring questions that we would like answered through to disseminating the results of our work to both a local and wider audience. This presentation will also give a brief overview of the work we have undertaken over the past 5 years. These include basis research on lesser known local monuments, excavation at 2 sites, post excavation processing of finds, publication of results and communication of findings in publications and conferences. Most recently the Resurrecting Monuments group published our first book ‘A Guide to the Archaeology of the Howth Peninsula’

**Profile**                    **E-mail: [ajneville2020@gmail.com](mailto:ajneville2020@gmail.com)**

**Anthony Neville** is a retired Group Marketing Manager for a major motor importer and distributor. He is a founding member of Resurrecting Monuments Community Archaeology Group in 2015 and a contributor to *A Guide to the Archaeology of the Howth Peninsula: The story of Howth and its people*, published by Resurrecting Monuments in 2019.



**Jonathan Barkley** (Northern Archaeological Consultancy)

***“A Gaelic Moated Site: The Excavation at Arney Fort, Co. Fermanagh”***

**Abstract**

Arney Fort is an unusual trapezoidal shaped enclosure located on the southern bank of the Arney River. Recorded within the NISMR as a rath, its unusual shape had led to a reinterpretation as a potential Gaelic moated site. In 2019 NAC and the Cuilcagh to Cleenish: A Great Place community group undertook a small-scale excavation to explore this enigmatic site and to try and determine a possible date and function.

**Profile**            **E-mail: [jonathan@northarc.co.uk](mailto:jonathan@northarc.co.uk)**

**Jonathan Barkley** graduated in Archaeology from Queen's University Belfast in 2003 and is currently Projects Manager for Northern Archaeological Consultancy.



## **SESSION 2: SURVEY AND EXCAVATION**

**Dr Patrick Gleeson** (Queen's University Belfast)

***“Navan Fort and environs: recent Discoveries in the Emain Macha Landscape”***

**Abstract**

Navan Fort constitutes one of Northern Ireland's premier monuments. Fabled in history and legend as the home of the early kings of Ulster, and setting for the deeds of some of Ulster's most iconic heroes, its significance has long been appreciated. While this landscape has consistently offered up discoveries of a spectacular nature since the 1960s, a recent campaign of geophysical survey between QUB and Aberdeen University colleagues, is changing our understanding of this complex, its long-term evolution and continued importance within medieval

society. This talk will review some of the most recent discoveries, examining their significance for our understanding of the Navan Fort complex, as well as its place as a royal and cult landscape in later prehistoric and medieval Northwestern Europe.

**Profile**            **E-mail: P.Gleeson@qub.ac.uk**

**Dr Paddy Gleeson** is a Senior Lecturer in Archaeology in the School of Natural and Built Environment, QUB. Prior to joining QUB in 2017, he was previously a lecturer in archaeology at Newcastle University and a postdoctoral fellow at the Moore Institute, National University of Ireland, Galway. His research interests are in the later prehistoric and medieval archaeologies of Northwestern Europe, with a focus on landscape, rulership and cult. He is co-investigator on the Leverhulme Trust funded Comparative Kingship Project and the AHRC funded Waves of Colonisation in the Sea of Moyle Project.



**Dr Victoria Ginn** (Historic Environment Division, Department for Communities).

***“Unearthed: Recent Discoveries from Development-Led archaeology in Northern Ireland 2018-2020”***

**Abstract**

This presentation provides a brief overview of archaeological sites which have been investigated as a result of the planning process in Northern Ireland between 2018 and early 2020.

**Profile**            **E-mail: [Vicky.Ginn@communities-ni.gov.uk](mailto:Vicky.Ginn@communities-ni.gov.uk)**

**Dr Vicky Ginn** is an archaeologist in the Heritage Development and Change Branch of Historic Environment Division, Department of Communities. She was awarded her PhD in 2012 after completing her thesis on Bronze Age settlement in Ireland.



### **SESSION 3: ARCHITECTURE AND MONUMENT TYPES**

**Dr Michelle Comber** (National University of Ireland, Galway)

***“Square Ringforts – A Square Peg in a Round Hole?”***

**Abstract**

Much is known about the Irish ringfort, yet closer study reveals a depth of detail that has the potential to shed new light on settlement patterns and social organisation in Early Medieval Ireland (usually taken as 5th to 12th century AD). In this case, enclosure shape was the first indicator of something different – the traditional ‘ring’ of ‘ringfort’ is replaced by a straight-walled enclosure. Why, then, are some sites not the characteristic circular shape? This question prompted further investigation, culminating in targeted excavation of a non-circular site in the townland of Caherconnell in the Burren region of western Ireland. This paper will present the information uncovered and use that to suggest some possible answers to the question of shape difference.

**Profile**            **E-mail: [michelle.comber@nuigalway.ie](mailto:michelle.comber@nuigalway.ie)**

**Dr Michelle Comber** teaches in the department of Archaeology in NUI, Galway. Her research interests lie mainly in the archaeology of Ireland's Early Medieval period (approx. 5th to 12th century AD), especially its fine

metalwork, economy and settlement. She has over 25 years of excavation experience, and is currently directing a project examining the settlement landscape of the Burren, Co. Clare in the first millennium AD. As part of this, she directs the international Caherconnell Archaeology Field School.



**Dr Michael O'Mahony** (Queen's University Belfast)

***“Towering Ambitions: A Spatio-Structural Comparison of the Late Medieval Tower-Houses of Britain and Ireland”***

**Abstract**

Tower-houses were the lordly residence par excellence of Late Medieval Britain and Ireland (c.1300-1600). They are stone-built, multi-storeyed towers containing a cellar, hall, and residential accommodation. Surrounding the tower-house are ancillary structures such as the enclosing wall (bawn/barmkin), great hall, kitchen, and other building types. They were built in significant quantities in south-west Ireland and the Anglo-Scottish border for protection against raiding parties and to help emanate the lordly authority of their respective patron. They were constructed by every ethnic group in Britain and Ireland from the aristocracy to the gentry, cardinals to vicars, landowners to tenants, and even by the monarchy of England and Scotland. Tower-houses were a common topic of interest for 18th to 20th century antiquarians and archaeologists, yet there has to date been no comparative study of their design or function. As part of his doctoral thesis, the author examined 20 tower-houses from England, Ireland, and Scotland, and compared their spatial and functional attributes. Subsequently, he produced the first national study of the spatial and functional attributes of tower-house design in England and Scotland, and the first comparative analysis of Britain and Ireland's tower-houses. This paper will examine the main evidence for masonic communication and architectural similarities across Britain and Ireland's tower-houses.



**Profile**            **E-mail: momahony02@qub.ac.uk**

**Dr Michael O'Mahony** is a Visiting Scholar at Queen's University Belfast. He is a medieval archaeologist who specialises in the tower-houses of Britain and Ireland and the Late Medieval lordly landscape. His journey at QUB began in 2012, and he was awarded the John Hurst Prize in 2016 by the Society for Medieval Archaeology for his undergraduate dissertation entitled "Access Analysis and the Gaelic Tower-Houses of North-West Ireland". His doctorate was acquired in 2020 for his thesis entitled "Spatial Analysis and the Late-Medieval Tower-Houses of Britain and Ireland." He is currently a Visiting Scholar in the Archaeology Department at QUB, with his research focussing on reconstructing the original environs of Ireland's tower-houses using archaeological and historical evidence.



**Dr Barry O'Reilly** (National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht)  
***"Our Built Vernacular Tradition: A 2020 Perspective"***

### **Abstract**

Our built vernacular is a living tradition. Its forms, construction, materials, crafts and associated folkloric and social traditions make it an identifiably common inheritance for North and South. It includes buildings that are occupied and derelict, loved and unloved. A growing concern for sustainable living, coupled with housing shortages, means that the vernacular must form part of our future. Our vernacular is more than buildings – settings, settlements and landscapes must also be considered – and the tangible has its twin, the intangible. Activity in the vernacular started in the 1930s and has proceeded in fits and starts since. An island-wide survey is overdue by 75 years (first mentioned in *JRSAI* back then) and recognition and protection has been less than comprehensive. Identifying our vernacular settlements and vernacular landscapes offers a further interesting challenge. There is also the more immediate task of meeting the needs of a building stock that deserves gentle conservation and rehabilitation. A three-year strategy for the Republic, informed by work done in the North, is being finalized and is aimed at addressing these various challenges.

**Profile**            **E-mail: Barry.O'Reilly@chg.gov.ie**

**Dr Barry O'Reilly** works in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. His involvement with vernacular matters goes back 35 years with his Masters thesis in folklore studying the vernacular architecture of north County Dublin and his doctoral research on hamlets in different parts of the island. He is currently drawing together a three-year strategy for the vernacular in the Republic, much informed by his opposite numbers north of the border. Another string to his bow is his work as editor for Europe of revised edition of the *Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World*.



## **SESSION 4: ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

**Dr Colm Donnelly** (Queen's University Belfast)

***“Going online: meeting our community partners’ needs in a pandemic”***

### **Abstract**

The Centre for Community Archaeology (CCA) at Queen's University Belfast undertakes outreach activities with local communities across Northern Ireland and enables adult volunteers and school children to participate directly in archaeological fieldwork through community-based research projects thereby facilitating the involvement of local people in the study of the heritage in their area. Over the course of the last decade our staff have undertaken this work through partnerships with a network of public, voluntary and community-based organisations. Our plans for 2020, however, suffered major disruption due to the Covid-19 pandemic and its associated lockdown. This necessitated the development of our Community Archaeology Toolkit, a free online resource designed to enable local communities to engage directly with their local heritage.

**Profile**            **E-mail: c.j.donnelly@qub.ac.uk**

**Dr Colm Donnelly** is the Co-Director of the Centre for Community Archaeology in the School of Natural and Built Environment at Queen's University Belfast. His research focuses on the history, architecture and archaeology of Late Medieval and early seventeenth century Ireland. He is a co-editor of *The Science of a Lost Medieval Gaelic Graveyard – The Ballyhanna Research Project* (2015) and co-author of *The Glens of Antrim in Medieval Times* (2018).



**David Craig** (Ulster Archaeological Society)

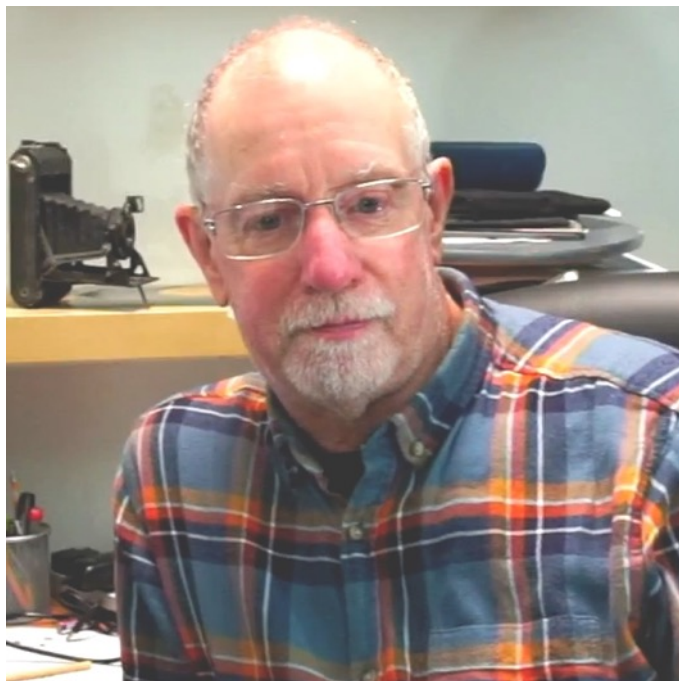
***“Armchair Archaeology: A Lockdown Discovery Experience”***

**Abstract**

This presentation will demonstrate some basic desktop techniques to find new sites from various sources of online aerial imagery, showing that even through a period of limited fieldwork activity due to the current pandemic, new sites can be discovered remotely. One 'unlocated' ecclesiastical site in the townland of Killard Upper will be used to demonstrate the process with a few surprises along the way. As a result of a similar discovery process, another site at Ringreevy near Islandhill was identified and was subsequently surveyed by the Ulster Archaeological Society's Geophysics Survey Team. The presentation closes with 2 examples of how 3D recording of artefacts can allow detailed inspection without physical handling.

**Profile**            **E-mail: david@heritageni.com**

**David Craig** runs HeritageNI an aerial photography and mapping business. David has been a member of the Committee of the Ulster Archaeological Society for a number of years and heads up the geophysics sub-team within the UAS Survey Group. He is passionate about community led archaeology and works with communities and individuals encouraging and assisting with the technological aspect of archaeological recording. One of his aims is to create bridges and pathways between archaeological commercial/academia and the communities where the sites of study exist.



## SESSION 5: RESEARCH

**Dr Lara Cassidy** (Trinity College Dublin)

***“ The Genomics of Megaliths: Hierarchy and Heterogeneity in Irish Neolithic Society ”***

### **Abstract**

We present whole genome data from the Irish Mesolithic and Neolithic periods, including individuals sampled from all the major megalithic funerary traditions. With this we provide evidence for a hereditary elite in Irish passage tomb societies. This includes a web of biological kinship connections across large temporal and spatial distances on the island, as well as a case of first-degree incest associated with the right hand recess of the main mound at Newgrange. We also find diversity among the individuals interred within megalithic tombs. This includes the remains of an infant with Down syndrome at Poul nabrone portal tomb and an individual with ancestry derived from the Irish Mesolithic population at Park nabinnia court tomb. Genomic data taken directly from two Irish Mesolithic individuals points to a long-term island isolation, which ended with a seemingly rapid maritime colonisation of the island during the Early Neolithic.

**Profile**            **E-mail: [cassid1@tcd.ie](mailto:cassid1@tcd.ie)**

**Dr Lara Cassidy** is an Assistant Professor in Genetics at Trinity College Dublin. She completed her PhD in Ancient Genomics in 2018. The main focus of this research was the creation of a time series dataset of genomes from across Irish prehistory, which revealed major population turnovers in the Neolithic and Bronze Age. She continued to expand the Irish Ancient DNA project as a postdoctoral researcher, utilising genotype imputation to study fine-scale patterns of regional differentiation and social structure in prehistory. Her group is currently working to better characterise the strong signals of genetic continuity observed in Ireland over the past 4,000 years, with a specific focus on selection and the evolutionary trajectories of deleterious alleles.



**Dr Connie Kelleher** (National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht)  
***“When an alliance of pirates ruled the seas around Ireland”***

**Abstract**

Piracy and pirates from bygone days have captured the imagination of successive generations. Whether it is the fictional tale of characters like Captain Hook or Captain Sparrow or the real life exploits of pirates of the Golden Age of the Caribbean – like Edward ‘Blackbeard’ Thatch or ‘Black Sam’ Bellamy – the world of these men has engaged and entertained generations. Wherever goods were traded and settlements existed, particularly in the remote ports and harbours of peripheral places, pirates were to be found. Ireland was no exception, and at a particular time in history, Ireland had its own golden age.

In the early part of the seventeenth-century, within the coastal waters around Ireland, and in particular along the southwest coast of Munster, piracy was integral to everyday lives. This alliance of men, who established bases in the isolated villages of Baltimore, Leamcon (Schull) and Crookhaven in West Cork, also frequented other areas of the coast as part of their operations. The harbours of Broadhaven in County Mayo, Killybegs in Donegal and Lough Foyle and Lough Swilly were also utilised by them when opportunity and business beckoned.

The presentation will discuss this Alliance of Pirates – who they were, where they operated and why they became so strong that the king of England, James I, had no other recourse but to pardon most of them. It will look at the historical evidence, supported by cartographic as well as potential archaeological evidence that may provide a tangible cultural link to this period, including evidence from beneath the waves.

**Profile**                      **E-mail: [Connie.Kelleher@chg.gov.ie](mailto:Connie.Kelleher@chg.gov.ie)**

**Dr Connie Kelleher** works with the National Monuments Service in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and is visiting lecturer in the Department of Archaeology in University College Cork, delivering the course on the Introduction to Underwater Archaeology. As part of her work with the Underwater

Archaeology Unit she has undertaken excavations on several shipwreck sites, including that of the 1588 Spanish Armada wreck of *La Trinidad Valencera* in Donegal. Her research interests include the historical archaeology of piracy and her book *The Alliance of Pirates: Ireland and Atlantic Piracy in the Early Seventeenth Century* was published this year.



**Thomas McErlean** (Archaeological Consultant)

***“Statements of Significance on five sites in State Care: Copney, Ballygroll, Church Island, Devenish and Knockmany”***

**Abstract**

In recent years, a key tool in the management of heritage sites has been the creation of what is called ‘a statement of significance’. This is a succinct summary of all the key values of the site based on an identification and evaluation all the important values the site contains. These include the obvious ones such as its archaeological importance and landscape context, but the net is cast much wider to include its cultural, social, economic, and educational and spiritual significance. The site’s contribution to a sense of social and personal wellbeing is also considered a key value. The speaker was asked by the State Care team of HED to prepare statements on five sites in state care. These were Ballygroll ritual landscape, Copney stone circle complex, Knockmany Passage tomb with its superb megalithic art, Church Island and Devenish. The lecture reviews the results of the exercise with Devenish covered with more detail than the others.

**Profile**            **E-mail: [tc.mcerlean@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:tc.mcerlean@ulster.ac.uk)**

**Thomas McErlean** is a landscape archaeologist and former senior research fellow in the Centre for Maritime Archaeology in Ulster University where he retains associate staff status.



**Dr David Tosh** (National Museums Northern Ireland)

***“Visitor Views on the Display of Human Remains in the Ulster Museum”***

**Abstract**

Since the expansion of public museums in the 19th century, the display of human remains has been synonymous with museums of Western Europe. However, this practice was called into question at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as indigenous communities called for the repatriation and reburial of remains held in collections. The debate and discussion on the ethics of retaining human remains in museum collections that resulted in 2005's guidance on the care of human remains continue to this day. National Museums NI is not deaf to such conversations and is keen to understand how its visitors view such displays. Consequently, face-to-face visitor surveys were undertaken at the Ulster Museum in early 2020 to garner people's opinions on the display of the remains of ancient people.

**Profile**            **E-mail: David.Tosh@nmni.com**

**Dr David Tosh** is National Museum NI's Research co-ordinator and is responsible for promoting research across all of the museum's collections. He made his debut at the Ulster Archaeological Societies conference last year despite being relatively new to the museum sector and having a background in Conservation Biology. His new position affords him the opportunity to dabble in the world of archaeology and he is keen to support further research on NMNI's collections.





## Further information and Acknowledgements

### **Information about the Ulster Archaeological Society**

The current Committee of the Ulster Archaeological Society comprises: Ruairí Ó Baoill (President), Professor Eileen Murphy, Barrie Hartwell and Patrick O'Neill (Vice Presidents), Ken Pullin BEM (Honorary Secretary), Lee Gordon (Honorary Treasurer), Cormac Bourke (Honorary Editor, *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*), Grace McAlister (Honorary Assistant Editor, *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*), Anne MacDermott MBE (Assistant Secretary Events), Dr Duncan Berryman (Honorary Editor: UAS Newsletter), Randal Scott, Roisín McCaughan Brian Sloan, David Craig, Leo van Es, Dr Ian Meighan and David Mayes (Committee members).

### **For further information about the activities of the Ulster Archaeological Society please see our**

Website: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/uas/>

Facebook site: <https://en-gb.facebook.com/The-Ulster-Archaeological-Society-190943297657719/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ulsterarcsoc>

Email: [ulsterarchaeolsoc@gmail.com](mailto:ulsterarchaeolsoc@gmail.com)

The Ulster Archaeological Society is registered with The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland NIC101151

### **Further information about Archaeology & Palaeoecology at Queen's University Belfast**

For further information about Archaeology & Palaeoecology at Queen's and our activities please see our

Websites: [www.archaeology-palaeoecology-qub.com](http://www.archaeology-palaeoecology-qub.com)

[www.qub.ac.uk/schools/NBE/](http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/NBE/)

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Last, but not least, we would like again to thank all the participants in the conference who have so generously agreed to share their discoveries with us.

The conference was hosted by Queen's University Belfast and our thanks to the University for facilitating it.

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