

Stones that Speak

Causeway Stones:

- Iconic symbol of the North Coast, Northern Ireland and much else - one of the 'Seven Wonders of the Natural World'
- Stones that date from around 60 million years ago.
- Created during the formation of the Atlantic Ocean
- Black basalt flows overlay the white chalk/limestone measures that make up much of our coastal scenery
- At the Causeway basalt flows pooled in a valley and cooled slowly, resulting in the iconic shapes and structures preserved through time'
- These stones speak to the world, other stones within the area have a message but not a voice.

Culfeightrin Stones; Ballyvoy (Between Ballycastle and Fairhead)

- Neolithic Megaliths - erected between 4000 and 6000 years ago. The image is of one of three megaliths within the graveyard
- Many indicators around the area point to a thriving New Stone Age community - stones, habitation and a local axe industry
- Culfeightrin Church - the graveyard of which encompasses the stones - is very much a newcomer, being built in 1831
- It is interesting that the early Celtic Church tradition of claiming pre-Christian sites was carried on into the near past; here a megalith stands within the graveyard and another is found outside the front door
- The monochrome image of this particular stone provided the spark to the club produce the panel as a monochrome presentation

Magheraboy or the Druids Altar; Ballintoy

- The Druids Altar is a Neolithic passage grave situated above White Park Bay
- The Mount Druid Rectory was completed in 1791, and is the Rectory associated with the Parish of Rathlin and Ballintoy, named after this Druids Altar
- Neolithic monuments and tombs are often placed in commanding situations on high ground, the Druids Altar is highest of three passage tombs in the White Park Bay. Mesolithic sites have been identified locally which indicate habitation before Neolithic times and therefore a long history of occupation.
- Constructed from local basalt boulders, probably left behind by glaciers retreating some 10,000 years before
- Likely created as a repository for ancestral bones rather than a burial site
- A beautiful location, obviously treasured by its Neolithic creators

Camus High Cross; Castleroe, Colereaine.

- Portion of a carved and decorated cross shaft located above the River Bann, South East of Coleraine and overlooking the ford of Camus which means 'winding river'.
- a monastery founded at Camus in the 6th century by St Comgall, the High Cross was erected on the site in the 9th or 10th century
- Decorated with biblical scenes; the Baptism of Jesus, the Ark and the Murder of Abel are represented, along with Celtic geometric patterns and interlace designs
- The cross was reportedly broken in the 17th century and was subsequently used as a gatepost to the burying ground before being re-instated on a plinth in the 1900's
- A memory of days and times gone by, before bridges were built over the river - Camus Ford was a major crossing point on the Bann, this crossing disappeared following dredging in the 18th and 19th century.

Bonamargy Friary; Ballycastle.

- The ruins are located by the Margy River, close to the seashore and present day golf course
- Franciscan Friary established in 1485 by Rory MacQuillan, the local Clan chief
- The friary was the focus of ongoing fighting between the local MacQuillan and MacDonnell Clans
- In the 1580's the friary was used to garrison English troops by Queen Elizabeth 1st's Lord Deputy of Ireland, who was defeated after a surprise attack by the MacDonnells
- Contains the burial vault of the MacDonnells of Antrim, which holds the remains of Sorley Boy McDonnell and some of the Earls of Antrim.
- The Black Nun, Julia MacQuillan, who lived within the Friary is also buried within the Church
- The ruins represent the gatehouse, a store and the church - all that remains after the friary fell into ruin during the period of the Wars of the Three Kingdoms and Cromwells confiscations of land in Ireland
- The story of the ruins reflects the turbulent history which afflicted Ireland, Scotland and England around the Tudor and Elizabethan times

Dunboe Old Church, Downhill demesne; Castlerock

- Ruins located on a mounded burying ground adjacent to the recent Presbyterian Cemetery and across the road from the Downhill Mausoleum
- The original Church may have been built as early as 1291 on the site of a monastery founded by Saint Adomnan and monks from Iona around 700/800 AD
- The church fell into disrepair after a replacement was built in Articlave in 1691, the burying ground has been used until recent times and contains tombs and graves of the Bruce family who inherited the Downhill House estate from the Earl Bishop
- An atmospheric location now bordered by the Downhill Forest, planted as part of the demesne.

Ramoan Old Churchyard; Ballycastle.

- Located on the outskirts of Ballycastle, close to the Rectory. The old Rectory has recently been renovated and the area is being surrounded by housing developments
- The Ramoan church was originally established by St Patrick in 6th century
- The burying ground contains many memorials dating from the 18th century when the new Ramoan Church was established
- The image is the detail of a Memento Mori carved on two separate family tombs. The Memento Mori was meant to remind you to appreciate your life, as one day you will die. The inscription on the tombs, with similar details and by the same sculptor - is an unfortunate translation of the Latin "Remember you must Die" here being rendered as "Remember to Die"

Two images contained on the Panel are excluded from the presentation because we originally had too many. They have, however, been left in their original position as decided by the Club. The image from Rathlin refers to a memorial remembering those lost at sea, in an archaic 'pecked relief' form of lettering on native rock. The second is a modern memorial located on Ramore Head remembering an individual tragedy.

Poorhouse Graveyard; Coleraine.

- Situated in the Harpur's Hill area of Coleraine, now surrounded by housing development and small industrial units.
- Established in 1858 and in use until 1947.
- The Workhouse for Paupers was established in 1842, and a fever hospital erected on the site a few years later; the burying ground within the site was supplemented by the opening of the Poorhouse Graveyard 10 years later. The Graveyard was at a remote location outside of the town curtilage and about a mile distant from the workhouse
- Coleraine has grown, and a previously remote country location is now part of the town. Graves would have been unmarked and not recorded consistently, and there is no evidence other than the constructed marker that such activity ever occurred in this recent urban location

Cillin Memorial, Bonamargy Friary, Ballycastle

- A modern memorial situated within the curtilage of the friary
- Gravestones and memorials honour and remember those buried within the consecrated graveyard
- The memorial is on the unconsecrated burying ground for 'Those to Whom Ecclesiastical Funeral Rights Are Denied'
- Primarily for unbaptised children, the lists of those denied by proscription included "...strangers, suicides, sailors, mothers who died in childbirth, criminals, victims and excommunicates as well as people with mental health issues and physical deformities"
- The earliest reference to cillini in Ireland was in 1619 and the practise of interment in unconsecrated ground was widespread through Ireland until changes started to become adopted in the mid and late 1800's
- Efforts are now being made to acknowledge these sites and memorials such as this are sometimes being installed. In another church locally bones have been exhumed and re-interred within the consecrated graveyard.

Garvagh Pyramid; Garvagh Forest.

- Constructed as a Mausoleum in the early 1800's
- Designed and built on instruction of Lord Garvagh, a keen Egyptologist, to serve as his final resting place
- Lord Garvagh was a member of the Canning family, who owned the area from 1614 to 1921. The family were instrumental in the development of Garvagh during the Plantation of Ulster.
- Lord Garvagh died in France in 1840 and was never interred within the Pyramid. The vault has never been used for its original purpose and was filled in at a later date - it is now technically a Cenotaph, a mausoleum without content.
- This is quite an unconventional object to come across deep within the forest

War Grave, Tamlaghtfinlagan Church; Ballykelly

- Memorial to a Serviceman who died on active service
- RAF Ballykelly was a base for the Coastal Command during the Second World War, flying patrols into the Atlantic to guard convoys and hunt submarines
- There are 17 war graves in Ballykelly containing the remains of Airmen who died and whose remains were not repatriated.
- Warrant Officer Wallace was a member of the crew of a Liberator which took off from Ballykelly on June 23rd to go on anti-submarine patrol over the Atlantic. The aircraft returned from patrol early in the morning of 24th June and found the airfield obscured by low cloud and fog. The aircraft was heard to start circling the area of the base at 4:00am. On the third rotation the noise of the plane crashing into Binevenagh Mountain and exploding was heard from the base - the wreckage was located 3 hours later and there were no survivors from the crew of 8.
- The simplicity and uniformity of a war grave in no way contributes to the commemoration of the individual being memorialised. Under every gravestone there is a story of human loss.

Downhill Mausoleum, Downhill House; Castlerock

- The mausoleum erected around 1780, design based on a classical Roman mausoleum in France
- The mausoleum was constructed at the same time as Downhill House and Mussenden Temple by the Earl Bishop of Derry
- The mausoleum is another example of a cenotaph, which was built as a memorial to the Earl Bishop's brother who had died in 1775
- The edifice was damaged in the Great Storm of 1839, lasting only some 60 years - possibly due to poor construction
- The structure currently is not available for photography - it is surrounded by scaffolding.

There are many stones telling many stories, from creation and prehistory through the rise of religion and the Christian church.

They can and do commemorate people who have gone before- some people historically important, some unnamed or untouchable.

The stones silently mark history, the voices comes from approaching them, appreciating them, photographing them and sharing the stories.