

STRATA

Uncovering Layers of Archaeology

Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland

Conference and AGM 2017

Friday 31st March – Saturday 1st April

Louis Fitzgerald Hotel, Dublin

www.iai.ie



IAI

Institute of
Archaeologists
of Ireland

Friday 31st March

9.30-10.00

Registration

Session 1:

Prehistoric Ireland I

10.00-10.20

Dr Stephen Davis, Cathy Moore & Mick Drumm

Excavations at Tlachtga 2014–2016

10.20-10.40

Yolande O' Brien

The prehistoric origins of the Midland Corridor routeway

10.40-11.00

Dr Robert Hensey

Light at the end of the tunnel: a phase of enlargement at Newgrange?

11.00–11.15

Discussion

11.15–11.45

Tea and coffee

Session 2

Prehistoric Ireland II

11.45–12.05

Neil Jackman

The Hellfire Club Archaeological Project: the first chapter of an archaeological storytelling project.

12.05–12.25

Dr Thor McVeigh

Timing is everything—a theoretical perspective on the structure of Neolithic–Bronze Age calendars in the British Isles

12.25–12.45

Kevin Kearney

The Mesolithic/Neolithic Transition in southern Ireland: linking multi-proxy palaeoenvironmental evidence to the archaeological record.

12.45–13.00

Discussion

13.00–14.00

Lunch

14.00-16.00

Annual General Meeting of the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland

Session 3:	Special Presentations: Developments in Irish Archaeology 2017
16.00-16.20	Brendan O' Neill UCD School of Archaeology's Centre for Experimental Archaeology and Material Culture
16.20–16.40	Edmond O'Donovan and Mary Teehan Archaeology 2025 - Ireland's Strategy
16.40–17.00	Peter Hinton and Michael MacDonagh IAI and ClfA: a Strategic Partnership
17.00-17.05	Una McConville and Nick Maxwell Archaeology Ireland: bringing the past on-line
17.05-17.25	Tea and coffee
17.25–18.05	Keynote Address Dr Meriel McClatchie, Assistant Professor, UCD School of Archaeology Food 'facts': new findings and emerging challenges in the investigation of ancient foodways
18.05-18.20	Discussion
20.00-Late	Table Quiz – Louis Fitzpatrick Hotel

Saturday 1st April

9.20-9.50

Registration

Session 1:

Community Archaeology I

9.50-10.10

Fintan Walsh

The Ulster Scots Archaeology Project

10.10-10.30

Conor McDermott, Matthew Seaver, Dr Graeme Warren

Recent Archaeological Fieldwork at Glendalough: community engagement, research, management, teaching

10.30-10.45

Discussion

10.45–11.15

Tea and coffee

Session 2

Community Archaeology II

11.15–11.35

Isabel Bennett

The Corca Dhuibhne 3D Project

11.35–11.55

David McIlreavy

The Medieval Bray Project

11.55–12.15

Anne Carey

Exploring the heritage of a burgeoning suburb: a school-based community project in Knocknacarra, Galway

12.15–12.30

Discussion

12.30–13.30

Lunch

Session 3

Medieval & Historic Archaeology

13.30-13.50

Shane Delaney

Ranelagh, Co. Roscommon: preliminary observations

13.50-14.10

Dr Eve Campbell

‘Ar scáth a chéile a mhaireann na daoine’: life and material culture in an Achill rundale settlement

14.10–14.30

Enda O’Flaherty

Triggering memory and meaning for the online public: the abandoned national schools of Ireland

14.30–14.50	Dave Swift Reconstructing 1916
14.50–15.05	Discussion
15.05	Conference Close

Abstracts

Friday 31st March

Session 1: Prehistoric Ireland I

Dr Stephen Davis, Cathy Moore & Mick Drumm

Excavations at Tlachtga 2014–2016

This paper summarises the results of survey and excavation at the Hill of Ward, Co. Meath, over three seasons from 2014 to 2016. Tlachtga is a quadrivallate earthen enclosure, c. 150m in diameter, located at the Hill of Ward, just east of Athboy, Co. Meath. Geophysical survey at the site highlighted the presence of multiple phases of enclosure: a large, trivallate enclosure had been partially overbuilt by the existing monument which also intersected much smaller (c. 40m diameter) ditched enclosure. Subsequent excavation has shown that the large enclosure was likely constructed in the Bronze Age and infilled in the Iron Age, with several centuries then elapsing prior to the construction of Tlachtga. The smaller 'southern enclosure' pre-dates Tlachtga, but only slightly, with both phases dating from the Late Iron Age to early medieval transition. The central platform within the site appears to have been constructed later—perhaps mirroring the situation at Kilfinnane, Co. Limerick. A complex of features to the east of the site appears to be contemporary with this renewed phase of construction. The results and conclusions of three seasons of excavations will be presented, drawing together a new narrative regarding construction, re-use and deconstruction at the Hill of Ward.

Yolande O' Brien, NUIG

The prehistoric origins of the Midland Corridor routeway

The Midland Corridor is the name given by the late Alfred Smyth to a natural routeway which extended through the Midlands of County Offaly, joining Leth Chuinn and Leth Mogha. This c. 40km long and 5-10km across routeway was composed of dry soils which connected the Boyne catchment area to the Tipperary region of North Munster, in a landscape which is otherwise dominated with substantial areas of raised bog. Smyth discussed it as a medieval routeway, observing the distribution of important ecclesiastical settlements, such as Rahugh, Durrow, Lynally, Kinnity and Roscrea, along its course. It was also the means by which the Uí Néill managed to extend their influence southwards.

This paper will examine the prehistoric origins to this routeway. Distributions of monuments, artefact depositions and other sites suggest that the northern extent of the Midland Corridor may date from the Early Bronze Age and perhaps as early as the Neolithic period. The southern extent is composed of heavier soils and may have come into use by the Late Bronze Age. The northern and southern influences in this region are evident in the composition of the Dowris hoard, which is composed of both Class 1 and Class 2 horns from the northern and southwestern regions, respectively. These influences must have arrived through the use of the Midland Corridor, on which this hoard was discovered.

Dr Robert Hensey

Light at the end of the tunnel: a phase of enlargement at Newgrange?

Conventionally the reason for the existence of the roof-box at Newgrange is what M.J. O’Kelly described as a ‘...feasible solution to the problem of orientation’. By ‘problem’ O’Kelly ultimately meant the 2m difference between the elevation of the passage floor at the monument’s entrance and that of the chamber floor farther upslope. O’Kelly’s comment answers a particular question, but there are other questions that could be asked and other problems that may have needed to be resolved as the Newgrange roof-box was constructed. A question that has perhaps not been clearly articulated is why the Neolithic builders chose to design a monument of a particular scale and diameter which necessitated such a device; or rather, why did they not construct a marginally smaller monument at which the light would come directly through the entrance as at other astronomically oriented passage tombs? Recent research has highlighted that there are potentially two dozen astronomically oriented passage tombs in Ireland, none with an equivalent roof-box device. Here it is proposed that the origins of the astronomically oriented ‘roof-box’ can be found in a previously unidentified extension to the passage constructed during a phase of enlargement at the monument.

Session 2: Prehistoric Ireland II

Neil Jackman, Abarta Heritage

The Hellfire Club Archaeological Project: the first chapter of an archaeological storytelling project.

The Hellfire Club Archaeological Project aims to explore the archaeological landscape of Montpelier Hill, Co. Dublin. Previous phases of the project have included desk-based research, a geophysical survey and a small programme of test-excavation.

The latest phase focused on DU025–001001, previously recorded as a possible passage tomb. This monument was thought to have been largely destroyed by the construction of the Hellfire Club in the early eighteenth century. Two trenches were placed into the monument, primarily to assess whether any archaeological features had survived the disturbance of the eighteenth century and, secondly, if archaeological features were present, to assess if it is possible to conclusively prove that DU025–001001 was indeed a Neolithic passage tomb or another type of archaeological monument. The excavation strategy encouraged an open dig where locals and schools could visit to see the dig in progress. Along with the excavation, a folklore research project involving schools in the locality will also collect folklore and tales about this iconic site.

The Hellfire Club Archaeological Project is a collaborative, multi-agency community outreach project led by Abarta Heritage, with funding from South Dublin County Council and support from Coillte and the Dublin Mountains Partnership. A key objective of the Hellfire Club Archaeological Project, is to raise awareness and public engagement with the heritage of Montpelier Hill, including the tombs, the Hellfire Club itself, and the wider story of the Dublin Mountains.

Dr Thor McVeigh, NUIG

Timing is everything—a theoretical perspective on the structure of Neolithic–Bronze Age calendars in the British Isles

This paper will investigate how Neolithic–Bronze Age calendars could have been structured in the British Isles and outline the role of calendrically scheduled feasts within this milieu. Firstly, the structure and divisions present within historical Eurasian and Egyptian calendrical systems will be summarised, as these provide clues as to how prehistoric calendars may have been structured. Secondly, the economic and ceremonial importance of calendrically scheduled feasts, particularly those connected with winter solstice festivals, will be outlined. The third section will elucidate the potential structure of prehistoric calendars in the British Isles. In this context, a theoretical model advocating an overarching ‘lunisolar structure’ and the existence of two parallel calendars, one with an economic focus, the other with a more overt ceremonial (‘ritual’ or religious) function will be advanced. This model draws upon a combination of the structures evident in historical calendars and the ‘natural’ cyclical processes which would have informed the ‘rhythms’ of prehistoric life. Finally, some trends in Neolithic monument orientations and alignments in the British Isles, including evidence for potentially calendrically significant examples and patterns will be highlighted, with particular reference to Irish passage tombs.

Kevin Kearney, UCC

The Mesolithic/Neolithic Transition in southern Ireland: linking multi-proxy palaeoenvironmental evidence to the archaeological record.

This study explores the forager to farmer interface (c. 5000–3000 cal. BC) in the southern region of Ireland, through the combined use of multi-proxy palaeoenvironmental evidence and archaeological analysis. This presentation will focus on the results of palaeoenvironmental analysis from Lough Cullin, south Kilkenny, where qualitative and quantitative palynological analysis is complimented by Bayesian modelling of chronological data from across southern Ireland. The integration of both these datasets allows for the formulation of new hypotheses concerning patterns of environmental change and the timing and intensity of human activity during the Early Neolithic period.

Session 3: Special Presentations: Developments in Irish Archaeology 2017

Brendan O’ Neill, UCD

UCD School of Archaeology’s Centre for Experimental Archaeology and Material Culture

UCD School of Archaeology’s Centre for Experimental Archaeology and Material Culture is one of the only dedicated, on-campus university facilities in the world for experimental archaeological research, teaching and public engagement. The facility provides a unique opportunity and place to reconstruct past buildings, technologies, environments and things, and to explore through making the role of material culture and materiality in people’s lives in the past. This talk will describe the Centre for Experimental Archaeology and Material Culture and its investigations, ranging from undergraduate projects, to MSc students theses, to PhD and Post-doctoral studies, as well as funded projects. A particular focus will be put on the Early Medieval and Viking House Project, and its investigations on the architecture, organisation, and uses of houses in the past.

Edmond O'Donovan and Mary Teehan

Archaeology 2025 - Ireland's Strategy

Archaeology 2025 is an initiative of the Royal Irish Academy (RIA) Standing Committee on Archaeology (SCA), and the process was kindly facilitated by the Discovery Programme. It is a long-term strategic and sustainable pathway forwards for archaeology which strengthens its role in the cultural heritage sector in Ireland. The RIA SCA is uniquely representative of the archaeology profession with members spanning the public, private and academic areas of the discipline. In developing the strategy, it was seen as crucial to reach out to those within the profession and those who interact with archaeology more generally. Consultation was seen as a key element of the strategy, especially with external audiences. Therefore, the recommendations that are to be made are consensus-based and grounded in the realities of all stakeholders on local, national and EU levels. The talk at the IAI Conference will seek to inform the members of the process to date and update them on the future progress on the project. It is seen as a follow on talk from last year's presentation.

Peter Hinton (ClfA) and Michael MacDonagh (IAI)

IAI and ClfA: A Strategic Partnership

This paper will briefly introduce the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists to IAI members and will review the Memorandum of Understanding between the two organisations. It will provide an opportunity to question Michael and Pete about the two institutes, and to make suggestions about the way forward.

Una McConville and Nick Maxwell, Wordwell Ltd.

Archaeology Ireland: bringing the past on-line

As part of ongoing developments for Archaeology Ireland, which is celebrating 30 years of publication in 2017, Wordwell Ltd. will be announcing the completion of the digitization of the Archaeology Ireland archive (30 years, 119 issues and over 70 Heritage Guides) - all future issues of Archaeology Ireland will now be available in print and digital formats with full search functions. The Digitization Project, Archaeology Ireland: bringing the past on-line, was made possible with support from the National Monuments Service, Dept of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs.

You can view this here <https://shop.exacteditions.com/ie/archaeology-ireland> (individuals) and <https://institutions.exacteditions.com/archaeology-ireland> (Institutions)

Keynote address: Dr Meriel McClatchie, Assistant Professor, UCD School of Archaeology

Food 'facts': new findings and emerging challenges in the investigation of ancient foodways

Ancient foodways—the customs or habits of a group of people concerning food and eating—are increasingly a focus of research in archaeology. This paper will highlight some of the exciting new findings from Ireland and beyond, as well as some of the challenges facing archaeologists who are undertaking research in this area. The structure of the paper will follow the four themes of the IAI conference: prehistory, environmental archaeology, community archaeology and historic archaeology. The prehistory and environmental archaeology themes will be explored through consideration of evidence from Ireland's first farmers, highlighting research from the Cultivating Societies project. The community archaeology and historic archaeology themes will focus on the Swords Castle: Digging History – Fingal Community Excavation Project. These two projects have made important new discoveries on ancient foodways, and they have highlighted issues relating to professional practice in Ireland. The paper will also include an analysis of the role that archaeologists can play in informing debates relating to modern food trends, such as the Paleo diet and lactose-avoidance, as well as potential problems that may arise when archaeologists advise on healthy-eating practices for modern societies.

Saturday April 1st

Session 1: Community Archaeology I

Fintan Walsh, IAC

The Ulster Scots Archaeology Project

The Ulster Scots Archaeological Project is a three-year project formulated by the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure which aims to raise awareness of Ulster Scots history, heritage and culture and provide a clearer understanding of the impact that the Plantation had on the landscape, peoples and architecture of Ulster. This project culminates in the forthcoming production of a landmark publication—a gazetteer of all known archaeological sites associated with this pivotal period in Irish history. Archaeological excavation was a key element of the Ulster Scots project and as part of the project three excavations were carried out at key Plantation sites in Northern Ireland. These excavations, in tandem with community involvement, open days, volunteer programmes and school visits, sought to raise awareness and public interest in this important period of our shared history.

Conor McDermott, Matthew Seaver, Dr Graeme Warren, UCD.

Recent Archaeological Fieldwork at Glendalough: community engagement, research, management, teaching

This paper reviews an ongoing archaeological project undertaken by UCD School of Archaeology immediately adjacent to the main monastic complex at Glendalough, Co. Wicklow. UCD have been working in the Glendalough Valley since 2009, and have developed a variety of approaches to community engagement over this period. This has been associated with the establishment of the Glendalough Heritage Forum, which coordinates a variety of (cultural) heritage initiatives involving the local community and State Agencies. This paper reviews the Glendalough project, highlighting its contribution to our understanding of the valley, management of this iconic landscape, role in our student training and as an example of developing community engagement.

Session 2: Community Archaeology II

Isabel Bennett

The Corca Dhuibhne 3D Project

A community project based on the Dingle Peninsula, Co. Kerry, co-organised by the Discovery Programme, the Ogham in 3D Project and Músaem Chorca Dhuibhne, initially to 3D scan some of the ogham stones in the area, is going from strength to strength. Members of the community (from all parts of the Peninsula, and from elsewhere in Kerry) attended training sessions and a core group with a range of skills have been busy photographing and researching carved stones from all time periods including pieces of (nearly modern) graffiti. Interesting discoveries have been made, and work continues. There is a website, www.corcadhuibhne3D.ie, and a Facebook page, and the Discovery Programme featured the project in its 25th Anniversary exhibitions. An article has been published in Archaeology Ireland and more articles are planned, and, as they continue with their fieldwork and research, it is hoped that some of these will be by the 'lay' members of the project, rather than those attached to the managing institutions.

The project has helped train people in a range of skills: fieldwork, photography, more ease using the computer and the structure from motion technique, learning about specific monuments, maps, and in doing research. It has also introduced them to the work of the Discovery Programme and the Ogham in 3D Project, national projects whose work doesn't always filter down into smaller rural areas very far from Dublin.

David McIlreavy

The Medieval Bray Project

The Medieval Bray Project (TMBP) is a community research initiative dedicated to the investigation and dissemination of the history and archaeology of the medieval manor of Bray, Co. Wicklow, during the Lordship of Ireland 1171–1541 AD. The initiative is a partnership of community members, including heritage professionals connected to the Bray area. Whilst taking inspiration from successful community archaeology projects such as Grassroots Archaeology and Resurrecting Monuments, the central research tenet of TMBP is not confined to simply archaeology, but aims to provide a holistic exploration to both the historical record and social geography.

Since its inception in 2015, TMBP's three main research avenues have developed. Firstly, exploring the social geography of the Bray area immediately preceding 1171 AD, which partially formed our presentation to the Rathmichael Historical Society Series 2016. Secondly, researching the Bray Bell, a Class II bronze ecclesiastical bell currently held in the Hunt Museum Limerick. And thirdly, the investigation of Raheen na Cluig church on the slopes of Bray Head, which at the time of writing TMBP has been granted permission to geophysical survey.

This presentation will give the results of the project to date and outline how we hope to proceed in 2017 and beyond.

Anne Carey

Exploring the heritage of a burgeoning suburb: a school-based community project in Knocknacarra, Galway

A school-based community heritage project called Feile Oidhreachta agus Fomhair has been running for five years in Gaelscoil Mhic Amhlaigh, Knocknacarra, Galway. An archaeologist (Anne Carey) and a folklorist/harpist (Áine Sheridan) conducted weekly workshops with the children of Rang 4 over a period of eight weeks in September/October each year, with each week dedicated to activities that would appear in an exhibition to the community. The centre of the exhibition was an artefact display where items from the children's homes were curated and exhibited by the children. The focus of the exhibition was on the idea that items are saved by people and passed down through the generations for a specific reason, because they have a meaning and sometimes rich associations. The effect of the artefact exhibition on the children and their families and the wider community far exceeded initial expectations and has created real and lasting memories and impressions on all who participated. The paper will synthesise the exhibition event and the preparation that led up to it, and discuss the positive learning outcomes for the children and their families.

Session 3: Medieval & Historic Archaeology

Shane Delaney

Ranelagh, Co. Roscommon: preliminary observations.

Irish Archaeological Consultancy Ltd carried out an excavation in Ranelagh townland, to the north of Roscommon town, as part of a road realignment project along the N61 from October 2015 to October 2016. The archaeological site was located in pastureland on a noticeable rise with good views across the surrounding landscape. Previous geophysical survey and test excavations identified and confirmed the presence of a large enclosure complex. The excavation revealed a multi-vallate enclosure with an associated burial ground, ditches, two small souterrains, pits, kilns, hearths and linear drainage features. The burial ground was used over a long period and appeared to expand eastwards and represents continuous or multiple phases of activity. It contained 551 burials and 242 disarticulated deposits of human bone. A large number of infant and child burials were recovered from the upper deposits of the burial ground and may indicate later use as a cillín or children's burial ground. Finds recovered from the site suggest a 6th–11th century AD date range for the primary activity at Ranelagh.

Dr Eve Campbell

‘Ar scáth a chéile a mhaireann na daoine’: life and material culture in an Achill rundale settlement

In 1845, on the eve of the Great Famine, some 8% of land in Ireland was held under a co-tenancy system known to contemporary writers as ‘rundale’. While acknowledged to present diverse spatial forms, rundale is frequently connected with so-called ‘clachans’ or farm clusters, common arable infield, and common outfield or rough grazing. This settlement form was once ubiquitous, finding its densest concentrations along the western seaboard. In Mayo, for example, 42% of land was held under the system. Rundale seriously declined in the latter half of the 19th century, undermined by demographic changes wrought by mortality and emigration, coupled with agricultural reforms enacted after the Famine. While questions over the origins and character of rundale have engendered vigorous debate, chiefly among historical geographers, many questions concerning its development, spatiality and material culture(s) remain. This paper will present recent work by the Achill Archaeological Field School (AAFS) at the pre-Famine rundale settlement of Keem, Achill Island. Between 2009 and 2016 the AAFS carried out a programme of excavations at Keem, examining two dwellings and associated features in the settlement. These works have provided an important window into life in pre-Famine Keem. In particular, they have elucidated architectural forms and material culture, shedding light on household, community and connections between Keem and the wider world, as well as offering insights into the thorny question of origins and chronology of rundale settlements.

Enda O’Flaherty

Triggering memory and meaning for the online public: the abandoned national schools of Ireland

My current study involves documenting and researching at a local level, the disused school houses scattered across the Irish landscape. This paper will explore the use of imagery, narrative and new technology and media as a method of triggering memory and meaning for the online public, and consequently encouraging engagement with, and contribution to, historical and cultural research.

For the past two years, I have been casually engaged in a personal research project documenting disused school houses in Ireland. Although this project began as a personal photo diary of a select number of aesthetically pleasing buildings, it has since expanded to include primary documentary research and constant engagement with the online public through a dedicated blog and social media outlets.

Public engagement has come from both home and abroad. For many who emigrated from Ireland at an early age, their days spent in these rural and isolated school houses often represented the last formal education they received before seeking a brighter future abroad. Although many of these buildings are now empty or approaching a point of collapse, the physical structures are cognitive stimuli for those who attended these schools, and hold a wealth of memory and associations that shaped their understanding of the world around them at an early age.

Memory is dynamic and fluid—a pulsing living thing. It can be continually stretched, coveted, erased and manipulated by the environment and circumstances from which it is recalled by an individual or group—taking on greater or lesser significances that are determined by the interpretation of those who recollect in the present. Outside of an individual’s family, or tragic and traumatic events in our youth, it could be argued that few things have greater impact on our development and personality, our understanding of the world around us, and our coping mechanisms to deal with and interpret that world as our experience of the classroom and schoolyard.

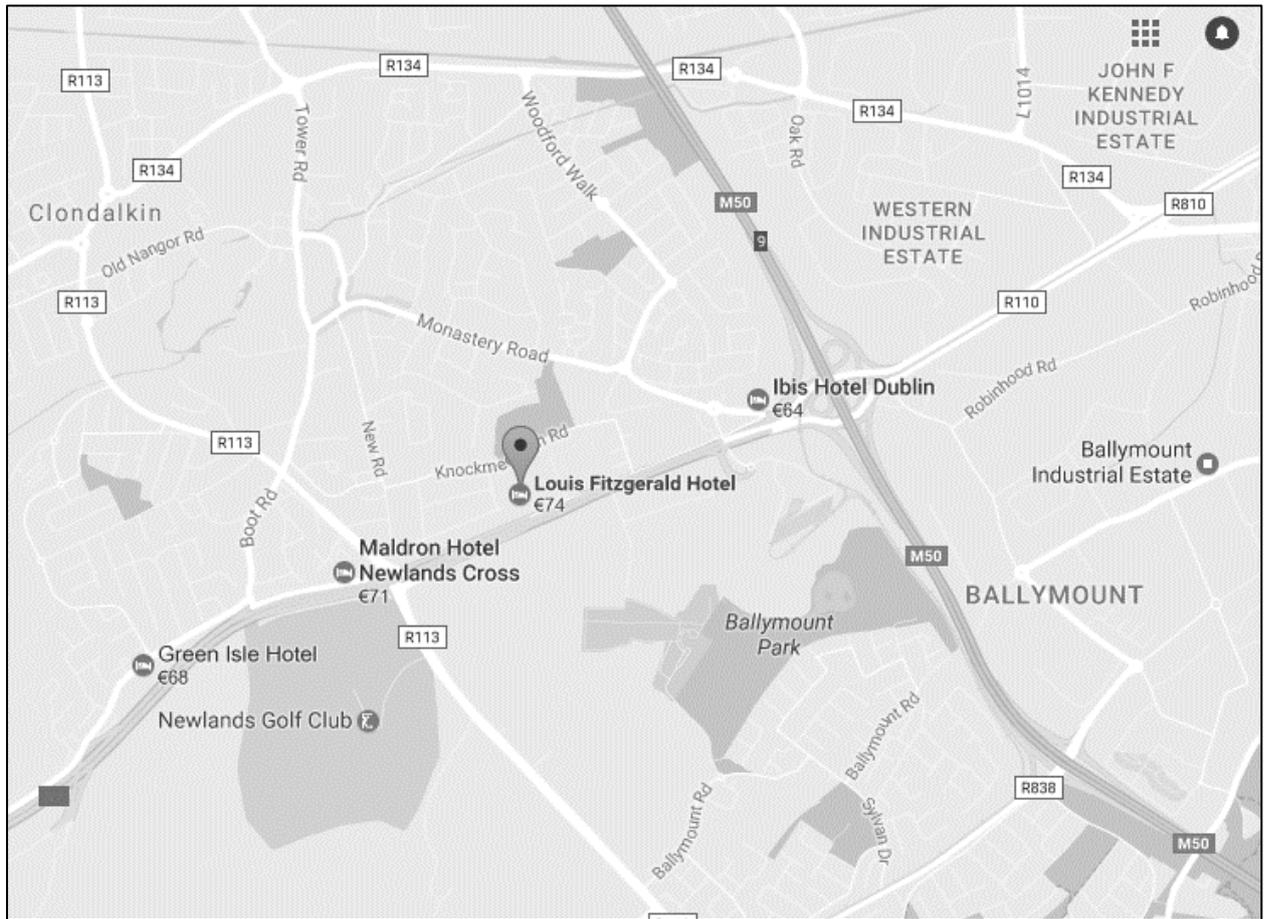
The use of evocative imagery online has proven a stimulus for the public to engage with historical research on a personal level, teasing out the narrative of many of the abandoned school houses that I have visited and documented. Social media in particular has allowed the general public to easily share their experiences and memories, adding overlooked narratives to these buildings, and highlighting their significance as monuments to a changing rural Ireland in particular.

Dave Swift

Reconstructing 1916

Dave Swift and some of his colleagues in Medieval Living History group 'Cláíomh' set up a 1916 Easter Rising & Irish War of Independence interpretative group 'Claidheamh Soluis' in late 2014 to demonstrate at live events and also to work on media projects for and during the centenary year. Some of the clients who availed of the services provided by the Claidheamh Soluis team included GPO Witness History, the National Museum of Ireland and various county councils around the country. This paper will provide an insight into what exactly is involved in assembling the materials required for the most authentic expression possible of a fascinating period in Irish history.

Venue



The 2017 IAI Conference is being held at the Louis Fitzgerald Hotel in Clondalkin, Dublin.

The Louis Fitzgerald Hotel is on the N7 Naas Road, just off the M50.

Accommodation, at a special IAI Conference delegate rate, can also be secured at the Louis Fitzgerald Hotel. The Louis Fitzgerald Hotel is just a 5 minute walk from the Red Cow Luas stop (Luas Red Line) and a shuttle bus is available from the hotel to the Luas.

Alternative nearby accommodation options include:

- Ibis Hotel Dublin
- Maldron Hotel Newlands Cross
- Green Isle Hotel



Wordwell



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council



GALWAY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
FIELD SCHOOL

#IAI2017



Consistent accuracy
Delivered on time
Beta Analytic



*The Institute of Archaeologists of
Ireland would like to thank all of
our kind sponsors for #IAI2017*



The Discovery
Programme
Centre for Archaeology
and Innovation Ireland



ARCHAEOLOGICAL
CONSULTANCY
SERVICES UNIT
(Established 1992)



Institute of
Archaeologists
of Ireland



NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh

